

## ACTIVITY: 2013 NY State Common Core Test Questions (Elementary School)

### 2013 NY State Common Core Math Test Question – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. A group of 6 people at an elementary school gave a total of \$1,890 to a town to fix up a playground. Each person gave the same amount. At a middle school, 5 people each gave \$280 to the same town. How much more did each person at the elementary school give than each person at the middle school?  
**Show your work.**

*What does this question require students to know and be able to do? How does this connect to the skills students need to prepare for college and career success?*

### Sample Student Response

A group of 6 people at an elementary school gave a total of \$1,890 to a town to fix up a playground. Each person gave the same amount.

At a middle school, 5 people each gave \$280 to the same town.

How much more did each person at the elementary school give than each person at the middle school?

**Show your work.**

$$\begin{array}{r} \overline{6} \\ 5,890 \\ -1,800 \\ \hline 90 \\ -84 \\ \hline 6 \\ -6 \\ \hline 0 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \$315 \\ -\$280 \\ \hline 35 \end{array}$$

**Answer \$**

35

### Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response answers the question correctly and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the mathematical concepts. This response uses mathematically correct procedures to determine out how much more each person at the elementary school gave (\$35).

Students answer the following questions after reading **Copycat Elephants** (on p.4 of this note-taking guide)

1. Which detail about Mlaika helps explain the strange sounds she was making?
  - a. She was an African elephant.
  - b. She lived in Kenya.
  - c. She lived near a highway.
  - d. She was ten years old.

2. Read the sentence from the article.

**It turned out that Mlaika was copying the sounds of the trucks driving by.** (paragraph 3)

How does paragraph 7 support this sentence?

- a. It gives a new example of Mlaika copying sounds.
- b. It shows how Mlaika enjoyed studying the trucks.
- c. It gives a possible reason for Mlaika copying sounds.
- d. It shows how Mlaika learned to make the truck sounds.

*What do these questions require students to know and be able to do? How does this connect to the skills students need to prepare for college and career success?*

# Copycat Elephants

*by Michael Thai*

## What do elephants and parrots have in common?

- 1 You may have seen a talking parrot on a TV show, in a movie, or even in someone's home. The parrot has learned to copy sounds that people make. Birds are not the only animals that can copy the noises they hear. Dolphins, bats, and some apes also mimic sounds. Now we can add elephants to this list of copycats.
- 2 Dr. Joyce H. Poole is a zoologist. She studies the sounds of elephants. While she was in Kenya, she would hear strange noises made by Mlaika after sunset. Mlaika was a 10-year-old African elephant.
- 3 Mlaika lived near a highway. Dr. Poole says, "I could not tell the difference between Mlaika's call and the distant truck noise." She and other scientists studied Mlaika's sounds. It turned out that Mlaika was copying the sounds of the trucks driving by.

## Chirping Elephants

- 4 "Mlaika was not the only copycat elephant," Dr. Poole says. Calimero is a 23-year-old male African elephant. He spent 18 years with two female Asian elephants. Asian elephants make chirping sounds to talk with one another. African elephants usually do not make chirping sounds. But Calimero now does. He is copying his Asian elephant friends.
- 5 Only a few other mammals, such as bats, dolphins, and humans, have learned to copy noises around them. Many of them seem to copy the sounds of friends to create a special bond.
- 6 Dr. Poole says that elephants, too, need to form bonds with their family and friends. She says, "They make sounds to communicate with each other. When they are separated, they use sound to keep in contact."

### What is a mammal?

A mammal is an animal that has hair on its body and makes milk to feed its young.

- 7 Why would Mlaika copy trucks that she heard going by on the highway? Animals that are able to mimic sounds may enjoy practicing new sounds. When they are kept outside of their natural environment, they may copy unusual sounds. That may be why an elephant would copy the sound of a truck.
- 8 Parrots, dolphins, humans, and elephants show that being a copycat is one way that animals and people make new friends and keep old ones.