“Please Don’t Pet the Shark”

**Please Don’t Pet the Shark**

In her article “Please Don’t Pet the Shark,” author Lauren Tarshis expresses concern about wildlife selfies. While she admires Ocean Ramsey’s passion for sharks, Tarshis’s apprehension is evident from the start: Her title “Please Don’t Pet the Shark” appears next to Ramsey’s viral Instagram photo—a great white shark selfie—as if she is asking Ramsey to back away from the wild animal. Then, Tarshis’s subtitle reads, “This woman gets close to sharks to help protect them. But is that a good idea?” These word choices make clear that Tarshis wants people to think about the possible consequences of her doing so. Later in her article, Tarshis asks another question of readers, but this time, she answers it. She writes, “But is it ever a good idea to snuggle up to a great white shark? Certainly not” (21). Tarshis goes on to explain that posing and touching animals for pictures can be “cruel to wild animals that can become stressed by human interactions” (21). She then offers advice on how people can photograph animals in their natural habitats responsibly and respectfully: from afar (21). Because Tarshis explains why wildlife selfies are a bad idea for both wild animals and humans and then offers a wiser alternative, it is clear that Tarshis wants this trend to end.

**Answers to Activities and Prompts in the Magazine**

Answers will vary. Here’s a sample response to the question on page 21:

In her article “Please Don’t Pet the Shark,” author Lauren Tarshis expresses the idea that wildlife selfies are cruel and unwise, and need to stop. After describing viral Instagram posts of shark advocate Ocean Ramsey posing with her hand on a great white shark, Tarshis writes, “Many scientists expressed horror over Ramsey’s shark photos, noting the potential for harm to both Ramsey and the sharks” (21). Tarshis goes on to explain that posing and touching animals for pictures can be “cruel to wild animals that can become stressed by human interactions” (21). She then offers advice on how people can photograph animals in their natural habitats responsibly and respectfully: from afar (21). Because Tarshis explains why wildlife selfies are a bad idea for both wild animals and humans and then offers a wiser alternative, it is clear that Tarshis wants this trend to end.

**Answers to Activity Sheets**

**“PLEASE DON’T PET THE SHARK” QUIZ**

*Higher Level (HL)*

1. B (central idea; R.2)
2. C (text evidence; R.1)
3. C (supporting details; R.4)
4. A (vocabulary; R.4)
5. B, D (text structure; R.4)
6. D (key ideas; R.2)
7. In her article “Please Don’t Pet the Shark,” author Lauren Tarshis expresses concern about wildlife selfies. While she admires Ocean Ramsey’s passion for sharks, Tarshis’s apprehension is evident from the start: Her title “Please Don’t Pet the Shark” appears next to Ramsey’s viral Instagram photo—a great white shark selfie—as if she is asking Ramsey to back away from the wild animal. Then, Tarshis’s subtitle reads, “This woman gets close to sharks to help protect them. But is it a good idea?” These word choices make clear that Tarshis would rather Ramsey not interact with a wild animal in this way and that she wants readers to think about the possible consequences of her doing so. Later in her article, Tarshis asks another question of readers, but this time, she answers it. She writes, “But is it ever a good idea to snuggle up to a great white shark? Certainly not” (21). Tarshis goes on to explain that “taking these selfies can be dangerous to humans—and cruel to wild animals that become stressed by human interactions” (21). These details make clear that Tarshis is concerned about wildlife selfies and wants people to end this trend—for their own safety and for the wellbeing of animals. (key ideas & details, supporting a claim, writing explanatory text; R.4, R.2 W.2)
“Please Don’t Pet the Shark” cont’d

“PLEASE DON’T PET THE SHARK” QUIZ
*Lower Level (LL)
1. B (central idea; R.2)
2. C (text evidence; R.1)
3. C (supporting details; R.4)
4. A (vocabulary; R.4)
5. B, D (text structure; R.4)
6. D (key ideas; R.2)
7. The claim that Lauren Tarshis is concerned about wildlife selfies is true, based on her article “Please Don’t Pet the Shark.” Though she expresses admiration for Ocean Ramsey’s passion for sharks, Tarshis’s apprehension is evident from the start: Her title “Please Don’t Pet the Shark” appears next to Ramsey’s viral Instagram photo—a great white shark selfie—as if she is asking Ramsey to back away from the wild animal. Then, Tarshis’s subtitle reads, “This woman gets close to sharks to help protect them. But is that a good idea?” These heading choices make clear that Tarshis would rather Ramsey not interact with a wild animal in this way and that she wants readers to think about the possible consequences of her doing so. Later, she asks another question of readers, but this time, she answers it. She writes, “But is it ever a good idea to snuggle up to a great white shark? Certainly not” (21). Tarshis goes on to explain that “taking these selfies can be dangerous to humans—and cruel to wild animals that become stressed by human interactions” (21). These details make clear that Tarshis is concerned about wildlife selfies and wants people to end this trend—for their own safety and for the wellbeing of animals. (key ideas & details, supporting a claim, writing explanatory text; R.4, R.2 W.2)

“PLEASE DON’T PET THE SHARK” VOCABULARY
1. D; Skyrocketing success is great success that happens very quickly, which is what Jeannie experiences with her bakery.
2. B; Fearsome means “causing fear,” which the fairies in this book are doing.
3. C; Animal species that are at risk of being on the endangered species list are classified as “threatened.”
4. B
5. A
6. A
7. B
8. fearsome
9. skyrockets
10. potential