



Imagine a critter that's as cute as a bunny, with round mouse-like ears: that's our friend the American pika! This adorable creature is small, typically around the size of a guinea pig, and has a thick, grey-brown coat to keep it warm. Its tiny feet are perfect for scampering around its rocky home, and its big eyes are always on the lookout for possible danger. But don't be fooled by its size, the American pika is one tough little creature!

Speaking of being tough, let's delve into the habitat of this hardy creature. American pikas are found in the mountainous regions of western North America, where they live in rocky slopes known as talus. They prefer cool climates and are most commonly found at high altitudes, where temperatures are low and there's plenty of fresh air. The rocky terrain also provides them with lots of hiding spots from predators.

Now, you might be wondering what these cute critters munch on in these rocky homes. Well, American pikas are herbivores, which means they eat plants. Their diet consists mainly of grasses, leaves, and flowers, which they gather and store in 'haypiles' for the winter months when food is scarce. They're like tiny, furry farmers, aren't they?



From being little farmers to playing a part in our ecosystem, American pikas sure do a lot! They're considered a 'sentinel species', which means they help scientists understand changes in our environment. Their sensitive nature to temperature changes makes them important to their ecosystem, as their presence, or absence, can indicate the health of their environment. So next time you think of the American pika, remember - they may be small, but they play a big part in our world!





Solve each problem.

Use the article to answer the question.

- 1) What type of climate do American pikas prefer?
 - A. Hot and humid climates
 - B. Temperate climates
 - C. Cool climates
 - D. Arid and dry climates

- 2) Where does the American pika live?
 - A. Forests of Eastern North America
 - B. Mountainous regions of western North America
 - C. Jungles of South America
 - D. Deserts of Africa

- 3) What is the size of an American pika?
 - A. The size of a rabbit
 - B. The size of a bear
 - C. The size of a cat
 - D. The size of a guinea pig

- 4) What do American pikas eat?
 - A. American pikas eat rocks and soil.
 - B. American pikas are herbivores and eat plants.
 - C. American pikas are omnivores and eat both plants and animals.
 - D. American pikas are carnivores and eat other smaller animals.

- 5) What do American pikas do for the winter months?
 - A. Hibernate
 - B. Migrate to warmer places
 - C. Gather and store food in 'haypiles'
 - D. Grow a thicker coat

- 6) What kind of terrain do American pikas live in?
 - A. Forest floors
 - B. Sandy desert
 - C. Rocky slopes
 - D. Grassy hills

- 7) What do American pikas resemble in appearance?
 - A. A hamster with floppy dog-like ears
 - B. A rat with long rabbit-like ears
 - C. A bunny with round mouse-like ears
 - D. A squirrel with pointed cat-like ears

Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it it is not something the animal would say (N).

- 8) "I enjoy nice cool weather."
- 9) "I'm about the same size as a guinea pig."
- 10) "I might be small, but I'm tough as nails."
- 11) "I'm really an omnivore, I love to snack on small insects when I get a chance."
- 12) "My diet is mostly grasses, leaves, and flowers."
- 13) "My fur coat is too thin, I feel cold easily."
- 14) "You'll find me mostly in the mountains in western North America."
- 15) "My home is typically amongst tree branches, that's where I feel safest."
- 16) "I thrive in hot and humid climates, there is no better place for me."
- 17) "I don't gather food for the winter, I just find it as I need it."

**Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.**

- 18) American pikas have a hoard of food called a 'haypile' to survive through the winter when food is scarce.
- 19) American pikas have the best "scream" in the animal kingdom.
- 20) The primary food an American pika consumes is grasses, leaves, and flowers.
- 21) The fact that American pikas live mainly on grass is really interesting.
- 22) American pikas typically live at high altitudes in the mountainous regions of western North America.
- 23) The haypiles that American pikas gather for the winter months are impressive.
- 24) American pikas are known as 'sentinel species' as their presence or absence can indicate the health of their environment.
- 25) The climate an American pika prefers is cool with low temperatures and fresh air.
- 26) It is amazing how high up in the mountains American pika can live.
- 27) American pikas are the cutest animals to be found in the mountains.

Determine if the statement is true or false.

- 28) American pikas can be found in the mountainous regions of western North America.
- 29) American pikas are only found in places with high temperatures.
- 30) American pikas are most commonly found at high altitudes.
- 31) American pikas are found in the mountainous regions of eastern Africa.
- 32) American pikas prefer cool climates.
- 33) The diet of American pikas consist mainly of insects.
- 34) American pikas have a black and white coat.
- 35) American pikas are carnivores and eat only meat.
- 36) American pikas are herbivores.
- 37) American pikas store their food.

Determine if the sentence is a declarative(d), exclamatory(e), interrogative(i) or imperative(m).

- 38) American pikas are active during the day and spend most of their time gathering food.
- 39) How do American pikas communicate?
- 40) American pikas are herbivores and mainly eat grass, leaves, and small plants.
- 41) American pikas are small mammals that live in the mountains of North America.
- 42) Do American pikas hibernate?
- 43) Where do American pikas live?



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| 20. <u> fact </u> | |
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| 22. <u> fact </u> | |
| 23. <u> opinion </u> | |
| 24. <u> fact </u> | |
| 25. <u> fact </u> | |



12) "My diet is mostly grasses, leaves, and flowers." (paragraph 3)