

Name _____ Date _____

Meet the Koala

Imagine you are visiting a friend in Australia. You go for a hike in the forest. Suddenly, your friend shouts, "Look up!" There's a furry, gray animal in a leafy tree. "What is it?" No, it's not a squirrel. It's not an opossum, either. Can you guess what it is? It's a koala.

The koala looks like a teddy bear, but it's not a bear at all. The koala is a marsupial. A marsupial is a mammal with a pouch. A kangaroo is a marsupial, too. A female marsupial has a pouch on her underside. This is where her babies live after they are born.

A newborn koala is the size of a lime bean. The baby can't protect itself and must crawl into its mother's pouch. Inside the pouch, the baby gets milk. Gradually, it grows larger. After eight months, the baby is ready to come out. It can start eating a koala's favorite food - leaves from the eucalyptus or gum tree.

At one time, these trees covered large parts of Australia. Koalas filled the forests. Then, people cut down the trees. It looked as if koalas might disappear.

Now, koalas are protected. They live in parks and in the wild. If you ever go to Australia, remember to look up. You might see a koala.

1. Another good name for this story is
 - a. "The Bear from Australia"
 - b. "Fascinating Facts about the Koala"
2. A koala lives in its mother's pouch
 - a. before it is born
 - b. after it is born
3. Koala babies stay in their mother's pouch because
 - a. they need food
 - b. they don't have any legs
4. If people cut down all the eucalyptus trees,
 - a. koalas would disappear
 - b. koalas would live in caves
5. You know people want to save koalas because
 - a. they raise lots of lima beans
 - b. they have laws to protect them