

Blarp

When Benjamin Forrest turned on the faucet to brush his teeth, nothing came out. Then, slowly, there was a drip...drip...drip. Then, suddenly, there was a sea monster.

The sea monster was about the size of an apple, with shimmery purple skin. She had little green fins that were webbed and glistening with water drops. She sat in the porcelain sink, blinking in the harsh light of the bathroom.

“Blarp,” she said.

“Hi, Blarp. I’m Benjamin.”

Mrs. Forrest called up from the kitchen. “Ready for bed?”

“Uh, sure Mom,” Benjamin called back. “Just a minute.” He looked around for something to put the creature in. As he heard his mom’s footsteps on the stairs, he spied a small plastic bucket nestled in among his old tub toys.

Benjamin filled the bucket with water, dumped the sea monster in, and ran with it, sloshing, down the hall to his bedroom. He barely had time to shove the bucket in the closet before Mrs. Forrest was at the door with a glass of water and a good night kiss.

As soon as his mom had gone, Benjamin opened the closet door. Blarp had grown as big as a grapefruit now, and she was stuck in the bucket.

Benjamin pulled her out with a pop.

“Blarp!” squealed the sea monster.

Benjamin wondered what to do next. He figured that the creature needed to be kept wet. He’d have to look for a larger container. He scanned his room for possibilities, and when he turned back, Blarp was as large as a cantaloupe. He sensed this growing thing was going to be a problem.

Sure enough, within a few minutes she was bigger than a watermelon. Her little green fins were no longer glistening, and her purple skin looked dry. It was starting to crack.

“Blarp,” said the creature, softly.

“Its ok, Blarp,” said Benjamin, thinking quickly. “I’ll get you to water before you dry out.” He picked her up and tried to keep quiet as he crept to the bathroom. She was a little sticky and much heavier now. By the time he put her in the tub, she was the size of two watermelons, then three.

Benjamin turned on the bathtub faucet to wet Blarp’s skin, but nothing came out. Then, slowly, there was a drip...drip...drip. Then, suddenly, there were more sea monsters! They were the size of apples, with skin the colors of the rainbow. They had little green fins.

“Ack!” Benjamin shouted.

“Everything OK up there?” called Mrs. Forrest.

“Sure, Mom, just a bad dream,” Benjamin tried to reassure her. But he could hear her feet on the stairs. So, he pulled off his pajamas, hopped into the bathtub, and ran the water full force. As his mom opened the bathroom door, he dumped in a capful of bubble bath.

“What are you doing in the tub?” asked Mrs. Forrest.

“I thought it would calm me down from my bad dream,” said Benjamin, trying to sound innocent. He pushed down Blarp’s fin, which was starting to poke above the bubbles. Was it his imagination, or was her fin just a little bit smaller?

Mrs. Forrest looked perplexed. “Finish up quickly,” she said, shaking her head.

When she closed the door, Benjamin parted the bubbles with his hands. There were all the sea monsters, floating in the water with him, but their fins were indeed smaller. They seemed to be shrinking. They were the size of lemons now, and Blarp was back to her cantaloupe self.

Benjamin poured in more bubble bath. The creatures shrunk to the size of cherries, then raspberries. They slipped down the drain one by one.

“What do you know,” thought Benjamin. “Turns out soap is useful for something after all.” He watched Blarp shrink back to an apple, then to a lime,



and finally to a blueberry. He could barely see her tiny fin wave as she, too, washed down the drain.

“Bye, Blarp,” said Benjamin. And he dried off and went back to bed.



This page has been intentionally left blank.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What color is Blarp?
 - a. Blue and gold
 - b. Red and yellow
 - c. Purple and green
 - d. Orange and purple

2. Where do the sea monsters go at the end?
 - a. Out the window
 - b. Down the drain
 - c. Into Benjamin's closet
 - d. To the kitchen

3. Why do you think Benjamin poured bubble bath into the tub?
 - a. So his mom wouldn't see the sea monsters
 - b. Because he had a bad dream
 - c. To make sure Blarp was clean
 - d. To wash his pajamas

4. Which of the following is Benjamin NOT concerned about?
 - a. That his mom will see the sea monsters
 - b. That Blarp will dry out
 - c. That Blarp is growing
 - d. That he didn't get to brush his teeth

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

1. What color is Blarp?
 - a. Blue and gold
 - b. Red and yellow
 - c. Purple and green**
 - d. Orange and purple
2. Where do the sea monsters go at the end?
 - a. Out the window
 - b. Down the drain**
 - c. Into Benjamin's closet
 - d. To the kitchen
3. Why do you think Benjamin poured bubble bath into the tub?
 - a. So his mom wouldn't see the sea monsters**
 - b. Because he had a bad dream
 - c. To make sure Blarp was clean
 - d. To wash his pajamas
4. Which of the following is Benjamin NOT concerned about?
 - a. That his mom will see the sea monsters
 - b. That Blarp will dry out
 - c. That Blarp is growing
 - d. That he didn't get to brush his teeth**