Rescue Dogs

In “Buried Alive,” you read about dogs trained to rescue avalanche victims. Here, learn more about the important work dogs can do. Then answer the questions.

Search and Rescue (SAR) dogs do important work. They can quickly find people who are lost or hurt.

SAR dogs helped to find people after last year’s earthquake in Haiti. After the 9/11 attacks in the United States in 2001, about 300 SAR dogs and their handlers from all over the U.S. helped search for victims.

SAR dogs are trained to find human scent carried by air currents. People constantly give off dead skin cells. SAR dogs smell these cells and follow the smell to its source—a person. The dog then returns to its human handler and leads the handler to the source.

Dogs can smell people deep under snow, water, or piles of broken building materials. Scientists say that a dog’s sense of smell is about a thousand times stronger than a human’s.

To teach a SAR dog to search, handlers have a person hide with the dog’s favorite toy. When the dog finds the person, it gets a reward. To SAR dogs, finding people is a game. But to disaster victims, the dogs can be their best hope for survival.

1. SAR stands for __________.
   A Search and Recovery
   B Search and Rescue
   C Sudden Air Retrieval
   D Search and Removal

2. SAR dogs can find people who are __________.
   A underwater
   B buried in snow
   C buried under fallen buildings
   D all of the above

3. A dog’s sense of smell is about ____ times stronger than a human’s.
   A 10
   B 100
   C 1,000
   D 10,000

4. How many SAR dogs helped after the 9/11 attacks?
   A about 300
   B about 30
   C about 100
   D about 1,000