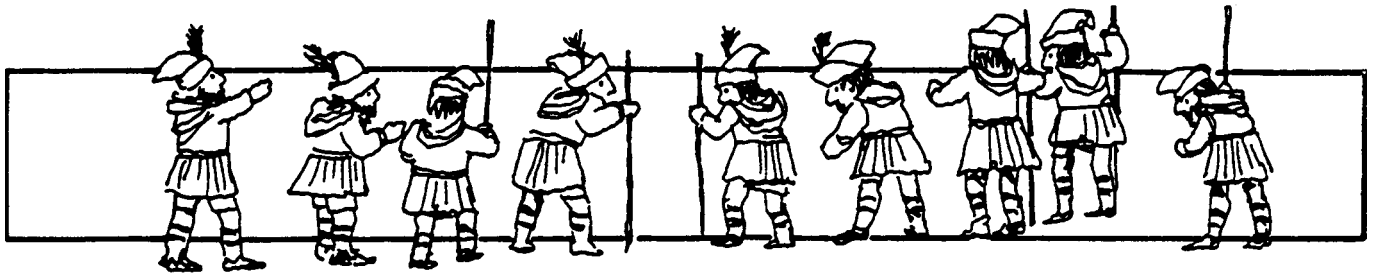


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Name _____

Praying or Preying?

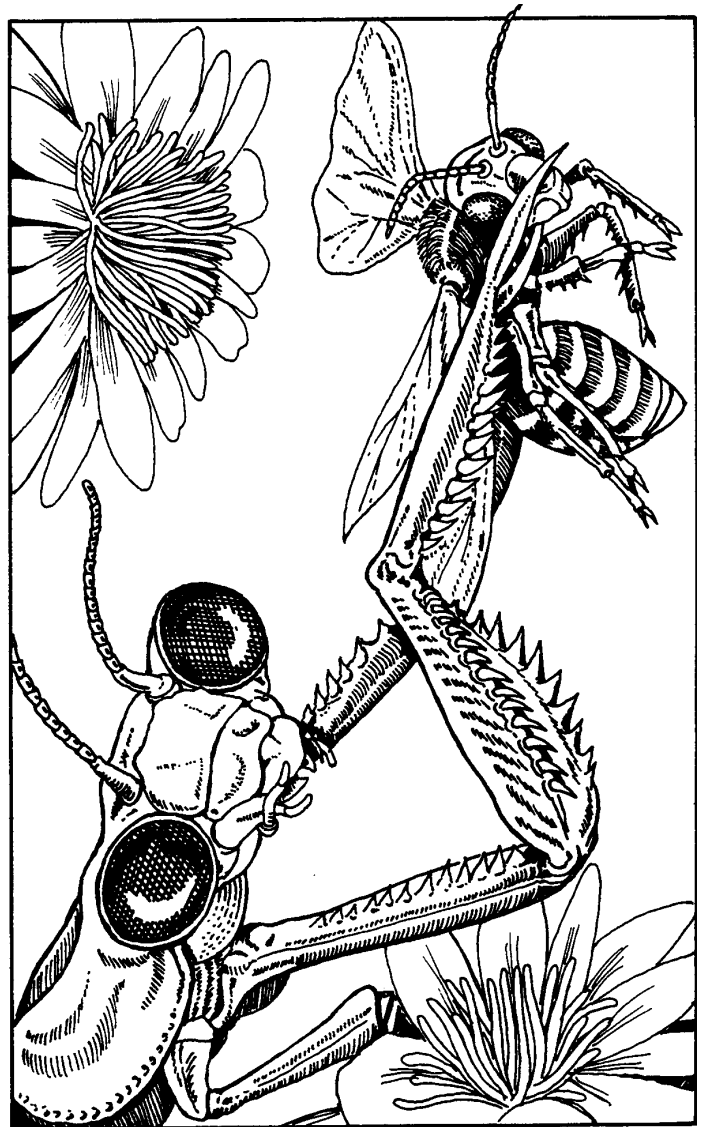
Have you ever had the pleasure of watching a praying mantis capture its prey? It raises its forelegs as if in an attitude of prayer, and waits patiently for an unsuspecting insect. When its prey comes within striking distance, the mantis thrusts its forelegs out and grabs its insect victim. The clever praying mantis is actually a preying master.

A praying mantis has six legs. It uses its middle legs for walking and its hind legs for jumping. With graceful balance, the mantis can move each leg from front to back and side to side. It is a very fast runner, but often prefers to trot gracefully on all six of its legs.

The praying mantis is an excellent climber. It pulls itself up most surfaces with hooks at the end of its forelegs. Between two tiny claws at the end of each leg there is a pad. In some mantises, this pad secretes a sticky mucous which allows them to climb smooth surfaces such as glass.

A mantis relies on its keen vision for capturing prey. Its triangular face supports two huge compound eyes. The mantis may tilt its head as if to get a better look at you, but its compound eyes allow it to see in almost all directions. In the centre of its two eyes, the mantis also has three other tiny eyes, called ocelli, which help the mantis distinguish dark and light.

In the early morning or late afternoon, you may find a praying mantis hanging upside down with its forelegs folded. It is not resting; the mantis is waiting. It is waiting for a fly, bee, butterfly, grasshopper, or caterpillar. The mantis eats only insects. It has no need even for

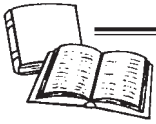


water since it gets plenty from the body of its prey.

When it captures its prey, the mantis bites off and discards the head, eating the insect live.

Mantises are cannibals. After mating, the female mantis will often eat her mate simply because he is the nearest insect.

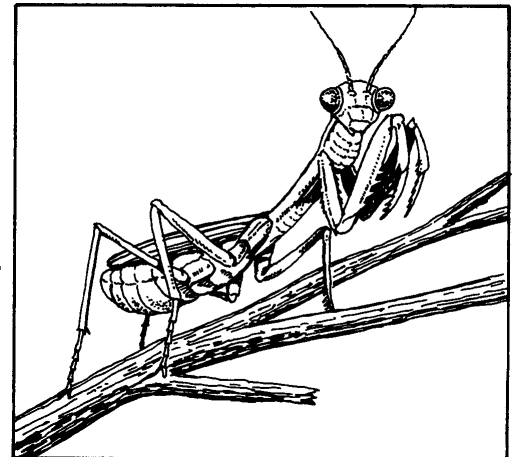
The praying mantis seems to have one mission in life: to capture and devour insects. Next time you see a mantis with its forelegs folded in prayer, stop and admire its unique preying skills.



Praying or Preying?

Read each statement. Write **T** for true or **F** for false.

- ___ 1. Praying mantises have four legs.
- ___ 2. Some have sticky pads that help them climb.
- ___ 3. Praying mantises are rarely hungry.
- ___ 4. Insects are part of mantises' varied diet.
- ___ 5. The male is sometimes eaten by its mate.
- ___ 6. The forelegs are designed for jumping.



Read clues A-I. Write the number of the matching homonym in the correct box. Each line across and down adds up to the magic number.

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1. pray | A. to be in readiness |
| 2. prey | B. letters delivered by the postal system |
| 3. taught | C. relative heaviness of an object |
| 4. taut | D. a group of words containing a verb and its subject |
| 5. piece | E. a man or boy |
| 6. peace | F. pulled tight |
| 7. wait | G. curved nails on an animal or bird |
| 8. weight | H. instructed |
| 9. claws | I. number equal to 3+1 |
| 10. clause | |
| 11. mail | |
| 12. male | |
| 13. fore | |
| 14. four | |

A	B	C
D	E	F
G	H	I

The magic number is _____.

Extension: Catch at least two praying mantises and put them in a large jar with grass, twigs, and other live insects. Be sure to allow for some air flow in the jar. Keep a daily journal to record what you see for five consecutive days. Include diagrams in your journal. Be sure to let the remaining insects go free at the end of your observation.



Name _____

Hooray for Hair

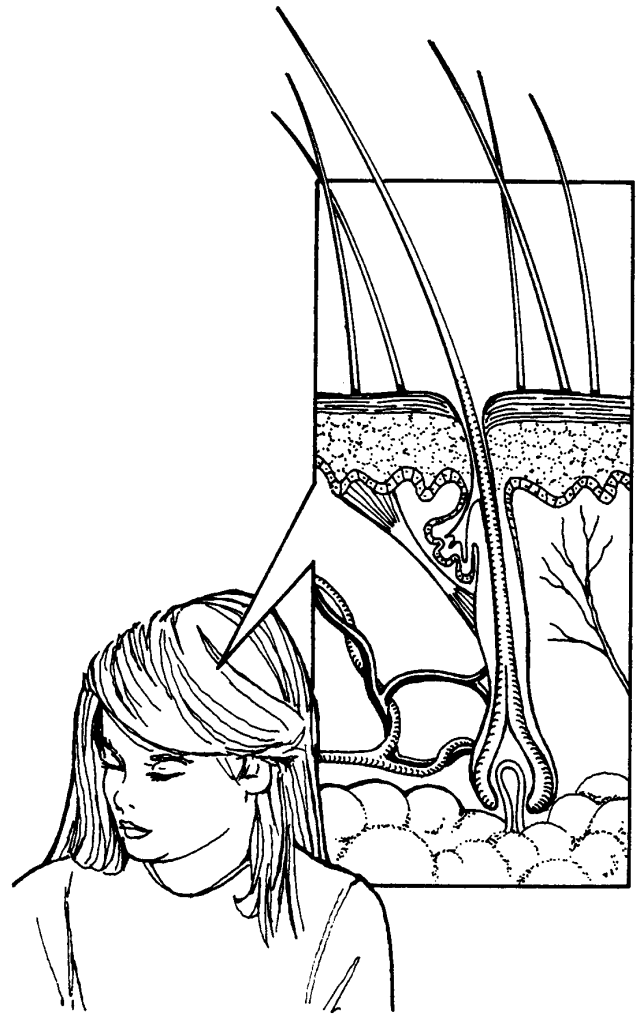
Have you ever considered the many characteristics of your hair? Of course hair may improve appearance, but it also has important functions.

Hair protects the body. It acts as a cushion protecting the head from bumps and bruises. Hair can be a shield from the hot summer sun and keep the head warm on chilly winter days. Inside the nose and ears, tiny little hairs deter dirt, dust and insects from entering the body. Eyebrows are patches of hair that trap perspiration before it is able to reach the eyes. Eyelashes prevent dirt and dust from infecting the eyes. The hair on legs and arms senses things, like insects, before they actually touch the less sensitive skin. Amazing work, wouldn't you say, given the fact that hair is really just a bunch of dead cells!

Each hair on the body grows from a root beneath the skin. This root forms in a tiny tube called a follicle. As new hair cells grow from the root, the old cells are pushed up, and since they are no longer being fed, they soon die. The dead cells harden, forming a stack on top of a root, referred to as a hair shaft. Only the follicle and the root remain alive, so it doesn't hurt to cut hair.

Many factors affect the rate of hair growth. Root cells grow better with a healthy diet. Hair grows more rapidly in warm weather. A young person's hair grows faster than an adult's hair. Contrary to popular belief, shaving or cutting does not speed hair growth.

Have you ever wished for a different type of hair? Maybe you would like straighter hair, or perhaps you wish your hair had more curl. The shape of the hair



shaft, as seen in a cross section under a microscope, determines the degree of curliness or straightness. Straight hairs are round in structure. The flatter the hair shaft, the curlier the hair will be. Also, the amount of melanin, a dark brown pigment, determines hair colour. You cannot change your hair follicles or melanin, but hair straighteners, permanents, and dyes can alter the appearance of hair temporarily. Sooner or later, however, hair will return to its natural state.

Keep your hair healthy by keeping your body healthy. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and proteins. Get lots of exercise, as well as plenty of rest. No matter how you cut it, healthy hair is beautiful hair!



Hooray for Hair

Answer the following questions:

1. What sentence in the first paragraph tells you what the reading selection is about?

2. For what audience did the author write this selection?

3. Why does the author say that healthy hair is beautiful hair?

4. What is the author's purpose in writing this article?

Use vocabulary from the story to complete the puzzle.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Beautiful hair is... | 9. Temporary curling agent |
| 2. The tiny tube where the root forms | 10. Invasion of a body part by a disease-causing micro-organism |
| 3. A substance that determines hair colour | 11. Hairs that help keep perspiration from entering the eyes |
| 4. The smallest unit that makes up a hair | |
| 5. To keep from harm | |
| 6. A hair on the eyelid | |
| 7. It temporarily changes hair colour | |
| 8. Stack of dead hair cells | |

_____	H	_____
_____	E	_____
_____	A	_____
_____	L	_____
_____	T	_____
_____	H	_____
_____	Y	_____
_____	H	_____
_____	A	_____
_____	I	_____
_____	R	_____



Extension: Take a survey of 15-25 people asking if they would prefer curly, straight or wavy hair. Summarise your findings on a graph.