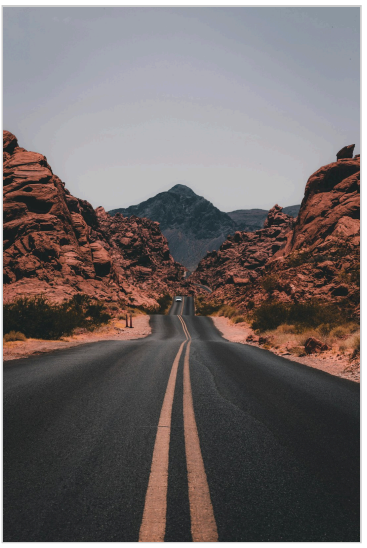
Fireflies in Taiwan



Reading Worksheet — Level F | tahricteaches.com

Every spring, many hills and river valleys in Taiwan become temporary night theaters for fireflies. These insects produce light through a **chemical** reaction in their bodies, a process known as bioluminescence. The flash is not decoration. It is a **signal** that helps males and females find the correct partner in the dark. Different species use different rhythms, so timing matters as much as brightness. For visitors, the result is beautiful. For the insects, the light is a precise language shaped by evolution.

Taiwan still supports a surprising range of firefly **species**, especially in moist forests, low mountain trails, and protected farm areas. Each **habitat** gives the insects what they need: shade, water, soft soil, and fewer artificial lights. Larvae live on the ground and need humid places where they can hunt small prey. Adults live for a much shorter time, so they must find a mate quickly. If that cycle breaks, local groups can disappear within a few seasons.

Modern development can easily disturb this fragile system. Bright streetlights interrupt the flashing **pattern** that fireflies use to **attract** partners. River pollution and careless construction can destroy breeding zones before people even notice what has been lost. Because many populations are small, they do not always **survive** sudden environmental change. A trail that looks healthy to people may already be too bright, too dry, or too busy for the insects that once lived there.

That is why many parks and communities now **protect** firefly areas during viewing season. Guides ask visitors to stay on paths, avoid flash photography, and keep noise low. These rules may seem simple, but they reduce stress on the insects and preserve the **environment** they depend on. Some schools also use firefly walks to teach students how light, water, and land use affect living things in connected ways.

Fireflies are not just a pretty spring event. They are living indicators of ecological balance, and their presence reminds us that small creatures often respond first when a landscape changes. If Taiwan wants these glowing nights to remain part of local life, conservation must stay practical and consistent. Clean streams, dark trails, and patient visitors give fireflies the space they need to return year after year.

A. Vocabulary

1. chemical ____	a. not common; unusual
2. signal ____	b. a message or sign that gives information
3. species ____	c. a type or group of living thing
4. habitat ____	d. relating to substances and reactions in science
5. pattern ____	e. a repeated design or order
6. attract ____	f. the natural home where a plant or animal lives
7. survive ____	g. to keep safe from harm
8. protect ____	h. the surroundings and conditions of a place
9. environment ____	i. to continue living
10. rare ____	j. to pull interest or bring closer

B. True or False

1. Fireflies make light through a chemical reaction. ____
2. All firefly species use the same flashing rhythm. ____
3. Moist forests and river valleys can be good firefly habitat. ____
4. Firefly larvae only live high in the trees. ____
5. Bright streetlights can disturb firefly mating signals. ____
6. Large populations always survive environmental change easily. ____
7. Some parks protect firefly areas during viewing season. ____

8. Visitors are encouraged to use flash photography near fireflies. ___

9. The article says fireflies can show whether an environment is healthy. ___

C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: chemical, signal, habitat, pattern, attract, survive, environment

1. Fireflies produce light through a _____ reaction in their bodies.

2. Each firefly species may use a different flashing _____.

3. A moist forest can provide a good _____ for fireflies.

4. Bright lights can interrupt the _____ fireflies use to find a mate.

5. Conservation helps fireflies _____ in Taiwan's changing landscapes.

D. Comprehension Questions

1. Why do fireflies produce light?

2. What conditions make a habitat good for fireflies?

3. How can artificial light harm firefly populations?

4. Why do parks give visitors special rules during firefly season?

5. What does the article mean when it calls fireflies indicators of ecological balance?

E. Discussion Questions

1. Should popular nature spots limit tourism during sensitive seasons? Why or why not?
2. Do small animals like fireflies deserve as much protection as larger, more famous species? Explain.
3. What changes could cities or towns make to help wildlife survive near human development?

Answer Key

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A. Vocabulary: 1-f, 2-g, 3-h, 4-i, 5-e, 6-j, 7-c, 8-b, 9-d, 10-a

B. True/False: 1-T, 2-F, 3-T, 4-F, 5-T, 6-F, 7-T, 8-F, 9-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-chemical, 2-pattern, 3-habitat, 4-signal, 5-survive

D. Comprehension:

1. They produce light to send signals and help males and females find the correct partner.
2. Good habitats have shade, water, soft soil, humidity, and limited artificial light.
3. Artificial light disrupts the flashing patterns fireflies use to attract mates.
4. The rules reduce stress, limit damage, and help preserve the environment fireflies need.
5. It means fireflies respond quickly to changes, so their presence suggests the local ecosystem is still in good balance.