



Comprehension: Folktale

Read the following story, then answer the questions that follow:

How the Monkeys saved the Fish

(Traditional Tanzanian Folktale)

The rainy season that year had been the strongest ever and the river had broken its banks. There were floods everywhere and the animals were all running up into the hills. The floods came so fast that many drowned, except the lucky monkeys who climbed up into the treetops. They looked down on the water where the fish were swimming and jumping out of the water as if they were the only ones enjoying the flood.

One of the monkeys saw the fish and shouted: "Look down, my friend, look at those poor creatures. They are going to drown. Do you see how they struggle in the water?" "Yes," said the other monkey. "They could probably not escape the floods, because they seem to have no legs. How can we save them?" "I think we must do something. Let's go close to the edge of the flood where the water is not deep enough to cover us, and we can help them to get out."

So the monkeys did just that. They started catching the fish, but not without difficulty. One by one, they brought them out of the water and put them carefully on the dry land. After a short time there was a pile of fish lying on the grass motionless. One of the monkeys said, "Do you see? They were tired, but now they are just sleeping and resting. Had it not been for us, my friend, all these poor animals without legs would have drowned."

The other monkey said: "They will be very grateful because we have saved their lives."

Vocabulary Builder

river bank	- the land alongside the river
floods	- when it rains a lot and a lot of water spread from a river or the sea and covers the land
drown	- to die while under water
creatures	- living things (not plants)
struggle	- to try to do something that is not easy to do
escape	- get away from
edge	- side or end

motionless - without moving

Question 1: *Fill in the missing word:*

1. The rainy season was the _____ they have ever had.
2. The fish could not _____ the floods.
3. Many animals _____ in the flood.
4. The river had broken its _____ .

Question 2: *Answer the following questions:*

1. Why did all the animals run up the hill? (2)

2. Where did the monkeys hide from the floods? (1)

3. Who did the monkeys try to save? (1)

4. What did the monkeys do with the fish? (2)

5. Why do you think the fish lay 'motionless' (without moving) on dry land? (1)

6. What did the monkeys think the fish were doing? (2)

7. Why did the monkeys think the fish will not be able to swim? (1)

Language in context

Question 1: *Find **synonyms** (words with the same meaning) from the passage for the following words:*

1. quickly (par 1) _____
2. trouble (par 3) _____
3. unlucky (par 3) _____

Question 2: Find **antonyms** (words with opposite meaning) for the following words from the passage:

- 1. careful _____
- 2. lucky _____
- 3. strongest _____

Question 3: Rewrite the following sentences in the **past tense**:

- 1. The monkeys climb the tree.

- 2. The fish is swimming in the water.

- 3. Do you see the fish in the water?

- 4. There are floods everywhere.

- 5. The fish cannot escape the floods.

First underline the **verb**, then change the verb to the past tense:
 The fish swim in the river.
 swim – swam
 The fish swam in the river.

Question 4: Identify the **sentence type** and add the correct **punctuation**:

Example: Where did the monkeys hide from the flood ?

Question

- 1. Look out for the tree coming down the river ___ _____
- 2. The monkeys thought the fish couldn't swim ___ _____
- 3. How many fish were taken out of the water ___ _____
- 4. Finally, we have saved all the fish ___ _____
- 5. Don't go too close to the river ___ _____
- 6. Why did all the animals run up the hill ___ _____

MEMO:

Question 1: Complete the following by filling in words from the story:

1. The rainy season was the **strongest** they have ever had.
2. The fish could not **escape** the floods.
3. Many animals **drowned** in the flood.
4. The river had broken its **banks**.

Question 2: Answer the following questions:

1. Why did all the animals run up the hill? (2)

They tried to escape the floods.

2. Where did the monkeys hide from the floods? (1)

The monkeys climbed into the trees.

3. Who did the monkeys try to save? (1)

The monkeys tried to save the fish in the river.

4. What did the monkeys do with the fish? (2)

They took them out of the water and put them on dry land.

5. Why do you think the fish lay 'motionless' (without moving) on dry land? (1)

I think they were dead.

6. What did the monkeys think the fish were doing? (2)

The monkeys thought the fish were just tired and were sleeping.

7. Why did the monkeys think the fish will not be able to swim? (1)

They thought the fish will not be able to swim, because they had no legs.

Language in context

Question 1: Find **synonyms** (words with the same meaning) from the passage for the following words:

1. quickly (par 1) **fast**
2. trouble (par 3) **difficulty**
3. unlucky (par 3) **poor**

Question 2: Find **antonyms** (words with opposite meaning) for the following words from the passage:

1. careful **careless** (suffix changed -ful to -less)
2. lucky **unlucky** (prefix added - un)
3. strongest **weakest**

Question 3: Rewrite the following sentences in the **past tense**:

1. The monkeys climb the tree.

The monkeys climbed the tree.

2. The fish is swimming in the water.

The fish was swimming in the water.

3. Do you see the fish in the water?

Did you see the fish in the water?

4. There are floods everywhere.

There were floods everywhere.

5. The fish cannot escape the floods.

The fish could not/couldn't escape the floods.

First underline the **verb**, then change the verb to the past tense:

The fish swim in the river.

swim – swam

The fish swam in the river.

Question 4: Identify the **sentence type** and add the correct **punctuation**:

Example: Where did the monkeys hide from the flood ?

Question

1. Look out for the tree coming down the river !

Command

2. The monkeys thought the fish couldn't swim .

Statement

3. How many fish were taken out of the water ?

Question

4. Finally, we have saved all the fish !

Exclamation

5. Don't go too close to the river !

Command

6. Why did all the animals run up the hill ?

Question