

Section: What Is Biodiversity?

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Humans benefit from biodiversity every time they eat. Most of the crops produced around the world originated from a few areas of high biodiversity. Most new crop varieties are *hybrids*, crops developed by combining genetic material from other populations. History has shown that depending on too few plants for food is risky. For example, famines have resulted when an important crop was wiped out by disease. But some crops have been saved from diseases by being crossbred with wild plant relatives. In the future, new crop varieties may come from species not yet discovered.

IDENTIFYING MAIN IDEAS

One reading skill is the ability to identify the main idea of a passage. The main idea is the main focus or key idea. Frequently, a main idea is accompanied by supporting information that offers detailed facts about main ideas.

In the space provided, write the letter of the term or phrase that best completes each statement.

- _____ 1. Depending on a few plants for food is
- healthy for humans.
 - risky for humans.
 - good for crops.
 - beneficial for some species.
- _____ 2. Relying on one important crop can cause
- famine if the crop is wiped out.
 - hybrids if the crop mixes with another population.
 - disease if the crop came from wild plants.
 - a new crop variety if a new species is introduced.
- _____ 3. Some types of crops can be saved from disease if
- they can be genetically isolated.
 - they are sprayed with enough pesticide.
 - areas of high biodiversity are destroyed.
 - they are crossbred with their wild plant relatives.

Read the question and write the answer in the space provided.

4. What is the main idea of this passage?
- _____
- _____

Active Reading *continued*

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

5. What key term is in this passage?

6. What is a hybrid crop?

RECOGNIZING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

One reading skill is the ability to recognize similarities and differences between two phrases, ideas, or things. This is sometimes known as comparing and contrasting.

Read the question and write the answer in the space provided.

7. How is a hybrid different from its originating crops?

RECOGNIZING CAUSE AND EFFECT

One reading skill is the ability to recognize cause and effect.

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

8. The crops we enjoy today originated from

9. A hybrid crop is developed by

10. Explain one reason why a famine might occur.

11. How can crossbreeding help save a type of crop plant?
