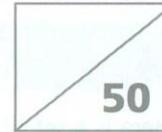


Practice Paper 1



Text 1 [5 marks]

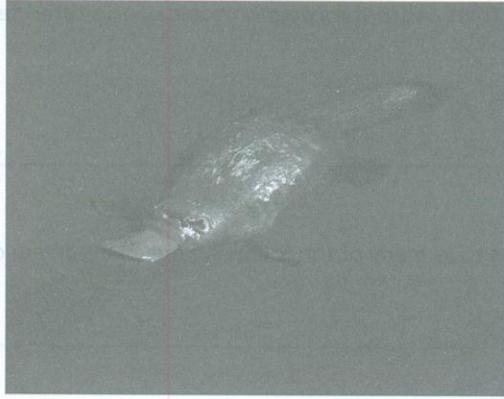
Study the information sheet below and answer Questions 1–4.



The Duck-billed Platypus



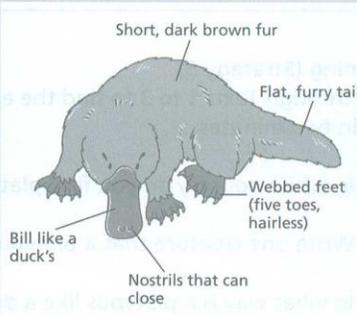
The duck-billed platypus, *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*, is a primitive Australian egg-laying mammal. After an egg hatches, the tiny baby (a puggle, as they are affectionately nicknamed) drinks its mother's milk, which comes from tiny openings in the mother's belly.



A platypus has a life span of ten to 17 years. It lives in a burrow and spends much of its time in freshwater ponds and streams. The name platypus means 'flat-footed'.

Anatomy

The duck-billed platypus is about the size of a domestic cat. Its thick, waterproof fur covers all of its body, except for the feet and bill. It walks like a lizard because its legs sprawl out to the side of its body. Males are venomous — they have a poisoned spike on their ankles which can be used to kill small animals in self-defence.



Diet

The platypus uses its beak to scoop up aquatic worms, shellfish, insects and insect larvae and other small animals from the bottom of a stream. It stores the food in its cheek pouches until it rises to the water surface to chew and swallow them.



1. How does the drawing of the platypus show it to be a strange creature?
_____ [1]
2. What effect on the reader does the phrase '*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*' have?
_____ [1]
3. The platypus is uniquely equipped to cope with its environment. Explain how **two** of its body parts enable it to survive.

_____ [2]
4. What is the main purpose of this page?
_____ [1]

Text 2 [20 marks]

The text below is about the platypus. Read it carefully and answer Questions 5–15.

1	A duck-billed platypus swimming up a stream can easily be mistaken for a piece of log. It has dark, sleek fur covering a soft undercoat, a pair of black, beady eyes and a duck-like bill. The bill, however, only looks like a duck's. It is not hard but soft, and is covered with rows of small pores that stretch out to its forehead. The beak is more like an overgrown snout.	5
2	The beak of the platypus has a greater function than merely scooping up food. Scientists have only recently discovered that the bill and head hairs have an unusual sense of touch. These hairs are rows of specialised nerve endings (or electroreceptors), which are extremely sensitive to even tiny amounts of electricity. A freshwater stream has many electrical fields and even the slightest movement from an aquatic creature creates a disturbance and changes these fields. The electroreceptors inform the platypus about obstacles and any change generated by them. This explains the platypus' uncanny ability to find food. While diving, even though its eyes, ears and nostrils are shut by flaps of skin, it is able to locate prey such as insect larvae and freshwater shrimp with the help of the electroreceptors. In about 24 hours, a platypus can eat larvae and shrimp up to half its body weight.	10 15
3	A platypus' webbed feet are armed with stout claws. On the front feet, the webbing goes beyond the claw tips. A platypus swims forward with its paddle-like front legs and steers with its hind legs and tail. When it burrows, the webbing folds back, exposing its front claws. All young platypuses have sharp spurs, about 15 centimetres long, on their hind legs. The spurs are hollow and each one is connected by a duct	20

	to a poison gland inside the thigh. The poison is not known to be fatal to human beings but it can cause excruciating pain to the victim. The poison can, however, kill an animal the size of a dog.	
4	Platypuses live in burrows that they dig in the banks of streams, keeping the entrance just above water level. They are shy animals and sleep in their burrows during the day. These burrows are narrow and inaccessible to human beings. The female builds special nesting burrows which are usually eight metres long, though tunnels up to 30 metres long have been found. At the end of this is a small chamber lined with leaves and grass. She seals herself inside the chamber with a plug of earth and lays two or three sticky, grape-sized eggs. The female then curls around the eggs to incubate them. The eggs hatch in about ten days. The hatchlings are hairless and about two centimetres long. They come out of the burrow only after three or four months in the late Australian summer.	25 30

5. Find a phrase in paragraph 1 that describes the appearance of a platypus in water.
 _____ [1]
6. Give (a) a word and (b) a phrase from paragraph 1 that describe how the bill of a platypus is different from a duck's.
 (a) Word: _____ [1]
 (b) Phrase: _____ [1]
7. According to paragraph 2, what **two** uses does the beak of a platypus have?
 1. _____ [1]
 2. _____ [1]
8. (a) In what **two** ways are the nerve endings 'specialised' (line 8)?

 _____ [2]
 (b) What is 'uncanny' (line 13) about the platypus's ability to find food?

 _____ [2]

9. What part of its body does the platypus use to move itself forward? [1]

10. Why does a young platypus need sharp spurs? [1]

11. Which words in paragraph 3 have similar meanings as
- (a) tube: _____ [1]
 (b) painfully: _____ [1]
12. In which part of a day would you most likely see a platypus in a stream or river? [1]

13. Identify a phrase in paragraph 4 that explains how a female platypus isolates herself in the burrow. [1]

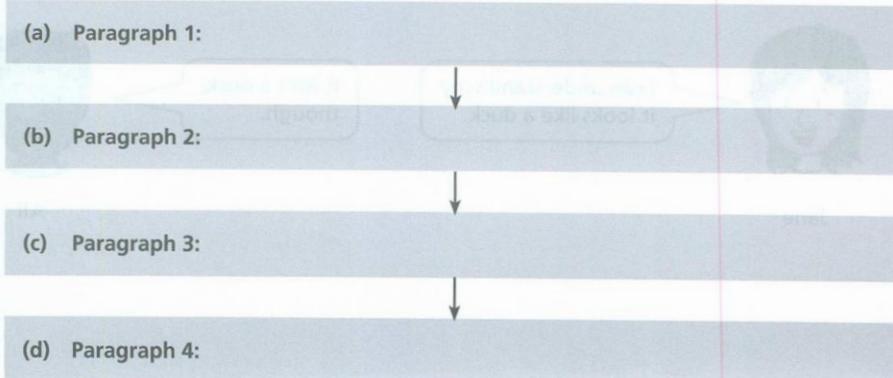
14. At what time of the year do platypuses usually give birth? [1]

15. The structure of the text reflects the stages of a platypus' life. Complete the flow chart by choosing one word or phrase from the box to summarise each stage. You do not need to use all the words or phrases in the box. [4]

A platypus' life

- stream life • ducks • living and breeding • obtaining food
- appearance • fighting predators • movement and protection

Flow Chart

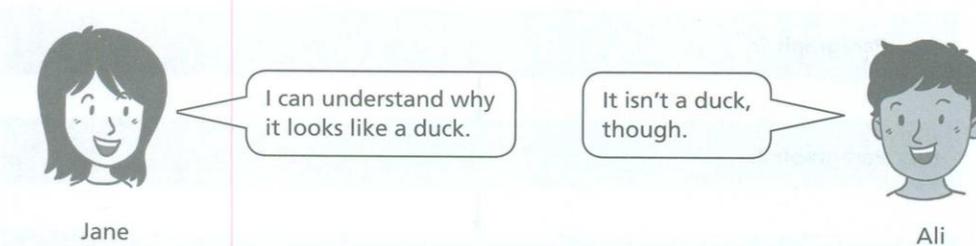


Text 3 [25 marks]

The text below is about the platypus, which is considered one of nature's strangest creations. Read it carefully and answer Questions 16–20.

1	The duck-billed platypus is perhaps one of nature's strangest creations. It is found in the freshwater streams, lakes and lagoons of eastern Australia. It took a long time for people to believe that an animal like the platypus really existed. When the skin of a platypus first arrived in the British Museum in 1798, the museum scientists were totally confused; they thought that someone had stitched a duck's beak onto the body of a mammal. It was small wonder that they thought so. It had webbed feet and a bill like a duck's. However, the body was covered with fur and it had a beaver-like tail. Doubts persisted, until a naturalist inspected it and officially named the species 'platypus'.	5
2	Scientists were further confused when they discovered that the platypus laid eggs like a snake yet suckled its young like any other mammal. There was disagreement among scientists during the nineteenth century about whether the platypus was a furred reptile or a primitive mammal. Eventually, experts put it and its only relative, the spiny anteater, in their own category — egg-laying mammals.	10
3	In the years following the discovery of the platypus, many platypuses were killed for their soft fur. This demand for platypus fur decimated the platypus population. Fortunately, hunting has been banned since 1912 and the platypus population started to make a comeback. Unfortunately, other human activities, such as the building of dams, the felling of trees along riverbanks and the pollution of the platypus' freshwater habitat continue to endanger their survival. The protective measures taken by the Australian government to limit these problems have, however, proved successful, enabling the platypus to be taken off the endangered animals list.	15 20
4	Generally, the platypus still needs to be protected. Public awareness of their needs need to be generated and long-term measures need to be put in place to save this unique mammal from extinction.	25

16. Jane and Ali have different views of the platypus.



(a)	Give two facts from paragraph 1 that support Jane's statement.	1.	
		2.	
(b)	How would Ali justify his opinion?	1.	
		2.	

[4]

17. 'There was disagreement ... about whether the platypus was a furred reptile or a primitive mammal.' (lines 11–13) Identify an example supporting each argument.

(a) Like a reptile: _____ [1]

(b) Like a mammal: _____ [1]

18. What do the ban on hunting and the implementation of protective measures for the platypus suggest about the change in human attitudes toward the platypus?

(a)	Previously		[1]
(b)	Now		[1]

19. What are **two** ways we can protect the platypus?

(a) _____ [1]

(b) _____ [1]

20. **Using your own words as far as possible**, summarise man's understanding of the platypus.

USE ONLY INFORMATION FROM PARAGRAPHS 1–2.

Your summary, which must be in continuous writing (not note form), must not be longer than **80** words, not counting the words given to help you to begin.

Begin your summary as follows:

When scientists were first shown a platypus, their reaction was ...

Method

1. Underline the key words in the summary question that tell you what to focus on.
2. Read the passage and underline the points that answer the summary question.
3. List the points and make brief notes in your own words about what you have underlined in the passage.

Points to select from text	No.	Suggested own words
	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	
	7	
	8	

Your notes should be marked out of 7 for language by your teacher / tutor.

Vocabulary Extension

1. ... a

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

[15]

Vocabulary Extension

Each practice paper provides you the opportunity to improve your vocabulary. What is the meaning of the words in bold below?

From Text 1

1. ... a **primitive** Australian egg-laying mammal. _____
2. ... its legs **sprawl out** to the sides of its body ... _____
3. ... It stores the food in its cheek **pouches**. _____

From Text 2

4. It has dark, **sleek** fur ... (line 2) _____
5. ... a pair of black, **beady** eyes ... (line 2) _____
6. ... the platypus' **uncanny** ability to find food.
(line 13) _____
7. All young platypuses have sharp **spurs**,
about 15 centimetres long (line 20) _____

From Text 3

8. Doubts **persisted** ... (line 8) _____
9. The **protective** measures taken ... (line 20) _____
10. Public awareness of their needs
need to be **generated** ... (line 24) _____