



New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts Test

Listening Selection

Grade

6

January 14–18, 2008

This listening selection is to be used in administering Book 2 of the English Language Arts Test. The entire selection is to be read aloud twice to the students. For complete directions, please follow the instructions in the *Teacher's Directions*.

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The Bat in the Refrigerator

by Jean Craighead George

Another pet from which we learned wondrous bits of knowledge was a bat. Sonar, Craig named her.

We came across her in winter. Sonar had been hibernating under the bark of a tree, but the tree was felled and lay on the ground. She had been jolted from her home and, in her hibernating state, could not find another. She was cold, motionless, and deep in sleep. We knew she could never find a new hideout in that condition, so we brought her home. The kids walled a cardboard box with a piece of carpeting and hung Sonar on it. She clung by her tiny claws. I placed her gently in the refrigerator. We planned to keep her there until spring. In her dormancy she would be a nice pet. We would not even have to feed her, just admire her and keep her cold.

Of course, the inevitable happened. Someone took Sonar out of the refrigerator to show her off and did not put her back. When I came home from a research trip, she was winging around the living room in the springlike temperature of the house.

“She can go right through the hula hoop,” Twig said, holding it up, “and never touch it anywhere.”

“And she can miss the chandelier.”

“And hang on the little plaster bumps on the wall.”

Virginia, who had been baby-sitting, came into the room and sat down.

“This has been an interesting time,” she said, and chuckled.

“How are we going to feed her now that she’s awake?” I asked the kids. “She eats insects, and it’s winter.”

“Crickets,” Luke answered. “From the pet shop. You said you tossed crickets to a bat you had when Twig was a baby. We could do that.”

“We’ll spill cake crumbs on the floor and the ants will come,” said Twig. “Sonar can eat the ants like Toad did.”

Virginia wisely observed, “That bat likes to rest on rough things. We could hang a bunch of towels around, and when she stops on one, we’ll wrap her up in it and take her to the attic. It’s cold up there.”

Go On

“You’re right,” I said.

“Neat,” said Twig. “Bats belong in attics.”

Two days later we finally caught Sonar and released her in the attic among the books, drums, electric guitars, and the outgrown dollhouse. As I turned back the folds of the towel, we all got a good look at a magical bat. Sonar opened her mouth, and we imagined the inaudible sounds that she was sending out to locate herself. Her ears were large receiving discs. Her eyes were small in a furry head. She could see so well with her ears that she did not have to see well with her eyes. Her wings and tail were like the webbing in Goose’s feet. With the tail and wings she caught and ate insects while flying.

“Nature can sure make up some unreal creatures,” said Virginia.

“Let her go,” said Luke.

She flew to a rafter and hooked her wing claws in a knothole, turned around, and hung upside down by her feet. I opened the window a crack.

“She’ll ‘hear’ the opening in the window with her sonar,” I said, “and will leave when the weather is right.”

STOP



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