

Name _____

Read the selection. Then answer the questions that follow.

Bird Songs

You probably hear birds singing every day, but did you ever wonder how and why they sing? 14

Birds sing by using something called a syrinx. It is a tube with two sides, deep inside the bird's chest, which allows the bird to sing two notes at the same time, or to breathe through one side and sing with the other. Birds can make trilling sounds and chuckling sounds, as well as many, many more. 17
33
51
66
74

As you probably know, some birds can even talk. Parrots can talk because they have thick tongues, as humans do, to shape the sounds they make with the syrinx. Smaller birds, like budgies, use their syrinx in special ways to make human sounds. 88
103
117

Not all birds sing, but all birds make particular sounds to communicate with other birds. We call these sounds bird calls. Birds call to announce danger and may have several calls to describe different kinds of danger. They call to mark the borders of the area where they live. To guard their surroundings, birds call to tell other birds to stay away. 130
145
160
176
179

Male birds use their calls hoping that female birds will like them so they can begin families. The male bird's call is also intended to scare away other male birds that are looking for a female. Young birds make distress calls, which bring adult birds to their aid. Young birds also make feeding calls, which say they're very hungry and need food right now! 194
209
223
238
244

Now when you hear a bird singing or calling, you will know that it is sending an important message. 261
263

Turn the page.

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Answer the questions below.

1 Before a bird makes a danger call, it *most likely*

- has produced a human sound.
- has gotten food for its young.
- has been scared by something.
- has warned its family already.

2 After reading this selection, what can you conclude about bird calls?

- Birds call only when they cannot sing.
- Bird calls are more beautiful than bird songs.
- Calls are the way birds talk to each other.
- Calls are made mostly to tell other birds what to do.

3 What can you conclude about the bird sounds?

- Bird calls are more varied than bird songs.
- All birds can sing.
- All birds sing, but only some birds call.
- All birds call, but only some birds sing.

4 What can you conclude about birds that make feeding calls?

- They are warning other birds to stay away.
- They are very young birds.
- They have found food for their babies.
- They are flying around looking for food.

5 What kind of danger do you think a bird call might tell about?

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