

Why do moles spend most of their time underground? This Native American selection tells a story to explain the mole's habits. Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

Why Mole Lives Underground

retold by Josepha Sherman

In the long-ago days, Mole lived on the surface of the land with the other animals. In those days, his paws could bend back and forth, just like a person's hands, and his coat was a lovely white. He was very proud of that coat and those paws.

Oho, but up in the sky, Sun was thinking, "I'm bored. I'm tired of living up here by myself. I think I'll try rolling along the ground instead."

So just at sunrise, down came Sun. Only Mole heard her words, and only Mole saw her fall. "No, no, no!" he cried. "You mustn't do this. You will burn up all the plants and animals."

But Sun wouldn't listen. So Mole did the only thing he could: He ran to catch her, holding her up with all his strength.

"Help me!" Mole shouted to the other animals. "Hurry!"

⑥ All the birds and beasts hurried to help him. They pushed and they pushed. Together they gave Sun such a mighty shove that she went soaring back into the sky.

"Those animals are nasty and rude," Sun decided. "I will stay up here where I belong."

And so it was. But Mole's lovely white coat had been scorched quite black by Sun's heat. At first he was very sad. But as he looked at himself in a pool, Mole saw that this new color was every bit as pretty.

Ah, but Mole's paws, which had once bent back and forth, could no longer move so easily. They had been bent back forever by Sun's weight. At first Mole was very sad about that, too. But then he started to think.

"This is a good thing after all. Now I can dig more easily in the earth. Which is just what I will do right now."

"But where are you going?" the other animals asked. "Don't leave. You are a hero."

"Maybe I am, maybe I'm not," Mole said. "But that bright light from Sun hurt my eyes. Thank you, I've had enough of her for a while."

So Mole went to live in the nice, cool earth, where his dark coat fit right in, where his bent-back paws could easily dig, and where the darkness didn't hurt his eyes.

Mole was happy down there. And to this day, his children are happy there, too.

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| <p>1. What is the purpose of the first paragraph in this selection?</p> <p>A to describe the setting</p> <p>B to introduce the main character</p> <p>C to summarize the main idea</p> <p>D to predict the conclusion</p>
<p>2. Why did Sun want to roll on the ground?</p> <p>A She wanted to burn the plants on the ground.</p> <p>B She became too heavy for the sky to hold her.</p> <p>C She saw Mole running on the surface of the land.</p> <p>D She was bored living alone in the sky.</p>
<p>3. Paragraph 6 says that the animals “gave Sun such a mighty shove that she went soaring back into the sky.” What is the meaning of <i>soaring</i>?</p> <p>A shining brightly</p> <p>B flying high</p> <p>C burning quickly</p> <p>D crying loudly</p> | <p>4. What is the result of Sun’s thinking that the animals were nasty and rude?</p> <p>A She stays up in the sky.</p> <p>B She makes it rain.</p> <p>C She turns animals black.</p> <p>D She causes heat waves.</p>
<p>5. Why did Mole’s fur turn black?</p> <p>A He rolled on the ground.</p> <p>B He fell into the pool.</p> <p>C He was burned by the sun.</p> <p>D He crawled into a hole in the ground.</p>
<p>6. Why did Mole like his dark hole in the earth?</p> <p>A The light from Sun hurt his eyes.</p> <p>B He could store his food there.</p> <p>C He could hide from animals.</p> <p>D The hole was a good place to think.</p> |
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7. What is a lesson that the reader can learn from this selection?
- A Do not try to catch things that are too heavy.
 - B It is great to be a hero.
 - C White fur does not last forever.
 - D People should make the most of what they have.

End of Set

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Answers to

Grade 3 Reading Comprehension Sample Items

Selection Title	Question Number	Correct Answer	Category	Thinking Skill	Objective Number
Why Mole Lives Underground	1	B	Cognition	Analyzing	2.04
Why Mole Lives Underground	2	D	Cognition	Knowledge	2.02
Why Mole Lives Underground	3	B	Cognition	Analyzing	1.03
Why Mole Lives Underground	4	A	Interpretation	Analyzing	2.04
Why Mole Lives Underground	5	C	Cognition	Knowledge	2.02
Why Mole Lives Underground	6	A	Cognition	Knowledge	2.02
Why Mole Lives Underground	7	D	Interpretation	Generating	2.04