

The Biggest Mouse in the World

by Charles House



- 1 Jimmy was a meadow mouse. He had wonderful ears.
- 2 He could hear the breezes when they whispered through the tall grass—*feeeeeoooooooo*.
- 3 He could hear an acorn fall out of an oak tree far away—*kuk*.
- 4 He could hear a snowflake when it nestled onto the earth next to his ear—*thuth*.
- 5 The reason Jimmy could hear so well was that he listened. He listened all the time. Jimmy was wise to listen. He couldn't see as well as other meadow mice. Perhaps he needed glasses.
- 6 One day Jimmy was looking for the tiny seeds he liked to eat for lunch. In the sky the great hawk could see Jimmy in the meadow. He dropped out of the sky like a falling star.
- 7 At the last second, Jimmy heard the wind whistling through the hawk's wings—*ssssssss*. Jimmy scurried under a fallen tree trunk.
- 8 On another day the old owl saw Jimmy as he moved through the grass. The old owl flew swiftly and quietly toward Jimmy. Jimmy heard the air slip through the owl's wings—*phhhhhhhhhhhhhhh*. Jimmy ran under a crooked old rock.
- 9 On another day the prowling fox crept toward Jimmy. He crouched down and got ready to leap. But Jimmy heard a *tst* as the fox's claws touched a stone. Jimmy ran into a hole in the ground and was safe.
- 10 One day Jimmy came to a place where there was a circle of very large seeds. They looked so good and so big!
- 11 Jimmy tried to eat one of the big seeds. But before he could reach it, his nose bumped into something hard.
- 12 He tried to eat another one of the big seeds. Again his nose bumped into something hard.
- 13 That something hard Jimmy found was a round piece of glass.
- 14 He used his paws to see if he could raise an edge of the circle of glass. He could. He looked beneath it and saw that the seeds were tiny. He set the glass down again and looked. The seeds were big!
- 15 What a wonderful thing! The glass made the small seeds turn big!
- 16 Then Jimmy lifted the whole glass off the ground. He found that if he walked on his hind legs he could carry the glass over his head with both paws. Jimmy was sure that now he would find seeds easily when he looked for his lunch.
- 17 Jimmy walked along carrying the circle of glass over his head. He was so happy about his great discovery! But he forgot to listen.
- 18 High in the air, the great hawk saw Jimmy. He dropped out of the sky like a falling star. At the very last second Jimmy heard the sound of the wind through feathers—*ssssssss*.
- 19 Jimmy looked up through the circle of glass. He was frightened. What a huge, terrible hawk!
- 20 At the same time, the hawk looked through the glass at Jimmy. He spread his wings and slowed down—fast! Then he flew far away. The hawk was filled with fear. What a huge, terrible mouse! It was the biggest mouse in the world!
- 21 Now Jimmy always carries the circle of glass with him wherever he goes. The hawk, the owl, and the fox have moved away. They moved to a field where the mice are not so terrible or so huge.
- 22 Jimmy still lives in the meadow. There the seeds are bigger and easier to find than they ever were before.

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COMPREHENSION

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

- 1 This story shows that
 - a** a mouse must be huge to carry a piece of glass.
 - b** big animals scare more easily than small animals.
 - c** things are not always as they appear.
- 2 Before he found the glass, Jimmy
 - a** listened carefully.
 - b** forgot to listen.
 - c** was looking for one.
- 3 The hawk, the owl, and the fox all wanted to catch Jimmy because they
 - a** wanted to keep him from eating the seeds.

- b** liked to play a game of chase with him.
- c** ate mice as part of their diet.

- 4 Jimmy always carried the glass with him because
 - a** it made finding seeds easier.
 - b** it made other animals look larger.
 - c** Neither **a** nor **b**
- 5 The other animals moved away from the meadow because Jimmy
 - a** had grown to be huge and terrible.
 - b** frightened them when he looked enormous.
 - c** was eating all their food.

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 grassland (1)
- 2 settled; snuggled (4)
- 3 scampered; hurried (7)
- 4 very fast; quickly (8)
- 5 below; under (14)
- 6 afraid (19)
- 7 dreadful; horrible (19)

C A word may have more than one meaning. Its meaning will depend on how it is used.

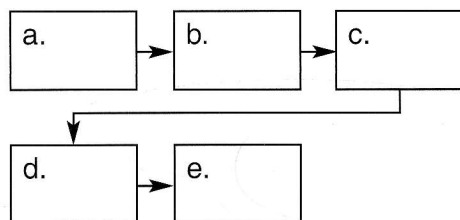
The *fly* buzzed around the room.
The bird will *fly* to its nest.

Look at each word in **bold type** below. Note the paragraph number. Look back at the paragraph. Which meaning does the word have there? Write *a* or *b*.

- 8 **trunk** (7)
 - a** main stem of a tree
 - b** large box for storing things
- 9 **touched** (9)
 - a** affected the feelings or sentiments
 - b** came against; made contact with
- 10 **reach** (11)
 - a** stretch out for
 - b** get to; come to

THINK ABOUT IT

- D** Look at the story map below. Complete the story map by writing the letter that tells in what order each event happened.



- 1 Jimmy finds a glass that makes tiny seeds look big.
- 2 Now it is easier and safer for Jimmy to find seeds.
- 3 Jimmy the mouse lives in a meadow.
- 4 The other animals see a huge mouse and move away.
- 5 Jimmy cannot see tiny seeds very well.

- E** sadly = sad + **ly**
sadness = sad + **ness**

The letters *-ly* and *-ness* are called suffixes. A suffix is added to the end of a word. It changes the word's meaning. Adding the suffix *-ly* to a word makes the new word tell *how*. Adding the suffix *-ness* to a word makes the new word tell *what*.

Read each sentence. Which word in parentheses () makes sense? Write the word.

- 6 Jimmy crept (quietly, quietness) across the meadow.
- 7 Jimmy was hidden (safely, safeness) under a fallen tree trunk.

- 8 Jimmy was surprised by the hawk's (swiftly, swiftness).
- 9 Jimmy walked (slowly, slowness) with the heavy glass.
- 10 Now Jimmy found food (easily, easiness).

- F** Words with similar or nearly similar meanings are called synonyms. *Scared* is a synonym of *frightened*.

Read each sentence. Which word in parentheses () is a synonym of the word in **bold type**? Write the word.

- 11 The hawk landed on a **crooked** branch. (straight, twisted)
- 12 The **wise** owl thought she could catch Jimmy. (silly, smart)
- 13 The hawk flew away **swiftly**. (quickly, quietly)
- 14 Jimmy wanted to **raise** the piece of glass. (bump, lift)
- 15 Jimmy was a **scary** creature. (frightening, darling)