Now, That’s a Big Bird!

A teenager recently discovered the skull of a huge prehistoric bird in Argentina, a country in South America. Scientists say the 10-foot-tall bird had a sharp, hooked beak and thin legs. They think that the bird probably ate animals as large as sheep and ran fast.

The big bird belonged to a group of birds called "terror birds" that once lived on Earth. "It is an unbelievable creature. This is the largest known bird, with a skull bigger than a horse’s head," says Luis Chiappe, director of the Dinosaur Institute, a part of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, California.

1 prehistoric: relating to times before written history
“Now That’s A Big Bird” Questions

1. The main idea of this passage is
   a. there were many kinds of large prehistoric birds.
   b. the skull of a large prehistoric bird was recently discovered.
   c. terror birds had skulls larger than a horse’s head.
   d. prehistoric birds used to eat sheep.

2. Which of the following is not a detail from this passage?
   a. The skull was found in Argentina.
   b. These birds ran very fast.
   c. These birds were very large.
   d. These birds could fly for long distances.

3. The author includes a picture of the bird
   a. to show the color of the bird.
   b. to compare the size of the bird to a person.
   c. to show details about the bird’s skull.
   d. to show where the bird was found.

4. It is an opinion that
   a. “It is an unbelievable creature”.
   b. Luis Chiappe said, “It is an unbelievable creature”.
   c. The bird had a "skull bigger than a horse's head".
   d. All of the above.

5. This type of terror bird was around 10 feet tall. Is this the main idea of the text or a detail? How do you know?

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Name: ____________________________ Date: __________

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“Now That’s A Big Bird” Answer Sheet

MI 1. The main idea of this passage is
   a. there were many kinds of large prehistoric birds.
   b. the skull of a large prehistoric bird was recently discovered.
   c. terror birds had skulls larger than a horse's head.
   d. prehistoric birds used to eat sheep.

MI 2. Which of the following is not a detail from this passage?
   a. The skull was found in Argentina.
   b. These birds ran very fast.
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TF 3. The author includes a picture of the bird
   a. to show the color of the bird.
   b. to compare the size of the bird to a person.
   c. to show details about the bird's skull.
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F/O 4. It is an opinion that
   a. “It is an unbelievable creature”.
   b. Luis Chiappe said, “It is an unbelievable creature”.
   c. The bird had a “skull bigger than a horse's head”.
   d. All of the above.

MI 5. This type of terror bird was around 10 feet tall. Is this the main idea of the text or a detail? How do you know?

   Students should say it is a detail. They know it is a detail, because the entire passage is not about height of the bird. There is also a lot of other information about the bird given in the passage.

Suggested Additional Vocabulary: skull, terror