The Bison of Yellowstone

Read the passage. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

The bison is the largest land animal in North America. A grown male, called a bull, can weigh up to 2,000 pounds. Many people call bison buffalo, but scientists say bison.

A bison has a big hump on its back, made of strong muscles. In winter, it swings its head from side to side like a snowplow to sweep the snow off the grass underneath. Thick skin, thick fur and layers of fat keep it warm.

Bison eat mostly grasses and sedges. They roll in the dirt to keep biting flies away. Baby bison, called calves, are born in late April and May. Two or three hours later, they can keep up with the herd.

Yellowstone National Park is the only place in the United States where bison have lived since prehistoric times. By 1902, poachers had left only about two dozen. The Army protected them and brought in more from private herds. Thousands live there today.

1. **What is a bison's hump made of?**

2. **When are bison calves born?**

3. **How does a bison reach grass in winter, when snow covers it?**

4. **Only about two dozen bison were left in 1902. Why do you think there are thousands today?**

Answer key

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1. What is a bison's hump made of?
   Strong muscles.

2. When are bison calves born?
   In late April and May.

3. How does a bison reach grass in winter, when snow covers it?
   It swings its head from side to side like a snowplow and sweeps the snow away.

4. Only about two dozen bison were left in 1902. Why do you think there are thousands today?
   Sample answer: because the Army protected them from poachers and brought in more bison, so the herds could grow again.