READTHEORY

ME

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Date 2/18/15

Amazing Rays

Rays are truly amazing animals. Watching one glide through water is a remarkable sight. Unlike other aquatic animals, they almost seem to fly through the water. They also look like no other animal on earth.

Ray Appearances

Rays are basically flattened fish. They have a mound in the middle that juts out a bit, but otherwise all rays are just large flat discs. These discs differ in size and shape from ray to ray. Most are circular, wedge-shaped, or triangular.

Rays also have tails. The tails differ in size for each ray species, and they differ in function too. In some rays, the tail is used as a stinger. These rays, called stingrays, use their tail to stun their prey. These rays then eat the animals that they sting.

Other rays use their tails for self-defense. Some rays' tails poison any predator that attacks them. Other rays have spikes in their tail. This type of ray will whip its tail at predators to scare them away.

For many other rays, the tail is able to detect dangerous predators. The manta ray, for instance uses the tail to protect its blind spot. Manta rays' tails function as a type of security system, then.

Really, though, most animals do not attack rays. Their shape makes them hard to eat. And most rays move much faster than other aquatic species can.

Rays and Sharks

Rays look practically nothing like sharks. But scientists actually say rays and sharks are very similar. Both are completely made of cartilage, for instance. Cartilage is a tough material, but it is softer than bone. Most aquatic species have bones, but rays and sharks do not. Rays and sharks also have both similar teeth and spine structures.

Rays may be very similar to sharks, but many behave more like fish. Unlike sharks, most species of rays are social. They live and hunt in groups. Rays also are unlike sharks in how they eat.

Most rays are bottom-feeders. Their mouths are on their bottom sides, and their eyes are above. These rays use their eyes to see what's ahead of them, while their mouths scrape the ocean floor for food. Other rays swim constantly and have mouths that open on their front side. These rays sweep food into their mouths as they swim.

Sharks, on the other hand, hunt in a more active way. They seek out prey and chase it down. Some sharks actually follow rays. When rays swim into an area, fish will often hide. When the rays leave, the fish return. When they return, a shark emerges from hiding to eat the fish.

Rays and sharks are both very smart animals. Rays have large brains for their body weight. The higher an animal's brain to body ratio, the smarter it is. By that measure, marine biologists say that it

2) According to the passage, which of the following is a true statement about rays' tails?

A. Some rays use their tails for defense, but some use them to attack.

B. Some rays use their tails to help them swim, but some use them to help them glide.

C. All rays use their tails for defense, but some use them to help them swim too.

D. All rays use their tails to help them swim, but some also use them to attack.

3) The author suggests that sharks

A. contain different teeth from rays

B. live and hunt in groups

C. contain more bones from rays

D. live and hunt alone

4) Based on its use in paragraph 10, it can be understood that the word **active** belongs to which of the following word groups?

A. involved, effortful, busy

B. usual, normal, common

C. uninterested, bored, uninvolved

D. friendly, kind, warm

5) The author mentions the experience of divers in paragraph 12 to

A. describe how rays eat food

B. argue that sharks are smarter than rays

C. prove that rays are curious

D. explain that rays are peaceful

6) According to the passage, eagle rays can be recognized by

A. the locations of their mouths

B. their spots

C. their large size

D. their flat noses

7) Most rays

A. are able to glide through water

B. are over two feet wide

C. cannot jump out of the water