

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

# 7 *Journey to the Ants*

—*Bert Hölldobler and Edward O. Wilson*

## Synopsis

*Journey to the Ants* is a survey of the most populous animal species on Earth—ants. Bert Hölldobler and Edward O. Wilson’s personal interest in ants dates from their youth where, they say, “We, having entered our bug period as children, were blessed by never being required to abandon it.” The authors’ long and successful collaboration as scientists and authors culminated in 1990 with *The Ants*, a complete reference encyclopedia of myrmecology, the scientific study of ants. This scientific work, which won the 1991 Pulitzer Prize in general nonfiction, is aimed primarily at biologists. *Journey to the Ants* is a less technical study and more accessible to the general public. It condenses the best of myrmecology to a more manageable level for the nonscientist.

*Journey to the Ants* explores the world of ants, examining their colonies, ways of communicating, the social roles of workers and queens, conflict and dominance, and function as a superorganism. The book also traces the evolution of ants since they arose amid the dinosaurs 100 million years ago.

Ants are biologically very diverse. This fact is demonstrated throughout the book by the authors’ use of numerous drawings, and full-color photographs and paintings. The authors’ extensive research as well as that of other entomologists is evident in this work.

## Student Focus

You will learn a lot about the social aspects of ants in this book. In addition to the scientific information about ants, you should pay attention to the authors’ anecdotes that describe their fieldwork. As you read, make a list of examples of the naturalists’ fieldwork. What were the objectives of the fieldwork? How was the fieldwork planned? How did their fieldwork differ from their laboratory work in planning and preparation?

## Correlation to Subject Matter

Entomology, Zoology, Evolution, Genetics, Population Biology, and Ethology