

3rd Quarter Graded Assignment – Intermediate English B

Literature Unit 15: Critical Skills- Argument Writing

ASSESSMENT

DUE THURSDAY January 29th

Take Test in Sapphire

Read the passage below and then open the assignment in Sapphire. Answer the questions. You may refer back to the passage to help you.

Wild Animals as Pets

(1) A photograph of a leopard cub's spotted face is so irresistible that it makes people want to run out, scoop up that feline, and bring it home. And some people do. They may purchase one as a pet and keep it in their house or yard. That is, until it is too big, too dangerous, and too expensive to keep any longer. These days, it is very easy to buy an exotic animal. In some places it is legal. The exotic pet trade is a multibillion dollar industry, where animals are bred, sold, and traded in large numbers. However, it is illegal to buy or own one in many places. Exotic pets are lions, tigers, bears, primates, constrictor snakes, lemurs, kangaroos, iguanas, alligators, monkeys, and a whole lot more. Many people think having an exotic pet is exciting, but it is actually bad for the animals. It is also bad for us and for the environment.

Exotic Pets Held Captive

(2) Wild animals are very different from domesticated ones. Domesticated animals need people for their survival. But wild animals don't do well with people. They have needs that cannot be met while they are in captivity. The animals often suffer from malnutrition, stress, trauma, and behavioral problems. If an exotic animal gets sick, a local veterinarian most likely will not know how to diagnose or even treat it.

(3) Exotic animals are sometimes chained or beaten because their owners can't control them. To keep them from harming their owners, sometimes the animal's teeth or claws are removed. The animals are often caged in very small pens with nothing natural around them. Many cages don't provide enough shelter from the elements. Oftentimes, the animals are isolated and have no interaction with animals of their own kind. The animals can become depressed and exhibit abnormal behavior. They may pace or circle repeatedly, lick or bite the bars of their enclosures, or groom themselves excessively.

The Dangers of Exotic Animals as Pets

(4) Many wild animals carry diseases that can be transmitted to humans. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 90 percent of imported green iguanas carry "some strain of intestinal bacteria." Exotic animals can transmit diseases such as ringworm, hepatitis A, giardia, tuberculosis, and measles to humans. Diseases such as herpes B, salmonellosis, monkeypox, and rabies can be fatal to people. Wild animals can be unpredictable and dangerous, too. People can get hurt. Many animals on display in roadside zoos are not kept safely from the public. Visitors are often allowed direct contact with the animals. And barriers don't always adequately restrain the animals. People have been injured by big cats, primates, and reptiles. Some attacks have been fatal.

(5) Many exotic pets that people buy are taken from their native habitats. If a number of animals are removed from their natural habitat, that ecosystem can be disrupted. The ecosystem the animals are moved to cannot really support them. Lions, tigers, monkeys, and bears are sometimes bred in captivity by inexperienced backyard breeders. The animals often have health and genetic problems because they are bred with animals they are linked to genetically. Zookeepers, on the other hand, pay careful attention to the health and genetic makeup of the animals they breed.

(6) Some owners consider their exotic pet a status symbol. But usually they are unaware of the responsibility that owning the animal entails. According to National Geographic, there are an estimated 5,000 captive tigers, most of them kept by private owners. Many pet owners soon realize that they cannot meet the animal's needs and that it is cruel to keep the animal captive. The animal can't be returned to the wild. Unfortunately, most animal shelters are not equipped to take in wild animals. Zoos won't take them because they may not have a legal permit for the animal. Zoos also often don't have space for these animals and are concerned about exposing the zoo animals to diseases these animals may carry. The person who sold the animal to its owner won't take it back. The seller wants to make a profit, so live animals often aren't returnable. Letting the animal loose is dangerous, for the animal and for people. The animal may starve and be unable to adapt to the new environment. It can also hurt people or other animals and spread diseases.

(7) Wildlife sanctuaries will take exotic animals if they have room. Unfortunately, there aren't enough of them. According to Vernon Weir of the American Sanctuary Association, many wildlife sanctuaries in the United States make a profit from their animals. They breed the animals or they are open to public contact. Sanctuaries that do operate solely for the benefit of the animals are often overloaded. Through his agency, Weir rescued more than 100 big cats in 2013 alone.

(8) Laws regarding the sale and possession of exotic animals exist, but most of them are inadequate or not enforced. Some states prohibit the sale or ownership of exotic pets. Pet owners in some states are required to have a license. Only six states have no laws at all.

(9) According to the Humane Society of the United States, there have been nearly 1,300 dangerous animal encounters nationwide since 1990. The incidents involved big cats, bears, primates, and large constrictor snakes. There were 700 injuries and 41 deaths, and eight of those were children.

(10) The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Animal Control Association, and the American Zoo and Aquarium Association are opposed to exotic pets because of the danger and the risk from disease. Born Free USA and the World Wildlife Fund promote conservation efforts to protect animals in the wild.

Exotic Pet Owners

(11) Why would anyone want to have an exotic animal as a pet? Some say it makes them feel special. Tim Harrison of Ohio used to have a menagerie of exotic animals at his house. Monkeys leapt from chair to couch. Lions sunned themselves in the driveway, but his favorite pets were his wolves. After a trip to Africa though, Harrison's view about his animals changed. When he saw how wild animals lived in their natural environment, he realized they aren't supposed to live in the suburbs or a city. When he returned home, he slowly gave up one animal at a time. Now, Harrison volunteers for Outreach for Animals, an organization that rescues exotic pets and places them in sanctuaries.

(12) Some exotic pet owners insist on keeping their animals. Zuzana Kukol, co-founder of REXANO (Responsible Exotic Animal Ownership) opposes a ban on private ownership of exotic animals. She and co-founder Scott Shoemaker live on 10 acres in Nevada. They have two bobcats, two African lions, two cougars, four tigers, one serval, which is a medium-size African wild cat, and one ocelot. Kukol believes that most exotic pet owners treat their animals well and keep them from hurting people. She feels more connected to her animals than to people.

(13) Leslie-Ann Rush owns a small petting zoo on her seven-acre farm outside Orlando, Florida. Rush has three male kangaroos, a potbellied pig, a muntjac deer, which is a small deer from Asia, and a kinkajou, a rainforest mammal that's related to the raccoon. She also has four lemurs that are native to the African island of Madagascar. Lemurs are threatened to become endangered in the wild. Rush believes she is helping to keep lemurs alive on earth by caring for these captive-bred animals.

(14) By taking animals out of their natural habitat and having them live a life that wasn't designed for them by nature, however, we are doing them a disservice. Their lives are meant to be lived just the way they are—wild!