

## Rita and the Manatee

One day, Rita found a manatee in the bathtub. “What’s that?” she asked her mother.

“That’s a manatee,” said her mother. “Also known as a sea cow. They like warm water. Some of them live in Florida, near Grandma and Grandpa.”

“That’s nice,” said Rita. “But what is this one doing in our bathtub?”

“Hmm,” said her mother. “I’m not sure. Maybe Grandpa sent it?”

That didn’t seem very likely. But Rita didn’t have time to ask more questions. She had a manatee to take care of.

Rita went online and read about manatees. Apparently they liked to eat lettuce. Rita looked in the fridge. They had one head of lettuce. She gave it to the manatee. It did like the lettuce! Sometimes the Internet was helpful.

After the manatee ate the lettuce, it still looked hungry. Rita went next door to see Mr. Whipple. He had a big garden.

“Can I have some of your lettuce for my manatee?” asked Rita.

“You have a manatee?” asked Mr. Whipple.

“It’s a bit of a mystery,” said Rita. “But yes, it seems that I do.”

Mr. Whipple was glad to share his lettuce. But he warned Rita that manatees eat a lot. And he said that they probably needed a bigger place to swim than a regular sized bathtub.

“Hmm,” said Rita. “What should I do?”

“You should take that manatee to the aquarium,” said Mr. Whipple.

Rita thought that was a great idea. Mr. Whipple helped her order a big fish tank on wheels. Sometimes the Internet was very helpful indeed.

Mr. Whipple helped Rita put the manatee into the tank. They lured it with lettuce. Once it was in the tank, Rita wheeled the manatee down the street to the aquarium.

On her way back home, Rita stopped at Mr. Whipple’s house. “Thanks, Mr. Whipple!” she called. “That was a great idea.”

“Wait!” said Mr. Whipple. “Why do you still have the manatee in the tank?”

“We had such a good time at the aquarium. Now we’re going to go to the movies!”



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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Where did the manatee come from?
  - a. Florida
  - b. Rita's grandpa
  - c. Mr. Whipple
  - d. It's a mystery
  
2. Why did Rita go to see Mr. Whipple?
  - a. Because he knew about the Internet
  - b. Because he could order a fish tank
  - c. Because he had a garden with lettuce
  - d. Because he knew about manatees
  
3. What did Mr. Whipple mean when he suggested that Rita take the manatee to the aquarium?
  - a. Rita should take the manatee to visit the aquarium.
  - b. Rita should leave the manatee at the aquarium to live there.
  - c. Rita should take the manatee to the movies.
  - d. Rita should leave the manatee in the bathtub.
  
4. In this story, what does the word **lure** mean in this sentence? "They lured it with lettuce."
  - a. To feed
  - b. To attract
  - c. To trap
  - d. To entertain

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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