

**Woolly Mammoth Reading Comprehension**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Growing thirteen feet tall and weighing six tons, woolly mammoths were massive creatures that roamed modern-day Eurasia, North America, and the Arctic plains. Their extinction occurred relatively recently; mostly because of the ice age which took place around 10,000 years ago. The very last mammoths, however, are thought to have died only four thousand years ago! They were last found alive on Wrangel Island, which is now part of Russia. While climate change drove these huge beasts toward extinction, they were finished off by humans, who used their bones and tusks to make construction materials and primitive tools, and who, often depicted mammoths in ice-age era cave murals. Because mammoth bones are often discovered near rivers, scientists believe many died because they fell through ice.

Woolly Mammoths were herbivorous mammals that fed upon small plants in their environments. In the Arctic, however, most of the plants that the mammoth could have eaten lacked the necessary nutrition to allow them to survive. Recently, however, scientists concluded that Arctic mammoths survived by eating forbs - flowering plants high in proteins and other nutrients. Forbs were primary food sources for mammoths, wild horses, buffalo, and woolly rhinoceroses. Mammoths used their long elephant-like tusks to move the snow so they could access such plants hidden beneath the surface.

The Woolly Mammoth is closely related to the Asian elephant! In fact, scientists conducting DNA research on the woolly mammoth have concluded that it is 99% identical to the Asian elephant. Today researchers have even tried to use genetic engineering to re-create the woolly mammoth. Although research and experimentation continues, it has thus far been unsuccessful.

**1. Which of the following was true 7,000 years ago?**

- A. The ice age was occurring
- B. Mammoths were extinct
- C. Populations of mammoths were increasing
- D. The very last mammoths were still alive

2. **Which of the following is a CORRECT conclusion based on evidence?**
- A. Mammoths occurred in North America, Eurasia, and Arctic regions
  - B. Because mammoth bones are usually found near rivers, scientists believe that mammoths often fell through ice
  - C. Because the Arctic lacked nutritious plants, mammoths became extinct
  - D. Humans contributed to the extinction of the woolly mammoths because they are often depicted in cave murals
3. **What is the significance of Wrangel Island in the history of the woolly mammoth?**
- A. It was the first place mammoth bones were found
  - B. It was the place in which forbs were discovered
  - C. It was the last place woolly mammoths were known to have lived
  - D. It was the site of the ice age that occurred 10,000 years ago
4. **What were the two forces that brought the woolly mammoth to extinction?**
- A. Climate change and people
  - B. Climate change and natural predators
  - C. Climate change and fossils
  - D. The ice age and disease

5. **What word could replace “primary” in the following sentence?**

Forbs were **primary** food sources for mammoths, wild horses, buffalo, and woolly rhinoceroses.

- A. rare
- B. important
- C. interesting
- D. common

6. **What is implied from the following sentence?**

Mammoths were often depicted in ice-age era cave murals.

- A. Mammoths lived in caves
- B. Mammoths were important in the lives of early people
- C. Mammoths went extinct during the ice age
- D. Mammoths could be very dangerous

7. **Which IS NOT true about the woolly mammoth?**

- A. It was an herbivore
- B. It is nearly identical to the Asian Elephant
- C. They were last found alive in what is now Russia
- D. Scientists recently were successful in re-creating the mammoth.