

Read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions that follow, using the information in the extract.

A hard winter affects the chipmunks very little; they are snug and warm in their burrows in the ground and under the rocks, with a bountiful store of nuts or grain. I have heard of nearly a half-bushel of chestnuts being taken from a single den. They usually hole up in November, and do not come out again till March or April, unless
5 the winter is very open and mild. Grey squirrels, when they have been partly domesticated in parks and groves near dwellings, are said to hide their nuts here and there upon the ground, and in winter to dig them up from beneath the snow, always hitting the spot accurately.

The red squirrel lays up no stores like the provident chipmunk, but scours about for
10 food in all weathers, feeding upon the seeds in the cones of the hemlock that still cling to the tree, upon sumac-bobs, and the seeds of frozen apples. I have seen the ground under a wild apple-tree that stood near the woods completely covered with the “chonkings” of the frozen apples, the work of the squirrels in getting at the seeds; not an apple had been left, and apparently not a seed had been lost. But the
15 squirrels in this particular locality evidently got pretty hard up before spring, for they developed a new source of food-supply. A young bushy-topped sugar-maple, about forty feet high, standing beside a stone fence near the woods, was attacked, and more than half denuded of its bark. The object of the squirrels seemed to be to get at the soft, white, mucilaginous substance (cambium layer) between the bark
20 and the wood. The ground was covered with fragments of the bark, and the white, naked stems and branches had been scraped by fine teeth. When the sap starts in the early spring, the squirrels add this to their scanty supplies. They perforate the bark of the branches of the maples with their chisel-like teeth and suck the sweet liquid as it slowly oozes out. It is not much as food, but evidently it helps.

I have said the red squirrel does not lay by a store of food for winter use, like the
25 chipmunk and the wood-mice; yet in the fall he sometimes hoards in a tentative, temporary kind of way. I have seen his savings—butternuts and black walnuts—stuck here and there in saplings and trees near his nest; sometimes carefully inserted in the upright fork of a limb or twig. One day, late in November, I counted
30 a dozen or more black walnuts put away in this manner in a little grove of locusts, chestnuts, and maples by the roadside, and could but smile at the wise forethought of the rascally squirrel. His supplies were probably safer that way than if more elaborately hidden. They were well distributed; his eggs were not all in one basket, and he could go away from home without any fear that his storehouse would be
35 broken into in his absence. The next week, when I passed that way, the nuts were all gone but two. I saw the squirrel that doubtless laid claim to them, on each occasion.

There is one thing the red squirrel knows unerringly that I do not (there are probably several other things); that is, on which side of the butternut the food lies.
40 He always gnaws through the shell so as to strike the kernel broadside, and thus

easily extract it; while to my eyes there is no external mark or indication, in the form or appearance of the nut, as there is in the hickory-nut, by which I can tell whether the edge or the side of the food is toward me. But examine any number of nuts that the squirrels have rifled, and, as a rule, you will find they always drill
45 through the shell at the one spot where the food will be most exposed. Occasionally one makes a mistake, but not often. It stands them in hand to know, and they do know. Doubtless, if butternuts were a main source of my food, and I were compelled to gnaw into them, I should learn, too, on which side my bread was buttered.

Extract taken from Squirrels and Other Fur-Bearers by John Burroughs.

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1. What is meant by describing a winter as 'hard'? (line 1)
 - A. A 'hard winter' is one with above average temperatures.
 - B. A 'hard winter' is a winter with unpredictable weather.
 - C. A 'hard winter' is a winter when the ground is very hard.
 - D. A 'hard winter' is one that is difficult to explain.
 - E. A 'hard winter' is a winter that is very cold.

2. What do chipmunks, according to the author, usually do in November?
 - A. They start burying nuts and grains.
 - B. They start building underground tunnels.
 - C. They go underground and stay there for months.
 - D. They dig a big hole together.
 - E. They start eating chestnuts.

3. Which of the following statements is true?
 - A. All squirrels are domesticated.
 - B. Chipmunks have a store of food for the winter.
 - C. Grey squirrels have some trouble in finding the food they have buried.
 - D. Red squirrels behave in exactly the same way as grey squirrels.
 - E. Squirrels bury all their nuts under the snow.

4. What are “chonkings”? (line 13)

- A. They are the parts of the apples that the red squirrels have rejected.
- B. They are the apples that are growing on the wild apple-trees.
- C. They are the seeds of the apples.
- D. They are the bruises on the apples that have fallen from the tree.
- E. They are the apples that have fallen off the tree.

5. ‘for they developed a new source of food-supply’ (lines 15-16)

Why did the red squirrels need to develop a new source of food-supply?

- A. They just wanted something different to eat.
- B. They wanted the challenge of finding something new to eat.
- C. Their normal food sources were not providing enough food for them.
- D. A sudden rise in the number of squirrels meant more food was needed.
- E. The food they normally ate had something wrong it.

6. ‘half denuded of its bark’ (line 18)

Which of the following words is closest in meaning to ‘denuded’?

- A. Left.
- B. Covered.
- C. Eaten.
- D. Burnt.
- E. Stripped.

7. ‘soft, white, mucilaginous substance (cambium layer)’ (line 19)

What are the brackets used for?

- A. To indicate that the words inside the brackets are important.

- B. To tell us that the words in the brackets are scientific words.
- C. To make us really notice the words in the brackets.
- D. To give additional information.
- E. The brackets act as an alternative to full stops.

8. 'chisel-like teeth' (line 23)

Which language technique is being used here?

- A. A simile.
- B. Alliteration.
- C. A metaphor.
- D. Personification.
- E. Onomatopoeia.

9. What does 'the sweet liquid' refer to? (line 23)

- A. It refers to the bark of maple trees.
- B. It refers to the sap of maple trees.
- C. It refers to the branches of the maple tree.
- D. It refers to the bare stems of the maple tree.
- E. It refers to maple trees.

10. When does the red squirrel sometimes hoard food?

- A. In the winter.
- B. In the summer.
- C. In the spring.
- D. In the autumn.
- E. The red squirrel never hoards food.

11. 'his eggs were not all in one basket' (line 33)

What does this refer to?

- A. It refers to the fact that squirrels do not eat eggs.
- B. It refers to the fact that the red squirrel doesn't bury his food.
- C. It refers to the fact that the red squirrel doesn't hoard his food in one place.
- D. It refers to the fact that squirrels do not lay eggs.
- E. It refers to the fact that squirrels do not use baskets to put their food in.

12. Why was the red squirrel 'without any fear that his storehouse would be broken into'? (line 34)

- A. He guarded his storehouse too well for it to be broken into.
- B. He did not have a storehouse to break into.
- C. Other animals were too scared to break into his storehouse.
- D. No animal could climb high enough to reach his storehouse.
- E. The red squirrel is fearless.

13. Which of the following best sums up how the author feels about red squirrels?

- A. He feels that they are destructive, aggressive animals.
- B. He feels that they are greedy and selfish.
- C. He feels that they are interesting, clever animals.
- D. He feels that they are rather strange and tiresome animals.
- E. He feels that they are more intelligent than any other animal.

14. What effect does the use of the words 'chisel' and 'drill' have? (lines 23 and 43)

- A. The words make us realise how strong squirrels are.
- B. The words make us think of a squirrel's teeth as tools.
- C. The words make us realise how blunt a squirrel's teeth are.
- D. The words make us unsympathetic towards squirrels.

E. We realise that squirrels are vicious animals.

15. According to the author, what do red squirrels know that he doesn't?

A. Where the food is positioned inside the shell of a butternut.

B. Where the nut is positioned inside the shell of the hickory-nut.

C. How to eat butternuts.

D. How to tell the difference between a hickory-nut and a butternut.

E. How to identify a butternut.

Answers

1. **E** Hard means tough and a tough winter will be one that is very cold.
2. **C** ‘They usually hole up in November, and do not come out again till March or April’. We know this refers to underground as ‘burrows in the ground’ have already been mentioned.
3. **B** We are told that chipmunks have ‘a bountiful store of nuts or grain’ and so winter does not affect them.
4. **A** Red squirrels want the seeds of the apples, so the “chonkings” on the ground must be the rest of the apple that has been rejected.
5. **C** We are told that they got ‘hard up’, meaning that they did not have enough of the food they normally ate. There is no mention of there being a rise in the number of squirrels.
6. **E** This is the only answer that makes sense. We know they did not eat the bark as we are told that the ‘ground was covered with fragments of the bark’.
7. **D** Brackets are used to give additional information that can be removed and the sentence will still make sense.
8. **A** A simile is the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind. In this case, a squirrel’s teeth are being compared to a chisel.
9. **B** We are told that the squirrels add sap to ‘their scanty supplies’. This means that the ‘sweet liquid’ that is ‘not much as food’ must be the sap.
10. **D** They sometimes hoard food ‘in the fall’. Fall is another word for autumn.
11. **C** We have been told that his food is spread out – ‘stuck here and there’. It is a saying that means you do not put all your resources in one place.
12. **B** As already mentioned, there is no one place that the red squirrel has stored his food.
13. **C** He is obviously interested in them as he has written about them. He refers to their ‘wise forethought’.
14. **B** A chisel and drill are both tools.
15. **A** ‘on which side of the butternut the food lies’