

Nurseries for GIANTS

by Pepper Leeper



- 1 There are big turtles in Malaysia. They aren't the kind you keep as pets. They're giant sea turtles. They're so big that boys and girls can ride them!
- 2 Every summer, mother turtles come to the beaches to lay their eggs. They crawl up the beaches to dry land. Each mother turtle digs a hole. She lays many eggs in it. She covers them with sand. Then she goes back to the sea. The hot sun keeps the eggs warm until they hatch. The mother turtle never sees her babies.
- 3 But if boys and girls see the mother turtle on the beach, they take a ride on her back! That's how big these turtles are.
- 4 Malaysian people like to eat turtle eggs. Some of the people go to the beach after the mother turtle leaves. They dig up her eggs. They take them to town. They sell them in the market.
- 5 This worried some people. What if all the eggs were taken? None would hatch. No baby turtles would be born. Soon there would be no turtles.
- 6 So the Malaysian government started special turtle nurseries. These are beaches that have high fences around them. People who are hunting eggs can't get in. The eggs are safe.
- 7 The baby turtles hatch. For a while they stay in a pen. That keeps big fish from eating them. When they're big enough to take care of themselves, they swim out to sea.
- 8 No one can ride the turtles in the nurseries. But boys and girls should be glad. They know there will still be giant turtles for *their* children to see.

COMPREHENSION

A Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a* or *b*.

- 1 This story is mostly about what
 - a happens to sea turtle eggs and babies.
 - b Malaysian children like to do.
- 2 This story shows that turtle eggs need
 - a to stay warm and dry.
 - b their mother's care.
- 3 A mother chicken sitting on her eggs is like a mother turtle
 - a going back to the sea.
 - b burying her eggs in warm sand.

4 Giant turtles are different from most animals because they

- a are bigger than most animals.
- b don't see their babies.

5 Children must stay out of the nursery because

- a mother and baby turtles must be kept safe.
- b giant turtles can hurt children.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

B Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.) Write the word.

- 1 bothered; upset (5)
- 2 rulers; people in charge of a country (6)
- 3 come out from an egg (7)
- 4 small, fenced place (7)
- 5 special places for taking care of babies (8)

C Read the words you wrote. Which one best fits in each sentence below? Write the word.

- 6 Baby turtles learn to swim in a _____.
- 7 The _____ wants to take care of giant turtles.
- 8 Turtle eggs _____ under the warm sand.
- 9 The government made some beaches into _____ for the turtle eggs.
- 10 Now people are not so _____ about giant turtles.

THINK ABOUT IT

D Her **eyes** are as **blue** as the **sky**.

This sentence helps you understand how blue her eyes are. The phrase “as blue as the sky” is a figure of speech. It is a different way of saying that her eyes are very blue.

Choose the word from the first two sentences that best fits in the blank. Write the word.

- 1 A horse is fast. A worm is slow.
The giant turtle was as slow as
a _____.
- 2 Snow is white. Coal is black.
The eggs were as white
as _____.
- 3 Ice is cold. Fire is hot.
The sand was as hot
as _____.
- 4 Bees are busy. Turtles are calm.
The people in the market were as
busy as _____.
- 5 A bunny is cute. A mud puddle
is ugly.
The baby turtle was as cute as
a _____.

E unhappy = **un** + happy redo = **re** + do

The letters *re-* and *un-* are called prefixes. A prefix is added to the beginning of a word. It changes the word’s meaning. The prefix *un-* means “not.” The word *unhappy* means “not happy.” The prefix *re-* means “again.” The word *redo* means “do again.”

Each word in **bold type** needs a prefix. Choose the correct prefix, *re-* or *un-*. Write the new word.

- 6 She told the story of the turtle
again. She _____**told** it.
- 7 Egg hunters aren’t welcome in
the nurseries. They are
_____**welcome**.
- 8 Turtles visit the same beach
every year. They _____**visit** it.
- 9 The eggs in the sand were not
safe. They were _____**safe**.
- 10 The old nursery has to be built
again. It must be _____**built**.