An Unlikely Duo: Symbiosis in Nature

Name: ANSWER KEY Date: _____

Vocabulary Words: Match the definition to each word.

1. The bird that often sits on the backs of water buffaloes is called an oxpecker.
2. The oxpecker helps the buffalo by eating insects and other pests from its fur.
3. The relationship where both animals benefit is called symbiosis or mutualism.
4. The oxpecker warns the buffalo about predators by squawking loudly.
5. In this relationship, the buffalo gets rid of insects, and the oxpecker gets food.

Word bank: food, oxpecker, predators, symbiosis, insects

Multiple Choice: Choose the correct answer from the choices for each question.

1. What does the oxpecker do for the buffalo?
   a) Eats insects from its back
   b) Makes a nest in its fur
   c) Fights off other animals
   d) Brings it water

2. What is the term for a relationship where both organisms benefit?
   a) Mutualism
   b) Competition
   c) Parasitism
   d) Predation

3. How does the buffalo help the oxpecker?
   a) By carrying it to new places
   b) By giving it water
   c) By providing food in the form of insects
   d) By building it a nest

4. What do the oxpeckers do when they see a predator?
   a) Hide in the grass
   b) Fly away silently
   c) Squawk loudly to warn the buffalo
   d) Ignore the predator

Discussion & Reflection: Answer the following questions in complete sentences

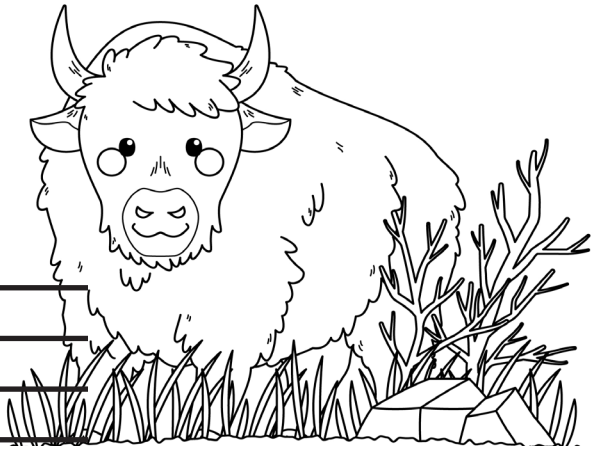
1. Why might it be helpful for a buffalo to have a bird with good eyesight on its back?

It is helpful because the bird can warn the buffalo of danger, giving it time to escape from predators.

2. Can you think of another example of mutualism in nature? Describe it.

An example is bees and flowers. Bees get nectar from flowers for food, and flowers get pollinated by the bees.

3. This shows me that God is (Circle the word):

Wise Powerful Caring Creative All of the above

Explain your choice: