

# Story Sleuth

Reading Comprehension

**5<sup>th</sup>**  
Grade



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*A passage from*

# *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*

*Written and Illustrated  
by Beatrix Potter*



**Once** upon a time there were four little Rabbits, and their names were Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, and Peter. They lived with their Mother in a sand-bank, underneath the root of a very big fir-tree.

“Now my dears,” said old Mrs. Rabbit one morning, “you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden: your Father had an accident there; he was put in a pie by Mrs. McGregor.”

“Now run along, and don't get into mischief. I am going out.” Then old Mrs. Rabbit took a basket and her umbrella, and went through the wood to the baker's. She bought a loaf of brown bread and five currant buns.

Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cottontail, who were good little bunnies, went down the lane to gather blackberries. But Peter, who was very naughty, ran straight away to Mr. McGregor's garden, and squeezed under the gate!

First he ate some lettuces and some French beans; and then he ate some radishes; and then, feeling rather sick, he went to look for some parsley.

But round the end of a cucumber frame, whom should he meet but Mr. McGregor! Mr. McGregor was on his hands and knees planting out young cabbages, but he jumped up and ran after Peter, waving a rake and calling out, “Stop thief!”

*What is the main idea, or theme, of this passage?*

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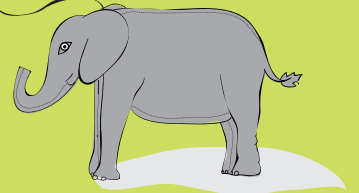


An excerpt from

# The Story of a Stuffed Elephant

by Laura Lee Hope

For Sale



"Oh, how large he is!"

"Isn't he? And such wonderfully strong legs!"

"See his trunk, too! Isn't it cute! And he is well stuffed! This is really one of the best toys that ever came into our shop, Geraldine; don't you think so?"

"Yes, Angelina. I must call father to come and look at him. He will make a lovely present for some boy or girl--I mean this Stuffed Elephant will make a lovely present, not our father!" and Miss Angelina Mugg smiled at her sister across the big packing box of Christmas toys they were opening in their father's store.

"Oh, no! Of course we wouldn't want father to be given away as a toy!" laughed Geraldine. "But this Stuffed Elephant--oh, I just love him!"

Miss Geraldine Mugg caught up the rather large toy animal and hugged it tightly in her arms.

"Be careful!" called her sister. "You may break him!"

"Oh, he's just a Stuffed Elephant!" laughed Geraldine. "I mean he hasn't any works inside him to wind up. He's just full of cotton! But I am beginning to like him more than I care for some of the toys that do wind up. I almost wish I were small again, so I could have this Elephant for myself!"

"He is nice," admitted Angelina.

"Well, I'm glad they like me," thought the Stuffed Elephant to himself, for just now he was not allowed to speak out loud or move around, as the Make Believe toys could do at certain times. But these times were when no eyes of boys, girls, men or women were looking.

## *What do you think?*

1. What are Geraldine and Angelina doing when the story begins?

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2. What does Geraldine mean when she says there are "no works inside" the stuffed elephant?

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3. Why do you think the toys only move around and speak aloud when no one is around to see?

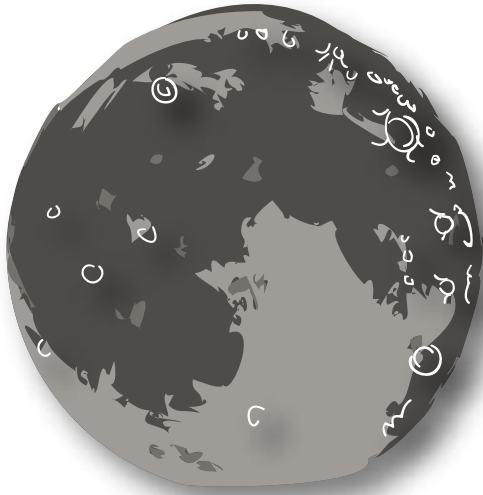
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# Find the Main Idea

Find the main idea in the paragraph below. Write the main idea in your own words in the space provided. Then, write a concluding sentence for this paragraph.



Even though we can clearly see the moon at night, it is about 238, 857 miles away from the Earth!

However, the moon seems very close by when you consider that the sun is about 92,955,817 miles away. Venus, the most visible planet, is 162 million miles away

from Earth when it arrives at the furthest point along its orbit. Orion, the furthest constellation you can see without a telescope, is 32,600 light years away. A light year is the distance light travels within one year. One light year is equal to over five trillion miles!

**Main idea:**

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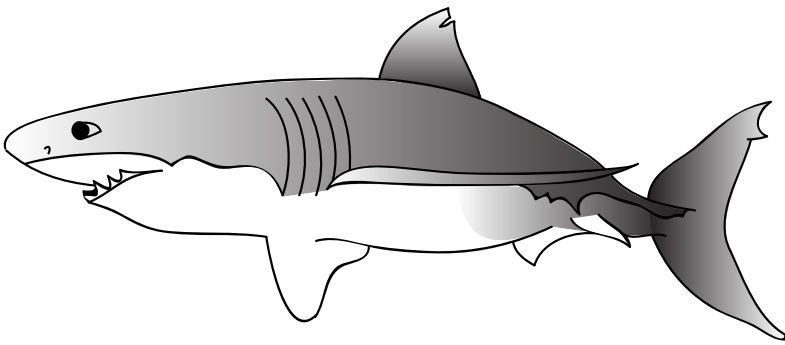
**Concluding sentence:**

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# Find the Main Idea

Find the main idea in the paragraph below. Write the main idea in your own words in the space provided. Then, write a concluding sentence for this paragraph.



You probably know sharks have very sharp teeth, but did you know they never run out of them? If a shark loses a tooth, another moves forward from within the

shark's jaw, where it keeps a nearly unlimited supply of replacement teeth. This way, it's almost impossible for a shark to end up without a full set of teeth. This is a phenomenon unique to the shark. No other animal in the world has teeth quite like the shark's. A shark can go through as many as 20,000 teeth in its lifetime!

**Main idea:**

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**Concluding sentence:**

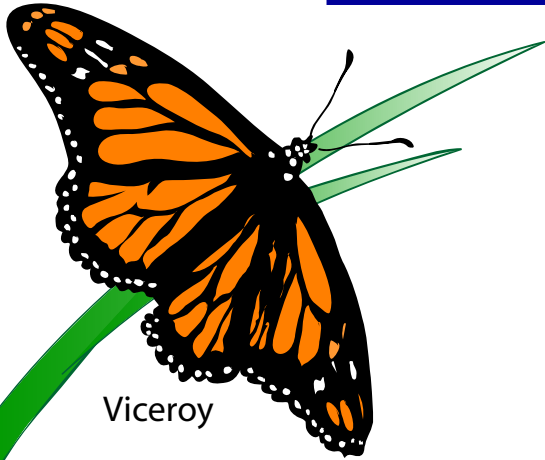
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# Find the Main Idea

Find the main idea in the paragraph below. Write the main idea in your own words in the space provided. Then, write a concluding sentence for this paragraph.



Viceroy

You know that butterflies are insects that glide through the air on colorful wings. Did you know they are also masters of disguise? For example, the Viceroy butterfly has evolved to look almost exactly like the monarch, a poisonous butterfly that predators know to avoid. Though the

Viceroy itself is not poisonous, birds and other predators steer clear, mistaking it for the Monarch. The Buckeye sports “eyespot”, target-shaped spots resembling eyes, on the tips of its wings. Predators will aim for an eyespot, believing it to be the head of the Buckeye, but will instead end up with just a wing tip, allowing the Buckeye to escape.

**Main idea:**

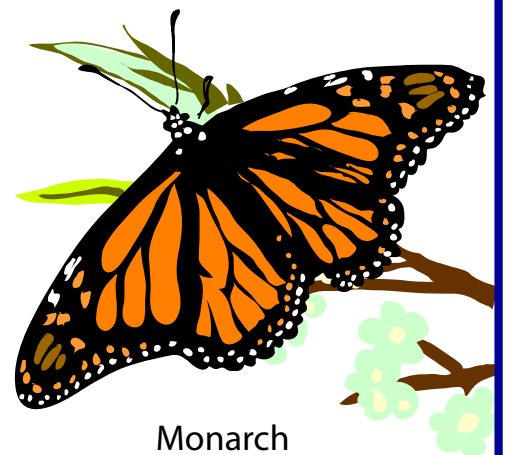
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**Concluding sentence:**

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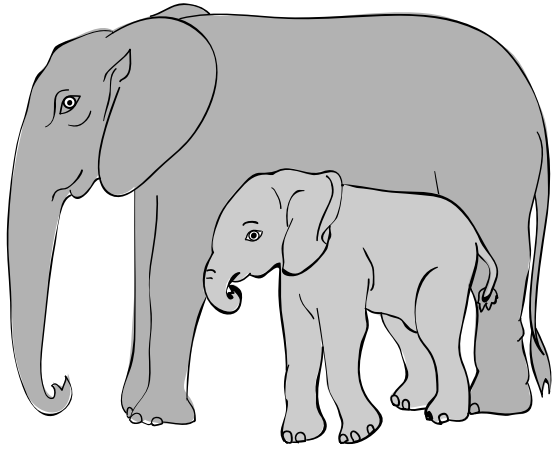
Monarch

## Find the Main Idea

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Find the main idea in the paragraph below. Write the main idea in your own words in the space provided. Then, write a concluding sentence for this paragraph.

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Elephants are the largest living land mammals. The Asian Elephant, also known as the Indian Elephant, can weigh up to 11,000 pounds. The African Elephant is even bigger, weighing as much as 20,000

pounds. The elephant's gestation period is 22 months, the longest of any mammal, because baby elephants weigh an average of 260 pounds at birth. The largest elephant ever measured was 13 feet tall and weighed 24,000 pounds!

**Main idea:**

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**Concluding sentence:**

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# THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD

By Rudyard Kipling



Long, long ago, the mighty Elephant had no trunk. His nose was short, and only as big as a boot! But the Elephant's child, just a baby Elephant, was very curious and always asked silly questions: "Aunt Ostrich, why do your tail feathers grow so tall? ... Uncle Giraffe, what makes your skin so spotty? ... Miss Hippo, how does your mouth open so wide?"

One fine morning the curious baby Elephant asked, "What does the Crocodile have for dinner?" All together everybody yelled, "HUSH!" in a dreadful tone, and they shushed and shooed him away angrily. But the baby Elephant did not understand why. He was still curious!

Then the baby Elephant came upon the magnificent Kolokolo bird and he sighed, "My family has shushed and shooed me away, but I still want to know what the Crocodile eats for dinner!" The Kolokolo Bird answered, sadly, "Go to the banks of the great green river if you want to find out." After a long and tiresome search, the baby Elephant found the Crocodile by the river bank. "I have been looking for you, Mr. Crocodile!" he said with excitement, "Will you please tell me what you have for dinner?" The Crocodile grinned wide, and he said, "Come closer, baby Elephant, I'll whisper it to you." The baby Elephant bent his head down to the Crocodile's large, toothy mouth. "I think," growled the Crocodile, "Today I will begin with a baby Elephant!" And suddenly the Crocodile caught him by his little nose. The baby Elephant cried out through his pinched nose, "Led go! You're hurdig be!" Stubbornly, he sat back and began to pull as hard as he could. As he pulled, and leaned back, his nose began to stretch! They both pulled and pulled until the baby Elephant's nose was almost five feet long. Finally the Crocodile let go of his nose with a plop. The poor baby Elephant was left with a very sore and very long nose! At first, all the animals made fun of his great, ugly nose. But then he found many uses for it. He could pick fruit from high treetops, brush away flies, and even breathe when he was underwater!

And that is how the Elephant got his trunk.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Why did everyone tell the baby Elephant to be quiet?

- A. They wanted to sleep.
- B. They were afraid the Crocodile would hear him.
- C. They were tired of him asking so many questions.
- D. They wanted to talk to each other.

2. Why was the Kolokolo bird sad when he told the baby Elephant to go to the river?

- A. He was having a bad day.
- B. All Kolokolo birds are sad.
- C. He was tired of answering questions.
- D. He knew that the Crocodile might try to eat the baby Elephant.

3. According to the story, after the baby Elephant's nose was stretched, what could he do?

- A. Pick fruit, brush away flies and breathe underwater
- B. Catch the Kolokolo bird
- C. Blow water on Aunt Ostrich
- D. Cover his eyes with his nose.

## WORD SEARCH

K T Z C K T E R K A M J L Q E	<b>Word List</b>
Z E I U J F N U H A S U S S L	Crocodile
A P Y R T X I E G H F C H Q I	Curious
M A A I E C F N M D U U J E D	Dreadful
Z E H O P S I Q A E S U Z A O	Excitement
B N R U J F O E V H T A H O C	Fine
Q A L S I E R M E S W I S C O	Kolokolo
D N F C M D L D E K I W C M R	Magnificent
Z R E K O L O K O L O W S X C	Mighty
R N Y L N R O B B U T S C L E	River
T E M I Y W N Y T H G I M G C	Shushed
A K V R W W Y L V I P J S D B	Stubbornly
T M G I U N O D B E N W D E W	Tiresome
U T T E R B T Q G X B F Y T A	
A T U Q H C S J V M T C H D W	

# HOW THE WHALE GOT HIS THROAT

by Rudyard Kipling

Once upon a time there was a giant Whale who lived deep in the sea. He was always hungry, and more than anything he loved to eat fish of all different kinds: mackerel, salmon, tuna, crab, octopus, squid, eel and more. He ate and ate, until there was only one fish left in the whole sea!

Luckily, the Last Fish in the sea was a clever one. Before the hungry Whale could chase him, the Last Fish took a bow and asked, "Oh, mighty Whale, have you ever tasted man?"

"No," said the Whale, who was a bit confused, "What is it like?"

"Oh, it's delicious," said the clever Last Fish, "And it will really fill you up. I saw one just the other day sitting on a raft in the middle of the sea. He is a shipwrecked sailor. Go and find him!"

So the Whale swam and swam, until he came upon a raggedy sailor, alone on a wooden raft. The hungry Whale crept up, opened his mouth wide and swallowed the sailor, raft and all. But it was not as the clever Last Fish had said—this man was not delicious at all! He kicked and danced, pranced and punched at the inside of the Whale's belly.

Annoyed, the Whale swam around trying to find that clever Last Fish, but he'd already made his escape. "This man is making me hiccup," the Whale said to himself, "What should I do?" Suddenly, from inside his belly the Whale heard a man's yell: "Take me home, to Albion, or I'll kick as hard as ever!"

The poor, hiccupping Whale had no choice but to swim the man home. After he escaped, the man lived happily ever after. And so did the Whale, but he had forgotten about the raft that was lodged in his throat. It was like a permanent sift! From then on, it prevented the Whale from eating anything except tiny fish.

And that was how the Whale got his throat.

## Activities

Put the events in the order in which they happened.

- |  | #     | Order |
|--|-------|-------|
| A. The Whale met the Last Fish                     | _____ |       |
| B. The Whale spit out the man.                     | _____ |       |
| C. The man's raft was stuck in the Whale's throat. | _____ |       |
| D. The Whale ate almost all the fish in the sea.   | _____ |       |
| E. The Whale swallowed the sailor.                 | _____ |       |

Who asked the Whale if he had tasted a man? \_\_\_\_\_

Who danced and kicked in the Whale's stomach? \_\_\_\_\_

Who swam the sailor home? \_\_\_\_\_

At the end of the story, who could eat only small fish? \_\_\_\_\_

## WORD SEARCH

D T Y Z J U Z Q U V N M E D I  
E F V D B B B N O A A J E U E  
Y G Y O E J E R J O G P W O X  
O U O T T G Z Z S I A F V A C  
N X Q D G S G G C C S D P L E  
N C L E V E R A S D J R W B D  
A O H L K U I E R D E H U I Z  
A O R I E I D P Q V A Q U O K  
E G E C R I X D E L I U M N R  
E J R I H Q Z N E D H H O U H  
S K I O S I T D E S U F N O C  
M F Y U D E C U X D B T W B B  
T I I S D L K C E R Y K U H D  
Y G D G A X N H U N Y D J W M  
B G O Q F F O A Z P D D N E U

### WORD LIST

Albion  
Annoyed  
Clever  
Confused  
Delicious  
Escaped  
Hiccup  
Prevented  
Raggedy  
Whale

# The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

by L. Frank Baum



“There’s a cyclone coming, Em,” Uncle Henry called to his wife. “I’ll go look after the stock.” Then he ran toward the sheds where the cows and horses were kept.

Aunt Em dropped her work and came to the door. One glance told her of the danger close at hand.

“Quick, Dorothy!” she screamed. “Run for the cellar!”

Toto jumped out of Dorothy’s arms and hid under the bed, and the girl started to get him. Aunt Em, badly frightened, threw open the trap door in the floor and climbed down the ladder into the small, dark hole. Dorothy caught Toto at last and started to follow her aunt. When she was halfway across the room there came a great shriek from the wind, and the house shook so hard that she lost her footing and sat down suddenly upon the floor.

Then a strange thing happened. The house whirled around two or three times and rose slowly through the air. Dorothy felt as if she were going up in a balloon.

In the middle of a cyclone the air is generally still, but the great pressure of the wind on every side of the house raised it up higher and higher, until it was at the very top of the cyclone; and there it remained and was carried miles and miles away as easily as you could carry a feather.

It was very dark, and the wind howled horribly around her, but Dorothy found she was riding quite easily. She felt as if she were being rocked gently, like a baby in a cradle.

Toto did not like it. He ran about the room, now here, now there, barking loudly; but Dorothy sat quite still on the floor and waited to see what would happen.



## Who Was It?

Circle the correct answer.

1. Who went to check the cows and horses?

- A. Dorothy                      B. Toto  
C. Uncle Henry                D. Auntie Em

2. Who hid under the bed?

- A. Dorothy                      B. Toto  
C. Uncle Henry                D. Auntie Em

3. Who sat still on the floor?

- A. Dorothy                      B. Toto  
C. Uncle Henry                D. Auntie Em

## Sequence of Events

The events of the story are mixed up. Put them in the correct order.

Toto ran around the room barking. \_\_\_\_\_

The house rose into the air. \_\_\_\_\_

Uncle Henry saw the cyclone. \_\_\_\_\_

The cyclone hit the house. \_\_\_\_\_

Dorothy caught Toto. \_\_\_\_\_

Auntie Em went into the cellar. \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Comprehension

## All Gold Canyon

By Jack London

The red-coated, many-antlered buck acknowledged the lordship of the spirit of the place and dozed knee-deep in the cool, shaded pool. There seemed no flies to vex him and he was languid with rest. Sometimes his ears moved when the stream awoke and whispered; but they moved lazily, with foreknowledge that it was merely the stream grown garrulous at discovery that it had slept.

But there came a time when the buck's ears lifted and tensed with swift eagerness for sound. His head was turned down the canyon. His sensitive, quivering nostrils scented the air. His eyes could not pierce the green screen through which the stream rippled away, but to his ears came the voice of a man. It was a steady, monotonous, singsong voice. Once the buck heard the harsh clash of metal upon rock. At the sound he snorted with a sudden start that jerked him through the air from water to meadow, and his feet sank into the young velvet, while he pricked his ears and again scented the air. Then he stole across the tiny meadow, pausing once and again to listen, and faded away out of the canyon like a wraith, soft-footed and without sound. 🦌

### VOCABULARY

Circle the word that has a similar meaning to a word in "All Gold Canyon."

#### buck

- A. buffalo
- B. fox
- C. deer
- D. dog

#### acknowledged

- A. recognized
- B. denied
- C. claimed
- D. destroyed

#### vex

- A. guide
- B. hear
- C. see
- D. annoy; irritate

#### languid

- A. energetic and busy
- B. peaceful and relaxed
- C. scared and trembling
- D. hungry and thirsty

#### foreknowledge

- A. fear
- B. laughter
- C. painful movement
- D. knowing ahead of time

#### garrulous

- A. noisy or talkative
- B. mean and hateful
- C. slow and steady
- D. dry and dusty

#### quivering

- A. ugly-colored
- B. quickly moving
- C. large and flat
- D. tired and useless

#### scented

- A. licked
- B. shook
- C. smelled
- D. blew into

#### monotonous

- A. boring; one note
- B. excited
- C. far away
- D. loud

#### singsong

- A. rough
- B. sharp
- C. sound with rhythm
- D. giggly

#### velvet

- A. dry grass
- B. coarse leaves
- C. sticky mud
- D. soft material

#### wraith

- A. bird
- B. bear
- C. ghost
- D. cloud

### WHY?

Circle the correct answer.

Why was the buck standing in the water?

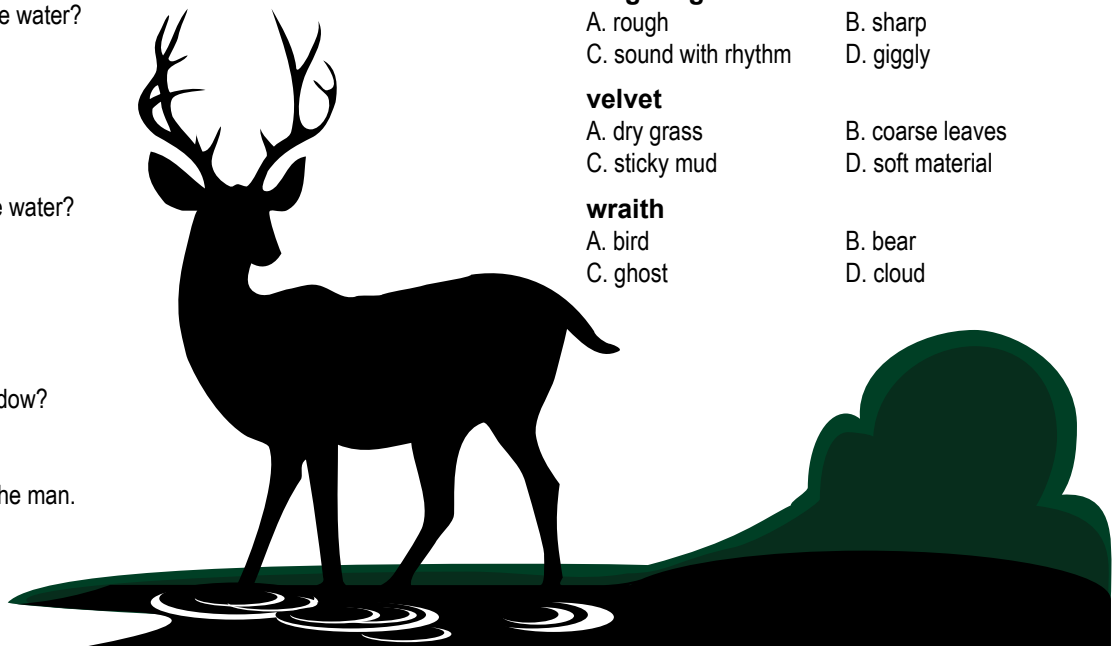
- A. He was taking a bath.
- B. He was resting.
- C. It was hot.
- D. A wolf chased him there.

Why did the buck jump out of the water?

- A. The wolf was gone.
- B. He was hungry.
- C. He saw a man.
- D. He heard a man.

Why did the buck leave the meadow?

- A. He wanted to find food.
- B. He wanted to see the man.
- C. He wanted to get away from the man.
- D. He wanted to find his family.



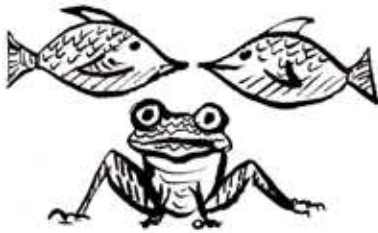
# PANCHATANTRA

The Panchatantra is an ancient collection of Indian animal fables. It is believed that it was first written around 200 B.C. to educate and entertain the children of the royal family. Each tale uses imagery to explain a moral or idea.

In literature, the **theme** is the main idea or moral of a story. Typically, the theme of a story conveys a message or lesson about life. The theme is generally not stated outright, but rather represented by the story's characters and their actions, as well as symbols and motifs.

On a separate sheet of paper describe the theme of this story and how it relates to today.

## The Fish That Were Too Clever



Two fish lived in a pond. Their names were Satabuddhi (having the understanding of a hundred) and Sahasrabuddhi (having the understanding of a thousand). The two of them had a frog for a friend, whose name was Ekabuddhi (having the understanding of one).

For a time they would enjoy friendly conversation on the bank, and then they would return to the water. One day when they had gathered for conversation, some fishermen came by just as the sun was setting. They were carrying nets in their hands and baskets of dead fish on their heads.

When the fishermen saw the pond, they said to one another, "There seem to be a lot of fish in this pond, and the water is very low. Let us come back here tomorrow morning!" After saying this, they went home.

These words struck the three friends like a thunderbolt, and they took counsel with one another.

The frog said, "Oh, my dear Satabuddhi and Sahasrabuddhi, what shall we do? Should we flee, or stay here?"

Hearing this, Sahasrabuddhi laughed and said, "Oh, my friend, don't be afraid of words alone! They probably will not come back. But even if they do come back, I will be able to protect myself and you as well, through the power of my understanding, for I know many pathways through the water."

After hearing this, Satabuddhi said, "Yes, what Sahasrabuddhi says is correct, for one rightly says: Where neither the wind nor the sun's rays have found a way, intelligent understanding will quickly make a path. And also: Everything on earth is subject to the understanding of those with intelligence. Why should one abandon the place of one's birth that has been passed down from generation to generation, just because of words? We must not retreat a single step! I will protect you through the power of my understanding."

The frog said, "I have but one wit, and it is advising me to flee. This very day I shall go with my wife to another pond."

After saying this, as soon as it was night, the frog went to another pond.

Early the next day the fishermen came like servants of the god of death and spread their nets over the pond. All the fish, turtles, frogs, crabs, and other water creatures were caught in the nets and captured, also Satabuddhi and Sahasrabuddhi. Although they fled, and through their knowledge of the various paths escaped they for a while by swimming to and fro, they too, together with their wives, fell into a net and were captured.

That afternoon the fishermen happily set forth toward home. Because of his weight, one of them carried Satabuddhi on his head. They tied Sahasrabuddhi onto a string and dragged him along behind.

The frog Ekabuddhi, who had climbed onto the bank of his pond, said to his wife, "Look, dear! Mr. Hundred-Wit lies on someone's head, and Mr. Thousand-Wit is hanging from a string. But Mr. Single-Wit, my dear, is playing here in the clear water."



# PANCHATANTRA

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On a separate sheet of paper describe the theme of the story and how it relates to today.

## The Foolish Friend



A king, while visiting his wives' apartments, took a monkey from a neighboring stable for a pet. He kept him constantly close at hand for his amusement, for as it is said, parrots, partridges, doves, rams, monkeys, and such creatures are a king's natural companions.

It goes without saying that the monkey, fed on the various dishes that the king gave him, grew large and was given respect by all who surrounded the king. Indeed, the king, due to his love and exceeding trust of the monkey, even gave him a sword to carry.

In the vicinity of the palace the king had a grove artfully planted with many trees of various sorts. Early in the springtime the king noticed how beautiful the grove was. Its blossoms exuded a magnificent fragrance, while swarms of bees sang praise to the god of love. Thus overcome by love, he entered the grove with his favorite wife. He ordered all his servants to wait for him at the entrance.

After pleasantly strolling through and observing the grove, he grew tired and said to his monkey, "I want to sleep a little while in this arbor of flowers. Take care that nothing disturbs me!" Having said this, the king fell asleep.

Presently a bee, pursuing the aroma of the flowers, betel, and musk, flew up and lit on his head. Seeing this, the monkey thought angrily, "What is this? Am I to allow this common creature to bite the king before my very eyes?"

With that he proceeded to drive it away. However, in spite of the monkey's defense, the bee approached the king again and again. Finally, blinded by anger, the monkey drew his sword and struck down the bee with a single blow. However, the same blow also split the king's head.

The queen, who was sleeping next to the king jumped up in terror. Seeing the crime, she said, "Oh, oh, you foolish monkey! What have you done to the king who placed such trust in you?"

The monkey explained how it had happened, but thereafter he was shunned and scorned by everyone. Thus it is said, "Do not choose a fool for a friend, for the king was killed by a monkey."

And I say, "It is better to have a clever enemy than a foolish friend."

# PANCHATANTRA

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## The Broken Pot



In a certain place there lived a Brahman by the name of Svabhâvakripâna, which means "luckless by his very nature." By begging he acquired a quantity of rice gruel, and after he had eaten what he wanted, there was still a potful left. He hung this pot on a nail in the wall above his bed. As night progressed, he could not take his eyes from the pot. All the while he was thinking:

This pot is filled to overflowing with rice gruel. If a famine should come to the land, then I could sell it for a hundred pieces of silver. Then I could buy a pair of goats. They have kids every six months, so I would soon have an entire herd of goats. Then I would trade the goats for cattle. As soon as the cows had calved, I would sell the calves. Then I would trade the cattle for buffalo. And the buffalo for horses. And when the horses foaled, I would own many horses. From their sale I would gain a large amount of gold. With this gold I would buy a house with four buildings in a rectangle.

Then a Brahman would enter my house and give me a very beautiful girl with a large dowry for my wife. She will give birth to a son, and I will give him the name Somasarman. When he is old enough to be bounced on my knee, I will take a book, sit in the horse stall, and read. In the meantime, Somasarman will see me and want to be bounced on my knee. He will climb down from his mother's lap and walk toward me, coming close to the horses hooves. Then, filled with anger, I will shout at my wife, "Take the child! Take the child!"

But she, busy with her housework, will not hear me. So I will jump up and give her a kick!

And, buried in his thoughts, he struck out with his foot, breaking the pot, and painting himself white with the rice gruel that had been in it. Therefore I say:

He who dreams about unrealistic projects for the future will have the same fate as Somasarman's father: He will find himself lying there painted white with rice gruel.

# PANCHATANTRA

The Panchatantra is an ancient collection of Indian animal fables. It is believed that it was first written around 200 B.C. to educate and entertain the children of the royal family. Each tale uses imagery to explain a moral or idea.

In literature, the theme is the main idea or moral of a story. Typically, the theme of a story conveys a message or lesson about life. The theme is generally not stated outright, but rather represented by the story's characters and their actions, as well as symbols and motifs throughout.

On a separate sheet of paper describe the theme of the story and how it relates to today.

## The Gold-Giving Snake



In a certain place there lived a Brahman by the name of Haridatta. He tilled the soil, but his time in the field brought him no harvest. Then one day, as the hottest hours were just over, tormented by the heat, he lay down in the shade of a tree in the middle of his field for a sleep. He saw a frightful snake, decorated with a large hood, crawl from an anthill a little way off, and thought to himself, "This is surely the goddess of the field, and I have not once paid her homage. That is why the field remains barren. I must bring her an offering." After thus thinking it over, he got some milk, poured it into a basin, then went to the anthill, and said, "Oh, protector of this field, for a long time I did not know that you live here. For this reason I have not yet brought you an offering. Please forgive me!"

Having said this, he set forth the milk, and went home. The next day he returned to see what had happened, and he found a dinar (a coin) in the basin. And thus it continued day by day. He brought the snake milk, and always found a dinar there the next morning.

One day the Brahman asked his son to take the milk to the anthill, and he himself went into the village. The son brought the milk, set it there, and returned home. When he came back the next day and found a dinar, he said to himself, "This anthill must be full of gold dinars. I will kill the snake and take them all at once!"

Having decided this, the Brahman's son returned the next day with the milk and a club. As he gave the milk to the snake, he struck her on the head with the club. The snake, as fate willed it, escaped with her life. Filled with rage, she bit the boy with her sharp, poisoned teeth, and the boy fell dead at once. His people built a funeral pyre not far from the field and cremated him.

Two days later his father returned. When he discovered under what circumstances his son had died, he said that justice had prevailed. The next morning, he once again took milk, went to the anthill, and praised the snake with a loud voice. A good while later the snake appeared in the entrance to the anthill, and said, "You come here from greed, letting even your grief for your son pass by. From now on friendship between you and me will no longer be possible. Your son, in his youthful lack of understanding, struck me. I bit him. How can I forget the club's blow? How can you forget the pain and sorrow for your son?" After saying this she gave him a costly pearl for a pearl chain, said, "Do not come back," and disappeared into her cave.

The Brahman took the pearl, cursed his son's lack of understanding, and returned home.



# Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Allan Poe is one America's most famous writers. He wrote short stories and poems often on very dark themes.

In literature, the theme is the main idea or moral of a story. Typically, the theme of a story conveys a message or lesson about life. The theme is generally not stated outright, but rather represented by the story's characters and their actions, as well as symbols and motifs throughout. Read the poem below and describe its theme on a separate sheet of paper.

## Annabel Lee

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea,  
That a maiden there lived whom you may know  
By the name of ANNABEL LEE;  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,  
In this kingdom by the sea;  
But we loved with a love that was more than love-  
I and my Annabel Lee;  
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven  
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling  
My beautiful Annabel Lee;  
So that her highborn kinsman came  
And bore her away from me,  
To shut her up in a sepulchre  
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,  
Went envying her and me-  
Yes!- that was the reason (as all men know,  
In this kingdom by the sea)  
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,  
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love  
Of those who were older than we-  
Of many far wiser than we-  
And neither the angels in heaven above,  
Nor the demons down under the sea,  
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;  
And the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;  
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side  
Of my darling- my darling- my life and my bride,  
In the sepulchre there by the sea,  
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

### vocabulary:

**Seraphs** - heavenly beings; angels or cherubs

**Kinsmen** - one's blood relatives

**Sepulcher** - a tomb

**Dissever** - divide or sever



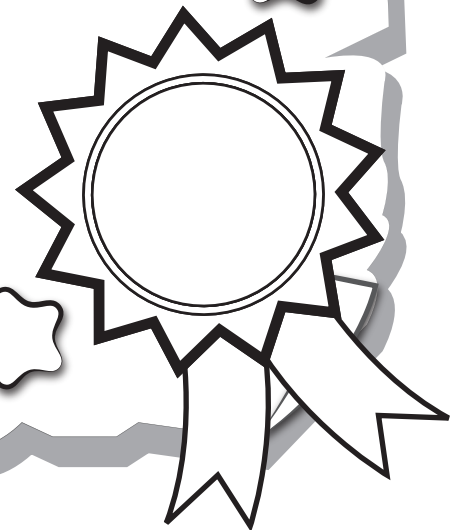




**Great job!**

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# Answer Sheets

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## Story Sleuth: Reading Comprehension

The Elephant's Child  
How the Whale Got His Throat  
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz  
All Gold Canyon

# Answer Sheet

## THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD

By Rudyard Kipling



Long, long ago, the mighty Elephant had no trunk. His nose was short, and only as big as a boot! But the Elephant's child, just a baby Elephant, was very curious and always asked silly questions: "Aunt Ostrich, why do your tail feathers grow so tall? ... Uncle Giraffe, what makes your skin so spotty? ... Miss Hippo, how does your mouth open so wide?"

One fine morning the curious baby Elephant asked, "What does the Crocodile have for dinner?" All together everybody yelled, "HUSH!" in a dreadful tone, and they shushed and shooed him away angrily. But the baby Elephant did not understand why. He was still curious!

Then the baby Elephant came upon the magnificent Kolokolo bird and he sighed, "My family has shushed and shooed me away, but I still want to know what the Crocodile eats for dinner!" The Kolokolo Bird answered, sadly, "Go to the banks of the great green river if you want to find out." After a long and tiresome search, the baby Elephant found the Crocodile by the river bank. "I have been looking for you, Mr. Crocodile!" he said with excitement, "Will you please tell me what you have for dinner?" The Crocodile grinned wide, and he said, "Come closer, baby Elephant, I'll whisper it to you." The baby Elephant bent his head down to the Crocodile's large, toothy mouth. "I think," growled the Crocodile, "Today I will begin with a baby Elephant!" And suddenly the Crocodile caught him by his little nose. The baby Elephant cried out through his pinched nose, "Led go! You're hurdig be!" Stubbornly, he sat back and began to pull as hard as he could. As he pulled, and leaned back, his nose began to stretch! They both pulled and pulled until the baby Elephant's nose was almost five feet long. Finally the Crocodile let go of his nose with a plop. The poor baby Elephant was left with a very sore and very long nose! At first, all the animals made fun of his great, ugly nose. But then he found many uses for it. He could pick fruit from high treetops, brush away flies, and even breathe when he was underwater!

And that is how the Elephant got his trunk.

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Why did everyone tell the baby Elephant to be quiet?

- A. They wanted to sleep.
- B. They were afraid the Crocodile would hear him.
- C. They were tired of him asking so many questions.
- D. They wanted to talk to each other.

2. Why was the Kolokolo bird sad when he told the baby Elephant to go to the river?

- A. He was having a bad day.
- B. All Kolokolo birds are sad.
- C. He was tired of answering questions.
- D. He knew that the Crocodile might try to eat the baby Elephant.

3. According to the story, after the baby Elephant's nose was stretched, what could he do?

- A. Pick fruit, brush away flies and breathe underwater
- B. Catch the Kolokolo bird
- C. Blow water on Aunt Ostrich
- D. Cover his eyes with his nose.

### WORD SEARCH

K T Z C K T E R K A M J L Q E  
Z E T U J F N U H A S U S S L  
A P Y R T X I E G H F C H Q I  
M A A I E C F N M D U U J E D  
Z E H O P S I Q A E S U Z A O  
B N R U J F O E V H T A H O C  
Q A L S I E R M E S W I S C O  
D N F C M D L D E K I W C M R  
Z R E K O L O K O L O W S X C  
R N Y L N R O B B U T S C L E  
T E M I Y W N Y T H G I M G C  
A K V R W W Y L V I P J S D B  
T M G I U N O D B E N W D E W  
U T T E R B T Q G X B F Y T A  
A T U Q H C S J V M T C H D W

**Word List**  
Crocodile  
Curious  
Dreadful  
Excitement  
Fine  
Kolokolo  
Magnificent  
Mighty  
River  
Shushed  
Stubbornly  
Tiresome

# Answer Sheet

## HOW THE WHALE GOT HIS THROAT

by Rudyard Kipling

Once upon a time there was a giant Whale who lived deep in the sea. He was always hungry, and more than anything he loved to eat fish of all different kinds: mackerel, salmon, tuna, crab, octopus, squid, eel and more. He ate and ate, until there was only one fish left in the whole sea!

Luckily, the Last Fish in the sea was a clever one. Before the hungry Whale could chase him, the Last Fish took a bow and asked, "Oh, mighty Whale, have you ever tasted man?"

"No," said the Whale, who was a bit confused, "What is it like?"

"Oh, it's delicious," said the clever Last Fish, "And it will really fill you up. I saw one just the other day sitting on a raft in the middle of the sea. He is a shipwrecked sailor. Go and find him!"

So the Whale swam and swam, until he came upon a raggedy sailor, alone on a wooden raft. The hungry Whale crept up, opened his mouth wide and swallowed the sailor, raft and all. But it was not as the clever Last Fish had said—this man was not delicious at all! He kicked and danced, pranced and punched at the inside of the Whale's belly.

Annoyed, the Whale swam around trying to find that clever Last Fish, but he'd already made his escape. "This man is making me hiccup," the Whale said to himself, "What should I do?" Suddenly, from inside his belly the Whale heard a man's yell: "Take me home, to Albion, or I'll kick as hard as ever!"

The poor, hiccupping Whale had no choice but to swim the man home. After he escaped, the man lived happily ever after. And so did the Whale, but he had forgotten about the raft that was lodged in his throat. It was like a permanent silt! From then on, it prevented the Whale from eating anything except tiny fish.

And that was how the Whale got his throat.

### Activities

Put the events in the order in which they happened.

- |  | #        | Order |
|--|----------|-------|
| A. The Whale met the Last Fish                     | <u>2</u> |       |
| B. The Whale spit out the man.                     | <u>4</u> |       |
| C. The man's raft was stuck in the Whale's throat. | <u>5</u> |       |
| D. The Whale ate almost all the fish in the sea.   | <u>1</u> |       |
| E. The Whale swallowed the sailor.                 | <u>3</u> |       |

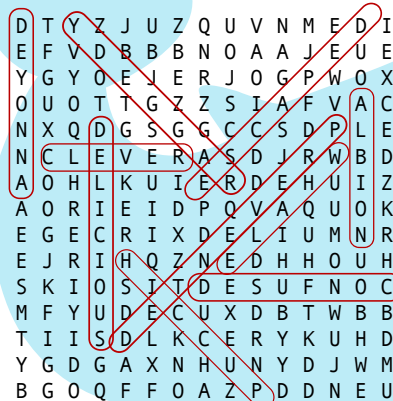
Who asked the Whale if he had tasted a man? the Last Fish

Who danced and kicked in the Whale's stomach? the Sailor

Who swam the sailor home? the Whale

At the end of the story, who could eat only small fish? the Whale

### WORD SEARCH



WORD LIST  
Albion  
Annoyed  
Clever  
Confused  
Delicious  
Escaped  
Hiccup  
Prevented  
Raggedy  
Whale



# Answer Sheet

## The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

by L. Frank Baum



“There’s a cyclone coming, Em,” Uncle Henry called to his wife. “I’ll go look after the stock.” Then he ran toward the sheds where the cows and horses were kept.

Aunt Em dropped her work and came to the door. One glance told her of the danger close at hand.

“Quick, Dorothy!” she screamed. “Run for the cellar!”

Toto jumped out of Dorothy’s arms and hid under the bed, and the girl started to get him. Aunt Em, badly frightened, threw open the trap door in the floor and climbed down the ladder into the small, dark hole. Dorothy caught Toto at last and started to follow her aunt. When she was halfway across the room there came a great shriek from the wind, and the house shook so hard that she lost her footing and sat down suddenly upon the floor.

Then a strange thing happened. The house whirled around two or three times and rose slowly through the air. Dorothy felt as if she were going up in a balloon.

In the middle of a cyclone the air is generally still, but the great pressure of the wind on every side of the house raised it up higher and higher, until it was at the very top of the cyclone; and there it remained and was carried miles and miles away as easily as you could carry a feather.

It was very dark, and the wind howled horribly around her, but Dorothy found she was riding quite easily. She felt as if she were being rocked gently, like a baby in a cradle.

Toto did not like it. He ran about the room, now here, now there, barking loudly; but Dorothy sat quite still on the floor and waited to see what would happen.



### Who Was It?

Circle the correct answer.

1. Who went to check the cows and horses?

- A. Dorothy                      B. Toto  
C. Uncle Henry                D. Auntie Em

2. Who hid under the bed?

- A. Dorothy                      B. Toto  
C. Uncle Henry                D. Auntie Em

3. Who sat still on the floor?

- A. Dorothy                      B. Toto  
C. Uncle Henry                D. Auntie Em

### Sequence of Events

The events of the story are mixed up. Put them in the correct order.

- Toto ran around the room barking.                      6  
The house rose into the air.                                      5  
Uncle Henry saw the cyclone.                                      1  
The cyclone hit the house.                                      4  
Dorothy caught Toto.                                      3  
Auntie Em went into the cellar.                                      2

# Answer Sheet

## Reading Comprehension

### All Gold Canyon

By Jack London

The red-coated, many-antlered buck acknowledged the lordship of the spirit of the place and dozed knee-deep in the cool, shaded pool. There seemed no flies to vex him and he was languid with rest. Sometimes his ears moved when the stream awoke and whispered; but they moved lazily, with foreknowledge that it was merely the stream grown garrulous at discovery that it had slept.

But there came a time when the buck's ears lifted and tensed with swift eagerness for sound. His head was turned down the canyon. His sensitive, quivering nostrils scented the air. His eyes could not pierce the green screen through which the stream rippled away, but to his ears came the voice of a man. It was a steady, monotonous, singsong voice. Once the buck heard the harsh clash of metal upon rock. At the sound he snorted with a sudden start that jerked him through the air from water to meadow, and his feet sank into the young velvet, while he pricked his ears and again scented the air. Then he stole across the tiny meadow, pausing once and again to listen, and faded away out of the canyon like a wraith, soft-footed and without sound. 🦌

#### WHY?

Circle the correct answer.

Why was the buck standing in the water?

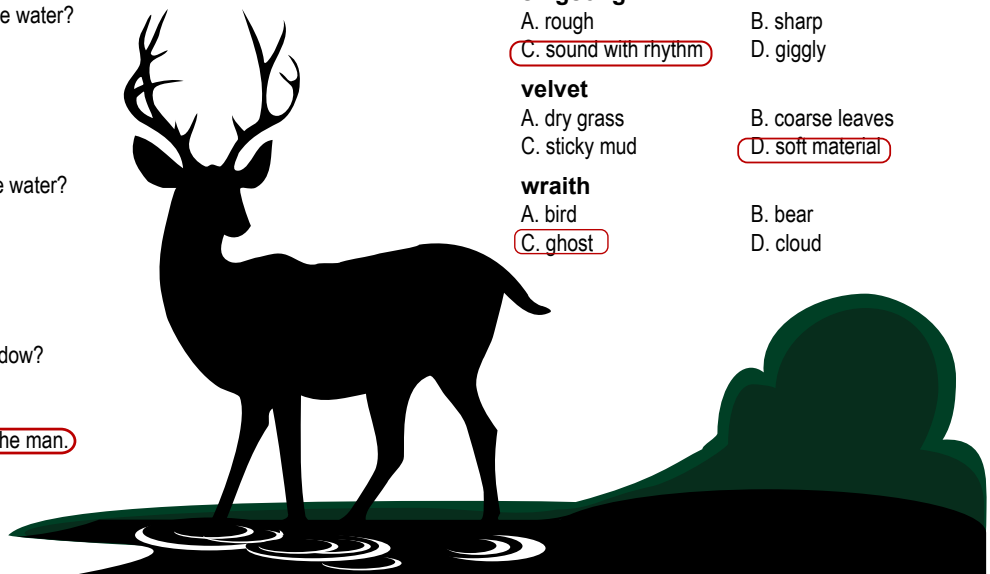
- A. He was taking a bath.
- B. He was resting.
- C. It was hot.
- D. A wolf chased him there.

Why did the buck jump out of the water?

- A. The wolf was gone.
- B. He was hungry.
- C. He saw a man.
- D. He heard a man.

Why did the buck leave the meadow?

- A. He wanted to find food.
- B. He wanted to see the man.
- C. He wanted to get away from the man.
- D. He wanted to find his family.



#### VOCABULARY

Circle the word that has a similar meaning to a word in "All Gold Canyon."

##### buck

- A. buffalo
- C. deer
- B. fox
- D. dog

##### acknowledged

- A. recognized
- C. claimed
- B. denied
- D. destroyed

##### vex

- A. guide
- C. see
- B. hear
- D. annoy; irritate

##### languid

- A. energetic and busy
- C. scared and trembling
- B. peaceful and relaxed
- D. hungry and thirsty

##### foreknowledge

- A. fear
- C. painful movement
- B. laughter
- D. knowing ahead of time

##### garrulous

- A. noisy or talkative
- C. slow and steady
- B. mean and hateful
- D. dry and dusty

##### quivering

- A. ugly-colored
- C. large and flat
- B. quickly moving
- D. tired and useless

##### scented

- A. licked
- C. smelled
- B. shook
- D. blew into

##### monotonous

- A. boring; one note
- C. far away
- B. excited
- D. loud

##### singsong

- A. rough
- C. sound with rhythm
- B. sharp
- D. giggly

##### velvet

- A. dry grass
- C. sticky mud
- B. coarse leaves
- D. soft material

##### wraith

- A. bird
- C. ghost
- B. bear
- D. cloud