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VOCABULARY PRACTICE
ADVANCED | C1

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each advanced term with its definition.

1 trophic cascade ____	**a** a chain of indirect effects across trophic levels caused by a change at one level
2 niche partitioning ____	**b** the process by which competing species divide limited resources to reduce direct competition
3 phenotypic plasticity ____	**c** an organism's capacity to change its physical traits in response to environmental conditions
4 convergent evolution ____	**d** the independent evolution of similar traits in unrelated species facing similar pressures
5 ecological niche ____	**e** the specific role and position a species occupies within its environment
6 co-evolution ____	**f** the reciprocal evolutionary influence two interacting species have on each other
7 biotic factor ____	**g** a living component of an ecosystem, such as a predator or competitor
8 anthropogenic pressure ____	**h** stress or disturbance to an ecosystem caused by human activity
9 rewilding ____	**i** the reintroduction of natural processes and species to restore a degraded ecosystem
10 metapopulation ____	**j** a group of spatially separated populations of the same species that interact at some level

2 Choose the most precise term for each context.

1 A chain of indirect ecosystem effects is a trophic cascade / an isolated incident.

2 Species dividing limited resources to avoid competition show niche partitioning / direct conflict.

3 The capacity to change traits with environment is phenotypic plasticity / fixed genetics.

4 Similar traits evolving independently in unrelated species is convergent evolution / shared ancestry.

5 The specific role a species occupies is its ecological niche / its entire habitat.

6 Reciprocal evolutionary influence between species is co-evolution / one-sided adaptation.

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7 Human-caused stress on an ecosystem is anthropogenic pressure / natural variation.

8 Restoring natural processes to a degraded ecosystem is rewilding / further development.

3 Match the verbs with the noun phrases to form academic collocations.

1 trigger ____	**a** a trophic cascade
2 occupy ____	**b** an ecological niche
3 exploit ____	**c** a limited resource
4 disrupt ____	**d** an established food web
5 restore ____	**e** a degraded habitat
6 partition ____	**f** available resources
7 exert ____	**g** anthropogenic pressure
8 sustain ____	**h** a viable population

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4 Complete the analysis with terms from the box.

anthropogenic pressure | co-evolution | convergent evolution | ecological niche | metapopulation | niche partitioning | phenotypic plasticity | rewilding | trophic cascade

Removing a top predator from an ecosystem can trigger a 1 _____, a chain of indirect effects rippling through multiple trophic levels. Species coexisting within the same habitat frequently rely on 2 _____, dividing available resources to minimise direct competition, allowing each to occupy a distinct 3 _____. Unrelated species facing similar environmental pressures sometimes independently develop remarkably similar adaptations, a phenomenon known as 4 _____. Some organisms display notable 5 _____, adjusting physical characteristics in response to changing conditions within a single generation, a flexibility increasingly valuable under mounting 6 _____ from habitat loss and climate change. Predator and prey species frequently undergo 7 _____, each evolutionary change in one prompting a corresponding adaptation in the other. Conservationists increasingly pursue 8 _____, reintroducing keystone species to restore degraded ecosystems, while monitoring the health of a 9 _____ across fragmented habitat patches remains essential to long-term species survival.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

Reintroduction and ecological memory

Rewilding projects, which reintroduce species to ecosystems from which they were previously eliminated, offer a valuable test of ecological theory, since outcomes are rarely fully predictable in advance. The reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park is frequently cited as a striking example of a trophic cascade: reduced elk browsing allowed vegetation to recover, which in turn altered river patterns through reduced erosion, demonstrating effects that extended well beyond the immediate predator-prey relationship. However, ecologists caution against over-generalising from this single, well-publicised case, noting that ecosystems retain a kind of ecological memory shaped by decades of absence, meaning reintroduction does not always restore original conditions straightforwardly or predictably.

1 What do rewilding projects offer, according to the text? _____

2 What example of a trophic cascade is frequently cited? _____

3 What happened to vegetation after reduced elk browsing? _____

4 What did this in turn alter? _____

5 What do ecologists caution against? _____

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6 What does ecological memory mean reintroduction does not always do? _____

6 Replace the words in bold with a precise term or collocation.

1 Removing the predator triggered a chain of effects across the food web. _____

2 The two species divided the available resources to avoid competing directly. _____

3 Unrelated species independently developed strikingly similar traits. _____

4 Conservationists reintroduced the species to restore the degraded habitat. _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 160-190 word critical commentary on how reintroducing a species can affect an ecosystem, distinguishing observation from broader ecological theory.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Include four academic collocations. [ ] Maintain a precise, balanced register.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Advanced terms

1 a 2 b 3 c 4 d 5 e 6 f 7 g 8 h 9 i 10 j

2 Precise terms

1 a trophic cascade 2 niche partitioning 3 phenotypic plasticity 4 convergent evolution 5 its ecological niche 6 co-evolution 7 anthropogenic pressure 8 rewilding

3 Academic collocations

1 a trigger a trophic cascade 2 b occupy an ecological niche 3 c exploit a limited resource 4 d disrupt an established food web 5 e restore a degraded habitat 6 f partition available resources 7 g exert anthropogenic pressure 8 h sustain a viable population

4 Analysis

1 trophic cascade 2 niche partitioning 3 ecological niche 4 convergent evolution
5 phenotypic plasticity 6 anthropogenic pressure 7 co-evolution 8 rewilding 9 metapopulation

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 A valuable test of ecological theory.
2 The reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park.
3 It was able to recover.
4 River patterns, through reduced erosion.
5 Over-generalising from this single, well-publicised case.
6 Restore original conditions straightforwardly or predictably.

6 Precise terms and collocations

1 a trophic cascade 2 niche partitioning 3 convergent evolution 4 rewilding

Over to you

Answers will vary. Look for conceptual precision, evidence-aware reasoning and balanced evaluation.