

**Nutting [1]**  
**NUTTING**

*By Barbara Greenwood*



Willy found a sunny spot on the porch and settled down to peel the freshly roasted chestnuts. "Just what I need to make a nice turkey stuffing," Ma had said when Willy arrived home with them a few days back. He was glad she hadn't asked where he'd found the chestnuts. It was a story he wasn't anxious to tell...

Willy had taken a shortcut through the forest, hoping to practice some tracking skills. Be sure to mark your trail, Pa always said, so he'd been slicing curls of bark from tree trunks. The fresh blazes glowed white in the gloom of the forest. No fear of missing *those* on the way back, Willy thought, folding down the blade of his jackknife.

He had just started to search the ground for animal tracks when a squirrel bounded across his path. For a frozen moment it stared up at him, and Willy noticed its bulging cheeks. "I'll bet you've got a cache of nuts somewhere, you little rascal."

The squirrel darted away, and Willy ran after it. Deeper and deeper he plunged into the forest, his eyes on the flicker of tail before him. Then, with a sudden leap, the squirrel scampered up a tree and vanished. Willy collapsed against the tree trunk, panting. Lost him!

Peering around, he felt the darkness of the forest press down on him. No white blazes pointed the way back. With a stab of alarm he realized he'd completely forgotten Pa's warning. What will I do? Willy slumped onto a large gnarled root. Shout? No use. Too far from home. Perhaps someone will come along. He listened hard. Nothing but eerie silence. Don't panic, he told himself. Don't panic. But he'd heard about people being lost in the woods for days, sometimes even...forever.

A rustle of leaves made him glance around. The squirrel! They stared at each other, unblinking, for a second. Then, with a flip of its tail, the squirrel

disappeared under a twisted root.

"I'll bet that's your hiding place." Willy was about to thrust his hand into the hole when he thought about the squirrel's sharp teeth. Instead he picked up a short stick. No angry scolding followed his probing, so he reached in. It was a cache of beechnuts. He could feel their three-sided shapes. And what was that? Something bigger. He drew out a handful. There, among the small, shiny beechnuts was one big chestnut. If there's one, there must be more. He felt around again. Yes, more big ones. Just what Ma needs for the turkey stuffing. Then he remembered—home. How was he going to find his way home?

There must be a way out. He peered into the darkness, hoping for any sign of the way he had come. Nothing. No—wait. A memory tugged at the back of his mind—just before the squirrel disappeared, his hand had brushed against smooth bark. Most of these trees had rough bark. But what if... Searching carefully, Willy spotted a smooth-barked tree. Underneath it on the forest floor were scuffed leaves. And there! Leading away was a line of scuffs. Leaves crunched by feet. Were these his own footprints? Yes! He could follow them back to the path.

"Hooray!" Willy shouted. Then he remembered the nuts. I'll come back for them. But, no, on second thought he didn't really want to come here again.

He pulled off his shirt, shivering in the chilly October air. It would make a good carrying sack. He'd run to keep himself warm.

He'd cleared the squirrel's hole right down to the bottom and was tying the shirt sleeves together to close the sack when a thought struck him. Opening the bulging shirt, he scooped out a handful of beechnuts and dropped them back into the hole.

"There," he said, in the general direction of the squirrel. "Now you can enjoy your harvest dinner, too."

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## **Treed [2]**

"Treed"

by Judith Viorst\*

Description of Poem

The speaker of the poem writes a humorous description of her experience climbing the tallest tree in her backyard. She explains that it is easy to climb up the tree, but it is very hard to climb down.

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### Reading Passage [3]

#### DISHPAN DUCKS

By Margaret Springer

Rosa walked home from school slowly. The rows of apartment buildings and the streets full of cars looked all the same. And it was cold.

Rosa missed her country. She had begun to learn some English, but she did not know what to say or what to do when other kids were around. They were friendly, but Rosa felt safer being alone.

Behind Rosa's brick apartment building was a special place, a small creek where Rosa always stopped after school. There were ducks there, and she could speak to them in her language. The ducks seemed to understand.

Every afternoon Rosa sat on a concrete slab above the creek and watched the ducks until Mama came home from work.

Rosa did not feed them. She knew that most people food was not right for ducks. But she watched them swim and feed and walk up to her, quacking. Once they even walked over Rosa's tummy as she lay with her feet stretched out on the bumpy grass. They like me, Rosa said to herself.

One day after school, the ducks were not in the water. They did not waddle toward Rosa, even though she stayed very still. Something was wrong.

Gently, Rosa tiptoed to where the ducks were huddled. "Are you sick?" she whispered. They looked different. They looked greasy.

Then Rosa noticed the creek. An oily film covered it, making patches of color on the water's surface. She looked closely at the ducks. Their feathers were stuck together. They could not swim. They could not fly.

I must get help, said Rosa to herself. But how? I don't know anyone. Mama told me not to speak to strangers. Besides, I don't know how to ask in English.

Rosa had an idea. She rushed back to the street, walked to the traffic light, then raced around the corner and back to the school yard.

Rosa was in luck. Boys and girls were still there practicing baseball with the gym teacher. Rosa had never played baseball in this country.

"Please! Come!" said Rosa, breathless, "Ducks!"

"Hello, Rosa," said the teacher. "What's the trouble?"

"Ducks!" said Rosa again. It was one of the few English words she was sure of. "Come. Please. Ducks!"

She pointed in the direction of the creek. The kids were staring at her, but she didn't care. "Ducks!" she said again, her dark eyes pleading.

The teacher said something in English to his team. They looked at Rosa and talked all at once. Then the teacher smiled. "OK, Rosa," he said. "Show us." They all grabbed their baseball mitts and bats, and followed Rosa to the creek.

Pretty soon there were more people at Rosa's creek than she had ever seen there before. First the police came with their squad cars and sirens. Then came the firefighters with their big trucks and Humane Society workers in their vans.

People came out from the apartment building with dishpans and towels and liquid dish detergent. Rosa did not understand all the talk, but she knew what was happening.

The ducks were too weak to fly or run away. She and the other kids rounded them up and held them in the dishpans while the Humane Society people worked. Four washes for each duck with mild detergent, and four rinses with clear water. It reminded Rosa of doing the wash.

After a while someone brought a blow-dryer. Rosa laughed as the ducks were blown fluffy-dry. One by one, they were packed carefully into cages in the Humane Society vans.

"We'll keep them for a few days," one of the workers said. "They need time to regain the natural oils in their feathers, so they can keep themselves warm and swim properly. A big factory upstream spilled four hundred gallons of diesel fuel into the storm sewers last night. What a mess! You got to these ducks just in time, young lady."

Rosa did not know what the man was saying, but she saw how everyone smiled at her, and she felt proud.

By the time Rosa's mama came home, the cars and the vans and the people were gone. Rosa was in her special place by the creek. But she was not alone. She was playing baseball with three friends. Rosa was good at baseball. She was getting better at English, too.

"Home run!" she shouted, laughing, after she slugged the ball almost to the parking lot. Rosa was happy. And the dishpan ducks were safe.



**Reading Passage [4]**

**HOW THE BRAZILIAN BEETLES GOT THEIR COATS**

***RETOLD BY ELSIE EELLS***

In Brazil the beetles have such beautifully colored, hard-shelled coats upon their backs that they are sometimes set in pins and necklaces like precious stones. Once upon a time, years and years ago, they had ordinary plain brown coats. This is how it happened that the Brazilian beetle earned a new coat.

One day a little brown beetle was crawling along a wall when a big gray rat ran out of a hole in the wall and looked down scornfully at the little beetle. "O ho!" he said to the beetle, "how slowly you crawl along. You'll never get anywhere in the world. Just look at me and see how fast I can run."

The big gray rat ran to the end of the wall, wheeled around, and came back to the place where the little beetle was slowly crawling along at only a tiny distance from where the rat had left her.

"Don't you wish that you could run like that?" said the big gray rat to the little brown beetle.

"You are surely a fast runner," replied the little brown beetle politely. Her mother had taught her always to be polite and had often said to her that a really polite beetle never boasts about her own accomplishments. The little brown beetle never boasted a single boast about the things she could do. She just went on slowly crawling along the wall.

A bright green and gold parrot in the mango tree over the wall had heard the conversation. "How would you like to race with the beetle?" he asked the big gray rat. "I live next door to the tailor bird," he added, "and just to make the race exciting I'll offer a brightly colored coat as a prize to the one who wins the race. You may choose for it any color you like and I'll have it made to order."

"I'd like a yellow coat with stripes like the tiger's," said the big gray rat, looking over his shoulder at his gaunt gray sides as if he were already admiring his new coat.

"I'd like a beautiful, brightly colored new coat, too," said the little brown beetle.

The big gray rat laughed long and loud until his gaunt gray sides were shaking. "Why, you talk just as if you thought you had a chance to win the race," he said, when he could speak.

The bright green and gold parrot set the royal palm tree at the top of the cliff as the goal of the race. He gave the signal to start and then he flew away to the royal palm tree to watch for the end of the race.

The big gray rat ran as fast as he could. Then he thought how very tired he was getting. "What's the use of hurrying?" he said to himself. "The little brown beetle cannot possibly win. If I were racing with somebody who could really run it would be very different." Then he started to run more slowly, but every time his heart beat it said, "Hurry up! Hurry up!" The big gray rat decided that it was best to obey the little voice in his heart so he hurried just as fast as he could.

When he reached the royal palm tree at the top of the cliff he could hardly believe his eyes. He thought he must be having a bad dream. There was the little brown beetle sitting quietly beside the bright green and gold parrot. The big gray rat had never been so surprised in all his life. "How did you ever manage to run fast enough to get here so soon?" he asked the little brown beetle as soon as he could catch his breath.

The little brown beetle drew out the tiny wings from her sides. "Nobody said anything about having to run to win the race," she replied, "so I flew instead."

"I did not know that you could fly," said the big gray rat in a subdued little voice.

"After this,"said the bright green and gold parrot,"never judge anyone by his looks alone. You never can tell how often or where you may find concealed wings. You have lost the prize."

Then the parrot turned to the little brown beetle who was waiting quietly at his side."What color do you want your new coat to be?"he asked.

The little brown beetle looked up at the bright green and gold parrot, at the green and gold palm trees above their heads, at the green mangoes with golden flushes on their cheeks lying on the ground under the mango trees, at the golden sunshine upon the distant green hills."I choose a coat of green and gold,"she said.

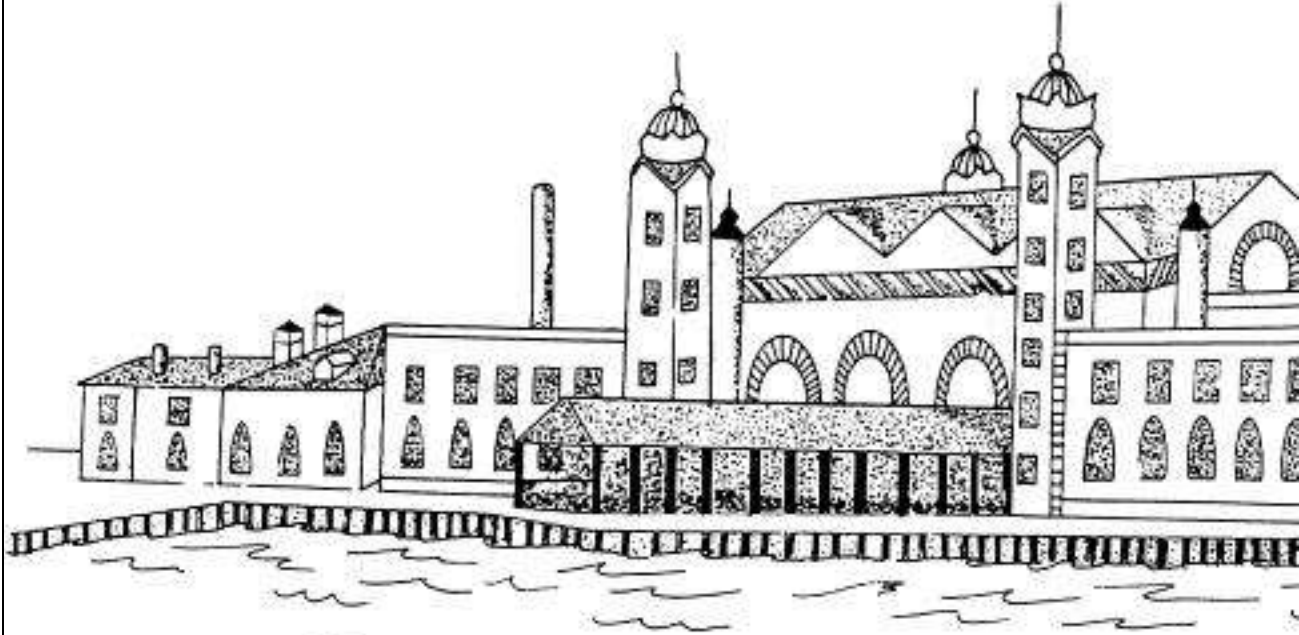
From that day to this the Brazilian beetle has worn a coat of green with golden lights upon it.

And until this day, even in Brazil, where the flowers and birds and beasts and insects have such gorgeous coloring, the rat wears a dull gray coat.

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#### **Reading Passage [5]**

# Ellis Island



# Doorway to Am

by Bill Walter



For such an important place, Ellis Island did not start out as much. Named after Samuel Ellis, the 27-acre knot of an island barely stuck out of the water at high tide.

Ellis Island became important to millions of immigrants in 1892, however, when the U.S. government converted it to an immigration station. Between 1892 and 1954, the island became—for more than 17 million souls—the doorway to America.



As you will see in their own words below, America offered immigrants more than just opportunity. You also will see that the "the land of the free" was not so free to everyone, after all.

### **Escaping to America**

The closing years of the 19th century were an oppressive time in many eastern and southern European nations. In such countries as Russia, Poland, and Armenia, millions of families were suffering. Wars, famines, and pogroms (organized massacres of Jews and other minorities) caused millions of people to flee.

Ida Mouradjian fled to America from Armenia to escape annihilation by the Turkish government:

*They [the Turks] would displace every Armenian out of their own homes, out of their own towns and drive them into the Syrian Desert. The idea was to get every Armenian there and by the time they got there they would either die of hunger or exposure or pestilence.*

But not all were running from the horrors of violence or poverty. Some, like Theodore Lubik from the Ukraine, wanted to avoid the military draft and simply saw the U.S. as a great opportunity:

*A friend of mine, he had gone to America. He came to Europe once on a visit...He looked just like a governor—horses, wagon, dressed fine, giving his pocket change to us. He gave me ten cents or a quarter—that was big money.*

### **Hard Time Traveling**

In these times of turmoil, one could not easily move to the U.S. The trials of getting to Ellis Island were often life-threatening in themselves.

Along the way, many immigrants had to contend with border guards, thieves, and crooked immigration agents. But it was the trip across the Atlantic that immigrants tended to remember most.

Crammed into poorly ventilated sleeping areas or cabins below deck, immigrants—many of whom had never seen the sea before—often suffered rough crossings. Vera Gauditsa, pregnant during her crossing from Czechoslovakia, remembered the torture of seasickness:

*I was pretty tough, but on the boat I was very sick. I thought the child wanted to be born right then.*

*I had a cabin, but in the cabin was nothing. You had to go through the whole boat to get to the showers and a toilet. So imagine when you are sick and you have to go to the bathroom and walk!*

But upon seeing their destination, most immigrants—like Sarah Asher from Russia—forgot about sickness and thought only of a bright future:

*About four or five o'clock in the morning we all got up. The sunshine started and what do we see? The Statue of Liberty!*

*Well, she was beautiful with the early-morning light. Everybody was crying. Beautiful colors, the greenish-like water— and so big. We could see New York already, with the big buildings and everything. . . There was a house where the boat stopped but only the Americans were able to go out, but we foreigners remained. Our boat moved further, and that was when we realized we were going to Ellis Island.*

### **Stuck at the Door**

Having to wait while first- and second-class passengers got off the boat, many immigrants began to realize that their troubles were not over.

After docking at Manhattan Island, immigrants in steerage were shipped by barge to Ellis Island, to go through examinations. On the island, the immigrants were guided into holding pens in the Great Hall. Irene Zambelli, from Greece, recalled the routine:

*There were little gates, the same as you go [through] to the subways. . . The first gate we [Irene and her cousin] passed they asked what we were to one another. Then we came to the next gate and they asked us how much was two and two, and four and four. We answered and went to the next gate.*

### **Cutting Back the Flow**

The number of immigrants increased over the years, peaking at 1,285,349 in 1907. U.S. officials grew concerned. They saw the growing numbers as a threat to American workers. The officials were afraid the foreigners would take away wages and jobs. As a result, the entrance examinations were made tougher. They included a medical exam and a literacy test. An immigrant who failed one of these tests faced **deportation** (being sent back) to his or her native country.

Of all the examinations, the medical exam seemed to cause immigrants the most concern, recalled Catherine Bolinski, who came from Poland:

*They turned your eye[lid] over— I had to blink a couple of times that way. I'll never forget it. They looked at your throat and to see if you had any rashes on your body. They found things wrong with some people. They sent them back, after they [had] sold everything to come here, so they were crying, they felt very bad.*

The thought of being deported was terrifying. Fannie Kligerman, who escaped from Russia with her family, remembered the fear:

*One of my brothers had something wrong with him. It was a sty. It left a funny thing and they put him aside. And they told us that if there was anything wrong with him, he'd have to go back to Europe. Oh, it was frightening. My father said, "I'm not going on without the children. We will all go back."*

### **Charting America's Course**

Only three percent of those who arrived at Ellis Island between 1892 and 1954 were turned away. By 1924, however, the government changed its policy. It slammed shut the "open door" that had allowed so many millions to flock to the U.S. The Immigration Act of 1924 set a quota of 164,000 immigrants per year. By 1954, Ellis Island had been shut down.

But for those who had passed through, America was truly a land of opportunity— despite often-severe hardships. Settling throughout the U.S., immigrants such as

composer Irving Berlin, football coach Knute Rockne, and Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter added to America's strength.

Having escaped from Russia, Arnold Weiss voiced the determination and hope of the immigrants who passed through Ellis Island:

*From the whole story of what I went through in all my years— and some of it wasn't very pleasant— I still love this country. I love this country in spite of everything.*

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## **Reading Passage [6]**

### **Dr. Shannon Lucid: Space Pioneer**

**by Vicki Oransky Wittenstein**

When Shannon Lucid was growing up in Bethany, Oklahoma, during the 1950s, she dreamed of exploring outer space. She loved pioneer stories about America's West, and felt she had been born too late.

But then she read about rocket inventor Robert Goddard. She realized that she had not been born too late to be a space explorer!

And explore space she did. On September 26, 1996, after a month's delay, Dr. Lucid returned to Earth after spending more than six months on the Russian space station *Mir*.

Dr. Lucid was the second American astronaut to live aboard *Mir* as part of a program to study how long-term travel in space affects the human body. The results will help the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) develop an international space station.

Dr. Lucid loved life in orbit. She said: "One of the best things to do is to look out the window and see the Earth, and watch the seasons change. I got to see the ice in all the lakes break up, and the Earth bloom."

Now she holds the American and women's record for the longest stay in space, and she received the Congressional Space Medal of Honor from President Clinton.

### **Adventurous Spirit**

It's possible that Dr. Lucid became an adventurous spirit when she was a baby. Her parents took her along as they traveled throughout China during and after World War II. The family settled in the United States when Shannon was six, but the future astronaut was always looking forward to the adventure of another move.

She pursued her love of science and her dream of space travel. As a result, she earned a pilot's license and degrees in chemistry and biochemistry.

But she was disappointed when NASA accepted only men to its first space program in 1959 and 1960. When NASA finally admitted women in 1978, Dr. Lucid was one of the first six women to be accepted. And she was a crew member on several successful space shuttle missions.

### **Aboard *Mir***

On the Russian space station, Dr. Lucid's determination helped her cope with the stress of weightlessness, a small living space, and a diet of dehydrated foods.

She also learned from the first American to live aboard *Mir*, Dr. Norman Thagard. Dr. Thagard had lost seventeen pounds while eating unfamiliar Russian food, and he had been lonely.

Dr. Lucid was determined to stay healthy and happy. She took some American foods, such as shrimp, tomatoes, potato chips, and candy. Supply ships delivered her favorite snacks as well as fresh fruits and vegetables.

And she stayed in touch with her family. Messages and books came from home. She wrote to her family through daily E-mail and talked to them in frequent "visits" by radio and television.

To stay fit in space, Dr. Lucid spent hundreds of hours exercising on a treadmill and stationary bicycle. Although she was in space longer than any other American, she maintained her weight. Also, she lost only a little strength in her bones and muscles.

When she returned to Earth, she surprised everyone because she was still strong enough to walk off the space shuttle instead of being carried.

While on *Mir*, Dr. Lucid also did research. In experiments on the development of quail eggs and growing wheat, she studied the effects of weightlessness on living things. In fact, her own body was an experiment in human adaptation to space. Dr. Lucid also studied ocean currents and photographed Earth.

She enjoyed life on *Mir* but missed bookstores, gooey desserts, the sun, the wind, and in-line skating with her daughters. "You really were isolated," she said. "You just couldn't run out and buy some fresh fruit."

### **Two Yuris**

Dr. Lucid's companions for most of her stay were two men, Russian cosmonauts named Yuri Usachov and Yuri Onufriyenko.

Dr. Lucid's mission was successful partly because she had a good relationship with the cosmonauts. She joked, ate, and watched adventure movies with "Yuri and Yuri," as she calls them.

Even though she and the two cosmonauts grew up when the United States and Russia were enemies, they became friends aboard *Mir*.

"It dawned on all three of us at once how remarkable it was that we were three people who grew up in totally different parts of the world, mortally afraid of each other," she said. "And here we were in an outpost in space, enjoying living together."

Dr. Shannon Lucid can inspire anyone who thinks that dreams come true only in fairy tales. "Who would have ever thought that I would have spent time on a Russian space station?" she said. "So just take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way, and make the most of it."

**Reading Passage [7]**

**The River**

***Based on a true story***  
**By Yetti Frenkel**

"SH," WHISPERED ELISA. "I think she's coming!"

Elisa and Cory stifled their giggles and crouched behind the pine tree. Peeping out through the snow-covered branches, the children held their breath and listened for the tinkle of Minnie's collar as the old dog tried to find their hiding place. It was usually the hound's favorite game, but today the only sounds the children heard were the wind whistling softly across the frozen snow and ice cracking on the river.

Cory shivered with cold. "I wonder where she is," he said. "I hope she isn't off chasing a deer."

Elisa snorted. "Minnie's too lame for that. I bet she went home to wait where it's nice and warm."

Cory looked doubtful. "She wouldn't go home without us," he said. "Maybe she got ahead, and we didn't notice. Let's go to the bridge and see if she's there."

They started down the trail at a quick pace, glad to be moving again. The bare branches of the trees rattled forlornly as they tramped through the frozen snow.

Elisa struggled hard to keep up with her older brother. "Wouldn't it be easier to walk on the ice on the river?" she called to him.

Cory slowed his pace and waited for her to catch up. "It's too dangerous," he said. "The water is still flowing underneath, and the ice is thin. We might fall through." He held out a mittened hand. "I'll help you."

"No, thanks," said Elisa stubbornly. "I can keep up." But she was secretly glad when Cory walked beside her until they reached the bridge.

The old wooden bridge spanned the widest part of the river. In summer they often came here to fish or lie in the sun, but now it was a desolate, wind-swept place. They could hear the water gurgling softly beneath the ice as they looked out over the railing, hoping to glimpse Minnie walking along the bank.

Cory cupped his hands to his mouth and called, "Minnie, Min-nie!" His voice echoed back to him from the lonely woods. "I don't see her, Elisa. Do you?" he asked.

Just then Elisa gave a startled cry, and Cory turned sharply to see Minnie ten feet from shore. The old dog had fallen through the ice and was paddling in desperate circles.

"Hang on, Minnie, I'm coming!" Cory cried, racing toward the river. Elisa was already ahead of him, pulling off her coat, scarf, and mittens, ready to plunge in and save her dog. Blinded by tears, she stumbled out onto the ice.

Cory caught up with her and pulled her back. "Do you want to drown yourself?" he shouted. His face was white as he held out the warm clothes she'd dropped. "Put these back on and let me think of something." He looked grimly at the river.

Elisa sobbed as she struggled into her coat. "You can save her, can't you, Cory? She won't die, will she?"

"Of course not," he said, wishing he felt as confident as he was trying to sound.

The sight of her masters had given Minnie new hope, and she managed to get her front paws up on the ice. She scratched and clawed frantically at the slippery surface, but her hind legs were too arthritic to be of much help. For a moment her frightened brown eyes met Cory's, then she slipped back into the icy water and began wearily swimming once more.

Cory searched the bank until he found a long, twisted branch. Holding it firmly, he maneuvered the end until he had it hooked under Minnie's collar. "C'mon, girl," he said to the tired dog. She heaved her front paws onto the ice and struggled desperately while he tried to help her by pulling on the branch. But frost and moisture had made the wood brittle, and it snapped almost immediately. Once more Minnie struck out swimming, but now her head was barely above the surface of the water.

A terrible thought crossed Cory's mind — Minnie was going to drown before their eyes. It's not fair, he thought. Why doesn't someone come along to help us? He scanned the woods for a game warden or hunter, but saw no one. The woods were dark and silent, waiting. "I don't know what to do," he said, frightened.

"I know what to do," cried Elisa. "I'm going to help her!"

Once again Cory grabbed his sister's arm to prevent her from going out onto the ice. She bit and kicked at him like a small fury as tears of frustration ran down her cheeks.

"Listen to me!" yelled Cory. "I thought of something, but I need your help." Elisa wiped the tears from her face. "I'm going to lie down on the ice and try to crawl to Minnie. You lie down behind me and hold my ankles. Don't let go, no matter what, and don't stand up. Understand?" Elisa nodded, sniffing.

Cory lay on the ice so that his weight would be distributed more evenly and there would be less chance of breaking through. He felt Elisa's hands close around his ankles. As he inched his way forward, he could hear the water rushing beneath the ice. A few feet in front of him was the deep green hole where the dog had broken through. Cory's heart pounded with fear, but he bit his lip and kept going. At last he reached the edge of the hole and threw his arms around Minnie's neck. It felt reassuring to have a hold on her, but he soon realized that there was little else he could do. The ice was slippery, and every time he tried to pull her out, he began to slide forward himself.

"Have you got her?" called Elisa anxiously.

"Yes," Cory yelled over his shoulder, "but I can't—" Before he could explain, he found himself being pulled back across the ice with Minnie in his arms. He looked around in amazement, expecting to see a big man with a broad grin standing behind him, but there was only his sturdy little sister, laughing and crawling over the ice to throw her arms around the shivering dog. "How did you ever do that?" cried Cory. "You're not that strong!" Then as Minnie, tail wagging wildly, began to lick his face, he saw what had happened.

Elisa had put her wool coat down on the ice to protect her from the cold. The warmth of her body lying on the top of it had made the wool fibers stick firmly to the ice so that when she pulled on Cory's legs, he slipped across the surface to her as easily as a cork popping from a bottle.

Cory grinned in admiration. "You sure are one smart little sister!" he said, tousling her hair. He took off his plaid shirt and dried Minnie with it. "It's a good thing we were all together today," he said to the old dog softly as he rubbed her lopsided ears. She wagged her tail in agreement, and the three hurried toward the warmth of home without looking back.

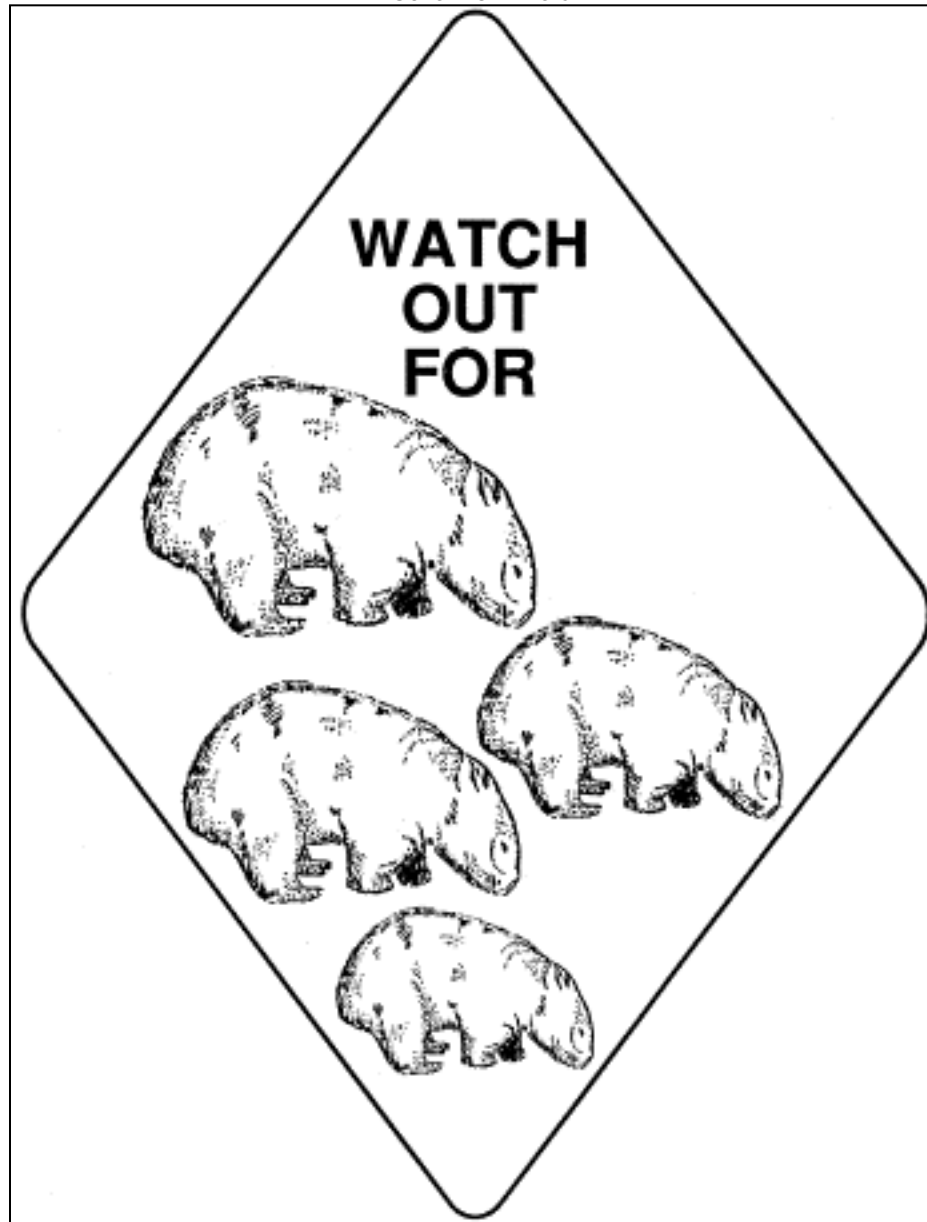


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Reading Passage [8]

**WATCH OUT FOR WOMBATS!**

by  
Caroline Arnold



AS WE RODE ALONG THE HIGHWAY sixty miles northeast of Adelaide, Australia, a diamond-shaped sign suddenly loomed ahead. *Watch Out for Wombats*, it warned. We peered into the sparse scrub along the roadside and searched for the brown furry animals. In the distance we spotted a mob of red kangaroos bouncing out of sight, and near the road a crowlike bird called a currawong was perched, but nowhere did we see any wombats. However, we later found out that this was not surprising because we were traveling during midday, and wombats are active mostly at night. It wasn't until we visited the animal reserve that we finally saw our first wombat and learned more about this funny-looking creature.

We found that there are two types of wombats in Australia: the hairy-nosed wombat, which lives in Queensland and South Australia, and the coarse-haired wombat, which lives along the southeast coast. Both have soft brown fur, short ears, and thick-set

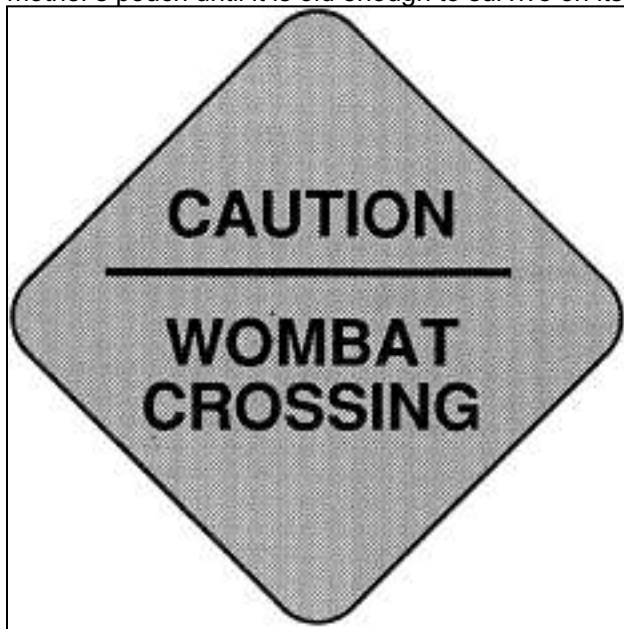


bodies. They are said to resemble North American badgers. The hairy-nosed wombat is smaller and has pointier ears compared to its coarse-haired cousin; otherwise they are very much alike.

In many ways the wombat is similar to another Australian native, the koala. Like koalas, wombats have strong forelimbs and powerful claws. But instead of using its claws to cling to high tree branches as the koala does, the wombat digs large underground burrows. These burrows are usually nine to fifteen feet across, but they can be enormous — sometimes as long as ninety feet. One end of the burrow is used as a sleeping area — there the wombat builds a nest made of bark.

The wombat is a vegetarian, so it also uses its mighty claws to tear up grasses and roots for its food. A mother wombat will pull out single stems of grass and lay them on the ground so her young wombat can eat the tender bases. The wombat's teeth, which grow throughout its life, are sharp and ideal for cutting and tearing.

When a mother wombat gives birth, she never has to worry about finding a baby-sitter — she simply carries her baby along with her. Like most mammals in Australia, wombats are marsupials. A baby wombat is born at a very early stage of development and lives in its mother's pouch until it is old enough to survive on its own.



Wombats have only one baby at a time, usually during the Australian winter months, May to July. A baby wombat is called a joey. At birth the tiny joey — barely an inch long — uses its forelimbs to pull itself along its mother's underside to get into her pouch, where it will be kept warm, protected, and fed.

Marsupials, like all mammals, are nourished by their mothers' milk. The nipples that supply the milk are inside the pouch. Once inside, the wombat joey finds a nipple and grabs it. The nipple then swells up in the baby's mouth, providing a firm hold and a steady supply of food. The joey stays in its mother's pouch for the next four months and grows rapidly.

Most marsupials have pouches which open upward when the animal is standing. However, both koalas and wombats have pouches which face downwards. A strong muscle keeps the pouch tightly closed and prevents the young wombat or koala from falling out. An advantage of the downward-opening pouch for wombats is that dirt is less likely to get inside when the wombat is burrowing.

The wombat is a shy and gentle animal. But even if you lived in Australia and were willing to keep watch during the nighttime hours, it would be difficult to get to know one. As more and more people move into territories in which wombats live, they destroy the wombat's burrows and food supplies. In some areas where the wombat was once plentiful, it is now almost extinct. Animal reserves have been set up recently to protect the wombat. Perhaps with a little help these friendly creatures will again prosper and multiply. The next time we drive through Australia, we really may have to *Watch Out for Wombats!*

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### Reading Passage [9]

#### *The Box in the Barn*

by Barbara Eckfeld Conner

Jason heard his mom calling him. Instead of answering her, he slipped deeper into the tall weeds behind his house. He closed his eyes, thinking of what he had done.

He had gotten up that morning in a good mood. Raspberry pancakes were on the table when he walked into the kitchen rubbing his eyes and yawning.

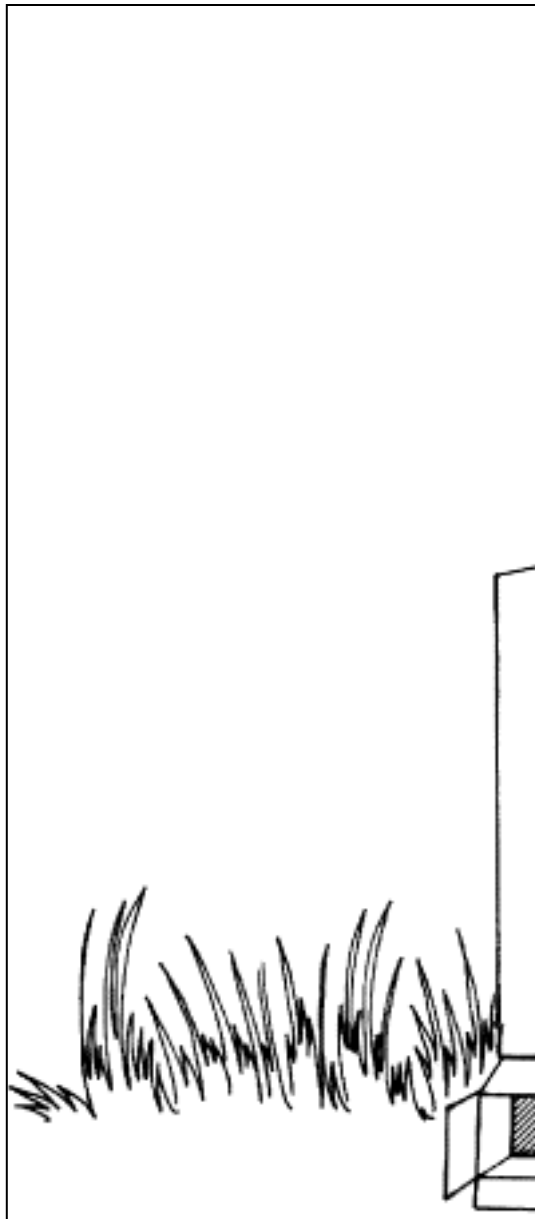
"After breakfast, Jason, I want you to go into town with me," Mom said quietly. "It's your sister's birthday, and we need to shop for her gifts."

Jason was eager to go, even if the gifts weren't for him. Buying presents was always fun.

As they drove to town, Jason couldn't help but ask the question that had been on his mind since yesterday when Aunt Nancy came. "What's in the big box that Dad took to the barn, Mom? Is it something Aunt Nancy bought for Megan's birthday?"

"It's a surprise, Jason, and I don't want you going near that barn today. Do you hear me?"





Jason sat staring at the road ahead. He knew that nothing would change her mind. Only now he was more curious than ever!

Back home, Megan ran out to meet Jason, her eyes wide and excited. "Jason, Jason, I'm six years old!" she cried, jumping up and down.

"I know, I know." Jason gave her a big hug.

Soon the house was buzzing with excitement. Megan sat on the stool watching while Mom and Aunt Nancy prepared the birthday dinner. Dad wouldn't be back for at least two hours. Jason wandered outside trying to think of something to do, but his thoughts kept returning to the box in the barn.

He started walking toward the barn, not at all sure what he'd do when he got there. He was hoping for just a glimpse of the box. Instead he heard a strange noise coming from inside the barn. He wished he could just turn back to the house, but his legs carried him into the barn. Jason saw the box. It was sitting between two bales of hay. He could hear loud wailing cries. Leaning over, Jason carefully lifted the lid. There was the most cuddly puppy he had ever seen!

"You must be pretty scared, huh, fellow?" Jason said quietly as he held the wiggly dog. "Megan's going to love you!" He secretly wished the puppy was for him. After all, Mom and Dad knew that he had been wanting his own puppy. Probably Aunt Nancy didn't know that, and anyway Megan would be happy.

Soon Jason was playing happily with the puppy, and he forgot that he wasn't supposed to be in the barn. Taffy, their big brown horse, stuck his head in the window as if to say, "What's going on?" Jason jumped, remembering that he wasn't supposed to be there. The puppy ran off as fast as it could out of the barn and into the field.

Jason stumbled out of the barn looking wildly for any trace of the puppy. "Come on, puppy! Oh, please come here!" he called, his eyes welling up with tears.

**Now** here he was, two hours later, hiding in the weeds. He'd looked everywhere, but the puppy was gone. He had ruined his sister's birthday.

"Jason! It's time for dinner!" Mom called even louder now. Just when he was determined to stay forever in the tall weeds, he heard his sister's voice.

"Jason! It's time for my party, Jason!" Megan yelled excitedly.

Jason rubbed his swollen eyes, trying to look normal. He couldn't ruin everything for her. "I'm here, Megan," he called.

"Are you OK?" she asked with genuine concern.

"Sure. Let's hurry." Jason grabbed her hand as they ran back.

As soon as they reached the house, the party began. Jason tried to pretend that everything was fine. When it was time to open Megan's birthday gifts, he sat in the big easy chair, hoping no one would notice him. Finally the last present was open.

"I'll be right back," Dad said.

Jason knew Dad was going to the barn. Megan would probably never forgive him for losing her birthday puppy. Everyone, even Aunt Nancy, would be angry when they found out the puppy was gone.

"Jason! Come here!" It was Dad calling from the front yard.

Jason slowly got out of the chair. It was hard to move, but Megan grabbed his hand and said, "Come on, Jason! Let's see what Dad wants."

Jason followed Megan out the door. Mom and Aunt Nancy followed close behind.

There was Dad standing with the box next to him in the grass. "Jason, I want you to open this box and see what's inside."

Jason looked up and saw that Dad was smiling. He turned and saw that Mom, Aunt Nancy, and Megan were smiling, too. What would he say to them when there was nothing in the box? But as Jason looked down, expecting to see nothing at all, he jumped back in surprise. The puppy looked up at him with sleepy eyes.

"Wow!" said Jason, bewildered.

"The puppy's for you, Son," his father said.

"I thought you'd like a gift, too, even if it isn't your birthday," said Aunt Nancy, laughing.

Megan started clapping. "Isn't he wonderful, Jason?" The puppy jumped up, ready to play. Jason and Megan spent the rest of the day with the puppy.

Later, when he was getting ready for bed, Jason turned to his father and said, "You know, Dad, I feel bad about something I did today."

Dad waited patiently as Jason explained what had happened. "And I still can't figure out how my puppy got back into his box!" he added.

"Well, Son, on my way home I saw your puppy running along the side of the road. I figured he had gotten out of his box somehow...You must have felt terrible during the party," Dad continued. "I get the feeling you've learned a lot today." He pulled back the covers on Jason's bed.

Jason looked down at his new puppy, who was sleeping soundly in a basket by the bed. "Dad, I think I'll call him Buddy."

Dad smiled and tucked the covers snugly around Jason.

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**Reading Passage [10]**



By Barbara Cole

Imagine shivering on a cold winter's night. The tip of your nose tingles in the frosty air. Finally, you climb into bed and find the toasty treat you have been waiting for—your very own hot brick.

If you had lived in colonial days, that would not sound as strange as it does today. Winters were hard in this New World, and the colonists had to think of clever ways to fight the cold. At bedtime, they heated soapstones, or bricks, in the fireplace. They wrapped the bricks in cloths and tucked them into their beds. The brick kept them warm at night, at least for as long as its heat lasted.

Before the colonists slipped into bed, they rubbed their icy sheets with a bed warmer. This was a metal pan with a long wooden handle. The pan held hot embers from the fireplace. It warmed the bedding so well that sleepy bodies had to wait until the sheets cooled before climbing in.

Staying warm wasn't just a bedtime problem. On winter rides, colonial travelers covered themselves with animal skins and warm blankets. Tucked under the blankets, near their feet, were small tin boxes called foot stoves. A foot stove held burning coals. Hot smoke puffed from small holes in the stove's lid, soothing freezing feet and legs. When the colonists went to Sunday services, their foot stoves, furs, and blankets went with them. The meeting houses had no heat of their own until the 1800s.

At home, colonial families huddled close to the fireplace, or hearth. The fireplace was wide and high enough to hold a large fire, but its chimney was large, too. That caused a problem: Gusts of cold air blew into the house. The area near the fire was warm, but in the rest of the room it might still be cold enough to see your breath.

Reading or needlework was done by candlelight, or by the light of the fire. During the winter, animal skins sealed the drafty windows of some cabins and blocked out the daylight. The living area inside was gloomy, except in the circle of light at the hearth.

Early Americans did not bathe as often as we do. When they did, their "bathroom" was the kitchen, in that toasty space by the hearth. They partially filled a tub with cold water, then warmed it up with water heated in the fireplace. A blanket draped from chairs for privacy also let the fire's warmth surround the bather.

The household cooks spent hours at the hearth. They stirred the kettle of corn pudding or checked the baking bread while the rest of the family carried on their own fireside activities. So you can see why the fireplace was the center of a colonial home.

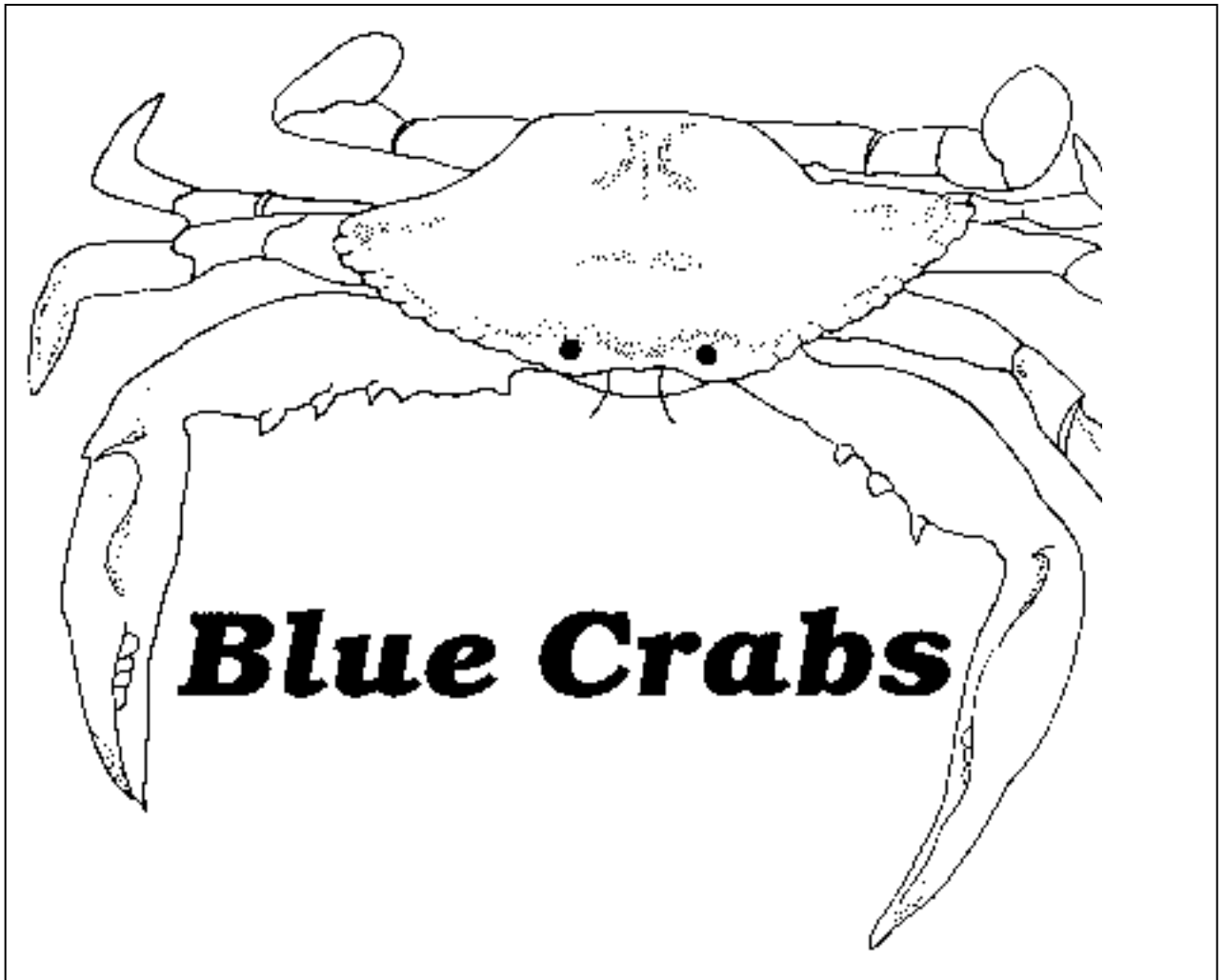
The only time the fire was allowed to die down was at bedtime. Ashes would be piled over the fire, reducing it to embers that might glow until morning.

By sunrise, the hot brick had become a cold stone once more. An early riser might get dressed under the covers, then hurry to the hearth to warm up.

Maybe you'd enjoy hearing someone who kept warm in these ways tell you what it was like. You wouldn't need to look for someone who has been living for two hundred years. In many parts of the country the modern ways didn't take over from the old ones until recently. Your own grandparents or other older people might remember the warmth of a hearthside and the joy of having a brick to cuddle up to.

"A Brick to Cuddle Up To" by Barbara Cole, illustrated by Katharine Dodge, from *Highlights for Children*, Dec. 1991, copyright (c) Highlights for Children, Inc., Columbus, Ohio. Used by permission.

### **Reading Passage [11]**



By George W. Frame

Nearly every day last summer my nephew Keith and I went crabbing in a creek on the New Jersey coast. We used a wire trap baited with scraps of fish and meat. Each time a crab entered the trap to eat, we pulled the doors closed. We cooked and ate the crabs we caught.

Blue crabs are very strong. Their big claws can make a painful pinch. When cornered, the crabs boldly defend themselves. They wave their outstretched claws and are fast and ready to fight. Keith and I had to be very careful to avoid having our fingers pinched.

Crabs are **arthropods**, a very large group of animals that have an external skeleton and jointed legs. Other kinds of arthropods are insects, spiders, and centipedes. Blue crabs belong to a particular arthropod group called **crustaceans**. Crustaceans are abundant in the ocean, just as insects are on land.

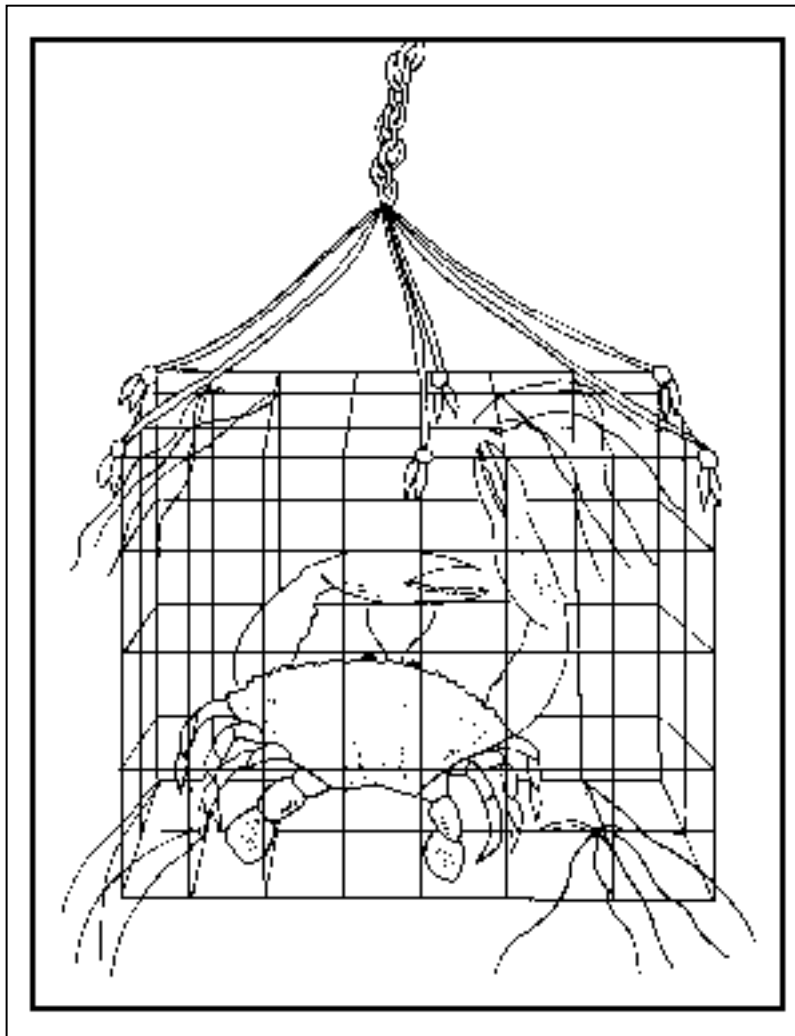
The blue crab's hard shell is a strong armor. But the armor must be cast off from time to time so the crab can grow bigger. Getting rid of its shell is called **molting**.

Each blue crab molts about twenty times during its life. Just before molting, a new soft shell forms under the hard outer shell. Then the outer shell splits apart, and the crab backs out. This leaves the crab with a soft, wrinkled, outer covering. The body increases in size by absorbing water, stretching the soft shell to a much larger size. The crab hides for a few hours until its new shell has hardened.

Keith and I sometimes found these soft-shell crabs clinging to pilings and hiding beneath seaweed.



Blue crabs mate when the female undergoes her last molt and still has a soft shell. The male courts her by dancing from side to side while holding his claws



outstretched. He then transfers sperm to the female, where they are stored until egg laying begins several months later. The female blue crab mates only once but receives enough sperm to fertilize all the eggs that she will lay in her lifetime. Usually she lays eggs two or three times during the summer, and then she dies.

When the eggs are fertilized and laid, they become glued to long hairs on the underside of the female's abdomen. The egg mass sometimes looks like an orange-brown sponge and contains up to two million eggs until they hatch — about nine to fourteen days later. Only one of the blue crabs that we caught last summer was carrying eggs, and we returned her to the water so her eggs could hatch. Most females with eggs stay in the deeper, saltier water at the ocean's edge rather than in the marshes.

The young blue crabs, and most other young crustaceans, hatch into larvae that look very different from their parents. The tiny blue crab babies are hardly bigger than a speck of dust. They are transparent and look like they are all head and tail. These larvae swim near the surface of the sea, and grow a new and bigger shell every few days. They soon change in shape so that they can either swim or crawl around on the bottom. Then they molt again and look like tiny adult crabs. After that their appearance does not change, but they continue to molt every twenty or thirty days as they grow.

As blue crabs become older, some move into shallower waters. The males in particular go into creeks and marshes, sometimes all the way to the freshwater streams and rivers. Keith and I caught ninety-two blue crabs in the shallow creek of the tide marsh last summer. Eighty-seven of those crabs were males, and only five were females.

Gulls find and eat many blue crabs. They easily catch crabs that hide in puddles at low tide. Other predators are raccoons, alligators, and people. If caught, the crabs sometimes drop off a leg or claw to escape. Seven of the blue crabs that Keith and I caught were missing a claw.

Crabs are able to replace their lost limbs. If a leg or claw is seriously injured, the crab drops it off. The opening that is left near the body closes to prevent the loss of blood. Soon a new limb begins growing at the break. The next time the crab molts, the tiny limb's covering is cast off, too, and the crab then has a new usable leg or claw. The new limb is smaller than the lost one. But by the time the crab molts two or three more times, the new leg or claw will be normal size.

Many fishermen catch crabs to sell. Most are caught in wire traps or with baited lines during the summer while the crabs are active. In the winter, the fishermen drag big nets through the mud for the dormant crabs. Commercial fishermen catch a lot of crabs, sometimes more than 50 million pounds in a year. And many other crabs are caught by weekend fishermen who crab for fun and food.

The blue crab has a scientific name, just like all other living things. Its name is *Callinectes sapidus*. In the Latin language *Callinectes* means "beautiful swimmer," and *sapidus* means "delicious." I think that scientists gave the blue crab a very appropriate name.

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### **Reading Passage [12]**

#### **HUNGRY SPIDER AND THE TURTLE (Description of Story)\***

"Hungry Spider and the Turtle" is a West African folktale that humorously depicts hunger and the custom of hospitality through the actions and conversations of the title characters.

Spider and Turtle live in different countries. They first meet when Turtle, famished from traveling a long way from home, comes upon Spider's house. While Spider is well known among his neighbors for his great appetite and his greediness, Turtle, being a stranger, believes Spider's offer of a meal to be sincere. It becomes clear that Spider wants all the food for himself and that his gesture of hospitality is mere show so that people will not speak badly of him. Turtle realizes that he has been tricked out of having any food but doesn't let on that he knows. He suavely concurs with Spider that it was a fine meal; and as Turtle leaves, he assures Spider of similar hospitality if Spider ever visits in his country.

In time, the gluttonous Spider finds himself a long way from home in Turtle's country. Now it is Turtle's turn to use local custom as a camouflage for true intent. He repays Spider's gesture of hospitality and Spider gets the meal that he deserves.

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*Question 1 refers to Nutting [1], Treed [2]*

1. Why does Willy take a shortcut through the forest?
  - A. He wants to get home before dark.
  - B. He is chasing some squirrels.
  - C. He wants to work on his tracking skills.
  - D. He is in a hurry to climb a tree.

*Question 2 refers to Nutting [1], Treed [2]*

2. How does Willy mark his path through the forest?
  - A. By leaving a trail of nuts
  - B. By cutting the bark of tree trunks
  - C. By painting lines on trees
  - D. By making piles of leaves

*Question 3 refers to Nutting [1], Treed [2]*

3. What is the speaker in the poem describing?
  - A. What it is like to live in a tree

- B. Reasons for climbing up a tree
- C. What things look like from a tree
- D. Fear of climbing back down a tree

*Question 4 refers to Nutting [1], Treed [2]*

4. On page 2, the author of the story says that Willy hears only " **eerie** silence." This means that Willy
- A. finds the silence strange and frightening
  - B. believes the silence will go away soon
  - C. wonders what causes the silence
  - D. feels alone in the silence

*Question 5 refers to Nutting [1], Treed [2]*

5. On page 3, the author of the story says that Willy "**cleared** the squirrel's hole right down to the bottom." This means that Willy
- A. dug deep into the hole
  - B. looked into the hole as far as he could
  - C. poked a stick in the hole
  - D. took all of the nuts from the hole

*Question 6 refers to Reading Passage [3]*

6. Which of the following lessons is most important to the story?
- A. People need to work together in an emergency.
  - B. Oil spills need to be cleaned up by experts.
  - C. Animals and people need to take baths.
  - D. Children need to play baseball to make friends.

*Question 7 refers to Reading Passage [3]*

7. Why does Rosa return to the school yard?
- A. She has forgotten her homework assignment.
  - B. She wants to play baseball with her friends.
  - C. She needs to get help for the ducks.
  - D. She wants to show her teacher a duck.

*Question 8 refers to Reading Passage [3]*

8. When Rosa tiptoes to the ducks and whispers to them, it shows that she
- A. thinks that something might be wrong
  - B. likes to walk and speak quietly
  - C. does not want to wake up the ducks
  - D. wants to tell the ducks a story

*Question 9 refers to Reading Passage [3]*

9. What does the word "pleading" mean, as it is used in the sentence below?  
*"Ducks," she said again, her eyes pleading.*
- A. Yelling
  - B. Begging
  - C. Looking
  - D. Blinking

*Question 10 refers to Reading Passage [3]*

10. When one of the workers speaks to her, why does Rosa feel proud?
- A. She has learned English.
  - B. The ducks understand her.
  - C. She has saved the ducks.
  - D. She is a good baseball player.

*Question 11 refers to Reading Passage [3]*

11. When Rosa plays baseball at the end of the story, what does it show?
- A. She likes the gym teacher.
  - B. She has made new friends.
  - C. She misses the ducks.
  - D. She obeys her mother.

*Question 12 refers to Reading Passage [4]*

12. Which best describes the beetle's character?
- A. Greedy
  - B. Well-mannered
  - C. Helpful
  - D. Boastful

*Question 13 refers to Reading Passage [4]*

13. Which of the following best describes the parrot?
- A. Wise
  - B. Royal
  - C. Quiet
  - D. Polite

*Question 14 refers to Reading Passage [4]*

14. The beetle chooses green and gold for the colors of her coat because they are
- A. unusual colors
  - B. her favorite colors
  - C. the colors the rat wanted
  - D. the colors of her world

*Question 15 refers to Reading Passage [5]*

15. This passage is mostly about the
- A. hardships of ocean travel in the nineteenth century
  - B. struggles of the early immigrants entering America
  - C. many opportunities to make money in America
  - D. effect of immigration on European countries

*Question 16 refers to Reading Passage [5]*

16. What did the immigrants dislike most about their trip to America?
- A. Seeing Ellis Island for the first time
  - B. Leaving their native countries

- C. Living conditions aboard the boat
- D. Letting the Americans off the boat first

*Question 17 refers to Reading Passage [5]*

17. What most worried the immigrants about the medical examinations?
- A. They did not want to be sent to the hospital.
  - B. They could not afford to pay the doctors.
  - C. They did not want to be deported.
  - D. They were too seasick to stand in line.

*Question 18 refers to Reading Passage [5]*

18. Ellis Island was called "the doorway to America" because it
- A. was the place most immigrants had to pass through before entering the United States
  - B. had a large and famous entranceway that immigrants walked through
  - C. was the only port in the United States where foreign ships could dock safely
  - D. was actually a large ship that carried the immigrants to the United States

*Question 19 refers to Reading Passage [6]*

19. According to the passage, what was the purpose of the space station *Mir* program?
- A. To learn how the body reacts to long-term travel in space
  - B. To observe how people from different cultures live together
  - C. To see what the seasons look like from outer space
  - D. To take pictures of the Earth and of water currents

*Question 20 refers to Reading Passage [6]*

20. During her time on *Mir*, what did Shannon Lucid do to stay fit?
- A. She studied the effects of weightlessness.
  - B. She read pioneer stories.
  - C. She exercised on a treadmill.
  - D. She experimented with growing wheat.

*Question 21 refers to Reading Passage [6]*

21. What did Shannon Lucid miss while in space?
- A. Eating her favorite snacks
  - B. Riding a stationary bicycle
  - C. Talking to her family
  - D. Feeling the sun and the wind

*Question 22 refers to Reading Passage [6]*

22. What surprised people when Shannon Lucid returned to Earth?
- A. She wanted to eat gooey desserts and go skating.
  - B. She still wanted to exercise on a treadmill.
  - C. She walked off the space shuttle on her own.
  - D. She still felt she had been born too late.

*Question 23 refers to Reading Passage [6]*

23. Why did Shannon Lucid think it was remarkable that she and the Russian cosmonauts became friends?
- A. They lived in a very small space station.
  - B. Their countries had once been enemies.
  - C. The time they spent on *Mir* was not very long.
  - D. There was not enough food for all of them.

*Question 24 refers to Reading Passage [7]*

24. The main problem Cory faced was
- A. convincing Elisa to keep her coat on
  - B. finding a good hiding place from Minnie
  - C. getting across the ice with Elisa before dark
  - D. pulling Minnie out of the icy waters

*Question 25 refers to Reading Passage [7]*

25. When Cory found out what had happened to Minnie, he
- A. blamed Elisa for not watching Minnie
  - B. told Elisa not to try to get Minnie by herself
  - C. sent Elisa home to get help for Minnie
  - D. warned Elisa that Minnie might die

*Question 26 refers to Reading Passage [7]*

26. This story could best be described as a
- A. modern-day fairy tale
  - B. mystery with a moral
  - C. real-life adventure
  - D. science-fiction piece

*Question 27 refers to Reading Passage [8]*

27. This article mostly describes how
- A. the wombat's special body parts help it to grow and live
  - B. highway signs help to save the wombat
  - C. the wombat is like the koala and the North American badger
  - D. wombats feed and raise their young

*Question 28 refers to Reading Passage [8]*

28. Where do wombats live?
- A. North America
  - B. Greenland
  - C. Australia
  - D. Africa

*Question 29 refers to Reading Passage [8]*

29. Where do wombats usually live?
- A. Along highways
  - B. Inside tree trunks
  - C. On high tree branches
  - D. In underground burrows

*Question 30 refers to Reading Passage [8]*

30. Why are wombats not often seen by people?
- A. Wombats look too much like koalas.
  - B. Wombats usually are active at night.
  - C. There are not enough wombat-crossing signs.
  - D. Wombats are difficult to see in trees.

*Question 31 refers to Reading Passage [8]*

31. To get food, the wombat uses its
- A. nose
  - B. ears
  - C. claws
  - D. pouch

*Question 32 refers to Reading Passage [8]*

32. What would a wombat probably do if it met a person?
- A. Try to attack the person.
  - B. Run away from the person.
  - C. Growl at the person.
  - D. Beg for food from the person.

*Question 33 refers to Reading Passage [9]*

33. Which best describes Jason's father?
- A. Strict and unwilling to listen to Jason
  - B. Understanding and patient with Jason
  - C. Curious and puzzled by the empty box
  - D. Angry and sad that Jason hid

*Question 34 refers to Reading Passage [9]*

34. When Megan spoke to Jason in the tall weeds, she was concerned that
- A. she wouldn't get enough presents
  - B. her dad wouldn't get back in time for the party
  - C. something was wrong with Jason
  - D. the puppy was missing from the box

*Question 35 refers to Reading Passage [9]*

35. What does Megan say in the story that shows how she felt about Jason's getting a gift on her birthday?
- A. "Jason, Jason, I'm six years old!"
  - B. "Are you OK?"
  - C. "Let's see what Dad wants."
  - D. "Isn't he wonderful, Jason?"

*Question 36 refers to Reading Passage [9]*

36. Jason's problem could have been prevented if
- A. his mother had not warned him to stay away from the barn



- B. he had not let the puppy play along the road
- C. his curiosity had not led him to open the box
- D. he had not wanted a puppy of his own so badly

*Question 37 refers to Reading Passage [9]*

37. Jason probably would have felt better at the birthday party if
- A. the box had been put in the backyard
  - B. the puppy had not run out of the barn
  - C. the party had lasted longer
  - D. he had not hidden in the tall weeds

*Question 38 refers to Reading Passage [10]*

38. You would probably read this article if you wanted to know how the colonists
- A. cooked their food
  - B. traveled in the winter
  - C. washed their clothes
  - D. kept warm in cold weather

*Question 39 refers to Reading Passage [10]*

39. A colonist would probably have used a foot stove when
- A. going on a trip
  - B. sleeping in bed
  - C. sitting by the fireplace
  - D. working around the house

*Question 40 refers to Reading Passage [10]*

40. In writing this article, the author mostly made use of
- A. broad ideas
  - B. specific details
  - C. important questions
  - D. interesting characters

*Question 41 refers to Reading Passage [11]*

41. According to the passage, what do blue crabs have in common with all other arthropods?
- A. They have a skeleton on the outside of their bodies.
  - B. They hatch out of a shell-like pod.
  - C. They live in the shallow waters of North America.
  - D. They are delicious to eat.

*Question 42 refers to Reading Passage [11]*

42. The growth of a blue crab larva into a full-grown blue crab is most like the development of
- A. a human baby into a teen-ager
  - B. an egg into a chicken
  - C. a tadpole into a frog
  - D. a seed into a tree

*Question 43 refers to Reading Passage [11]*

43. Just after molting, how does a blue crab increase in size?
- A. Its body absorbs water.
  - B. It drops off its legs and grows new ones.
  - C. Its shell grows the way human bones do.
  - D. It eats large quantities of food.

*Question 44 refers to Reading Passage [11]*

44. By saying that the blue crab's shell is a strong armor, the author suggests that the shell
- A. contains metal similar to that worn by King Arthur's knights
  - B. protects the blue crab from attacks by other animals
  - C. has strong muscles like those of professional wrestlers
  - D. consists of a number of heavy plates

*Question 45 refers to Reading Passage [11]*

45. The author of the article helps you to learn about blue crabs by
- A. explaining why they are an endangered species
  - B. comparing them to other arthropods
  - C. discussing their place in the food chain
  - D. providing details about their unique characteristics

*Question 46 refers to Reading Passage [12]*

46. Why did Spider invite Turtle to share his food?
- A. To amuse himself
  - B. To be kind and helpful
  - C. To have company at dinner
  - D. To appear generous

*Question 47 refers to Reading Passage [12]*

47. Which best describes Spider's character?
- A. Patient
  - B. Friendly
  - C. Selfish
  - D. Angry

*Question 48 refers to Reading Passage [12]*

48. When Turtle remains quiet about his mistreatment by Spider, the author wants you to
- A. believe Turtle is afraid
  - B. have sympathy for Turtle
  - C. feel dislike for Turtle
  - D. think Turtle deserved no dinner

*Question 49 refers to Reading Passage [12]*

49. Spider's behavior during the first part of the story is most like that of
- A. mothers protecting their children
  - B. thieves robbing banks
  - C. runners losing races
  - D. people not sharing their wealth

*Question 50 refers to Reading Passage [12]*

50. Spider's visit to Turtle in the second part of the story mainly shows that
- A. Turtle could treat Spider the same way
  - B. Spider could float on the water
  - C. Spider could get a free meal
  - D. Turtle lived in a small house

*Question 51 refers to Reading Passage [12]*

51. The final sentence of the story is: "People always say that one good meal deserves another." The author uses this sentence as a way of saying that
- A. Turtle and Spider both were good cooks
  - B. Turtle should not have invited Spider to dinner
  - C. Spider earned what Turtle did to him
  - D. Spider should have cooked what Turtle liked to eat