

Fire threatens thousands of acres

FIRE fighters are still attempting to gain control of the fire raging through 2,400 acres of dense forest in Westland.

By Susan Elliot

Soldiers yesterday joined forest rangers in making a fire break, cutting down trees ahead of the fire to stop it spreading further. But then the wind changed and the fire suddenly veered northwards, so the flames continue on their destructive path.

Although the fire is progressing at great speed, the vast area is uninhabited and no human life is threatened.



Fire fighter Joe Millar:

'This fire's like an untamed hungry beast.'

Fire fighter Joe Millar said yesterday: 'This fire's like an untamed hungry beast – the moment you think you've got it under control it surprises you with a sudden movement and it's escaped. That's what happened when the wind changed.'



Millar and his colleagues are standing by with high-tech equipment and foam-spraying helicopters to make their next attempt at taming the blaze.

But not everyone agrees with their action. Also on the scene is Carol Parker, an expert from The Forestry Ecological Survey. She says: 'We have argued for several years that it's a waste of resources to try to control a fire like this, where there's no threat to human life or property.'

Parker points to other parts of the world where 'let-burn' policies have been adopted as part of forest management. This means closely watching the fire but making no attempt to extinguish it. She explains: 'The forest will grow again after the fire – this should be seen as just one stage in a cycle of regeneration.'



Carol Parker:
**'It is far better to manage
the forest properly.'**

For Joe Millar, tracking the progress of the fire from a lookout post, these arguments are beside the point. 'At daybreak we'll tackle the fire from the air. You can't just stand and watch the forest being devoured and do nothing.'

2

Give **two** ways the fire fighters are trying to put the fire out.

1. _____

2. _____

2 marks

3

Which of the following facts can be found in the article?

Tick **two**.

The fire is dangerous to people living in the area.

☐

The fire is unpredictable because of the wind.

☐

Fire fighters have succeeded in getting the fire under control.

☐

Some people think that fires like this should be left to burn.

☐

Nothing can grow after the fire has destroyed the forest.

☐

2 marks

4

Why does Carol Parker think the fire should not be put out?

1 mark

5

Why has the reporter included quotations from Joe Millar and Carol Parker in this article?

1 mark

6

Joe Millar calls the fire an *untamed hungry beast*.

What does this phrase suggest about the fire?

Explain your answer fully.

2 marks

7

Circle the correct option to complete the sentence below.

(a) Many forest fires are caused by

smoke

animals

lightning

rain

1 mark

(b) A forest fire can help plants to grow by

giving them
shelter

clearing the
ground

making
leaves fall

giving them
shade

1 mark

- (c) As soon as the new plants start to grow,

large
animals

forest
rangers

small
creatures

fire
pines

begin to feed on them.

1 mark

- (d) Gradually, different plants grow and

large
animals

forest
rangers

big
bushes

fire
pines

move into the area so that in time there is

1 mark

- (e)

less
soil

more
space

less
grass

more
variety

than before.

1 mark

8

Look at the paragraph beginning *For Joe Miller...*

Find and **copy one** word that suggests that the fire consumed the forest quickly.

1 mark

The Spark of New Life

Introduction

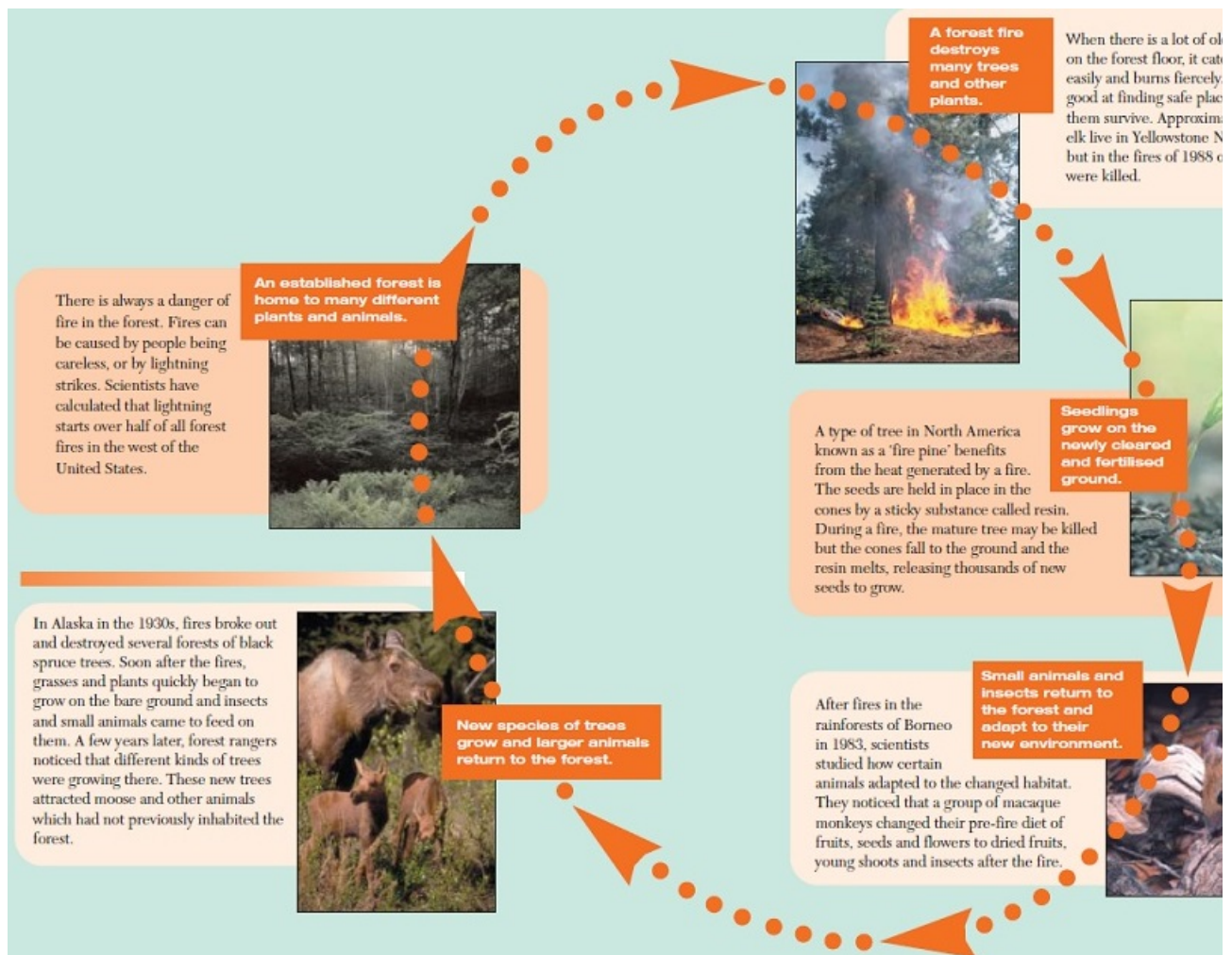
The texts show some different views of forest fires and their effects.

In England, forest fires are rare and can be destructive. In many other parts of the world, where they happen quite frequently, they can have a beneficial effect.

A forest fire can burn for days, or even weeks, through many square kilometres of land. Newspapers and television reports show dramatic pictures of whole forests ablaze.

But the news reports do not mention that these huge fires can have good effects as well as bad. Although they destroy much of the forest, they also help it to grow again more healthily.

Would you believe that the effects of a forest fire can be beneficial as well as destructive? The fire is part of a cycle that helps new life to grow.



10

Why does the **fire pine** need heat to release its seeds?

1 mark

11

How did the macaque monkeys of Borneo adapt after the fire?

1 mark

12

How were the forests of Alaska different:

(a) shortly after the fires?

1 mark

(b) a few years after the fires?

1 mark

13

Why is **The Spark of New Life** a good title?

1 mark