The London Zoo is Britain’s best known zoo, it’s National zoo, and one of the most famous and prestigious collections in the world. It is the primary home of the Zoological Society of London, and it occupies thirty six acres of a Royal Park, less than two miles from the centre of the city of London.

The Zoological Society of London was founded in 1826 at the instigation of its first president, Sir Stamford Raffles (who is rather better known as the founder of Singapore). Raffles obtained the land, and saw the first plans for the zoo, but in the same year that the Zoological Society was founded, he died, reportedly of apoplexy; so he never saw the scientific establishment that he had envisaged, for ‘teaching and elucidating zoology.’ That was left to his successor, the third Marquis of Lansdowne, who obtained a parcel of land from the Crown at Regent’s Park at a nominal rent, and who supervised the building of the first animal houses.

The gardens opened in April 1828 to members of the Zoological Society. The public were not to be admitted for almost two decades, but among the animals they might have seen before the turn of the century were such rarities as Arabian oryx, greater kudus, Indian and Sumatran rhinoceros, the now extinct quagga (a species of zebra), and the equally extinct thylacine (a marsupial wolf). Among the zoo’s regular visitors was Charles Darwin, a fellow of the Zoological Society, from 1831. His particular fascination was the orangutan, the first ever seen in Europe.  
 One of the great popular characters of the nineteenth century was Jumbo, an African bull elephant who came to the zoo as a baby and ended up as a six-ton cantankerous beast. Jumbo was so loved by Londoners of the time that there was a national outcry when the Zoo Council and Abraham Dee Bartlett, the zoo’s superintendent, sold him to Mr Bamum of Bamum and Bailey’s Circus. Jumbo sailed to the United States where he drew huge crowds until his death in a train accident two years later. London Zoo benefitted from the sale to the tune of two thousand pounds.

Ex. 1. Questions:

1. What is the primary home of the Zoological Society of London?

2. Where the London Zoo is stayed?

3. In what age was The Zoological Society of London founded?

4. Who did supervise the building of the first animal houses?

5. When did the gardens open?

6. Who was among the zoo’s regular visitors?

7. Who was Jumbo?

8. Who did buy Jumbo?

9. Where did Jumbo live until his death?

10. Who was found the London Zoo?

11.Who was Charles Darwin?

Ex.2. Answer true or false:

1. The London Zoo occupies thirty five acres of a Royal Park.
2. Raffles did not see the first plans for the zoo.
3. The third Marquis of Lansdowne did not obtain a parcel of land from the Crown at Regent’s Park.
4. The gardens opened in May 1928.
5. Quagga (a species of elephant).
6. Charles Darwin particular fascination was not the orangutan.
7. Jumbo had six-ton weight.