

Linguistics in the Natural World

Linguistics · Answer Key · 12 Questions

1. Which bird species is famously known for its ability to mimic human speech and complex environmental sounds?

A) Lyrebird

- B) Peregrine Falcon
- C) Great Grey Owl
- D) Emperor Penguin

2. Honeybees communicate the location of nectar sources to other members of the hive using what specific method?

A) Pheromone trails

B) The waggle dance

- C) Auditory clicks
- D) Light pulses

3. What is the primary function of the 'alarm calls' observed in Vervet monkeys?

- A) Attracting mates
- B) Defining territory

C) Distinguishing between types of predators

- D) Establishing social rank

4. The study of the song patterns of humpback whales has revealed they utilize which linguistic-like feature?

A) Dialects

- B) Syntax
- C) Hieroglyphics
- D) Braille

5. Which primate species has demonstrated the ability to learn and use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate basic needs?

A) Ring-tailed Lemur

B) Western Lowland Gorilla

- C) Hamadryas Baboon
- D) Capuchin Monkey

6. In linguistics, what term describes the ability of certain animals to learn and replicate vocal sounds from their environment?

- A) Vocal learning**
- B) Echo-location
- C) Genetic coding
- D) Auditory processing

7. Prairie dogs have been documented using distinct 'words' or calls to describe what specific environmental factor?

- A) The time of day
- B) The type and color of predators**
- C) The quality of soil
- D) The moisture level of vegetation

8. Bottlenose dolphins are known to use 'signature whistles' which function similarly to which human linguistic concept?

- A) Verb tense
- B) Proper names**
- C) Passive voice
- D) Rhyming

9. What is the main difference between human language and most animal communication systems regarding 'displacement'?

- A) Animals can describe the future
- B) Humans can describe events remote in time and space**
- C) Animals can negate statements
- D) Humans cannot communicate emotions

10. Research into zebra finch vocalizations indicates that young birds learn their songs through a process analogous to what in humans?

- A) Language acquisition**
- B) Mathematical deduction
- C) Biological instinct only
- D) Visual literacy

11. What specialized sensory organ do bats use to navigate, which acts as a form of non-vocal environmental communication?

- A) Lateral line
- B) Echolocation**
- C) Infrared vision
- D) Pheromone receptors

12. In the study of animal communication, what does 'duetting' refer to in avian species?

A) Aggressive territorial fighting

B) Synchronized singing between a pair

C) A bird singing to its own reflection

D) Migration signaling