

Bears



How many types of bears do you know? Some well-recognized types are the polar bear, black bear, brown bear, and honey bear.

5 Polar bears live in the Arctic. They eat marine animals and birds. Polar bears are covered in thick white fur so that they can hide in the snow. They also have a layer of insulating fat to help them survive the extreme cold. Not only are polar bears the greatest hunters of all the bears, they can also swim 100 kilometres without stopping to rest!

10 The black bear weighs about 136 kilograms, which is about as heavy as two adults. It averages 1.8 metres long, the height of a tall man. Like all bears that live in cold climates, the black bear hibernates throughout winter.

15 Brown bears can be found in Europe, Asia, and North America. One of the best known types of brown bears is the grizzly bear, which can weigh as much as 450 kilograms. In spite of its huge size, a grizzly can run as fast as 40 kilometres per hour. Grizzlies also hibernate throughout winter.

20 The largest of all the bears is a type of brown bear called the Kodiak bear. At 2.75 metres tall, it weighs as much as 725 kilograms – almost as much as eight people combined. Kodiaks eat plants and roots, but they love fish too, especially salmon. Every year, large groups of Kodiaks gather in streams to catch salmon as they swim their way upstream to the spawning grounds.

Honey bears live in Southeast Asia and are only about 1.2 metres long and weigh 45 kilograms. In fact, they are the smallest of all bear species. Unlike many other bear species, honey bears do not hibernate.

25 The headline in the *Toronto Star* on August 27, 2005 was bad news for bears. It read, “Fish Bad for Grizzlies”. If bears eat fish rather than berries and plants, they would have a high level of pollutants in their bodies because the fish are swimming in polluted waters. When they get contaminated, they pass the pollutants on to the bears.

30 Maybe one day you will have a job as a naturalist. It might be your responsibility then to track and count bear populations, record the changes to their habitats, and suggest ways of protecting them.

- 1** Which of the following statements is true?
- Grizzlies like eating berries and fish.
 - All kinds of bears hibernate in winter.
 - The polar bear is the largest among bears.
 - Honey bears are found in the warmer regions of North America.
- 2** The word “insulating” (line 5) means almost the same as
- protecting.
 - hiding.
 - fatty.
 - agreeable.
- 3** According to the text, which of the following statements is true?
- Grizzly bears are the greatest hunters of all bears, and they can swim 100 kilometres without stopping to rest.
 - The black bear can reach 2.75 metres in height and be as heavy as eight people combined.
 - Brown bears can only be found in Europe and North America.
 - Every year, Kodiak bears gather in streams to catch salmon as they swim to their spawning grounds.
- 4** What is the theme of paragraph 7?
- The *Toronto Star* reported some bad news about bears.
 - Bears would absorb pollutants after feeding on contaminated salmon.
 - It is better for bears to eat berries and plants.
 - There is a high level of pollutants in salmon.

- 5** What is probably NOT the job of a naturalist?
- Record the number of bears in a certain area.
 - Make sure that bears do not eat contaminated salmon.
 - See how bears' habitats change.
 - Find ways to protect bears.
- 6** Which of the following statements is NOT true?
- Salmon swim their way upstream to the spawning grounds.
 - When fish get contaminated, they pass the pollutants on to the bears that eat them.
 - The black bear is as tall as a man, and the Kodiak bear is taller than the average man.
 - Polar bears have a layer of fat to help them store food.
- 7** In North America, we do not find
- polar bears.
 - honey bears.
 - grizzly bears.
 - Kodiak bears.
- 8** Which of the following would be the BEST alternative title for this story?
- Bears of the World
 - Bears: Picky Eaters
 - Bears and Food
 - Big Bears and their Habitats