

Name: _____

Barnaby

In the heart of the Whispering Woods, where the oaks turn to gold every October, lived a groundhog named Barnaby.

While the other groundhogs were busy excavating deep, insulated chambers and feasting on dried clover to build their winter layers, Barnaby was busy perfecting his sun-tanning technique. To Barnaby, the concept of "hibernation" felt like a dreadfully boring waste of a perfectly good personality.

As the days grew shorter, his neighbors tried to intervene.

Old Silas paused from hauling dry leaves to grunt, "The frost is coming, Barnaby. Your belly is thin and your burrow is shallow."

Matilda offered him a pile of surplus acorns, but Barnaby just used them for a game of marbles.

"Why sleep through the party?" Barnaby would chirp, adjusting his straw hat. "The sun is still shining, and I've got plenty of time. Besides, I hear the winter scenery is spectacular."

One evening, the wind didn't just whistle; it bit. The sun, which Barnaby treated as a permanent roommate, checked out early behind a curtain of iron-gray clouds. By midnight, the ground had turned from soft butter to cold stone.

Barnaby retreated to his burrow, but it was a drafty, pathetic little hole. He tried to curl into a ball, but he hadn't eaten enough to keep his internal furnace humming. His teeth began to chatter—a rhythmic click-clack that was the only music left in the silent woods.

Shivering and wide awake, Barnaby realized that while the other groundhogs were dreaming of spring in velvet-lined warmth, he was stuck watching the "spectacular scenery" of a frozen wasteland with an empty stomach.

He spent the winter huddled in the deepest corner he could scratch out, surviving only on the meager scraps Silas had hidden near the entrance out of pity. When spring finally arrived, Barnaby didn't emerge with a stretch and a yawn; he stumbled out thin as a reed and twice as tired.



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1. What is the primary lesson (moral) of Barnaby's story?

- A) Sun-tanning is a dangerous hobby for woodland creatures.
- B) It is better to prepare for future hardships than to only enjoy the present.
- C) Groundhogs should never trust the advice of their neighbors.
- D) Winter is the most beautiful season in the Whispering Woods.

2. What was the direct effect of Barnaby building a shallow, drafty burrow?

- A) He was able to see the "spectacular scenery" more clearly.
- B) Silas and Matilda decided to move to a different forest.
- C) He spent the winter shivering because he couldn't stay warm.
- D) The sun decided to hide behind iron-gray clouds.

3. In the story, the author writes: "The wind didn't just whistle; it bit." Which of the following uses the word bit in the same way?

- A) I only wanted a tiny bit of chocolate after dinner.
- B) The carpenter used a specialized bit to drill the hole.
- C) The horse clamped down on the metal bit in its mouth.
- D) The sharp, stinging cold bit through my thin jacket.

4. The author describes Barnaby as being "thin as a reed" when he emerged in the spring. What type of figurative language is this, and what does it mean?

- A) Metaphor; it means Barnaby had turned into a plant.
- B) Simile; it emphasizes how much weight Barnaby had lost.
- C) Personification; it gives human traits to a marsh plant.
- D) Hyperbole; it suggests that Barnaby was invisible.

5. "By midnight, the ground had turned from soft butter to cold stone." This sentence uses a metaphor to show:

- A) The groundhog's diet was changing.
- B) The soil had frozen solid due to the drop in temperature.
- C) Barnaby was trying to dig into a rock.
- D) The forest was becoming a construction site.