

Name _____

Directions: Read the paragraph. Use context clues to determine the meaning of the underlined words. Then match each word with its correct meaning below.

Definition of a bird: A bird is a feathered animal. The covering of feathers is the only characteristic common to all birds and not possessed by any other creature. The other characteristics—the bill, the wings, egg-laying, etc. by which we usually distinguish birds from animals of other kinds are not exclusive bird characteristics. Turtles have beaks, and there is one species of mammal (the *ornithorhynchus*) which has a bill like that of a duck. Many insects and one species of mammal (the bat) fly. Insects, fishes, and reptiles lay eggs, and there are several rare species of mammals that lay eggs and incubate them. On the other hand, some birds are deficient in one or more of the typical bird characteristics. The ostrich cannot fly. The penguin can neither fly nor run, and cannot even walk well. The cuckoo lays its eggs in the nests of other birds, leaving to them the hatching and rearing of its young. These exceptional cases are very interesting because they show that animals now quite different in structure and habits had a common origin, but in no case is there such a combination of characteristics that any doubt arises whether the creature is a bird or a mammal. The characteristics which typically belong to birds attain their highest development in them, and in most cases this is due to peculiar adaptabilities of the feathers.

From *Our Domestic Birds* by John H. Robinson

_____	1.	characteristic	A	strange
_____	2.	distinguish	B	to tell apart from
_____	3.	exclusive	C	to raise (as in children)
_____	4.	incubate	D	not typical
_____	5.	deficient	E	typical of a person, place or thing
_____	6.	rearing	F	particular to only one thing/kind
_____	7.	exceptional	G	to sit on eggs to keep them warm
_____	8.	peculiar	H	lacking

ANSWERS

1. E
2. B
3. F
4. G
5. H
6. C
7. D
8. A