Reading Lesson 5: Summary completion

Summary completion (with wordlist) practice exercise.

The Black Mamba

Many types of snakes are not harmful to humans at all. Some are even domesticated and kept as pets. However, there are some species that even experts on the animal should be wary of. These snakes are beautiful, but they can be deadly if you cross their paths at the wrong time.

One snake that has a reputation for being dangerous is the Black Mamba. It is native to Africa and is known to mimic a cobra. There is a reason it is the most feared snake in the continent. It's the quickest moving snake on land, with an average speed of 10-12 mph. When this snake species feels threatened, it raises a third of its body off of the ground. This can make it rise up to four feet in the air. Only about 10-15 mg of venom can kill a human, but the Black Mamba's venom contains approximately 120 mg per strike. Some bites can even contain up to 400 mg of venom. Even with anti-venom treatment used to save victims, the mortality rate is still 14%.

Complete the summary using the list of words, a-l

Although many snakes are (1) _____, many others are very (2)_____ and should be avoided at all costs. One snake that is (3)_____ dangerous is the Black Mamba, which is (4)_____ to the Africa continent. There are several reasons why this snake is so deadly. It can travel extremely (5) _____, and it raises a third of its body off the ground so it can stand at nearly 4 feet tall. In addition, the black mamba's venom is around ten times the strength required to kill a human. In fact, if you are unlucky enough to be (6) _____by one of these snakes the mortality rate is just (7) _____ 15%.

a. particularly
b. contains
c. teeth
d. harmless
e. blood
f. dangerous
g. under
h. quickly
i. slimy
j. indigenous
k. bitten
l. scary

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Summary completion (without wordlist) practice exercise.

How Charles Darwin accurately predicted the existence of a moth without ever seeing it

Charles Darwin needs no introduction. Considered as the 'father of evolution', many people who have studied life sciences have come across the works of the genius. It so happened that in 1860, he received a parcel (by post) from one of his friends who was a botanist, loved gardening, and set up many orchids in his nursery. The parcel contained a carefully preserved flower, which belonged to a certain species of plants (Angraecu sesquipeale) which were known to thrive mainly in the island of Madagascar.

At that time, not only was Charles seeing such a flower for the first time, but also it hadn't been seen by any other European botanist yet. What was strange about the flower was that it was 11 inches long and its nectar lay 1.5 inches deep. Nectar is typically present in flowers to serve as food for insects, who in turn help plants with pollination. But this depth was too deep for any kind of butterfly or moth known at that time.

Charles firmly believed in the theory of natural selection. So when he was writing a book in 1862, he predicted that not only there should be some kind of butterfly or moth who must be helping with the pollination of such orchid flowers belonging to Madagascar, but also the proboscis of such an insect should be long enough to reach that nectar. According to Charles, if there was no way of reaching the nectar in the absence of such a proboscis, there was hardly any need for the insect to unnecessarily visit the flower.

Not only did many people who disbelieved in evolution give his prediction a cold shoulder, but also many who did believe ruled out the possibility of any butterfly or moth having a proboscis of about 30 centimetres. Several years later, two British explorers set out in the jungles of Madagascar. They came across a moth whose wing span was 40.25 centimetres and the proboscis was 40 centimetres long when fully stretched. The moth would wind up its proboscis like a spring when flying and would stretch it out flat like a cylindrical tube while feeding. Today we call it the Hawk moth. Charles Darwin's prediction came true 20 years after his death.

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Complete the summary below.

Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.

In 1863 Charles Darwin was sent a (1) _____ from a friend who was a botanist. The content of the package was a (2) _____ flower from Madagascar. The flower was unusual because it was 11.5 inches long and its nectar (3) _____ at a depth of 1.5 inches. Darwin anticipated that there must be a butterfly or (4) _____ native to Madagascar that had a proboscis long enough to help with the pollination of the flower. Most people did not believe Darwin's prediction, but several years later two British explorers discovered a moth whose proboscis was 40 centimteres (6) _____when fully extended. Today this is known as the (7) _____ moth.