

# An Unexpected Guest

By ReadWorks

Nobody moved and neither did the bear. The crows cawed in the trees. The trees rustled in the wind. The wind carried our scent to the bear. The bear took a step toward us.

We had been sitting on the deck when the bear came. It climbed over the rock wall that separates our backyard from the woods. It growled. Slobber dripped from its mouth. On the deck were me, my mom, my dad, and my little sister. When the bear growled, we gasped, and we became very still.

The bear took a step toward us, but we didn't move. It was only one step, we thought to ourselves. No need to panic. We didn't want to spook the bear. We didn't want the bear to charge.

The bear took another step. *Okay, we thought, perhaps we should move.* But we didn't move.

The bear took a third step. We grabbed each other. I grabbed my dad, my dad grabbed my mom, my mom grabbed my sister.

The bear roared. My mom said, "Nobody move," which I thought was unnecessary. Slowly, very slowly, she backed away from the bear, away from us. She backed across the deck all the way to the door. Without turning around, she pulled the handle. Locked.

"I forget which one you're supposed to do," my little sister whispered. "Are you supposed to play dead, or are you supposed to try and scare the bear?"

"Play dead," said my father. "Scare the bear," said my mother.

The bear raised itself on its hind legs and roared even louder. It was eight feet tall. It had teeth the length of my fingers. It had eyes without fear or pity.

"Let's cover all our bases," I said. "Mom, you scare the bear. Dad, you play dead. Sis, you play bear. I'll scare the dead."

It was settled. The bear took one step closer, and we sprang into action. Dad collapsed in a heap. Mom raised her arms and jumped up and down. My sister got down on all fours and started growling. I ran over to my dad and at the top of my lungs I screamed, "BOO!"

It worked like a charm. The bear stopped growling. Mom says I'm making this up, but I swear I saw it raise one eyebrow in surprise. It almost seemed to shrug, and then it turned and lumbered off. I think bears are like people: they don't like surprises.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are the narrator and the narrator's family doing when a bear comes?
  - A walking through the woods
  - B sitting on the deck
  - C climbing a rock wall
  - D climbing a tree
  
2. To solve the problem of the bear coming over, what does the narrator's mother do?
  - A She runs up to the bear and screams, "BOO!"
  - B She gets down on all fours and starts growling.
  - C She raises her arms and jumps up and down.
  - D She collapses in a heap.
  
3. The narrator and the narrator's family are scared of the bear. What evidence from the text supports this statement?
  - A "The wind carried our scent to the bear."
  - B "The bear took a step toward us."
  - C "When the bear growled, we gasped, and we became very still."
  - D "The bear raised itself on its hind legs and roared even louder."
  
4. Read these sentences from the text.

"The bear roared. My mom said, 'Nobody move,' which I thought was unnecessary."

Based on the information in the story, why might the narrator think the mother's words are unnecessary?

  - A Nobody is moving when the mother says, "Nobody move."
  - B The wind is too loud for anybody to hear the mother's words.
  - C The narrator thinks the mother's words will anger the bear.
  - D The narrator thinks that doing something would be more helpful than saying something.
  
5. What is a theme of this story?
  - A People should treat animals with respect and kindness.
  - B People should spend more time in nature and less time indoors.
  - C Grown-ups always know what to do in an emergency.
  - D Neither bears nor humans like surprises.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

"The bear took one step closer, and we sprang into action. Dad collapsed in a heap. Mom raised her arms and jumped up and down. My sister got down on all fours and started growling. I ran over to my dad and at the top of my lungs I screamed, 'BOO!' It worked like a charm. The bear stopped growling. Mom says I'm making this up, but I swear I saw it raise one eyebrow in surprise. It almost seemed to shrug, and then it turned and lumbered off."

Based on these sentences, what is the meaning of the phrase "it worked like a charm"?

- A It worked very hard.
- B It worked really well.
- C It did not work well.
- D It did not work at all.

7. Read these sentences from the text.

The bear took a third step. We grabbed each other. I grabbed my dad, my dad grabbed my mom, my mom grabbed my sister.

In the last sentence, what conjunction could be added after the second comma without changing the meaning of the sentence?

- A and
- B because
- C or
- D nor

8. Near the end of the story, the family springs "into action." Describe what each member of the family does at this time.

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9. Explain whether the family’s behavior near the end of the story surprises the bear. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

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10. Explain whether the family’s behavior near the end of the story is surprising to the reader. Support your answer with details from the text.

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