



## RSD Common Assessment

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

Score \_\_\_\_\_/32

### *War Dogs*

**Courageous canines use their noses to help soldiers**

By [Jennifer Marino Walters](#)

1. One night last May, a team of United States soldiers carried out a daring raid in Pakistan. They found and killed the world's most wanted terrorist, Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden had planned the September 11, 2001, attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people.
2. The team included 30 to 40 highly trained soldiers, all outfitted with the latest technology. But one of the team's most important assets was a four-legged soldier—a dog named Cairo. Cairo's main job was to find anyone who tried to escape.
3. The U.S. military uses about 2,700 dogs like Cairo. These dogs use their powerful sense of smell to sniff out bombs, weapons, drugs, and enemies. By finding hidden dangers, they help keep soldiers safe.

### **The Nose Knows**

4. When a dog sniffs the air, odor molecules enter its nostrils. These tiny, airborne particles travel to a membrane that contains scent-detecting cells. Dogs have about 220 million scent cells. That's 40 times more than humans have. That's why a dog gets much more information from a whiff of air than we do.
5. Dogs' noses are so powerful that they perform even better than machines. "Dogs find stuff that our sniffing technology can't find," says U.S. Marine Gunnery Sergeant Greg Massey. Massey is in charge of the Military Working Dog Program at the U.S. Marine Corps headquarters in Virginia.

## A Working Dog's Life

6. Military dogs go through months of tough training. They learn things like obedience, defense, and how to sniff out certain scents. Then each dog is paired with a military handler, with whom it forms a special bond. Finally, the hard work begins.
7. On the battlefield, dogs often walk far in front of their units to sniff for bombs. They'll also enter buildings first to see what's inside. Dogs will even parachute out of airplanes with their handlers! Dogs usually go to war several times, until they are about 9 years old. Then they retire and are adopted by families—a fitting reward for years of putting their lives on the line.
8. "These dogs do great things," says Massey. "They are heroes."

This article originally appeared in the October 2011 edition of *SuperScience* magazine.

Photo for Question #7



1. Each of these words could be used to describe Cairo. Choose the word you think best describes Cairo. (+10)

**Courageous**

**Hardworking**

**Intelligent**

Provide two details from the selection to support your choice (include paragraph reference, quotation marks, word for word copying, underline text).

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- 2a. Which sentence gives the main/central idea in the selection **War Dogs**? (+1)

- A. Cairo is a hero.
- B. Military dogs go through months of tough training.
- C. Dogs have 220 million scent cells.
- D. Canines are being used by the military for many purposes.

- 2b. Write a summary of the selection **WarDogs**. Cite three main points from the text (include paragraph reference, quotation marks, word for word copying, underline text). (+13)

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5. Do you think that dogs should be used in the military? Support your opinion with two details from the selection (include paragraph reference, quotation marks, word for word copying, underline text). (+10)

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6. What is most likely the author's purpose for writing **War Dogs**? (+1)

- A. To inform about the use of dogs in war by the military
- B. To entertain people with a story about Cairo
- C. To persuade readers to join the military
- D. To encourage people adopt retired military dogs

7. What inference can be made based on the photo at the end of the article about the relationship between the military dog and the soldier? Support your inference with two details from the selection (include paragraph reference, quotation marks, word for word copying, underline text). (+10)

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