

Name: _____

The Rabbit and the Hare

by Guy Belleranti



Rabbit

Did you know that jackrabbits aren't rabbits? They're actually called hares.

What are hares? These critters are close relatives of rabbits, and they belong to the same animal family.

Since they are members of the same family, there are many ways rabbits and hares are alike. First, both are mammals that twitch their noses when using their excellent senses of smell. Secondly, both are nocturnal, meaning they are most active from dusk until dawn.

Their large eyes help them see in the dark. Third, rabbits and hares are alike in what they eat. They are plant-eaters, or herbivores. They like eating grass, herbs, twigs, and bark. They also love tasting things in people's gardens!

Now, let's look at some ways rabbits and hares are different.

One of the biggest differences between rabbits and hares is their babies. Rabbit babies (called kits or kittens) have no fur and are born with their eyes closed. This means they're helpless and need lots of care from their mothers. Hare babies (called leverets) are furry and their eyes are open. Within just a few hours leverets are up and hopping around, exploring.

While both rabbits and hares have large ears, hare ears are usually larger. Hares also have longer hind legs. Rabbits can move quickly, but the longer-legged hares move even faster. Some jackrabbits can accomplish ten-foot leaps in bursts of forty miles an hour! Combined with their zigzag style of running, this helps them escape predators.



Hare

Except for the cottontail rabbit, rabbits spend most of the day in underground burrows. Hares spend the day above ground hidden in vegetation or in simple nests.

Finally, rabbits are much more social than hares, and often live in groups. Because of their more social natures, some types of rabbits have become common pets. Less social hares, however, dislike being held and do not make good pets.

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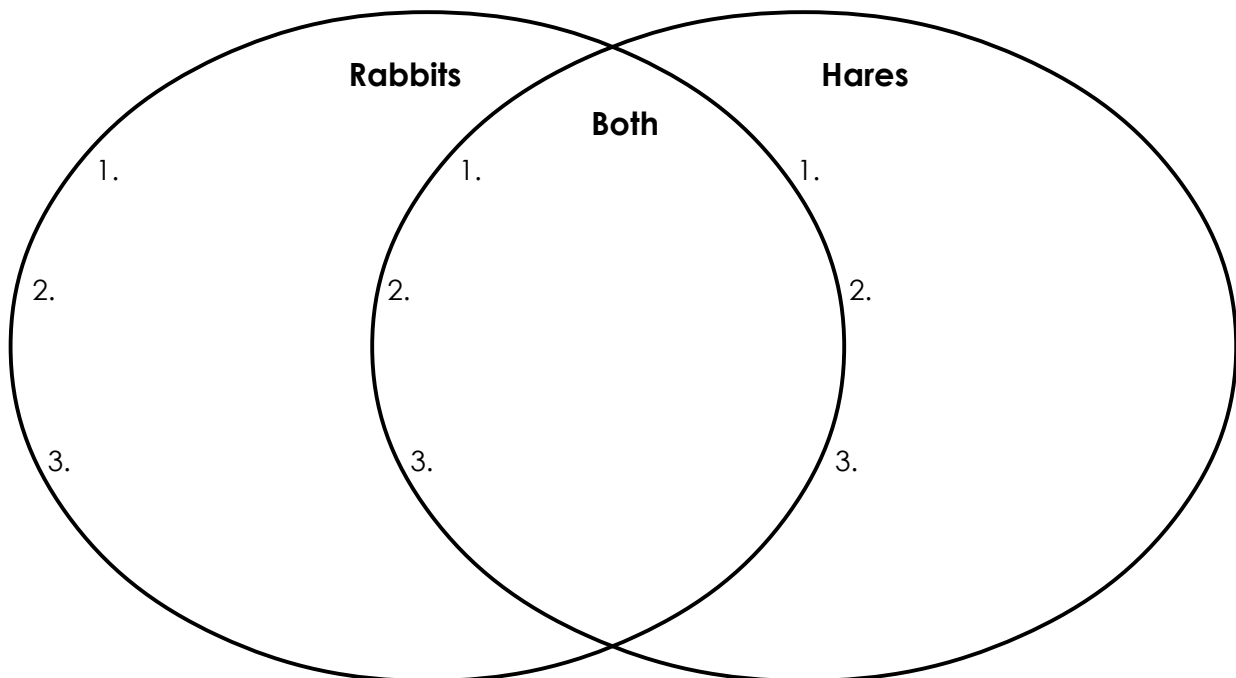


Answer the following questions based on what you read in the article.

1. What is a rabbit's young called? _____

What is a hare's young called? _____

2. Fill out the following chart to show three ways rabbits and hares are different and three ways they are the same.



3. Why do rabbits make better pets than hares?

4. What is unique about the way jackrabbits escape from predators?

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article.
Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. ____ i ____ ____ a g _____

hint: alternating turns to the left and the right

2. ____ e ____ b ____ ____ ____ r e s _____

hint: animals that only eat plants in their diet

3. ____ u ____ ____ o ____ s _____

hint: tunnels or holes where small animals live

4. ____ a ____ ____ a ____ s _____

hint: animals that give birth to live young, have fur or hair, and feed their babies milk

5. ____ r e ____ a t ____ ____ s _____

hint: animals that hunt down and eat other animals

6. ____ o ____ ____ u r ____ a l _____

hint: active at night

7. ____ u ____ ____ _____

hint: twilight; the time of evening after sunset and before nightfall

8. ____ e ____ e ____ a t ____ o ____ _____

hint: plant life

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In the article, “The Rabbit and the Hare,” you learned that rabbits make better pets than hares.

On the lines below, describe why rabbits make better pets than hares. Also, explain whether or not you would want a rabbit for a pet and why.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

ANSWER KEY

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Answer the following questions based on what you read in the article.

1. What is a rabbit's young called? kits or kittens

What is a hare's young called? leverets

2. Fill out the following chart to show three ways rabbits and hares are different and three ways they are the same.

Accept any of the following similarities: mammals; excellent sense of smell; nocturnal; herbivores

Accept any of the following differences: rabbit babies are born with no fur and eyes closed, while hare babies are born with fur and eyes open; rabbits have large ears, while hares have larger ears; rabbits run fast, while hares can run faster; rabbits live in burrows, while hares live above ground; rabbits are social, while hares are not social

3. Why do rabbits make better pets than hares?

Rabbits make better pets than hares because they are more social.

4. What is unique about the way jackrabbits escape from predators?

Jackrabbits can run up to forty miles per hour with ten-foot leaps. This, combined with running in a zigzag pattern, helps them escape from predators.

ANSWER KEY

The Rabbit and the Hare

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article.
Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. **z i g z a g** **hint:** alternating turns to the left and the right **zigzag**
2. **h e r b i v o r e s** **hint:** animals that only eat plants in their diet **herbivores**
3. **b u r r o w s** **hint:** tunnels or holes where small animals live **burrows**
4. **m a m m a l s** **hint:** animals that give birth to live young, have fur or hair, and feed their babies milk **mammals**
5. **p r e d a t o r s** **hint:** animals that hunt down and eat other animals **predators**
6. **n o c t u r n a l** **hint:** active at night **nocturnal**
7. **d u s k** **hint:** twilight; the time of evening after sunset and before nightfall **dusk**
8. **v e g e t a t i o n** **hint:** plant life **vegetation**