

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Dark Side of Fireworks

**Directions: Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**



1. Fireworks are widely used to celebrate holidays, including New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day. These are the holidays you probably think of when you hear the word "fireworks," but fireworks are used more often than you may think. They are also commonly used at sporting events, concerts, and festivals and at places like theme parks.
2. Although fireworks may dazzle *some* people, they have devastating effects on animals, the environment, and even other people. It's easy to overlook those effects when we're having fun, but we have a responsibility to take care of the planet and the fellow animals we share it with.
3. Dogs, cats, and other animals who live with humans can become terrified by fireworks' loud blasts and booms. Some animals injure themselves while trying to flee, and some have even died as a result of panic or injury. It's not uncommon for dogs to jump over or dig under fences. Some even break through windows and screen doors. The animals who escape their homes can end up lost or be hit by cars. After fireworks displays, many animal shelters see a rise in the number of cats and dogs brought in.
4. Animals who live in nature already have enough reasons to be on high alert, and the added stress of deafening noise and bright lights is too much for some of them. They may flee their homes out of fear and leave behind their babies, who could starve to death or be attacked by predators. The noise from fireworks can sometimes frighten birds and other animals off their migratory paths, and they can become lost. Some of them collide with trees, telephone poles, or buildings in a panic.
5. Bright lights and loud noises aren't the only things fireworks produce. They also produce lots of pollution that harms the Earth and animals, including humans. When fireworks explode, they create smoke. The smoke contains heavy metals and chemicals that pollute the air, soil, and water and can irritate the eyes, nose, and lungs of anyone who breathes it in. Fireworks also leave behind plastic shells that fall to the ground and can cause injury or death to animals who may accidentally swallow them.

6. Not all people enjoy fireworks. Military veterans, people with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), and people with developmental conditions like autism can become terrified or experience higher levels of stress and anxiety due to fireworks. People who suffer from seizure disorders, asthma, or other health issues can be harmed as well.
7. You can help animals, the planet, and other people by making sure your family and friends never buy or use fireworks. Fortunately, laser shows and drone shows are becoming more popular and can be streamed online if you can't find one near you. They're safe for everyone and just as mesmerizing as fireworks. If fireworks displays are planned near you, here are some ways you can help animals, the environment, and people:
- *Never* take animals to fireworks displays! If you know in advance that there will be fireworks in your area, stay home with your animals and try to help them feel safe.
  - Keep cats and dogs indoors. Never leave animals tethered, chained, or roaming freely outside.
  - Close the windows and curtains or blinds and play some soothing background music or turn on the TV.
  - Make sure all your animal companions are wearing collars with current identification tags and are microchipped.
  - Create flyers that educate people about the harms of fireworks and post them around your neighborhood or leave them at stores and businesses.
  - Talk to your friends and family about why they should stop using fireworks and supporting fireworks displays.



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## Comprehension Questions: The Dark Side of Fireworks

### Drawing a Conclusion and Making Inferences

**1. Paragraphs 1 and 2 explain to the reader that fireworks ...**

- a. cause animals to become frightened and run away.
- b. can be dangerous and require adult supervision.
- c. are a fun way to celebrate holidays.
- d. may be popular during holidays but can be harmful to animals, including humans.

**2. Which of the following best supports the conclusion that fireworks are harmful to animals and the environment?**

- a. Fireworks are loud and bright.
- b. Fireworks cause fear and create pollution.
- c. Fireworks are used more often than you may think.
- d. Laser shows and drone shows are better alternatives.

**3. Read this sentence from paragraph 2: “Although fireworks may dazzle some people, they have devastating effects on animals, the environment, and even other people.” How does the author support the information in that sentence?**

- a. By explaining that fireworks are a common and popular way to celebrate holidays
- b. By explaining how people use fireworks in irresponsible ways
- c. By describing how the noise and pollution caused by fireworks are harmful
- d. By showing that fireworks are nice to look at but are too loud

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## Comprehension Questions: The Dark Side of Fireworks

### Main Idea

#### 1. What is the main idea of paragraph 3?

- a. Animals are frightened by fireworks, and some of them become injured.
- b. People shouldn't attend fireworks displays.
- c. Fireworks pollute the environment.
- d. Laser shows and drone shows are replacing fireworks displays.

#### 2. What question is answered in paragraph 7?

- a. Why do people attend fireworks shows?
- b. How are animals harmed by fireworks?
- c. Which holidays are commonly celebrated with fireworks?
- d. How can we help animals?

#### 3. Which paragraph explains what happens to the environment when fireworks explode?

- a. 7
- b. 3
- c. 2
- d. 5

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## Comprehension Questions: The Dark Side of Fireworks

### Author's Purpose

**1. The author wrote this article to ...**

- a. encourage people to attend fireworks displays.
- b. inform the reader about the harmful effects of fireworks.
- c. recommend the best holidays to celebrate by using fireworks.
- d. explain the history of fireworks.

**2. What other reason might the author have had for writing this article?**

- a. To persuade people to stop buying and using fireworks
- b. To describe how fireworks explode in the air
- c. To encourage the reader to see a fireworks show
- d. To explain why it's important to use fireworks safely

**3. The article would be most useful for students who want to ...**

- a. report people who are using fireworks illegally.
- b. persuade people not to buy or use fireworks.
- c. write a report about which holidays are celebrated with fireworks.
- d. learn more about the history of fireworks.

# **Answer Key: The Dark Side of Fireworks**

## **Comprehension Questions: Drawing a Conclusion and Making Inferences**

1. d
2. b
3. c

## **Comprehension Questions: Main Idea**

1. a
2. d
3. d

## **Comprehension Questions: Author's Purpose**

1. b
2. a
3. b