

THE UGLY DUCKLING

The Mother Duck had been sitting on her nest a long time waiting for the eggs to hatch. It was a beautiful summer day, and she was getting rather tired of sitting there.

1. The Mother Duck was getting:
- A) tired of waiting
 - B) angry with the eggs
 - C) hungry

(A) She was a bit tired of waiting for the eggs to hatch.

Then, all at once, one after another of the eggs began to crack, so she jumped up and said, "Quack! Quack!" in greeting to her new little ducklings.

Finally, there were all of them-except one. The biggest egg of all. "Oh, well," sighed the Mother Duck. "I've waited this long, I might as well wait a little longer."

2. The _____ of the eggs did not hatch.
- A) smallest
 - B) largest
 - C) whitest

(B) The biggest egg did not hatch.

So she got back on the nest and sat down. Along came an old duck, a very good friend of hers, and said, "Well, how are you getting on?"

And the brooding duck answered, "This last egg is taking an awfully long time. It just won't break, and I'm getting rather bored with the whole thing."

"Let me look at the egg that won't break," said the old duck.

3. A brooding duck is one who is:
- A) sitting on her eggs, waiting for them to hatch
 - B) in a bad mood and refuses to talk
 - C) without any friends

(A) In this case, to brood is to try to hatch eggs by sitting on them.

So Mother Duck got off the nest to show her the big egg. "Oh, that's a turkey egg, as sure as I'm born," said the old duck. "You know, I was fooled like that one time, and the trouble I had with those youngsters. They were afraid of the water and, well, I just had a terrible time."

4. The Mother Duck's friend said the egg looked like a:
- A) robin's egg

- B) turkey egg
- C) chicken egg

(B) She said the egg resembled a turkey egg.

"Well, I'll wait a little longer," Mother Duck said as she settled back.

At last the big egg cracked. "Cheep, cheep," said the youngster as he scrambled out.

But he was so big and so ugly, thought Mother Duck. But she shrugged her shoulders and called to her brood. "Quack! Quack! Come with me down to the water for a swim. And if you don't want to swim," she said to the Ugly Duckling, "I'll just kick you in and make you swim!"

5. When the large egg finally hatched, the youngster was:

- A) big
- B) ugly
- C) both A and B

(C) He was large and ugly.

But to her surprise, he did want to swim, and he swam just as well as the others.

But as the days passed, the whole farmyard noticed how ugly Mother Duck's baby was, and they were very rudely outspoken about it.

"What a dreadful looking creature that duckling is! We won't put up with him!"

6. The other barnyard animals:

- A) paid no attention to the baby duck
- B) were rude to the baby duck
- C) were kind to the baby duck

(B) They were very impolite to the baby duck.

And the poor Ugly Duckling knew his mother was ashamed of him, so he took refuge among the reeds in the pond.

And when he did come to the farmyard for the food the girl threw out to all of them, he was criticized on all sides, and the girl even kicked him.

7. Who fed the Ugly Duckling?

- A) an old farmer
- B) Mother Duck
- C) a young girl

(C) A young girl threw food to all the ducks.

Poor Ugly Duckling. He was very unhappy, and finally he escaped by crawling under the fence.

As he wandered through the woods by the lake, he was frightened at how big the world was. Finally, he decided to cross the lake and perhaps find a good place to stay on the other side.

8. The Ugly Duckling finally escaped, or:

- A) got away
- B) grew up
- C) became beautiful

(A) To escape is to get away.

There he met some wild ducks.

"What sort of a fellow are you?" they asked. "You are appallingly ugly, but why should we care as long as you don't marry into our family!"

But just then shots rang out, and all the wild ducks scattered as fast as they could fly. Poor Ugly Duckling didn't know what the shots were, but they were so loud they frightened him . . .

. . . so he took refuge under some marsh grass, and there he stayed for two whole days.

9. How long did the Ugly Duckling stay under the marsh grass?

- A) a couple of days
- B) a week
- C) we are not told

(A) He stayed under the marsh grass for two days.

When he finally came out to get something to eat, he saw a large flock of big, beautiful birds come out of the bushes. They stretched their long wings and, oh, how white they were! The Ugly Duckling cried because he thought about how ugly he was and how beautiful these big white birds were.

And while he watched, they flew gracefully through the air-high, high above him.

10. A flock of birds is a:

- A) nest
- B) group of birds
- C) bird feeder

(B) Several birds in a group are called a flock.

Winter came on and it was bitterly cold, and the poor Ugly Duckling shivered and almost froze to death. And he had a terrible

time finding enough to eat in the snow.

Finally, one day, in desperation, he started swimming in the lake, trying to find food, but he became so exhausted that he lay quite still, caught in the ice.

11. While swimming, the Ugly Duckling became exhausted, or:

- A) very ill
- B) very tired
- C) very sad

(B) To be exhausted is to be very tired.

But in a little while, a farmer found him and broke the ice around him and took him home to his wife.

She put the Ugly Duckling in a box near the big kitchen stove, and he woke up after a while and felt better.

12. Who found the Ugly Duckling?

- A) a farmer
- B) Mother Duck
- C) a young girl

(A) A farmer found the Ugly Duckling and brought him back to his house.

For a time he lived in their farmyard and their children wanted to play with him, but he flew away because he thought that they meant to hurt him like all the other people he had known.

But he flew right into the milk pail and upset it, sending the milk in all directions.

So the woman got the broom and chased him until he flew over the fence.

And so, he was back in the marsh by the lake, and there he stayed the rest of the winter.

13. Who chased the Ugly Duckling with a broom?

- A) the farmer's wife
- B) the animals in the farmyard
- C) the children

(A) The farmer's wife chased the Ugly Duckling with her broom.

Spring came and one day he stretched his wings and realized how very strong he had grown, so he flew out to the middle of the lake and settled on the water. And as he looked around, what do you suppose he saw?

That's right! It was the flock of beautiful white birds he

had seen before winter had set in, so he started swimming toward them as fast as he could.

If only he could be close to these wonderful creatures, he thought as he swam along. It would even be better to be killed by them than to be bitten by the ducks, pecked by the hens, and kicked by people.

14. Which of the following bothered the Ugly Duckling?

- A) other ducks
- B) hens
- C) people
- D) all of the above

(D) Everyone picked on the Ugly Duckling.

When he was up close he cried, "Kill me!" And he bowed his head in the water, and as he did, he saw his reflection in the clear lake.

But what did he see? He saw a beautiful white bird, just like those he had flown to. He wasn't an Ugly Duckling-he was a swan!

15. Where did the Ugly Duckling see a reflection of himself?

- A) in the water
- B) in a mirror
- C) in a window

(A) He saw his reflection in the lake.

At that moment a group of children came to the edge of the lake. "Look!" one called out. "There's a new one, and he's the most beautiful swan of all!"

The children threw bits of cake and bread to him, and the old swans bowed to him. This made him quite embarrassed but, oh, how happy he was.

16. What did the children throw to the swan?

- A) cheese and crackers
- B) fruit and nuts
- C) bread and cake

(C) They threw him small pieces of bread and cake.

Finally he looked up at the sun and said, "I never dreamed that so much happiness was possible when I was the Ugly Duckling."

And so, when winter came, he flew away with the other swans and lived happily ever after.