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Name: _____

Date: _____

A Noise in the Dark

from *The Two Runaways (A Woodland Mystery)*

by Irene Shultz

Dave got home from high school later that afternoon. The Woodlanders ran to meet him, along with their dog, Mop. As they headed into the kitchen, Bill told Dave about the fight. Dave said, "Bill, this guy sounds pretty strange. You'll have to keep an eye on him."

Sammy said, "Something's eating him, that's for sure."

Mrs. Tandy said, "Well, how about if we eat THESE?" She put down a tray of oatmeal cookies.

They spent the afternoon at the clubhouse. They were building a fireplace so they could take out the stove. They had cut a big hole in one wall. They laid bricks outside it for the back and sides of the fireplace. Dave said, "Let's do the chimney tomorrow. I'll close up the opening with this." He put a piece of plywood over the hole.

Sammy shouted, "Come on!" He grabbed Dave's wheelchair and rushed him to the house. "Remember those cheeseburgers!" In a second he had Dave inside.

After dinner and homework, everyone was ready for bed. In the middle of the night, Kathy woke up suddenly. She heard a noise. She listened for it again. Nothing. She said to herself, "That old raccoon must be trying to get into the garbage cans." She went back to sleep. In a few minutes she woke up again. The noise was louder this time. It didn't sound like garbage cans. It sounded more like rocks bumping each other. Kathy got up. She saw that Sammy's door was open. She sneaked over to his room. She said, "Sammy! Sammy, wake up! Something's making a weird noise in the backyard!"

Sammy groaned under his covers, "Let me sleep...go away."

She said, "Sammy, wake up! I'm scared!" She shook him.

Sammy shouted, "WHAT IS IT!" He was awful when he was half-asleep. He threw the covers off of his head.

Kathy said, "I think I hear an animal out near the clubhouse."

Sammy said, "Don't be silly! If something were over there, Mop would be barking his head off!"

Just then they BOTH heard the noise. CLINK ... CLINK. Mop ran out of the closet where he had been sleeping. He started barking his head off. Sammy hopped out of bed in his shorts. He said, "Kathy! Something's out there! Why didn't you wake me up?"

Kathy said, "Don't turn on any lights until we wake up the others."

They flew across the hall to Mrs. Tandy's room. She was already coming out in her robe and slippers.

Kathy said, "Something's out by the clubhouse." CLINK ... CLINK ... CLINK. They heard it again.

Mrs. Tandy whispered, "Don't do anything yet. I'll go get Bill and Dave." She sneaked to the other end of the house, to the big bedroom where they slept. She said, "Boys, wake up. There's something strange going on outside."

Dave got himself into his wheelchair, quick as a flash. He and Bill and Mrs. Tandy raced to the kitchen. Everyone went to a window. They all had flashlights.

Bill whispered, "Wait until we hear it again. Then I'll yell 'NOW!' and we can all shine our lights!"

Dave whispered, "Ready."

They waited. They were hardly breathing. All of a sudden they heard CLINK! CLINK! CLINK! CLINK!

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1.

"Something's making a weird noise in the backyard!"

What word could not be used as a synonym for *weird*?

- A. spooky
 - B. loud
 - C. odd
 - D. unusual
-

2. The antonym of *shouted* is

- A. yelled.
 - B. called.
 - C. whispered.
 - D. screamed.
-

from *The Best Diver in the World*

By Jack Gabolinscy

Mark walked backward into the water until it reached his waist. Several times he ducked beneath the surface, allowing the water to creep inside his wet suit. Soon his warm body temperature would heat that layer of water, and it would help to prevent the cold from affecting him so quickly. He tightened his weight-belt, blew a spray of water out of his snorkel, and wiped the face of his mask. Turning, he propelled himself gently out into the bay.

Below Mark saw a world of activity. A timid snapper poked its nose out from under the reef, flicked its tail, and, in a sliver of flashing silver, was gone. A moray eel, opening and closing its jaws, backed slowly into its hole. Schools of little reef fish hustled about their business. A stingray tossed itself and rose in a cloud of sand. Like a giant butterfly, it glided out of sight.

Then, in the deepest part of the bay, Mark saw the biggest crayfish he'd ever seen. He backpedaled to a submerged rock, disarmed his spear gun, laid it on a ledge, and put on his gloves.

"He's seen something," said a child, watching Mark from the shore.

"No," replied a more knowledgeable fellow. "He's just getting himself comfortable."

Out on the water, Mark floated, breathing noisily through his snorkel. The sun warmed his back. His eyes never left the crayfish. He prepared himself for what he knew was going to be a really deep dive. Once . . . twice . . . three times, Mark sucked huge mouthfuls of air down into his lungs. Down went his head; up flashed his flippers. Down through the water he dived, his heavy weight-belt speeding his descent. Down. Down. Down. His cheeks bulged as he cleared the pressure from his ears. Down. Down. Down. His eyes felt like they were being pressed back into his skull. He squeezed his nose and depressurized again.

Long before his outstretched hands reached the crayfish, Mark knew he wasn't going to make it. It was too deep. He hadn't prepared himself properly. His eyes and nose and ears were hurting from the pressure. Reluctantly, he gave up and swam for the surface.

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3. The setting for "The Best Diver in the World" is a

- A. fish tank.
 - B. bay.
 - C. boat.
 - D. river.
-

4. In paragraph 2 the author writes, "A stingray tossed itself and rose in a cloud of sand. Like a giant butterfly, it glided out of sight."

Which group of words is a simile?

- A. in a cloud of sand
 - B. glided out of sight
 - C. like a giant butterfly
 - D. tossed itself and rose
-

5. Which of the following BEST describes the main idea of this passage?

- A. winning a diving contest
 - B. learning how to scuba dive
 - C. diving for lost treasure and succeeding
 - D. diving for crayfish and not succeeding
-

Fixing Lunch

One evening, Polly's mom reminded her to make her lunch for the next day. "But I don't know what to fix," Polly said.

"That really surprises me, Polly," Mom said, "You ate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for lunch all summer. You make them every weekend, and sometimes for after school snacks. Why is this such a hard choice for you?"

"They don't taste as good at school. The jelly comes through the bread and they get all sticky. Then my hands get messy. I just don't like it."

Mom thought for a while. "Let's go in the kitchen and figure this one out," she said to Polly.

They went in the kitchen and got out peanut butter, strawberry jelly, and bread. Mom said, "Tell me how you make your sandwiches."

"I get two slices of bread. I spread one with peanut butter and the other with jelly. Then I put them together and cut them in half. When I'm done, I put them in a plastic bag and in my lunch box," Polly reported.

"Good. Now does the jelly come through both slices of bread?" asked Mom.

"Hmm. Let me think. I think that the jelly only comes through the slice I put it on. The peanut butter slice doesn't get sticky," said Polly. "Wait—that gives me an idea!"

Polly set to work on making a sandwich. She got out two slices of bread. She put peanut butter on both slices, then spread jelly on only one slice. Then she put the slices of bread together and cut the sandwich in half.

"What did you do that was different?" Mom asked.

"I put peanut butter on both slices of bread. That might keep the jelly from soaking through." Polly said.

"Great idea, Polly. I think you may have solved the problem," Mom said.

After school the next day, Mom asked Polly how her sandwich had been. "It was great, Mom. No sticky fingers!" Polly reported.

Mom smiled. "I'm glad you solved that problem, Polly. Sometimes you only have to make a little change to make a big difference."

6. The BEST way to test Polly's idea is

- A. to read a recipe book.
 - B. to write a report on peanut butter.
 - C. to make your own sandwich.
 - D. to check your friends' sandwiches.
-

7. When Polly has a problem in the future, what will she most likely do?

- A. She will pity herself and act gloomy.
 - B. She will ask her mother for advice.
 - C. She will be uncertain what to do.
 - D. She will try to solve the problem.
-

8. Which word BEST describes Polly's mother?

- A. worried
 - B. excited
 - C. wise
 - D. peaceful
-

9. What is the MOST important thing Polly learns in this passage?

- A. Peanut butter protects bread.
 - B. Her mother has good ideas.
 - C. She can solve her own problems.
 - D. She likes peanut butter and jelly.
-

10. At the end of the passage, Polly feels

- A. proud.
- B. nervous.
- C. relieved.
- D. full.

Answer Key

1. B) loud
2. C) whispered.
3. B) bay.
4. C) like a giant butterfly
5. D) diving for crayfish and not succeeding
6. C) to make your own sandwich.
7. D) She will try to solve the problem.
8. C) wise
9. C) She can solve her own problems.
10. A) proud.