



Name: _____

The Mighty Peaks of the Teton Range

Grand Teton National Park is a spectacular place located in the state of Wyoming. When you first see the mountains there, you might notice something very strange. Most mountain ranges have smaller hills, called foothills, that lead up to the big peaks. But the Tetons are different! These mountains rise straight up from the flat valley floor like giant, jagged teeth reaching for the clouds. This makes the mountains look even taller and more powerful than they already are.

The story of how these mountains got their shape is all about geology. Millions of years ago, the earth's crust moved and cracked, pushing the mountains up while the valley floor sank down. Later, during the Ice Age, huge glaciers—which are like giant, slow-moving rivers of ice—slid down the mountain slopes. These glaciers were so heavy and strong that they acted like giant sandpaper. They scraped out deep holes in the ground and carved wide, U-shaped valleys between the peaks.

When the climate warmed up and the ice finally melted, the deep holes left behind by the glaciers filled with crystal-clear water. This is how beautiful places like Jenny Lake were created. On a calm day, the water in these lakes is so still that it acts like a giant mirror. You can see the snowy mountain peaks perfectly reflected on the



Mountains reflected in Jenny Lake

surface of the water. It is a favorite spot for photographers and hikers who want to see the "double mountains" in the reflection.

Grand Teton is also a very busy neighborhood for wildlife. Because there is a lot of water and lush green grass, many animals make their homes here. You might see a massive moose wading through a marshy pond to munch on delicious underwater plants. If you look toward the open fields, you might spot a herd of bison roaming through the sagebrush. High above the winding Snake River, you might even see a bald eagle soaring in circles, looking for a fish to catch for its dinner. The Snake River is a long, blue river that twists through the park like a giant ribbon, providing water for all these creatures.

People have loved this land for thousands of years. Long before it became a National Park, the Shoshone people lived in the valleys during the summer months to hunt and gather food. Later, fur trappers came to the area because there were so many beavers in the rivers. Today, millions of people visit from all over the world to go camping and explore the trails. Whether you are looking at the tiny wildflowers or the giant granite peaks, Grand Teton reminds us how important it is to take care of our wild and beautiful spaces.

1. According to the passage, what caused the U-shaped valleys to form in the Teton Range?

- A. Heavy glaciers scraped and carved the mountain slopes.
- B. The Earth's crust cracked and pushed the mountains up.
- C. Small hills called foothills grew into tall, jagged peaks.
- D. The Snake River flooded and washed away the valley floor.

2. Read the sentence from the passage. "The Snake River is a long, blue river that twists through the park like a giant ribbon..." What does the phrase "like a giant ribbon" help the reader understand about the river?

- A. The river is very narrow and straight.
- B. The river is used to tie the mountains together.
- C. The river is very thin and easy to break.
- D. The river has many curves and turns.

3. Which two details from the passage explain why many animals make their homes in Grand Teton?

- A. The mountains look like giant, jagged teeth.
- B. There is a large amount of water available.
- C. The park is a very busy neighborhood.
- D. There is plenty of lush green grass to eat.
- E. Millions of people visit the park every year.

4. What is the central message of the last paragraph?

- A. The Shoshone people only visited the park during the winter.
- B. Fur trappers moved to Wyoming to study the granite peaks.
- C. People have a responsibility to protect beautiful, wild places.
- D. It is important to remember that beavers live in the rivers.

5. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A, What can the reader conclude about the Teton Mountains compared to most other mountain ranges?

- A. They are much shorter because they have no foothills.
- B. They are easier to climb because the valley floor is flat.
- C. They look more impressive because they rise up suddenly.
- D. They are younger because they were carved by glaciers.

Part B, Which sentence from the passage best supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "Most mountain ranges have smaller hills, called foothills, that lead up to the big peaks."
- B. "This makes the mountains look even taller and more powerful than they already are."
- C. "Later, during the Ice Age, huge glaciers... slid down the mountain slopes."
- D. "Whether you are looking at the tiny wildflowers or the giant granite peaks..."

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