

Wednesday May 13th.

English

- Word Study
- Read for 15mins.

UNIT 27 **A Patchwork Hoax**

In 1799, the British **naturalist** George Shaw received a weird **specimen** from Australia. When he saw that it had a mole's fur, a beaver's tail, an otter's feet, a duck's bill and spurs on its rear legs, he came to the conclusion that it was an **elaborate hoax**!

George Shaw was so sure it was a hoax that he actually set about looking for the stitching and glue! He simply could not believe that it was a real animal.

"It was impossible not to **entertain** some distant **doubts** as to the genuine nature of the animal," Shaw later wrote.

Having a patchwork of the features of birds, reptiles and mammals has made the duck-billed platypus one of world's oddest creatures.

The platypus is a native of Australia and it is classified as a mammal because it produces milk and has a coat of fur. The platypus is a **monotreme**, meaning a mammal that lays eggs. The only other living monotreme is the **echidna**. The mother platypus lays one to three small, leathery eggs, similar to those of reptiles. Once it hatches, the baby platypus will feed on drops of milk that come out of its mother's abdominal skin. In his poem 'The Platypus', Ogden Nash says,

Echidna

"I like the way it raises its family
Partly birdly, partly mammaly."

Although it might seem like an accident of nature, the platypus is **endowed** with some pretty unusual gifts. Its bill is equipped with a **sophisticated electro sensory** system, which it uses to **forage** for food underwater. The sensors pick up weak electric fields emitted by underwater prey. It is a great lover of shellfish and its favourites include shrimp and crayfish, as well as other **delicacies** like water-dwelling worms and larvae. It carries its catch in special cheek pouches.



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until it reaches the surface of the water, where it can enjoy its meal in peace. It must consume an astounding 20 percent of its body weight in food every day, so it spends up to 12 hours trying to find the next course! (Humans consume slightly less than 2 percent of their body weight each day.)

The platypus is a **semi-aquatic** animal living in a relatively small region along Australia's east coast, Tasmania and Papua New Guinea. It inhabits streams and rivers in the cool climates of Tasmania and the Australian Alps and it also lives comfortably in the hot rainforests along the coast of Queensland. It propels itself through the water by a unique rowing movement of its two front feet. It uses its tail like a rudder to steer and change direction!

Night-time and twilight are the times when this creature is most active, so it can be described as a **nocturnal** animal. However, some individuals will also amble around during the day, especially if the sky is overcast. The platypus makes its home on river banks, where it burrows in for a place to rest and nest.

The male platypus has a pair of spurs on his hind legs, which will deliver powerful venom to his opponent in a struggle. The chemicals in the venom are almost identical to some snake venoms and though it is not strong enough to kill a human, it would cause severe pain.


Natural **predators** of the platypus include water rats, snakes, hawks, owls and eagles, although its biggest enemy in Australia is probably the crocodile. It was hunted for its fur up until the 20th century, but it is now protected throughout its range (all of the areas where it is found). The platypus is **vulnerable** to the effects of water pollution. Land-clearing and irrigation schemes in certain parts of Australia have reduced the water quality and caused the platypus to move away entirely. Thankfully though, it is not under any immediate threat of **extinction**.

This bizarre little animal has a world-wide fan-base because it appeals to the curiosity and imagination of everyone who sees it. It was used as one of the mascots for the 2000 Olympics in Sydney and it has featured as a logo for countless companies, products and other events. You will also find it on the reverse of the Australian 20 cent coin.

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A **Fact Finding**

1. Why is the platypus described as an odd creature?
2. How many species of living monotremes are there in the world?
3. What features of the platypus help it to forage for food?
4. Describe the habitat of a platypus.
5. What factors threaten the survival of the platypus?



- Read the comprehension piece about Australian animals and answer the questions.

Irish

I. Gramadach: Focail cheisteacha.

Cé?**Cad?****Cathain?****Cén?****Cén fáth?**

Beidh Aoife ag dul go dtí an phictiúrlann Dé Sathairn. Beidh sí ag dul chun an scannán scanrúil nua *Oíche Dhorcha a Dó* a fheiceáil.

Ceist

- Cé** a bheidh ag dul?
- Cathain** a bheidh sí ag dul?
- Cén fáth** a mbeidh sí ag dul?
- Cad** is ainm don scannán?
- Cén** sórt scannáin é?

Freagra

- Beidh **Aoife** ag dul.
- Beidh sí ag dul **Dé Sathairn**.
- Beidh sí ag dul **chun scannán a fheiceáil**.
- Oíche Dhorcha a Dó** is ainm don scannán.
- Is **scannán scanrúil** é.

 Tháinig an scannán *Scoil Rac is Roll* amach i 2017. Is ceoldráma é. Is í Jessie an laoch. Is é seo an scannán is fearr liom mar tá sé lán d'amhráin iontacha.

- _____ é an scannán is fearr léi?
- _____ sórt scannáin é?
- _____ a tháinig sé amach?
- _____ hé an laoch?
- _____ arb é sin an scannán is fearr léi?

- Is é *Scoil Rac is Roll* an scannán is léi.
- Is _____ é.
- Tháinig sé amach i _____.
- Is í _____.
- _____.

- Have a look at the examples and complete the questions and answers in your copy.

Maths

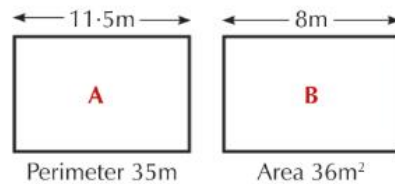
A Explain it! What is the difference between 'area' and 'perimeter'?

B Do it!

- Calculate the area and perimeter of each of these rectangles.
(a) L 14m, W 9m (b) L 23m, W 11m (c) L 57m, W 42m
(d) L 7·8m, W 6m (e) L 5·9m, W 1·5m (f) L 1·6m, W 0·13m
- Calculate the lengths of each of these rectangles. You are given the perimeter and the width.
(a) P 30m, W 6m (b) P 36m, W 8m (c) P 19m, W 4m
(d) P 81m, W 17m (e) P 100m, W 12·6m (f) P 85·6m, W 10·9m

C solve it!

- Calculate the area of rectangle A.
- Calculate the perimeter of rectangle B.
- A square has an area of 81m^2 . What is its perimeter?
- A square has a perimeter of 44m. What is its area?
- The length of a rectangle is double its width. If the perimeter of the rectangle is 42m, can you figure out its area?



- Try your best at these problems and activities. If you get stuck do not worry just do your best.

- Remember:** any pictures of completed work that you email me I will correct and email back to you with feedback included.