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Part 1

Performance Task 1

Part 1

Animals and Their Unique Abilities

Task:

Your science class takes a trip to the aquarium. A guide describes some underwater animals with amazing abilities like a mudskipper that climbs trees and a planarian that can heal itself. You and your classmates become interested in learning more about other animals with unique abilities. During your research, you found three more articles about this topic.

After you have looked at these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the three questions that follow. Then go back and read the sources carefully so you will have the information you need to answer the questions and complete your research. You may use scratch paper to take notes on information you find in the sources you read.

In Part 2, you will write a story using the information you read.

Directions for Beginning:

You will now look at several sources. You can look at any of the sources as often as you like.

Research Questions:

After reviewing the research sources, use the rest of the time in Part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the information you read, which should help you write your narrative story.

You may refer back to your scratch paper to review your notes when you think it would be helpful. Answer the questions in the spaces below the items.

Your written notes on scratch paper will be available to you in Part 1 and Part 2 of the performance task.

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Part 1**Source #1**

You found an article that describes how birds survive in the desert.

Desert Birds

Deserts are the driest places on Earth. They are also some of the hottest places. Yet some animals are able to live there. Certain birds are very good at adapting to the dry desert.

For example, the cactus wren can live with very little water. It uses its pointed beak to turn over rocks on the ground. Then it eats the insects underneath. From its food, it gets all the water it needs. The name *cactus wren* comes from where it lives. It lives in thorny trees and plants. The thorns are used to protect the cactus wren and its young from enemies.



The roadrunner is another desert bird. It is famous for its ability to run very fast. It can travel at speeds as fast as 15 miles per hour. This desert bird is so quick it can catch a rattlesnake! It can also catch a dragonfly in the air! In fact, there's not much it won't eat. Rodents, lizards, and spiders are all favorite foods. The roadrunner uses its speed to catch its prey. But it also uses its speed to escape from enemies. It rarely flies, so being fast is important.

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The roadrunner gets most of its water from eating other creatures, but it also has ways to make the most of its water supply. Water sources in the desert can be salty. Too much salt can be harmful. Luckily, this special bird has glands that remove salt from its body. The roadrunner rests during the hottest hours of the day. It does a lot of hunting in the cool evening. During this time, it needs less water.

A third desert bird is the sandgrouse. It deals with a lack of water in its own way. It will travel a long way to find a water source. While it drinks, the feathers on its belly will absorb and hold water. Then the sandgrouse will use these wet feathers to carry water. It brings the water to its chicks. It may travel as far as 75 miles to bring water to its chicks. This may happen a few times a day.

The sandgrouse is gray, brown, and beige. These are the colors of most desert birds. These colors allow it to hide in the desert. Under its feather cover is a thick layer of down. This protects the bird from extreme temperatures. When the desert becomes too hot or cold, the sandgrouse stays comfortable.

All these birds have qualities that make them unique. They have the ability to adapt to hard conditions.

Source #2

You found an article about animals that can change colors.

Quick Color Changes

A chameleon sitting among green leaves looks green. A chameleon resting on a tree trunk looks brown. A chameleon's skin color can change to match certain backgrounds. Blending in with a background is called camouflage. Chameleons are best known for their ability to change their look.

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A chameleon's camouflage helps a chameleon hunt for insects. The camouflage also helps a chameleon hide from enemies. But these are not the main reason for changing colors. The main reason is that changing colors is a way to communicate. A chameleon in danger may suddenly turn black or change its pattern. This confuses its enemy. Male chameleons change to bright colors. They do this to warn off other males. Skin color changes can also show the animal's mood.

How does the chameleon's skin change color? The outer layer of skin is see-through. Under it are other layers with special cells. These special cells contain color. They grow or shrink depending on nerve and chemical signals in the chameleon's body.

The chameleon is a master of color change, but a different animal takes the prize for colorful tricks. It is the octopus.

A reddish octopus sits on the ocean floor. In an instant, it is gray. The next second, it is orange. The next moment, it is tan. These color changes are amazing to see. Some color changes mean the octopus is changing emotions. Other color changes help the octopus defend itself. The enemy sees the changing colors and becomes too shocked to attack. The octopus also uses color changes to hide from enemies. It can take on the colors of a sandy ocean bottom. It can combine colors to blend in with a patterned background. Some octopuses can change the texture of their skin from smooth to rough. They appear to be coral or rocks.

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The colored cells in the octopus's skin have more parts than those in a chameleon. In an octopus, nerve signals act on the muscles around tiny sacs. The muscles squeeze or relax to open or close the sacs. This either reveals or hides the color. The octopus also has cells that reflect the light around it. In a way, the skin acts like a mirror. That explains why octopuses can take on the look of patterned backgrounds.

Source #3

You found an article about how monkeys can help people.

Monkey Helpers

Animals help people in a lot of ways. One amazing and helpful animal is the capuchin monkey. There are many things to help people in wheelchairs. For example, there are computer devices to help them with everyday tasks, but there are some things that a computer cannot do. That is where a monkey can help. A monkey has hands it can use to do things with. Other service animals do not have that ability.

Capuchin monkeys are from the tropical forests of Central and South America. These monkeys are about 1 to 2 feet long. They weigh between 2 and 9 pounds. They can live as long as 40 years in captivity. They are very intelligent. In the wild, these little monkeys use tools, such as sticks, to get food.



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These monkeys can be trained to do small tasks. They can help people in wheelchairs be more independent. With the help of a capuchin monkey, people in wheelchairs can do things they would need another person to do.

In some ways, being a monkey trainer is like bringing up a baby. But a baby cannot climb the curtains and swing on them! Monkeys are very curious and like to explore. The monkey trainers have to keep their homes safe for monkeys. Monkeys can grab things that a small child could never get near.

Once the monkey reaches a certain skill level, it starts going to a training center. It attends classes four or five times a week. The monkeys learn to use their natural skills in different ways. They use their curious nature and love of handling objects. They go through more and more difficult training. When they finish a task, they receive a reward.

The monkeys learn about 30 commands. They learn to turn lights on and off. They learn to get something to eat or drink. They pick up dropped items. The monkeys can also help with books or voice recorders. They take things to the trash. They open and close a refrigerator. They even put a DVD in a player. Capuchins can help wash a person's face. They can also move a person's hand.

To learn to do these tasks, monkeys need lots of training. After that, the monkey is paired up with someone who needs help. The needs of the person are matched with the skills of the monkey. The monkeys become devoted to their new owners. And the new owners are devoted to their monkeys. The monkeys give people friendship and fun. Just because monkeys are helpers does not mean that they have forgotten how to play!

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1 Source #1 and Source #2 discuss the unique abilities of some animals. Explain how animals use their unique abilities to survive. Use **one** detail from Source #1 and **one** detail from Source #2 to support your explanation. For each detail, include the source title or number.

2 Which source **most likely** has useful information about how animals can be trained? Explain why this source **most likely** has the most useful information about how animals can be trained. Give at least **two** details from the source to support your answer.

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3 Mark the boxes to match each source with an idea or ideas that it supports. Some ideas may have more than one source selected.

	Source #1: Desert Birds	Source #2: Quick Color Changes	Source #3: Monkey Helpers
Some animals have developed special body features that help them adapt to their environment.			
Animals can develop relationships with people.			
Animals can communicate their emotions in different ways.			

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Part 2

You will now review your notes and sources, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your writing. You may use your notes and go back to the sources. Now read your assignment and the information about how your writing will be scored, then begin your work.

Your Assignment:

Your teacher wants you to use the research information you gathered about unique animals. You are assigned to write a story that is several paragraphs long about a person who can take on the characteristics and abilities of the animals from your research.

In your story, you will choose two or three animals from the sources and write about how your character uses the abilities of those animals in an adventure story. Your character will face a big challenge or obstacle in your story. Describe how the person reacts and resolves the obstacle or challenge. When writing your story, find ways to use information and details from the sources to improve your story. Make sure you develop your characters, setting, and the plot. Also use details, dialogue, and description where appropriate.

REMEMBER: A well-written narrative story

- has an effective and complete plot.
- is well-organized and clear.
- has an introduction and conclusion.
- has a logical sequence of events.
- uses transitions.
- develops a setting, narrator/characters, and point of view.
- uses description, details, and dialogue.
- has effective and appropriate style.
- uses details from the sources to support your story.
- follows rules of writing (spelling, punctuation, grammar usage).

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Now begin your work on your story. Manage your time carefully so that you can

- plan your multi-paragraph story.
- write your multi-paragraph story.
- revise and edit the final draft of your multi-paragraph story.

For Part 2, you are being asked to write a narrative story that is several paragraphs long. Write your response in the space below.

Remember to check your notes and your prewriting and planning as you write and then revise and edit your story.

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