

William

Mark looked out the window. The moving truck had just pulled up next door. He couldn't wait to see who was moving in. He was really hoping for a friend. Especially a friend who played baseball.

Mark watched the moving men carry the boxes down the ramp. He tried to see if there was anything coming out of the truck that might belong to a kid his age. He didn't see a bike. He didn't see any boxes labeled "toys" or "video games." He definitely didn't see any baseball stuff. It wasn't looking promising.

Soon, a car pulled up in the driveway. It was the new owners! Who would they be? Mark was nervous.

He watched the family climb out of the car. Then he rubbed his eyes and looked again. This family was like nothing he had ever seen before. They were green. They had antennae. They had four arms. So much for finding a friend who played baseball. Mark doubted they had baseball wherever they came from.

The next day, Mark's dad sent him over to the neighbors' with cookies. "Aw, Dad, do I have to? They probably don't even eat cookies."

"Just try, Mark. They might be more like us than you think."

Mark rang the doorbell, but no one answered. He left the basket of cookies on the porch and came back home. Later, when he looked out the window, he saw the green kid sprinkling cookie crumbs in the flower garden. Just like he thought. They don't eat cookies.

Suddenly Mark felt upset. Why was this weird green kid crushing his dad's cookies? That didn't seem very nice. He went outside.

"Hey!" he said.

The green boy looked up. Mark wondered if he could even understand him.

"Greetings," he said. "My name is William."

Hmm. That's normal, thought Mark. He introduced himself. "Why are you doing that to my dad's cookies?" he asked.

"Cookies?" said William. "I thought they were fertilizer."

"No," said Mark. "Cookies. You're supposed to eat them."

"Wow," said William. "I have a lot to learn."

Mark surprised himself by what he said next. "I could teach you."

"Thanks!" said William.

"Do you play baseball?" asked Mark. "I bet you'd be great with all your arms."

"Let's find out," said William. And they did.



A purple one came up to Ezra and sniffed. It licked him with its two purple tongues. Ezra smiled. It turned out Mars might not be so bad after all.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Who did Mark want to move in next door?
 - a. A friend
 - b. A kid his age
 - c. Someone who played baseball
 - d. All of the above

2. Why does Mark decide that the neighbor won't be a friend who plays baseball?
 - a. Because he doesn't have baseball stuff
 - b. Because he looks different
 - c. Because he rode in a car
 - d. Because he says so

3. What helps Mark change his mind about William?
 - a. Seeing him crumble the cookies
 - b. Learning his name
 - c. Realizing that he could help William
 - d. B&C

4. What does the author mean by the phrase "it wasn't looking promising"?
 - a. The thing Mark wanted to happen was unlikely
 - b. Mark didn't want to make a promise
 - c. The thing Mark wanted was definitely happening
 - d. Mark could see what would happen next

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.

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