

Secret Message

Every answer is linked to a bold word on the right. Circle the correct answer and its word. After you've answered all the questions write the bold words (in order) inside the box to form the secret message.

- 1) Each year a tree grows, it gets a ring. Scientists count the rings from the center out to find out how old a tree is. Count either the light rings or the dark rings (NOT both) of this tree. How old is it?
 - a. Less than 50 **A**
 - b. Between 50 and 100 **An**
 - c. Older than 100 **The**

- 2) Look at the two samples. The *needles* come from a conifer, also called an _____; these trees do not lose their needles in winter. The *leaves* are from a tree that loses its leaves in winter and is called _____.
 - a. Evergreen, deciduous **ecosystem**
 - b. Deciduous, evergreen **system**
 - c. Needle tree, nevergreen **environment**

- 3) Picture the faces of a wolf and a rabbit. Look at the placement of the eye sockets on this skull. Do they face forward or to the side? Does that mean that this animal is a predator or prey?
 - a. Side, predator **in**
 - b. Forward, predator **is**
 - c. Forward, prey **are**

- 4) This is a bone from an animal that was killed by a predator. Most of the flesh was eaten by scavengers. The rest could have been decomposed by
 - a. fungi (plural of fungus) **an**
 - b. bacteria **the**
 - c. mold **at**
 - d. all of the above **a**

- 5) This is a picture of a spring that is visited regularly by wildlife. What is the importance of the spring?
 - a. It provides water for animals to drink **producer**
 - b. It provides water for plants in the area **people**
 - c. It is not important at all **parts**
 - d. Both A and B **place**

- 6) Look carefully at the picture. It was taken at the spring on our property and shows two animals: a skunk and a mountain lion. The skunk is the _____ and the mountain lion is the _____.
 - a. Predator, prey **wear**
 - b. Prey, predator **where**
 - c. Carnivore, herbivore **wear**

Secret Message:

- 7) Elevation is the measurement of distance above sea level. As you gain elevation the weather changes in two ways: the temperature _____ and the amount of precipitation (rain and snow) _____. The change in the weather at different elevations helps describe life zones.
- a. Increases, decreases **non-living**
 - b. Decreases, increases **living**
 - c. Increases, increases **alive**
- 8) Bears are omnivores, meaning they eat both plants and animals. This is scat from a bear. The food it ate has been digested, but has not fully decomposed. What needs to happen to decompose scat into soil?
- a. Bacteria and fungi have to fully break it down **and**
 - b. Insects need to eat it **as**
 - c. Water will wash it away **at**
- 9) Mammals have hair or fur to keep them warm and provide protection. Birds, which are not mammals, have feathers instead of hair or fur. Feathers serve many purposes for birds. Which of the following is NOT a function of feathers?
- a. They insulate the bird from cold temperatures and water **decomposer**
 - b. They can be eaten by other animals **non-living**
 - c. They help the bird fly **dead**
 - d. They help camouflage the bird **living**
- 10) All plants are producers, meaning they can make their own food. The Ponderosa Pine is a common tree at the Sandia Mountain Natural History Center. Ponderosa seeds are an important part of New Mexico ecosystems because _____.
- a. The animals in the forest eat them **places**
 - b. They will grow into new Ponderosa trees **producers**
 - c. Both a and b **parts**
- 11) The Sandia Mountains provide habitat for rabbits and other animals. Rabbits live in meadows where there are tall grasses, flowers, cacti, and bushes. How does the rabbit's fur help it survive predators in its habitat?
- a. Its fur protects the rabbit from the environment **at**
 - b. It doesn't help **and**
 - c. The coloring of the fur makes the rabbit camouflaged **are**
- 12) All animals are consumers, meaning they must eat to get energy. Look at the bottom teeth of this animal. Are they more flat or more pointed (like the teeth of a saw)? Do you think this animal was a(n) _____?
- a. Carnivore (ate only other animals) **consumer**
 - b. Omnivore (ate plants and animals) **connection**
 - c. Herbivore (ate only plants) **connected**



Revised February, 2014
Original by Rosie Norlander & Maggie Estock, SMNHC