**A DAY IN THE CLOUDS （主题阅读五）**

The air is thin and we have to rest several times on the short hike from camp. To our left, snow-covered mountains disappear into clouds that seem almost close enough to touch. On the plain in front of us we can just make out a herd of graceful animals. This is why we are here – to observe Tibetan antelopes.

Tibetan antelopes live on the plains of Tibet, Xinjiang and Qinghai. Watching them move slowly across the green grass, I'm struck by their beauty. I'm also reminded of the danger they are in. They are being hunted, illegally, for their valuable fur.

My guide is Zhaxi, a villager from Changtang. He works at the Changtang national nature reserve. The reserve is a shelter for the animals and plants of northwestern Tibet. To Zhaxi, the land is sacred and protecting the wildlife is a way of life. “We're not trying to save the animals,” he says. “Actually, we are trying to save ourselves.”

The 1980s and 1990s were bad times for the Tibetan antelope. The population dropped by more than 50 percent. Hunters were shooting antelopes to make profits. Their habitats were becoming smaller as new roads and railways were built.

In order to save this species from extinction, the Chinese government placed it under national protection. Zhaxi and other volunteers watched over the envelopes day and night to keep them safe from attacks. Bridges and gates were added to let the antelopes move easily and keep them safe from cars and trains.

The measures were effective. The antelope population has recovered, and in June 2015, the Tibetan antelope was removed from the endangered species list. The government, however, does not intend to stop the protection programmes, since the threats to the Tibetan antelope have not yet disappeared.

In the evening, I drink a cup of tea and watch the stars. I think about the antelopes and what Zhaxi told me. Much is being done to protect wildlife, but if we really want to save the planet, we must change our way of life. Only when we learn to exist in harmony with nature can we stop being a threat to wildlife and to our planet.

**Step I: Read for understanding**

1.What is the writer’s main purpose in writing the text?

The author intends to tell us that although the Tibetan antelope has been removed from the endangered species list, the threats to them have not yet disappeared. And to call on us to change our way of life and live in harmony with nature.

2.What qualities does Zhaxi have? Where can we find the evidence to support these?

Hard-working, responsible and loving nature. We can know that from the fact that Zhaxi and other volunteers watched over the antelopes day and night to keep them safe from attacks.

1. The writer says that we must change our way of life and learn to live in harmony with nature in order to save our planet. Do you agree? What do you think we should do or change?

I agree. As far as I am concerned, what we should do is to realise that we are part of nature and cannot separate from it. We can’t survive without it. When we damage it, we literally damage ourselves.Therefore，

1) Protect the environment and help animals return to nature.

2) Reduce hunting,and treat them as our friends.

3) Don’t buy endangered animals’ products and tell your friends not to do so too.

**Step II: Read for language**

1. Watching (watch) them move slowly across the green grass, I’m struck(strike) by their beauty.
2. In order to save this species from extinction(extinct), the Chinese government placed it under national protection(protect).
3. Only+状语位于句首引起的倒装句，为了表示强调，把“only+状语（副词、介词短语、从句）”置于句首，主句用部分倒装，即把主句中的助动词、情态动词提到主语前面。

①Only when we learn to exist in harmony with nature can we stop being a threat to wildlife and to our planet.

只有当我们学会与自然和谐相处时，我们才能停止成为对野生动物和星球的一种威胁。

②Only by practising paper cutting more can you learn the folk art.

只有通过多练习剪纸，你才能掌握这门民间艺术。

③Only then did we know the animals were in danger.

直到那时我们才知道这种动物处于危险中。

1. The reason why he wasn’t admitted into a key university was that his grades were too low.

他没有被重点大学录取的原因是分数太低了。