



Spike and the Long Night

A small hedgehog named Spike learned that being brave does not mean you are never scared.

Spike was a small hedgehog. He lived under a big tree at the edge of a green forest¹. Spike was not very big, but he had many sharp spines on his back. His mother told him that his spines could protect² him. "When you feel scared," she said, "you can roll into a ball. Then no animal can hurt you."

One evening, the sky turned dark and the moon came up. Spike wanted to find some food. He was very hungry. His mother was worried. "The forest is full of danger³ at night," she said. "You must be very careful⁴, Spike."

Spike said yes and walked into the trees. The night was cold and quiet. He looked for worms and berries under the leaves. He found some sweet berries near a small river, and he was happy.

Then, suddenly⁵, Spike heard a sound. It was a big, deep sound. He looked up and saw two yellow eyes in the dark. It was an owl! The owl was hungry too, and it wanted to eat the little hedgehog.

Spike was very worried⁶. His heart was fast. He wanted to run home to his mother, but the owl was too close. He could not run away in time. "What can I do?" he thought.

Then Spike remembered his mother's words. He did not run. He rolled into a small, tight ball. All his sharp spines pointed

out, like many little needles. He stayed very still and closed his eyes.

The owl came down and tried to catch Spike. But when the owl touched him, the spines hurt its feet. "Ow!" cried the owl. It tried again, but the ball was too sharp. After a short time, the owl gave up. It opened its big wings and flew away into the night sky.

Spike waited a long time. He did not move. When the forest was quiet again, he slowly opened the ball. The owl was gone. Spike was safe.

He ran home as fast as he could. His mother was waiting under the tree. "You are back!" she said, and she gave him a warm hug. Spike told her all about the owl and the long night.

"I was so scared," Spike said. "My legs were shaking."

"But you did the right thing," his mother said with a smile.

"Being brave does not mean you are never scared. Being brave means you think clearly, even when you feel afraid."

That night, Spike went to sleep under the stars. He was still a small hedgehog with sharp spines. But now he knew something new: he was brave, and his spines could always protect him.

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VOCABULARY — KEY WORDS FROM THE STORY

#	WORD	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	forest <i>noun</i>	a large area of land that is covered with many trees.	"We went for a long walk in the forest and saw some deer."
2	protect <i>verb</i>	to keep someone or something safe from danger or harm.	"A good coat will protect you from the cold and the rain."
3	danger <i>noun</i>	the chance that something bad or harmful may happen.	"The sign said the water was deep, so there was a danger of falling in."
4	careful <i>adjective</i>	giving a lot of attention to what you do so that you do not have an accident or make a mistake.	"Please be careful when you cross the busy road."
5	suddenly <i>adverb</i>	quickly and when you do not expect it.	"The dog was sleeping, but suddenly it jumped up and ran to the door."
6	worried <i>adjective</i>	feeling unhappy or nervous because you think something bad might happen.	"She was worried about her test because she did not study."

COMPREHENSION — ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

Why did Spike's mother tell him to be careful before he left home?

- A-) Because the forest was too far away
- B-) Because the forest was full of danger at night
- C-) Because Spike was too small to walk
- D-) Because there was no food in the forest

QUESTION 2 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

What did Spike do when the owl came close to him?

- A-) He ran home very fast
- B-) He climbed up a tall tree
- C-) He rolled into a tight ball
- D-) He shouted for his mother

QUESTION 3 — SHORT ANSWER

How did Spike's spines help him during the night? Explain in your own words.

COMPREHENSION ANSWERS

My score today ___ / 3

Q1 **Because the forest was full of danger at night** ✓ Correct (B)

The text says his mother told him, 'The forest is full of danger at night.' This shows she was worried about the dangerous animals, like the owl, and wanted him to stay safe.

Q2 **He rolled into a tight ball** ✓ Correct (C)

The story says, 'He rolled into a small, tight ball. All his sharp spines pointed out.' He could not run because the owl was too close, so he used the plan his mother taught him.

Q3 **Answer:** Spike's spines helped him protect himself from the owl. When the owl tried to catch him, Spike rolled into a ball, so all his sharp spines pointed out like needles. When the owl touched him, the spines hurt its feet. Because of this, the owl could not eat Spike and it flew away. His spines kept him safe.

Explanation: A good answer should explain that the spines are sharp and that Spike used them by rolling into a ball. It should connect the spines to the result: the owl was hurt and gave up. The student should use their own words and show they understood cause and effect.

VOCABULARY — TRANSLATION & NOTES

forest

We often say 'in the forest'. Do not confuse 'forest' (very big, with many trees) with 'garden' (a small green area near a house).

protect

We often say 'protect someone/something from something', for example 'protect your eyes from the sun'.

danger

The adjective form is 'dangerous'. We often say 'in danger', for example 'The animal was in danger'.

careful

We often say 'be careful' or 'careful with', for example 'Be careful with that hot cup'. The opposite is 'careless'.

suddenly

'Suddenly' is very common in stories to show a surprise. It usually comes at the start of a sentence or before the verb.

worried

We often say 'worried about something/someone'. The verb is 'worry', for example 'Don't worry!'

YOUR TURN — SENTENCE BUILDING

Mastery comes from practice. Write original sentences using today's target vocabulary.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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