

Name: _____

THE LIFEBOAT

Imagine that there is a large ship that is rapidly sinking at sea. An island with a small human city and a big forest can be reached by lifeboat. However, there is just one lifeboat left, and enough time for only one trip from the ship to the island. The following items are going to sink and be destroyed if they are not placed in the lifeboat:

- A. An intelligent, healthy, morally virtuous person.
- B. An intelligent, healthy, morally evil person.
- C. A healthy moose (there is a native moose population on the island).
- D. A collie with a permanently lame leg.
- E. A severely mentally disabled human.
- F. Ten chickens.
- G. The signed original copy of the Constitution of the United States.
- H. A breeding pair of an endangered species of bird, once native to the island.
- I. A human in a coma who will almost certainly never come out of it.
- J. A breeding pair of common, but beautiful, indigenous songbirds.
- K. The last red-ringed orchid on Earth.
- L. A hard-drive with scientific data that has a 50% chance of leading to the cure of cancer.
- M. Your sister.
- N. Two breeding pairs of a non-native variety of rapidly breeding wild rabbits (with no known predators on the island, and an extensive food supply).

Assume that:

- each of these items (A through N) requires the same amount of space as any other item: that is, one person takes up the same space as the one collie or the ten chickens, etc.
- while on the lifeboat, none of the potentially dangerous creatures will attack or cause any harm to the other creatures on the boat.
- you don't have time to measure the lifeboat to find out exactly how many items will fit.

Which items (A through N) should be saved first? Rank them from #1 to #14, where #1 is the top priority and should be saved first, while #14 is the lowest priority and will likely end up being destroyed.

1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6..... 7..... 8..... 9..... 10..... 11..... 12..... 13..... 14.....

1) Use the space on the back to write a paragraph that explains your ranking, indicating why you placed a given item where you did in your ranking. For example, if you placed the disabled collie ahead of the healthy moose (or vice versa), can you explain why you did so? You don't have to do this for every single item—just give a general rationale for why you organized your ranking the way you did.

2) After you have explained your ranking, answer: did you find it easy to complete this ranking? Why / why not?