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Reading

► Read the selection and answer each question.

Living with Lizards

¹ My name is Cecil. I used to live with skinks. I didn't want to, but there they were.

New Roommates

² I had moved from my home in Zimbabwe to Botswana to work as a teacher for a year. When I saw my house there, I was surprised at how big and empty it was. I was used to a smaller, busier home, so I wondered how I would live alone in such a big house. But I was not alone. One night, I was awakened by squeaking sounds. They came from inside the sofa, under the bed, and near the roof. At first I didn't try to find out what was making the noises. But I wondered . . .

³ Were they snakes?

⁴ *Squeak!*

⁵ Were they rats?

⁶ *Squeak!*

⁷ Were they scary creatures from my grandmother's stories?

⁸ *Squeak!*

⁹ I wrapped my blankets around me and tried to sleep.

¹⁰ *Squeak! Squeak! Squeak!*

¹¹ I switched on the lights and lifted one side of the bed. There they were—three striped skinks. In a blink, they disappeared into cracks in the floor and walls.

¹² These harmless lizards were no strangers to me. They can be found all over the world. In Zimbabwe, they live in the forests. They stay away from people, but sometimes they come near homes to search for scraps of bread and tiny insects. But here in Botswana, these skinks were roaming my house!

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¹³ The next day, I told the other teachers about my roommates. They all laughed. One teacher said the lizards would leave soon. “Those skinks have been living in that house for some time,” he said. “You just have to be patient.”

Chasing Skinks

¹⁴ I was not patient. I decided to get rid of the skinks. I didn’t want to hurt them, so whenever I spotted one, I used a small stick to try to chase it out. Instead of leaving, they hid under the bed or in the cracks in the walls or in the space between the roof and walls.

¹⁵ One day, I spotted a big one under the kitchen table. When I tried to catch it, I slipped, twisted my ankle, and broke two teacups. In my pain and sadness, I had no one to turn to but the lizards.

¹⁶ I gave up and decided to live with the skinks. Soon they saw that they were free to roam. They ran around the house, making all sorts of noises. Sometimes they ran right between my feet.

More Than Pets

¹⁷ One day, my friend Morgan was sitting on my sofa when a skink crawled onto his lap. Morgan jumped up. “What kind of pets do you keep here, Cecil?” he cried out.

¹⁸ To me, the skinks were more than pets. I had realized they were harmless and even useful. Brown ants snuck into my house, giving me painful bites as I slept. One day, I saw three young skinks in a corner, gobbling up ants. Thanks to the skinks, my bedroom was soon ant-free. Skinks like mosquitoes, too. In many countries, including Zimbabwe and Botswana, mosquitoes can carry a serious illness. I enjoyed watching the skinks munch on these dangerous insects.

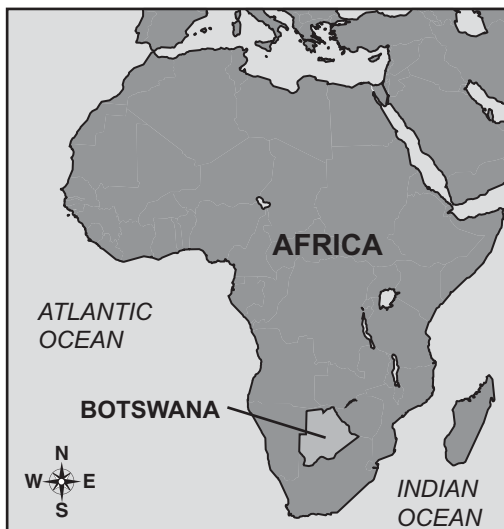
Sun-Loving Lizards

¹⁹ One morning, I heard a soft sound near the doorway. A large skink was stuck under the door, trying to squeeze its way outside. I let it go. I soon realized where it was going. Like most lizards, skinks need sunshine in the morning to warm up their bodies. The skinks became my alarm clock. Each morning, when I heard them squeezing under the door, I knew it was time to get up.

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²⁰ Since I had changed my thinking about skinks, I was not so lonely. I often sat and watched them. Sometimes they seemed to play and sometimes they seemed to fight, chasing one another around the house.

²¹ At the end of the school year, I went back to Zimbabwe. I was glad to go, because I missed my family. But now I would miss my scaly roommates. I hoped that the next person who lived there would also learn to be patient and to let skinks be skinks.



1 Who is telling the story?

- Ⓐ Cecil
- Ⓑ Morgan
- Ⓒ a student
- Ⓓ a narrator

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- 2 Read the sentence from paragraph 2.

They came from inside the sofa, under the bed, and near the roof.

Read the analogy.

Roof is to top as floor is to _____.

Which best completes the analogy?

- Ⓐ low
 - Ⓑ soft
 - Ⓒ inside
 - Ⓓ bottom
- 3 Which sentence about the structure of “New Roommates” and “Chasing Skinks” is true?
- Ⓐ “New Roommates” tells a central idea about the author, and “Chasing Skinks” gives supporting details.
 - Ⓑ “New Roommates” explains the author’s problem, and “Chasing Skinks” tells how he tries to solve it.
 - Ⓒ “New Roommates” explains what causes the author to move, and “Chasing Skinks” tells effects of moving.
 - Ⓓ “New Roommates” tells facts about the author’s home, and “Chasing Skinks” gives his opinions about living there.

- 4 Read the sentence from paragraph 18.

In many countries, including Zimbabwe and Botswana, mosquitoes can carry a serious illness.

Think about the suffix *-ness*. What is the meaning of illness above?

- Ⓐ something that is very heavy
- Ⓑ something that helps insects fly
- Ⓒ something that makes people sick
- Ⓓ something that is found in many places

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- 5 The story explains problems that the author has. Draw a line to match each problem with its solution.

There are ants that give the author painful bites.

The author needs to know when to get up each day.

The author feels lonely sometimes.

Skinks keep the author company.

Skinks eat harmful insects.

Skinks make noise when they crawl under the door in the morning.

- 6 What does the map show?

- Ⓐ what a skink's home looks like
- Ⓑ what the author's home looks like
- Ⓒ where in the world the author lives
- Ⓓ where in the world the most skinks live

- 7 How do the author's feelings about skinks change from the beginning of the story to the end? Use details from the story to support your answer.

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Writing

► Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Bella wrote about an activity at school. Read Bella's paper and look for any changes she should make. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.

Reading Stations

(1) Yesterday, Ms. Young let our class go to different reading stations. (2) At my first station I had to read a book quiet to myself and then answer three questions about what I read. (3) I liked the book I picked. (4) It was about Spain.

(5) I went to the word-making station soon. (6) At that station there were lots of letter tiles, and we got to work in groups to make as many words as we could with those tiles. (7) My group made 50 words!

(8) I had time for one more station, and I picked writing. (9) I wrote _____ everything I could think of about my favorite cousin. (10) Before I knew it, station time was over, and it was time for lunch.

1 What change should be made in sentence 2?

- (A) Change *quiet* to **quietest**.
- (B) Change *quiet* to **quieter**.
- (C) Change *quiet* to **quietly**.
- (D) No change is needed.

2 Read sentence 5 of the paper.

I went to the word-making station soon.

What is the best way to write the underlined part of the sentence?

- (A) next
- (B) often
- (C) before
- (D) tomorrow

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3 Which word would be best to put in the blank space in sentence 9?

- Ⓐ in
- Ⓑ down
- Ⓒ here
- Ⓓ over