

# UNDER THE SEA

## Differentiated Passages



### RELUCTANT READERS

Name: Jessica Date: 2/10/05

750L

### Gray Scales, Blue Scales

Elowyn brushed her long brown hair, braiding it in a strand of seaweed to her long locks. She would have loved one of the golden clips the royal merfolk had, but she was no royal. Her scales were a drab gray. They were nothing at all like the iridescent blues of the princes and princesses that swam around the castle at the center of Seawen. This kingdom was found in the deep, deep waters of the Pacific Ocean.

Elowyn's cave home was, unfortunately, close to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. It included enormous piles of trash just heaped in the ocean. She had seen many a sea creature caught up in all that plastic junk. She'd tried to ask the king and queen to clean up that mess, but she'd almost gotten arrested for wandering too close to the castle.

"Gray scales don't belong near here," a guard had roared. "Rubbish has to stay with rubbish."

But Elowyn didn't think she was rubbish. She definitely didn't think the color of one's scales or shell or flesh should matter.


She puffed out a breath, sending a flurry of bubbles up from her mouth then looked at her crab friend, Pinch. "Grab on and let's go exploring." She held out her hand and Pinch clipped his claws onto it as if it was a sturdy rope.

Elowyn took off, snaking through the water and pausing only to catch her eye. Most of the stuff turned out to be trash of some much value.

When she reached the edge of a trench and was about to help had her looking down into the deep gouge in the ocean floor up to her as did a mass of blond hair. One set of fingers barely touched the hair.

"Someone's hanging down there!" Elowyn roared to the conscious merman, struggling to hold on. She wondered why he was so close, she discovered that part of his tailfin had been torn.

"I'll get you out of here," she said, receiving only a gasp in return. "Let's wrap my hair around him and you hold it in place while I zip around the merman, weaving Elowyn's hair around his chest. He trapped the hair in his claws. "The o



Elowyn swam out of the trench, towing the merman behind her with her hair and Pinch's help. When they were clear of the trench, Pinch released his hold on her hair. Elowyn slid it free from around the merman. They gently laid him out on the sandy ocean floor.

He was still for a few moments, and Elowyn feared the worst, but then his eyes opened to reveal a blue that shimmered like his scales did. "Thank you." His voice was but a whisper.

"What happened to you?" Pinch asked.

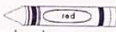
"A shark pursued me," the merman said as he rose to his elbows with Elowyn's help and looked at his damaged fin. "It had my tail in its jaws. I got free, but it shredded my fin, and I couldn't swim. I hid from the shark in the trench, but then I was too weak from the pain to pull myself out." He turned his blue gaze to Elowyn. "You have already helped me, but could I ask you another favor?"

"She'll do it!" Pinch answered.

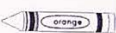
"How about we let him say what the favor is first, Pinch?" Elowyn rolled her eyes. "Excuse my friend. He's easily over-excited." She reached a hand to her chest. "I'm Elowyn, by the way."

Under the Sea Name: Jessica Date: 2/10/05


Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is not a crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

1. How does Elowyn feel about merfolk's scale color? 

a. She doesn't believe they should judge each other based on their scale color.  
b. She hates all tail scale colors, other than gray.  
c. She feels self-conscious about how beautiful her scale color is.  
d. She only values blue-colored scales.

2. Describe Elowyn's home. 


Elowyn's cave home was close to the Great Pacific Garbage patch, which included ginormous piles of trash just heaped in the ocean. She had seen many a sea creature caught up in all that junk

3. What are Elowyn's first impressions of Prince Tirren? How does this impression evolve throughout the story? 

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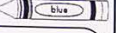
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\_\_\_\_\_


4. What role does Pinch play in the story? Why is this role important? 

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is one character trait you would use to describe Elowyn? Support your response with evidence from the passage. 

Character Trait	Evidence from the text



After needing rescuing by someone braver than all color. I've always thought merfolk should be "And your quick actions saved my life today. I pronounced. sear water. "What was the favor you wanted?"

2nd - 5th Grade



# UNDER THE SEA PASSAGES

2nd - 5th grade

## Table of Contents

\*This product includes 10 differentiated leveled passages in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade Text Complexity Bands (the range for 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> is 420-820 and 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade is 740-1010). Each passage is available on three levels and comes with general comprehension questions, a skill-based activity, and a reading response activity.

This product line, Reluctant Readers, is designed to foster an interest in reading, even your most resistant readers. With interest-based topics, these passages can help build excitement and investment around reading.

1. Part of the Pod (500L, 810L, 1010L)
2. At Your Service (470L, 760L, 920L)
3. The Best Swim Ever (450L, 790L, 970L)
4. A Different Purpose (520L, 760L, 930L)
5. A Very Special Show (460L, 790L, 950L)
6. A Vivid Imagination (450L, 770L, 990L)
7. Becoming (490L, 770L, 920L)
8. Sunday Night Dance at Coral Cover (500L, 800L, 930L)
9. Gray Scales, Blue Scales (510L, 750L, 950L)
10. A Better Life (470L, 740L, 930L)



# ABOUT LEXILE LEVELS



MagiCore is a certified Lexile® Partner. These texts are officially measured and approved by Lexile and MetaMetrics® to ensure appropriate rigor and differentiation for students.

The Lexile Framework® for Reading measures are scientific, quantitative text levels. When the Lexile of a text is measured, specific, measurable attributes of the text are considered, including, but not limited to, word frequency, sentence length, and text cohesion. These are difficult attributes for humans to evaluate, so a computer measures them.

Common Core State Standards uses Lexile level bands as one measure of text complexity. Text complexity ranges ensure students are college and career ready by the end of 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Lexile measures help educators scaffold and differentiate instruction as well as monitor reading growth.

Grade Band	Lexile® Bands Aligned to Common Core Expectations
K-1	N/A
2-3	420L-820L
4-5	740L-1010L
6-8	925L-1185L

Keep in mind when using any leveled text that many students will need scaffolding and support to reach text at the high end of their grade band. According to Appendix A of the Common Core Standards, "It is important to recognize that scaffolding often is entirely appropriate. The expectation that scaffolding will occur with particularly challenging texts is built into the Standards' grade-by-grade text complexity expectations, for example. The general movement, however, should be toward decreasing scaffolding and increasing independence both within and across the text complexity bands defined in the Standards."



# At Your Service

"We have no choice then." King Galen studied the map. His newest lead general, Maddox, had spread it out before him. "The Shark Clan will invade our borders if we do nothing."

"They have more numbers than we do," Maddox said. "We will not survive a fight against them."

"Bring Veronna here." King Galen removed his crown. Suddenly the weight of it was too much to bear. His people, the Merseains, depended on him to keep them safe. His bloodline had done so for centuries. He had done all that he could for the decades he had been king. Now was the time to ask for help, though. He would not sacrifice any lives just to shield his pride.

"What if she will not come?" Maddox asked. His hand rested on his sword. It was strapped to his waist.

"Then our people will meet their end at the hands of the Shark Clan." King Galen met Maddox's gaze. "And we cannot let that happen, Maddox. Do whatever you must to get Veronna's aid."



"Yes, my lord." Maddox bowed slightly. He left the room on swift feet. There was no time to waste. The Shark Clan had already set up a camp in the northern waters.



Maddox and a small group of his soldiers stood at the palace tunnel. It led to the kelp forest. "Speak now if you do not wish to make this trip."

None of the soldiers said a word.

"Good men." Maddox gave them a nod. He opened the hatch to the tunnel. He and his men entered the chamber. He sealed the tunnel behind them. He opened the final door. The first gush of seawater hit them. Their legs changed into the fins all Merseains had. They swam at a hurried pace. They darted around coral reefs. They made schools of smaller fish scatter.



Soon, the water grew murkier. Sunlight from the surface was muted at this depth. Tangled streams of kelp swayed in the current. It was the deadly eels that slithered among it that presented the true threat, though. These eels were larger than eels found elsewhere in the ocean. They were enchanted by Veronna herself. They acted as her guardians. Getting past them was a matter of skilled swimming and sharp swords.

Maddox signaled to his men to draw their weapons. Strangely, no eels snaked their way toward them. They grew closer to Veronna's cave lair. Maddox remained on guard. His gaze scanned the kelp for any signs of attack.

They made it all the way to the opening of Veronna's cave. Maddox found the silver-haired Merseain waiting for him. She gestured for Maddox and his soldiers to enter her cave. They did so. Their fins changed back to legs.

"You need my help." It was not a question but a statement instead. "I had a vision last night of the Shark Clan on the northern borders."

"That is correct," Maddox said. "Only you have the means to defend our kingdom against them."

"True words." Veronna's green gaze swept over Maddox. She then studied each of the soldiers who had come with him. "What have you brought to trade for my assistance?"

"King Galen said to offer you whatever you wanted."

Her lips turned up in a smile. That made Maddox shiver a little. "He has finally given in then."

Maddox did not know what that meant. He was encouraged when Veronna scurried around her cave, though. She threw items into a sack. She mumbled to herself, mostly in the Old Languages. He did not understand those words. She stood in front of him, ready to travel to the palace. Maddox thanked Poseidon, the god of the sea.

"What is it that you want for your services?" he asked.

"The king knows." Veronna's legs changed to a shimmering silver fin. She led the way out of the cave through the kelp forest and back to the palace.

Veronna didn't speak a word to King Galen. She prepared the materials she had brought with her. Tensions rose in the palace throne room. The king, Maddox, and a few soldiers watched Veronna work. She chanted, sang, and danced around the items she had crushed and stirred in a small bowl. Finally, a sparkling blue mist rose up from the mixture.

"I am at your service, King Galen!" Veronna shouted.

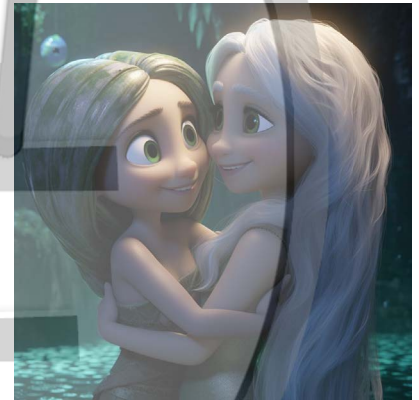
The palace rattled about them. A powerful shockwave vibrated out from the bowl. It nearly knocked all the men off their feet. Veronna, however, stood solidly. Her arms were outstretched. The blue mist circled around her. A second and third shockwave pulsed from the bowl. Cracks formed in the stone floor of the throne room. Bits of stone rained down from the high ceiling.

In the next moment, everything grew quiet. The mist faded.

Veronna turned to face King Galen. "It is done. The Shark Clan has retreated." She arched a silver eyebrow at the king. "Are you prepared to make good on your promise to grant me whatever I wanted for my help?"

"I am." The king motioned to a guard. The guard quickly slipped out of the throne room. When he returned, a female was in chains beside him. She had long, silver hair and green eyes just like Veronna. Her hair was knotted and dirty. Her skin was a sickly color. Those eyes had dark circles around them.

"Priseena! Dear sister!" Veronna ran to her twin. She gathered her in a hug. She held on tightly. Veronna was careful not to crush Priseena who was mere bones. "It is going to be all right, Priseena. You are coming home with me now."



The guard unlocked the chains. He freed Priseena.

"You have my unending gratitude for handling our Shark Clan problem," the king said. "Enjoy your reunion with your sister, Veronna. Know that if I catch wave of the two of you conspiring against me again as I did years ago, I will do more than merely lock Priseena up."

Nodding, Veronna gathered the materials she had brought. She took Priseena's frail hand. "Separating us was a punishment we do not wish to experience again, King Galen."

Maddox escorted Veronna and Priseena to the same tunnel he had used to fetch Veronna. He thanked Veronna again. He released the pair into the sea. The sisters swam back to their kelp forest cave. They found a visitor waiting for them there.

The leader of the Shark Clan took a knee before them. "I am at your service as is my entire clan. What orders do you have, my ladies?"

Veronna and Priseena smiled at each other.

# At Your Service

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"Summon Veronna." King Galen removed his crown. Suddenly the weight of it was too much to bear. His people, the Merseains, depended on him to keep them safe from threats in their underwater kingdom and on land. His bloodline had done so for centuries, and he had done all that he could for the decades he had been king. Now was the time to ask for help, though. He would not sacrifice any lives just to shield his pride.

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None of the soldiers said a word.

"Good men." Maddox gave them a nod of approval, then opened the hatch to the tunnel. He and his men entered the chamber, and he sealed the tunnel behind them. As soon as he opened the final door and the first gush of seawater hit them, their legs changed into the mighty fins all Merseains had. They swam at a hurried pace, darting around coral reefs and making schools of smaller fish scatter.

Soon, the water grew murkier, sunlight from the surface muted at this depth. Tangled streams of kelp swayed in the current. It was the deadly eels that slithered among it that presented the true threat though. Larger than eels found elsewhere in the ocean, these ones were enchanted by Veronna herself. They acted as her guardians. Getting past them was a matter of skilled swimming and sharp swords.





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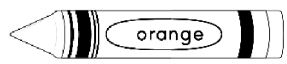
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Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is not a crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

1. What threat is presented in the beginning of the story?
  - a. The Shark Clan is stealing crops from the Merseains.
  - b. The Shark Clan is pillaging the kingdom.
  - c. A war with the Shark Clan is encroaching.
  - d. An evil sea witch is threatening the kingdom.



2. What can you infer about how Maddox and the soldiers feel about the journey to Veronna's lair and her cave? What details in the text support your inference?




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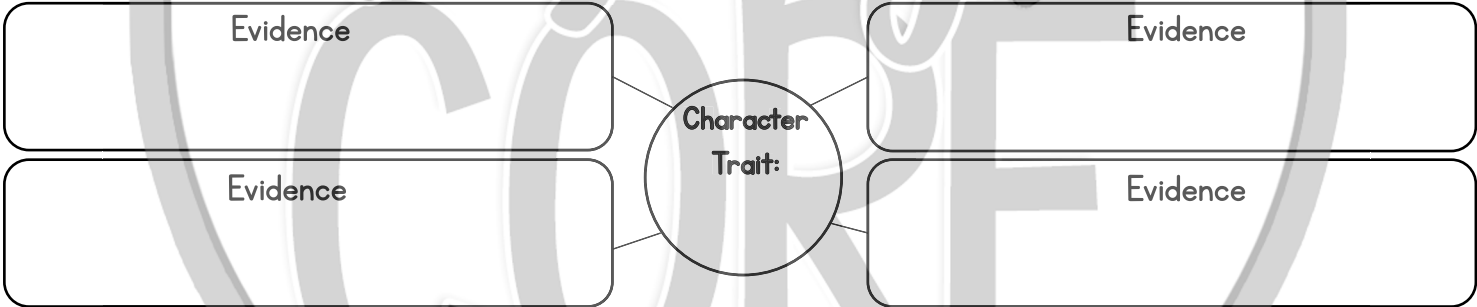
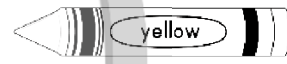


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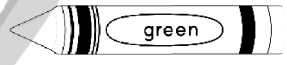


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3. What character trait would best describe Veronna? Support your response with evidence from the passage.



4. How did the author foreshadow the return of Veronna's sister?




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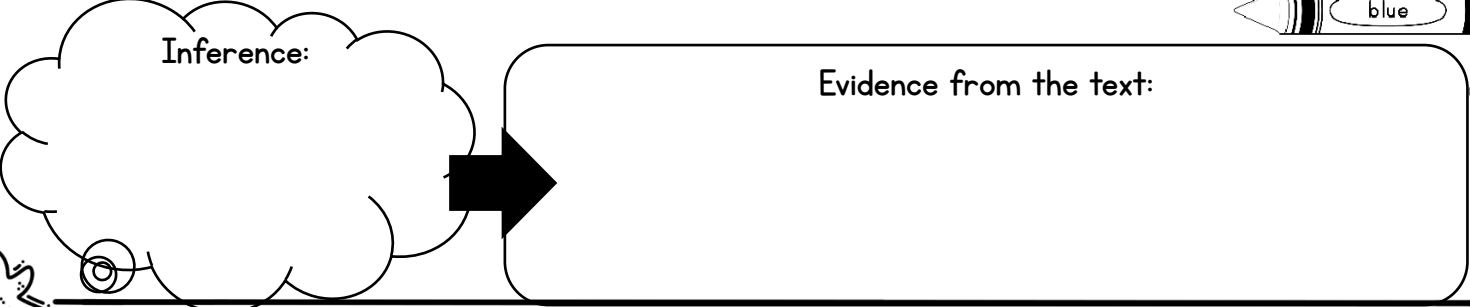


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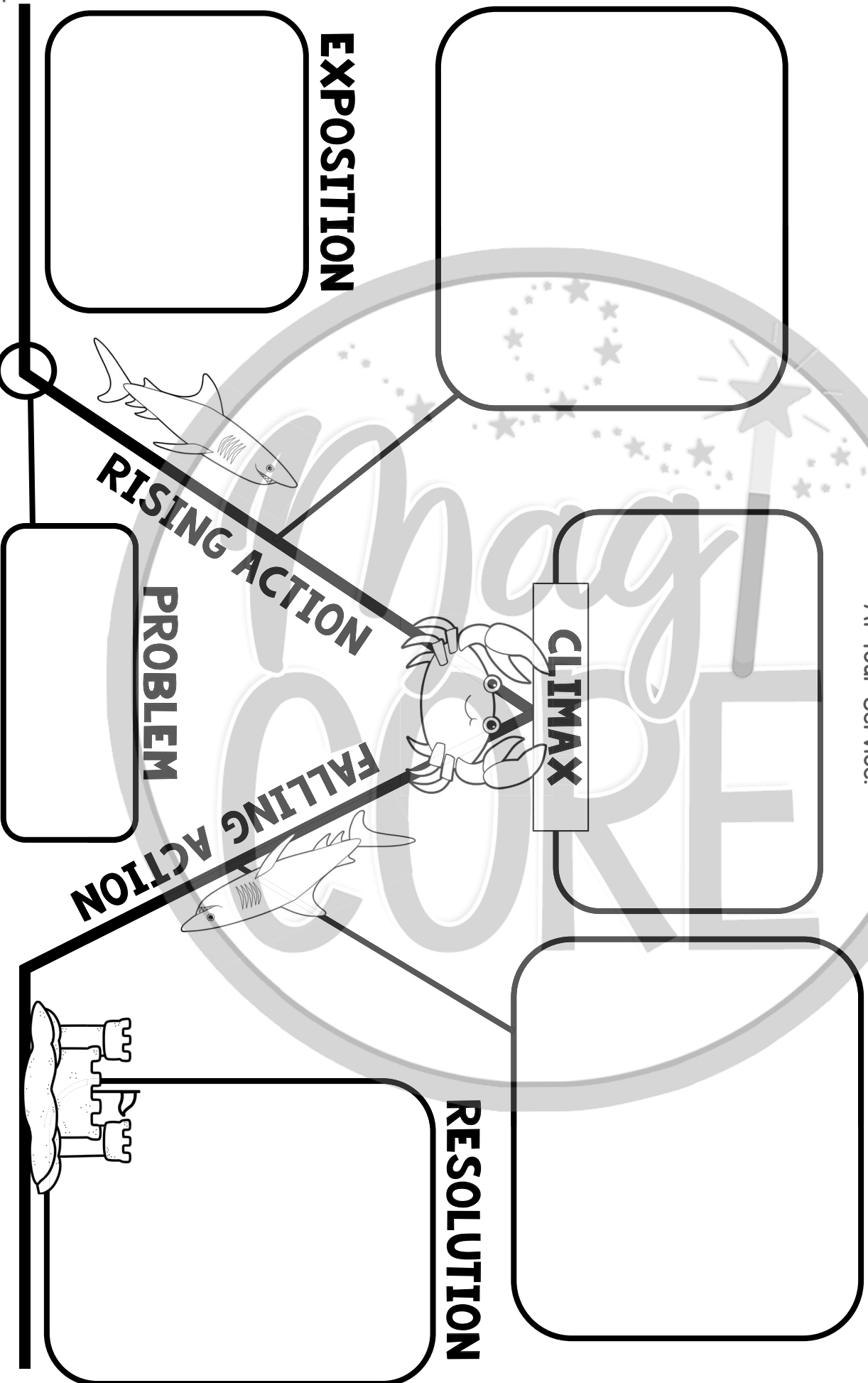
5. Analyze the end of the passage. What can you infer based on the conclusion?



# STORYLINE

The storyline is the sequence of events and major plot points that make up a story. Often, a story will have an exposition or hook, a problem, rising action, a climax, falling action, and a conclusion or solution. Outline the storyline of

“At Your Service.”



# AT YOUR SERVICE RESPONSE

Examine the story elements and the characters within the passage. Many stories have a hero and a villain. Write a response examining who the villain of the passage is. What evidence do you have from the text that supports your response?



# The Best Swim Ever

I helped my little brother, David, dig a moat around our sandcastle. Our grandmother said it was the best sandcastle she'd ever seen. She said that about everything we made. The left tower leaned a little too much. It probably wouldn't survive to lunchtime.

"Can we pour water into the moat now?" David asked. A bright red pail dangled from his hand.

"Go for it." I laughed when he turned up a spray of sand as he ran toward the ocean. I deepened the moat a little. This shaped it a bit more so it would hold water better.

David returned and poured the water into the moat. He did this a few more times. Soon, a murky ring of water circled the sandcastle. David dropped a few finger-sized sticks into the moat.

"What are those for?" I asked.

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I dove under the surface of the water. My arms and legs sent me forward. Grandma always said I was part fish. I loved swimming and the ocean so much. I often wished I was a fish. I'd love to spend my days exploring the deep sea.

I reached the bottom of the ocean floor. My fingers raked through the sand. I gathered a handful to take up to the surface. I stood and poked from the water. I opened my hand to sift through what was on my palm. A few smooth stones looked as if they were worth keeping. I liked to make art with things I collected. These stones would be great for that. I tucked them into a zippered pocket on my swim trunks and then dove again.

This new handful gained me a complete oyster shell. I turned it over in my hand. The bottom shell was cracked. Something white was inside.

*Can it be?*

I waded to the shore. I found a sturdy stick to pry open the shell. I hardly breathed as I pulled the shells apart. I found a perfect pearl resting inside.

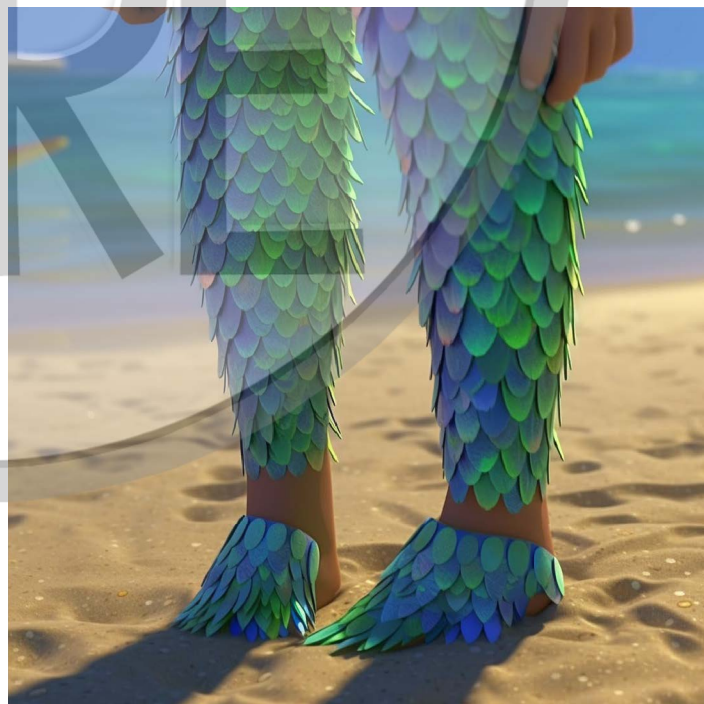
My fingers closed around the pearl. A tingling sensation shook through my entire body. The other beachgoers faded away around me. I let go of the pearl. The feeling stopped. The other people returned. I touched the pearl again. I held on longer this time. I was shocked when blue-green scales began to form on my feet. They traveled up my legs!

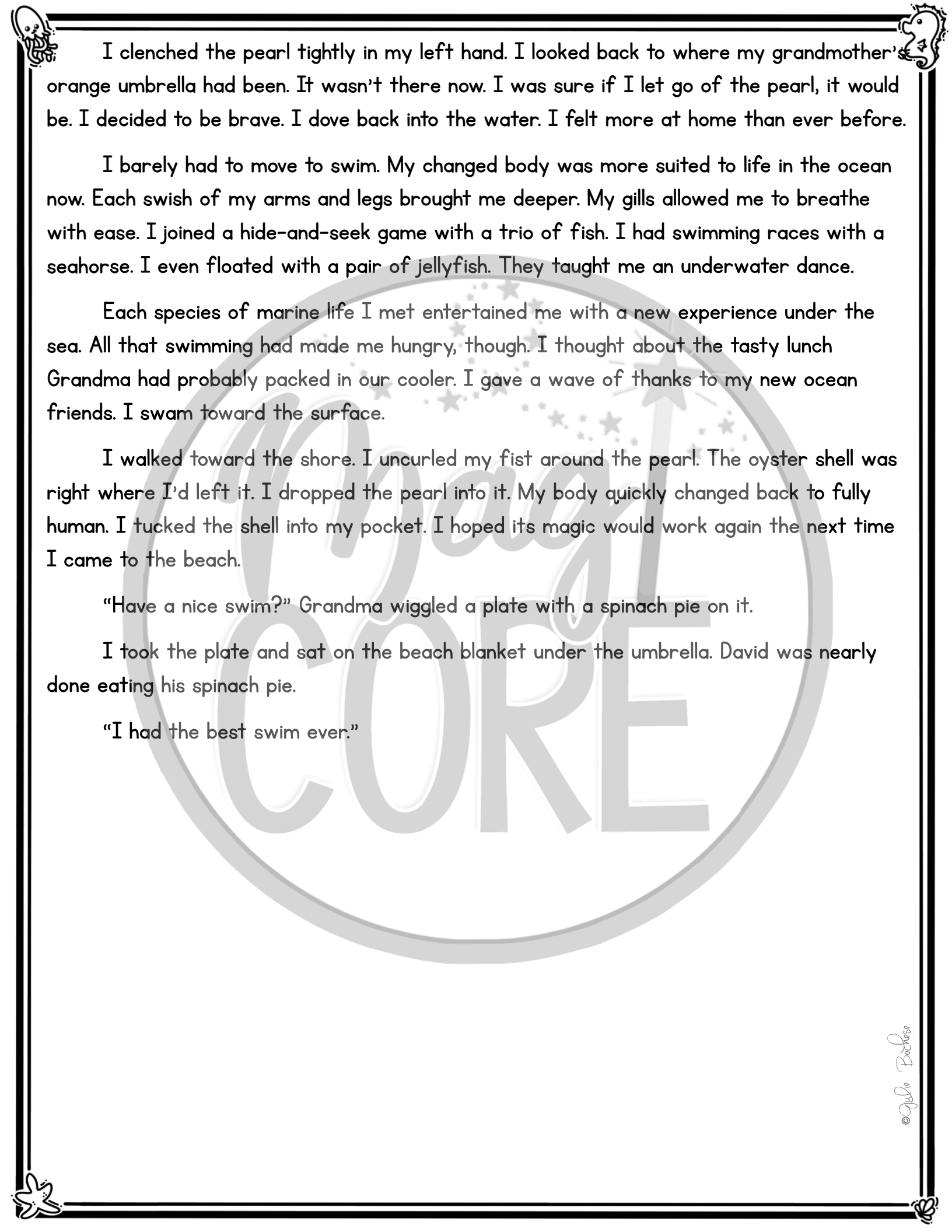
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I was a fish...but not a total fish. I still had my messy brown hair. I still had ten fingers and toes. They all had webbing between them now. So I was no longer a boy, but not entirely a fish.

*Does that make me a fishboy?*

Most people probably would have freaked out by now. I had daydreamed - and nightdreamed - about becoming a fish so many times, though. This seemed like a wonderful chance to me.





I clenched the pearl tightly in my left hand. I looked back to where my grandmother's orange umbrella had been. It wasn't there now. I was sure if I let go of the pearl, it would be. I decided to be brave. I dove back into the water. I felt more at home than ever before.

I barely had to move to swim. My changed body was more suited to life in the ocean now. Each swish of my arms and legs brought me deeper. My gills allowed me to breathe with ease. I joined a hide-and-seek game with a trio of fish. I had swimming races with a seahorse. I even floated with a pair of jellyfish. They taught me an underwater dance.

Each species of marine life I met entertained me with a new experience under the sea. All that swimming had made me hungry, though. I thought about the tasty lunch Grandma had probably packed in our cooler. I gave a wave of thanks to my new ocean friends. I swam toward the surface.

I walked toward the shore. I uncurled my fist around the pearl. The oyster shell was right where I'd left it. I dropped the pearl into it. My body quickly changed back to fully human. I tucked the shell into my pocket. I hoped its magic would work again the next time I came to the beach.

"Have a nice swim?" Grandma wiggled a plate with a spinach pie on it.

I took the plate and sat on the beach blanket under the umbrella. David was nearly done eating his spinach pie.

"I had the best swim ever."

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I helped my little brother, David, dig a moat around the sandcastle we'd built at the beach. Our grandmother said it was the best sandcastle she'd ever seen, but she said that about everything we made. Personally, I thought the left tower leaned a little too much. It probably wouldn't survive to lunchtime.

"Can we pour water into the moat now?" David asked, a bright red pail dangling from his hand.

"Go for it," I said, laughing when he kicked up a spray of sand as he ran toward the ocean. I deepened the moat a little while he was gone, shaping it a bit more so it would hold water better.

David returned and poured the water into the moat. He did this a few more times. Soon, a murky ring of water circled the sandcastle. David dropped a few finger-sized sticks into the moat.

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This new handful awarded me with a complete oyster shell. I turned it over in my hand to see the bottom shell was cracked and something white was inside.

*Can it be?*

I waded to the shore and found a sturdy stick to pry open the shell. I hardly breathed as I pulled the shells apart and found a perfect pearl resting inside. All the times I'd collected little treasures from the beach had never resulted in a find so impressive.

The moment my fingers closed around the pearl, a tingling sensation shook through my entire body. The other beachgoers faded away around me. I immediately let go of the pearl and the feeling stopped while the other people returned. I touched the pearl again, holding on longer this time, and was shocked when blue-green scales began to form on my feet. They traveled up my legs!

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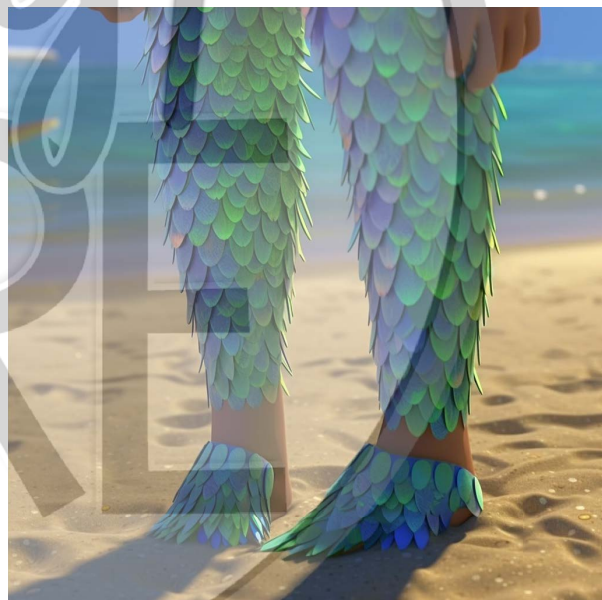
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Magi  
CORE

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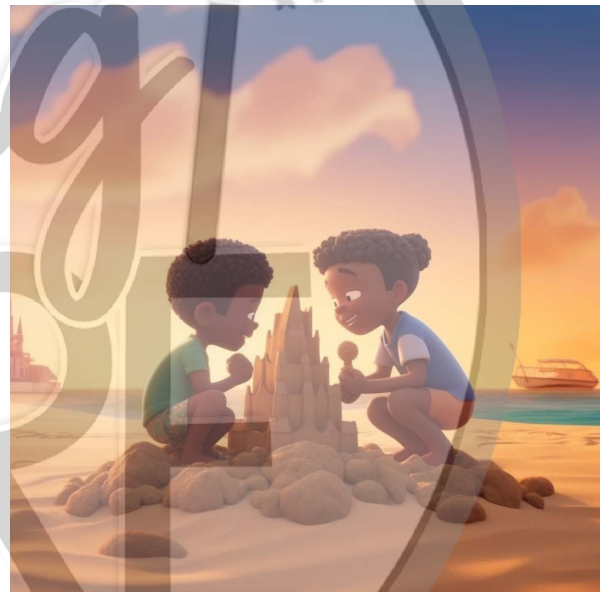
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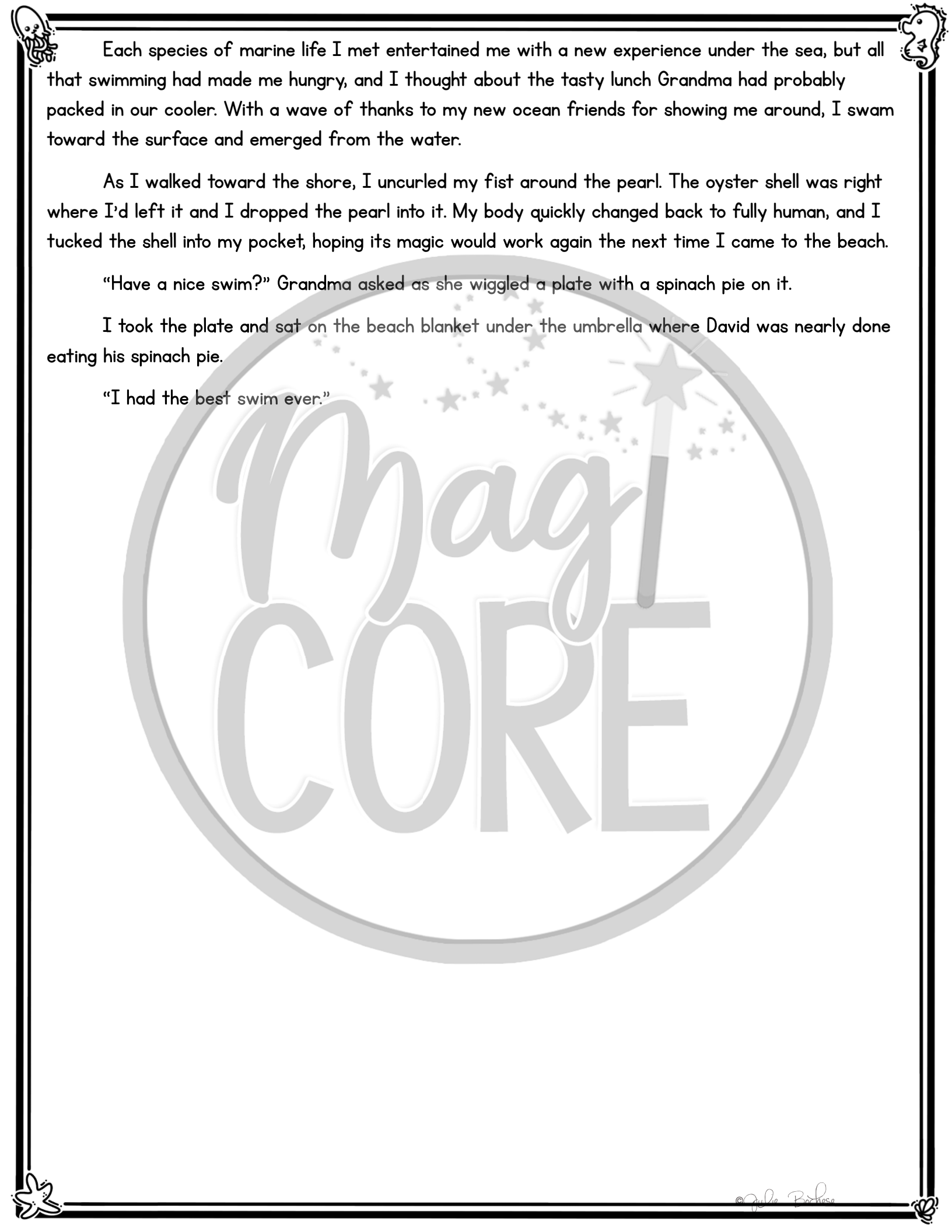
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Magi  
CORE

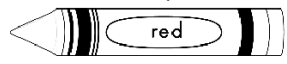


Under the Sea

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is not a crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

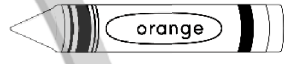
1. Based on evidence from the text, what word best characterizes our narrator's relationship with his brother, David?



- a. tense
- b. caring
- c. competitive
- d. detached

Justify your answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. How does our narrator feel about transforming into a "fishboy"? Support your answer with evidence from the text.



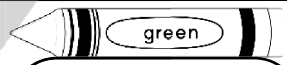
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Compare and contrast the two settings in the passage.



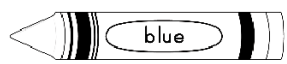
Setting 1: The Beach	Contrast	Setting 2: The Ocean

4. Sequence the events in the story.



	The narrator decides to go for a swim and looks for shells.			
--	---	--	--	--

5. How does the author foreshadow our narrator turning into a fish? Did you find the use of foreshadowing effective here?



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# VISUALIZING

Authors use words and phrases that allow readers to **visualize**, or create a mental picture of, what is being described in the story. Choose **three sentences** from "The Best Swim Ever."

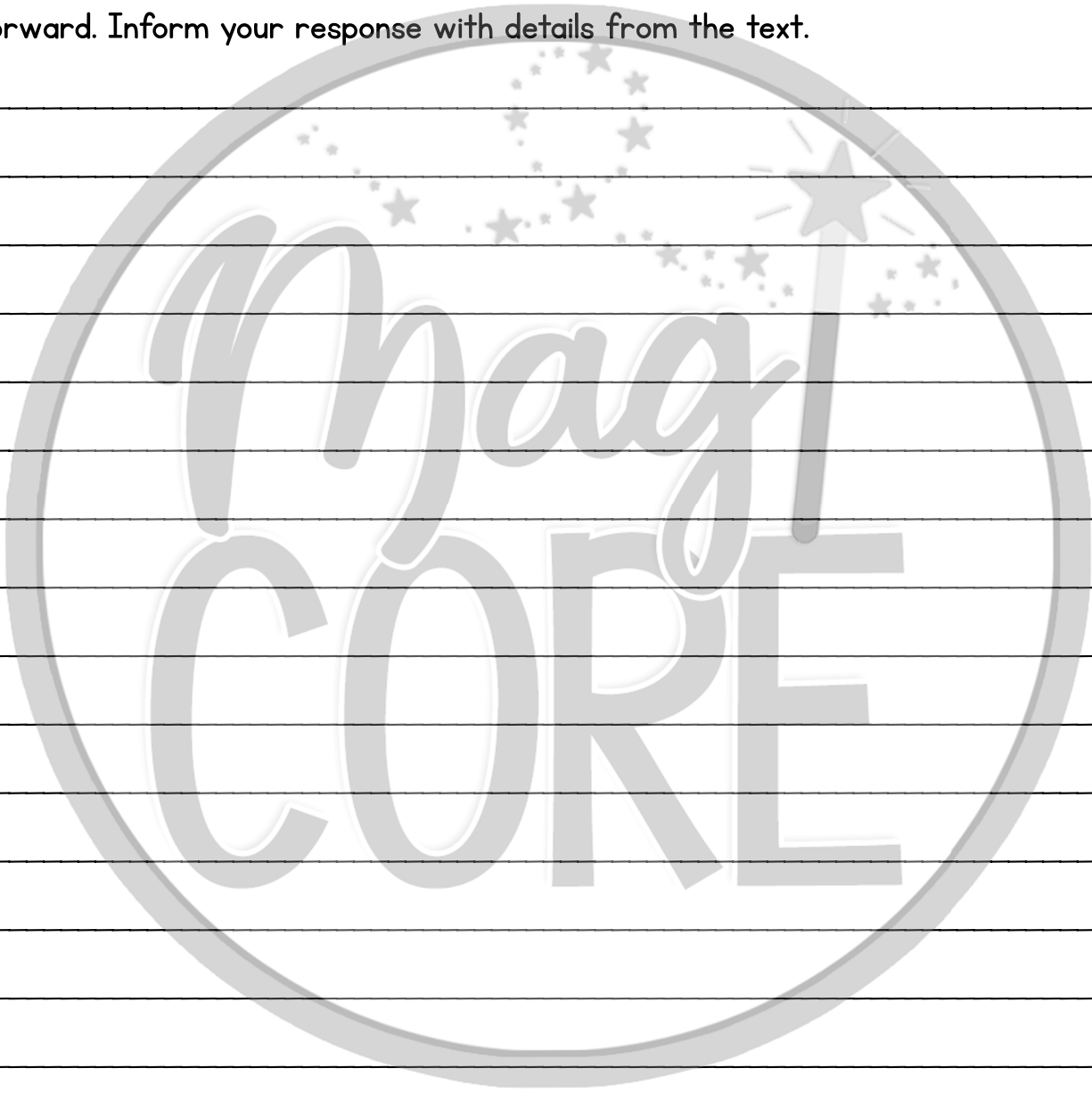
Copy them into the boxes on the "Sentence" side of the chart. On the "What I Visualize" side of the chart, draw a detailed picture of what you see in your mind when you read that line.

Sentence	What I Visualize
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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# THE BEST SWIM EVER RESPONSE

Our narrator has quite the adventure during this story. Write a response analyzing how this unique experience might shape our narrator's future. Make an inference about our narrator's future and how this experience in the ocean might influence our narrator's story going forward. Inform your response with details from the text.



Lined writing area for the response.

# A Very Special Show

“Step right up, folks! Come aboard. Be transported to a world of beauty and talent!” A man wearing a red suit and a tie with octopuses all over it waved his arm toward the submarine’s entrance. “You don’t want to miss this very special show!”

I loved the aquarium. I visited it at least once a month. I spent hours at the Touch Tank. I let my fingers trail through the cool water. I brushed them against the backs of cownose rays and epaulette sharks. I pressed my hands to the glass on the octopus exhibit. I loved when they too reached out a tentacle and high-fived me. I watched in awe as the jellyfish floated in their tank. The lighting made them glow.



Now the aquarium had added an underwater show. You had to ride a submarine to see it. It was no ordinary submarine either. This one was made of a clear material. It allowed riders to have an incredible view of the ocean. I could not wait to board and sink below the surface. Seeing marine creatures in their natural habitat was going to be great.

My turn to step onto the submarine finally came. The man in the red suit leaned toward me.

“A seat at the front has been saved for you, Prisha.” He pointed to a rounded door. It led in the opposite direction of where all the other guests had gone.



“How do you know my name?” I asked.

“A seahorse told me, of course.” He winked and ushered me toward the door. “Walk straight on through. You’ll meet another guide.”

I followed the man’s directions. I found myself at the nose of the submarine. I didn’t see another guide. I peeked through the door in front of me. My eyes widened at the gorgeous view even as we floated *above* the water at the dock.

“Ah, Prisha, you’re here.”

I jumped at the voice. I turned around to find a person wearing a white cloak with the hood drawn up. I stumbled back a few steps. The person removed the hood to reveal a pale gray face. I put a hand to my chest to calm my pounding heart.



“Nice makeup.” My voice was a little shaky. “This new feature of the aquarium is really cool.”

The person let the cloak fall open a bit more. Silvery scales were visible at his neck.

“Wow, that’s super realistic.” I took a step closer now. I was impressed at how the light shimmered off the scales. I was reminded of an exhibit at the aquarium. There were fish that had the same type of scales. They were called tarpon. “Why does everyone seem to know my name?”

“Because we’ve met before, Prisha,” he said. “Many times.”

“We have?” I squinted at him. I tried to see past the makeup job. I didn’t recognize him, though. I hadn’t recognized the man in the red suit either.

“My name is Narish. You come to the aquarium often.”

“Yes, I do. That’s how you know me?” I asked. “You’ve seen me there?”

Narish nodded. “No one that visits the aquarium spends the time appreciating us like you do.”

*Us?*

“Well, I’m just very interested in marine life,” I said. “I find it fascinating.”

“That is why we’ve put together this experience just for you.”

I was equal parts stunned and curious. The aquarium had made this show for me? But why?

I didn’t get the chance to ask that question. Narish indicated I should sit. The submarine was then in motion. It sunk lower and lower until the water completely surrounded us.

“Oh, man! This feels as if I’m actually swimming down here!” I got to the edge of my seat. I wished I could look in every direction at once. Different kinds of fish swirled around the submarine. Rays hovered above the sandy ocean floor below us. An entire dolphin pod glided by. Underwater plants swayed with the motion of the sea. A band of sea turtles streamed along.

Then one of the sea turtles paused in front of the submarine. It raised a front flipper in a . . . a wave? I squeezed my eyes closed. I opened them again. That turtle was looking straight at me.



And it was smiling.

I whipped my head around to look at Narish. He had remained standing behind my seat. “Does that turtle know me too?”

“Did you once take a sketchbook to the aquarium and draw that turtle?” Narish gestured to the sea turtle.

I stood and walked to the glass front of the submarine. I studied the sea turtle more closely. I *did* recognize him. I’d spent some time studying the patterns on the back of his shell. I wanted to draw them correctly.

I swiveled to look closely at Narish. “And you, you’re a tarpon, aren’t you?”

Narish smiled. “Indeed, I am. I very much enjoyed the poem you wrote about tarpons two weeks ago.”

I thought back to the writing assignment my English teacher had given. We had to write a poem about something we enjoy. When I’d finished it, I’d read it aloud at the tarpon exhibit.

*And they’d heard me!*

“That man in the red suit?” I pointed over Narish’s shoulder. That man now leaned against the doorway to this section of the submarine. “He’s . . . the Giant Pacific Octopus, isn’t he?”

“Yes.”

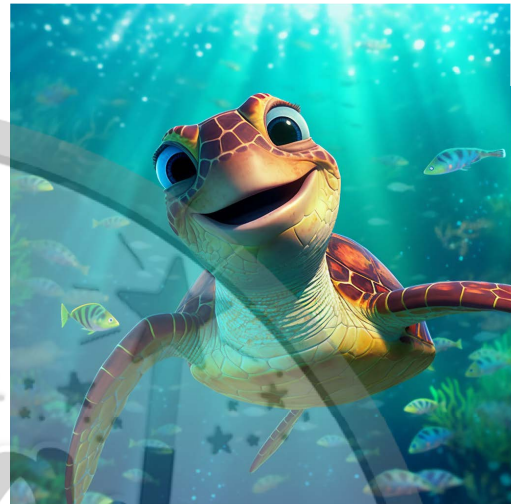
Suddenly, the submarine transformed into a single, clear bubble. Only Narish, the man in the red suit, and I were inside it.

“Where did all the other guests go?” I asked.

“There never were any other guests,” Narish said.

“You’re the only one we wanted to reward with this unique trip,” the man in the red suit said. “I’m Topu. Narish and I would love to be your guides.”

I looked around us. I was amazed to be floating in a giant bubble *under* the sea with a talking tarpon and an octopus in a suit. “I’d love that.”





“Fantastic,” Topu said. “The cownose rays won’t stop talking about meeting you.”

I watched in awe as Narish and Topu changed back into their natural forms. Then the bubble we were in popped! Water gushed in. I struggled for a moment until I realized I could breathe and swim easily.

I had gills and fins.

“You were right, Narish.” Topu’s voice echoed in my ears. “Prisha does make a fine catfish.”

I spent the afternoon exploring underwater with Narish, Topu, and all my friends from the aquarium. Then they returned me to the surface. I just sat on the dock for a long time. I wondered if I’d dreamed the entire experience. When I went into the aquarium, however, and heard all the sea creatures talking - and I understood every word - I knew I was forever changed by that very special show.

Magi  
CORE

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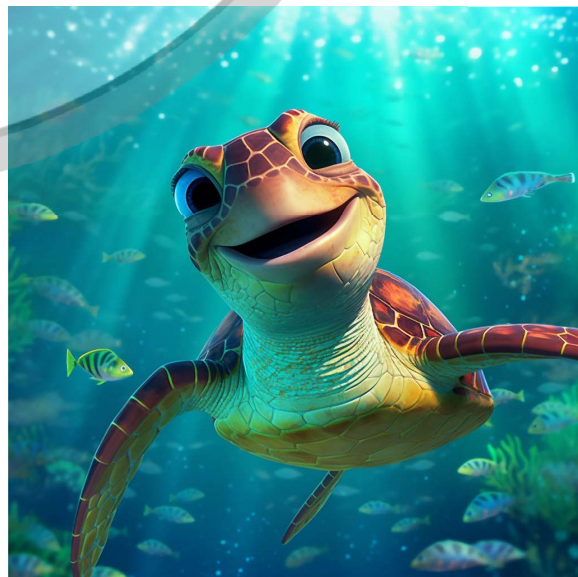
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I stood and approached the glass front of the submarine. Now that I studied the sea turtle more closely, I *did* recognize him. I’d spent some time studying the patterns on the back of his shell so I could draw them more accurately.





I swiveled to look closely at Narish. "And you, you're a tarpon, aren't you?"

Narish smiled. "Indeed, I am, and I very much enjoyed the poem you wrote about tarpons two weeks ago."

I thought back to the writing assignment my English teacher had given to write a poem about something we enjoy. When I'd finished it, I'd read it aloud at the tarpon exhibit.

*And they'd heard me!*

"That man in the red suit?" I pointed over Narish's shoulder where that man now leaned against the doorway to this section of the submarine. "He's . . . the Giant Pacific Octopus, isn't he?"

"Yes."

Suddenly, the submarine transformed into a single, clear bubble with only Narish, the man in the red suit, and me in it.

"Where did all the other guests go?" I asked.

"There never were any other guests," Narish said.

"You're the only one we wanted to reward with this unique trip," the man in the red suit said. "I'm Topu, and Narish and I would love to be your guides."

I looked around us, amazed to be floating in a giant bubble *under* the sea with a talking tarpon and an octopus in a suit. "I'd love that."

"Fantastic," Topu said. "The cownose rays won't stop talking about meeting you."

I watched in awe as Narish and Topu changed back into their natural forms. Then the bubble we were in popped! Water gushed in, and I struggled for a moment until I realized I could breathe and swim easily.

I had gills and fins.

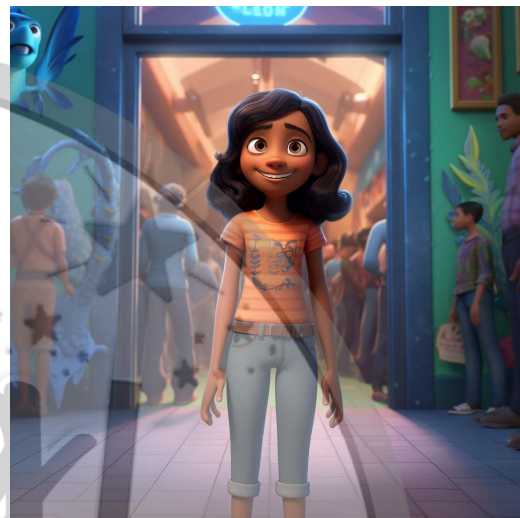
"You were right, Narish." Topu's voice echoed in my ears. "Prisha does make a fine catfish."

I spent the afternoon exploring underwater with Narish, Topu, and all my friends from the aquarium. Then they returned me to the surface where I just sat on the dock for a long time, wondering if I'd dreamed the entire experience. When I went into the aquarium, however, and heard all the sea creatures talking - and I understood every word - I knew I was forever changed by that very special show.

# A Very Special Show

"Welcome and step right up, folks! Come aboard, one and all, and be transported to a world of mystery, beauty, and talent!" A man wearing a bright red suit and a crazy tie with octopuses all over it arced his arm toward the submarine's entrance. "You don't want to miss this very special show under the sea!"

I was deeply in love with the aquarium and visited it on a monthly basis. I spent hours at the Touch Tank, just letting my fingers trail through the cool water and brush against the backs of cownose rays and epaulette sharks. I pressed my hands to the glass on the octopus exhibit, feeling positively giddy when they too reached out a tentacle and high-fived me. I was thoroughly entertained by the jellyfish gracefully floating in their tank, the lighting making them glow. If I could have, I would have spent every minute of my life at the aquarium, learning every single detail about every single animal there. I'd been tempted to hide out and sleep overnight there on many occasions, but so far, I hadn't actually tried.



Now the aquarium had added an underwater show that you had to ride a submarine to see. It was no ordinary submarine either because this one was made of a transparent material that was supposed to allow riders to have an incredible view of the ocean from all sides. I absolutely could not wait to board, sink below the surface, and see marine creatures in their natural habitat.



My turn to step onto the unusual submarine finally arrived, and the man in the red suit leaned toward me.

"A seat at the front has been saved for you, Prisha." He motioned to a rounded door that led in the opposite direction of where all the other guests had gone when they boarded the submarine.

"How do you know my name?" I asked.

"A seahorse told me, of course." He winked and then quickly ushered me toward the door. "Walk straight on through until you meet another guide."

I followed the man's directions and found myself at the nose of the submarine. I didn't see another guide anywhere, but I peeked through the door in front of me, my eyes widening at the gorgeous view even as we floated *above* the water at the dock. The ocean was just so breathtaking, and I was overjoyed that I lived so close to the coast and could enjoy it.



“Ah, Prisha, you’re here.”

I jumped at the deep voice, but when I turned around to find a person wearing a white cloak with the hood drawn up, I stumbled back a few steps. When the person removed the hood and a pale gray face was revealed, I put a hand to my chest to calm my pounding heart.

“That’s some extraordinary makeup,” I said, my voice still a little shaky. “This new feature of the aquarium is really outstanding, and guests are going to go wild over the opportunity to go underwater like this.”

The person let the cloak fall open a bit more so silvery scales were visible at his neck.

“Wow, that’s super realistic. You guys must have hired a true expert makeup artist.” I took a step closer now, impressed at how the light shimmered off the scales. I was instantly reminded of an exhibit at the aquarium with fish that had the same type of scales. They were called tarpon, and I visited them every time I came. “Why does everyone seem to know my name?”

“Because we’ve met before, Prisha,” he said. “On many, many occasions.”

“We have?” I squinted at him, trying to see past the impressive makeup job and picture him looking like a regular guy, but I didn’t recognize him. I hadn’t recognized the man in the red suit who had directed me to this part of the submarine either.

“My name is Narish, and you come to the aquarium often, more than anyone else ever does.”

“Yes, I do, and that’s how you know me?” I asked. “You’ve seen me at the aquarium on one of my visits?”

Narish nodded. “No one that visits the aquarium spends the time appreciating us like you do.”



*Us?*

“Well, I’m just very interested in marine life,” I said. “I find it fascinating, and it’s my favorite topic to read about and research. I never get bored with the ocean.”

“That is why we’ve put together this specific experience just for you, Prisha.”

I was equal parts stunned and curious that the aquarium had made this show for me. But why would they do that?

I didn’t get the opportunity to ask that question because Narish indicated I should sit and then the submarine was in motion, dipping lower and lower until the water completely surrounded us.



“Oh, man! This feels as if I’m actually swimming down here!” I scooted to the edge of my seat and wished I could look in every direction at once. Different kinds of fish, large and small, swirled around the submarine, while rays hovered above the sandy ocean floor below us. An entire dolphin pod glided by as underwater plants swayed with the motion of the sea and a band of sea turtles streamed along. I felt as if I’d been dropped into a giant fish tank and was oddly at home with that notion.

Then one of the sea turtles paused in front of the submarine and raised a front flipper in a . . . a wave? I squeezed my eyes closed and shook my head, but when I opened them again, that turtle was staring straight at me.

And it had a big, goofy grin on its face.

I whipped my head around to look at Narish who had remained standing behind my seat. “Is it possible that turtle knows me too?” Was that question as ridiculous as it sounded?

“Did you once take a sketchbook to the aquarium and draw that very turtle, making sure to include every detail?” Narish gestured to the sea turtle still hovering just outside the submarine as if waiting for me to wave back to it.



I rose from my seat and approached the glass front of the submarine. Now that I studied the sea turtle more closely, I *did* recognize him. I’d spent a great deal of time studying the intricate patterns on the back of his shell so I could draw them more accurately. I gave the turtle a wave, and he did an excited little flip, showing me the designs on the underside of his shell.



I swiveled to look closely at Narish, my eyes narrowing at those scales at his throat. “And you, you’re a tarpon, aren’t you?”

Narish smiled and swept his arms out to his sides. “Indeed, I am, and I very much enjoyed the wonderful poem you wrote and performed about tarpons two weeks ago.”

I thought back to the writing assignment my English teacher had given to write a poem about something we enjoyed. When I’d finished composing it, I’d read it aloud at the tarpon exhibit a few times.

*And they’d heard me!* So had some of the other aquarium visitors, and they’d applauded, making me remember that I never had the aquarium all to myself like I wanted.





“That man in the red suit?” I pointed over Narish’s shoulder where that man now leaned casually against the doorway to this section of the submarine. “He’s . . . the Giant Pacific Octopus, isn’t he?”

“Yes.” The man unfolded his arms that had been across his chest and smoothed the octopus tie.

Suddenly, the submarine transformed into a single, clear bubble with only Narish, the man in the red suit, and me inside it.

“Where did all the other guests go?” I asked, raising a brow at Narish.

“There never were any other guests,” Narish said.

“You’re the only one we wanted to reward with this unique trip,” the man in the red suit said. “I’m Topu, and Narish and I would love to be your guides on an up-close and personal tour of the ocean.”

I looked around us, amazed to be floating in a giant bubble *under* the sea with a talking tarpon and an octopus in a suit. “I’d love a personal tour of the ocean.”

“Fantastic,” Topu said. “The cownose rays and epaulette sharks won’t stop talking about meeting you.”

I watched in awe as Narish and Topu changed back into their natural forms, their clothes completely disappearing. Then the bubble we were in popped, and water gushed in at an alarming rate! I struggled for a moment until I realized I could breathe and swim easily.

I had gills and fins like the other sea creatures.

“You were right, Narish.” Topu’s voice echoed in my ears. “Prisha does make a fine catfish.”

I spent the afternoon exploring underwater with Narish, Topu, and all my friends from the aquarium. Then they returned me to the surface where I just sat on the dock for a long time, wondering if I’d dreamed the entire amazing experience. When I went into the aquarium, however, and heard all the sea creatures talking - and I understood every word - I knew I was forever changed by that very special show.

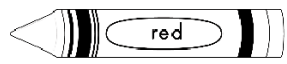


Under the Sea

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is not a crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

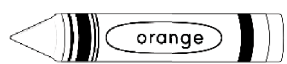
1. Based on details from the passage, what is the "Touch Tank" at the aquarium?



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is unique about the underwater show the aquarium is offering?



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

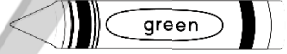
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Kurt made the following statement, "*Prisha got chosen to experience the special show because she didn't know much about marine life and needed to learn.*" Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Support your response with evidence from the text.



<p>Agree or Disagree?</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Evidence from the text:</p>
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4. How does the author use imagery to enhance the story? Is the author's use of imagery effective? Why or why not?

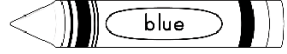


\_\_\_\_\_

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5. What does Prisha mean, both literally and figuratively, when she concludes the story thinking, "*I was forever changed by that very special show.*"?

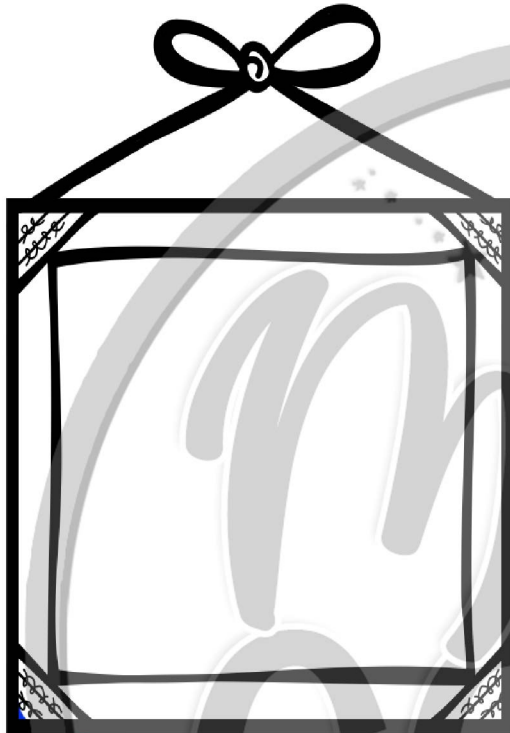


<p><b>Literally</b></p>	<p><b>Figuratively</b></p>
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# CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Analyze the main character in "A Very Special Show." Prisha is a unique character in many ways. Draw a picture of her, share details about her, and describe her as a character.



Draw the character

Character: Prisha

Physical Traits:

- 
- 
- 

Interests and Hobbies:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Personality Traits:

- 
- 
- 
-

# A VERY SPECIAL SHOW RESPONSE

What point of view is this passage written from? Who is the narrator? Write a response analyzing the point of view of the story. Examine how telling the story from this point of view enhances or takes away from the overall effectiveness of the passage.



# A Vivid Imagination

Chau sat at the stern of his father's fishing boat. This was not how he'd expected to spend his summer vacation. He didn't care for the smell. Being on a boat made his stomach queasy too.

His father hadn't wanted to hear any of Chau's protests, however. "Someday, you will join me in the fishing business. You need to know how everything works here."

Chau wanted to illustrate graphic novels. He didn't want to be a fisherman. He'd told his father many times. The man refused to hear him.

"Let's lower the nets," his father said.

Chau slowly got to his feet. He prayed his stomach would settle.

"Don't worry," his dad said. "You'll get your sea legs the more you're on the boat."

Chau wasn't sure he was going to make it through one day on this boat. How would he ever make it through the entire summer?

"Make sure the nets aren't tangled as I lower them," his father ordered.

Chau focused on the nets. Two of them went into the water without a problem. The third one had a knot in it.

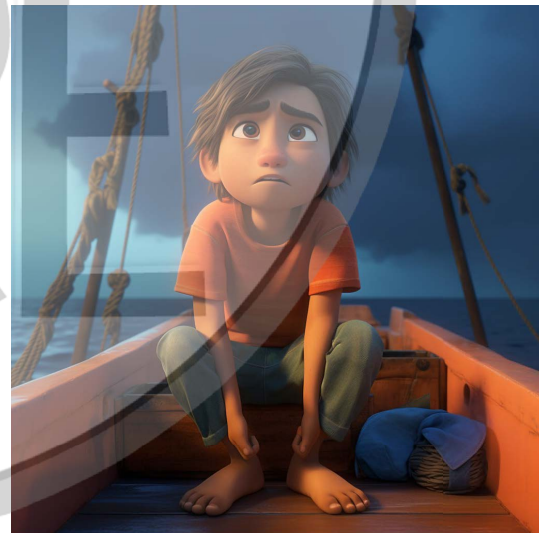
"Hang on a minute," Chau told his dad. He couldn't reach the net from his position on the deck. He stepped up onto the bench that lined the starboard side.



At the same time, a high-speed motorboat zipped by. Its engine roared. It created a huge wake that rocked the fishing boat.

Chau lost his balance. He fell over the side of the fishing boat.

He didn't hit the water right away, though. Instead, Chau got caught up in the fishing net. His arm was tangled in the mesh. He let out a shout as his arm was pulled back. The net was keeping him from dropping into the water. It was painful to just dangle on the side of the fishing boat by one arm, though.

His father's face appeared over the side. "I'll cut you free, Chau!"





Chau couldn't help thinking he wouldn't need to be cut free if he was at home in his room. He'd be working on illustrations at his desk. His desk that never swayed, never pitched, never made him nauseous, and never tossed him overboard.

He tried to reposition himself. His caught arm really hurt. His movement loosened the net. Chau plunged into the water.

*Don't panic. I know how to swim.* The arm that had been caught up in the net didn't want to work. It wanted to send zaps of pain throughout his body instead. Chau managed to tread water. He got tired quickly. He felt himself slipping lower into the sea. He had to get to the surface before he ran out of oxygen. The surface moved farther away with each moment that floated by.

Arms finally came around Chau. He was relieved his father had gotten to him in time. He expected to be taken up to the surface. Chau was pulled deeper instead.

Finally, he ran out of air and passed out.

Chau awakened. He was on a bed with the softest blankets. His arm didn't hurt at all when he tested it out. He sat up. He was in a room with walls that were made of rocks, shells, and coral. A peek over the edge of the bed revealed a floor made of the whitest sand he'd ever seen.

"Oh, you're awake," a voice said. "How do you feel?"

"Like I drowned," Chau said. He turned in the bed.



A girl with long blonde hair wearing a shimmering blue dress walked toward him. "You didn't drown," she said. "We were alerted to your presence in our home. Your distress was clear." She looked down at her clasped hands. "You were injured. I brought you here for our healers to ease your pain."

"Who are you?" Chau asked. He rubbed his arm which felt fantastic. "And where is here?"

"I'm Alora. This is the kingdom of Westalia." She crossed the room. Chau noticed a tail like that of a manta ray trailing out the back of her dress. She pulled open a pair of curtains. The view outside the window behind them made his mouth drop open.

Water. There was water out there. Fish swam by and sea plants grew.

"Did I hit my head or something?" Chau felt around his skull. He searched for bumps.



Alora turned to face him again. “The healers made no mention of any head injuries. Why? Do you still feel unwell?” Her face was full of concern.

“No. Actually, I feel amazing. The fact that I think I’m in an underwater kingdom right now suggests I can’t be all right.”

Alora laughed. The sound was as musical as her voice. “It is often hard to accept things your brain tells you are impossible.” She came closer to the bed. “This is all possible, though.” She gestured to the room around them, then to herself, and then out the window at the sea. “My father has been a fisherman since he was a teenager,” Chau said. “He’s spent almost every day out on the water. How come he has never mentioned anything like this?”

“He has been lucky enough never to need our aid,” Alora said. “We have watched your father’s activities for years, though. He never takes more fish than he needs. He is the type of fisherman my people don’t mind sharing the ocean with. Will you follow in his footsteps? Will you be a fisherman as well?”

“Now that I know about you and your kingdom,” Chau said, “I think spending more time on the water might not be so bad.”

Alora swam Chau back up to his father’s boat. His father pulled him on board. He held Chau so tightly.

“Oh, Chau, I’m sorry I forced you to be on this boat.” He gave Chau another squeeze before releasing him. “I thought you were lost to me forever. I’m so happy to have you back. I promise not to pressure you into becoming a fisherman anymore.”

Chau glanced over the side of the boat. Alora gave him a quick wave before diving back under the surface.

“It’s okay, Dad,” Chau said. “I think being out here has given me more ideas on drawings I’d like to make. No reason I can’t be an illustrator *and* a fisherman, is there?”

His father gave him another hug. They had the best summer together on the water. Chau’s father especially enjoyed the illustrations of a certain mermaid-like creature Chau had made.

“Wow, how do you get her to look so real?” his father asked. He marveled over Chau’s latest drawing.

Chau smiled. “I just have a vivid imagination, I guess.”

# A Vivid Imagination

Chau sat at the stern of his father's fishing boat. This was not how he'd expected to spend his summer vacation. He didn't care for the smell and honestly, being on a boat made his stomach queasy.

His father hadn't wanted to hear any of Chau's protests, however. "Someday, you will join me in the fishing business, and you need to know how everything works here."

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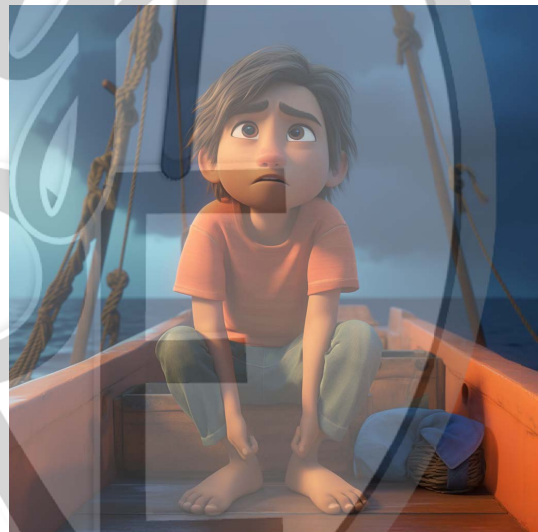
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Chau focused on the nets. Two of them went into the water without a problem, but the third one had a knot in it.

"Hang on a minute," Chau told his dad. He couldn't reach the net from his position on the deck, so he stepped up onto the bench that lined the starboard side.



At the same time, a high-speed motorboat zipped by, its engine roaring. It created a massive wake that rocked the fishing boat.

Chau lost his balance, and in the next moment, he fell over the side of the fishing boat.

He didn't hit the water right away, though. Instead, Chau got caught up in the fishing net, his arm tangled in the mesh. He let out a shout as his arm was wrenched back. Though the net was keeping him from dropping into the water, it was painful to just dangle on the side of the fishing boat by one arm.

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Chau couldn't help thinking he wouldn't need to be cut free if he was at home in his room, working on illustrations at his desk. His desk that never swayed or pitched or made him nauseous or tossed him overboard.

He tried to reposition himself because his caught arm really hurt, but his movement loosened the net, and Chau plunged into the water.

*Don't panic. I know how to swim.* But when he tried to, the arm that had been caught up in the net didn't want to cooperate. It wanted to send zaps of pain throughout his body instead. Chau managed to tread water, but he got tired quickly and felt himself slipping lower into the sea. He had to get to the surface before he ran out of oxygen, but the surface moved farther away with each moment that floated by.

Arms finally came around Chau, and he was relieved his father had gotten to him in time. Instead of getting ferried up to the surface, however, Chau was pulled deeper.

Finally, he ran out of air and passed out.

When Chau awakened, he was on a bed with the softest blankets. His arm didn't hurt at all when he tested it out. He sat up to find himself in a room with walls that were made of rocks, shells, and coral. A peek over the edge of the bed revealed a floor made of the whitest sand he'd ever seen.

"Oh, you're awake," a melodic voice said. "How do you feel?"

"Like I drowned," Chau said before turning in the bed to find a girl with long blonde hair wearing a shimmering blue dress walking toward him.

"You didn't drown," she said. "We were alerted to your presence in our home and your distress registered right away." She looked down at her clasped hands. "When I saw you were injured, I brought you here for our healers to ease your pain."

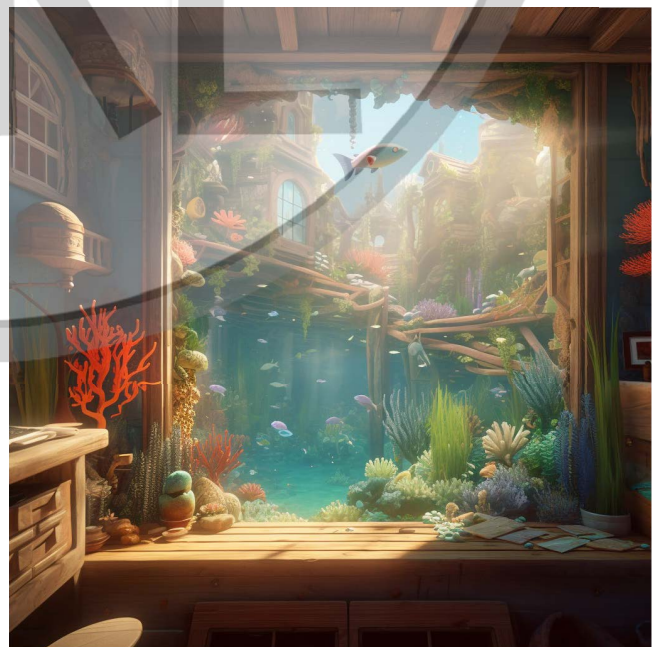
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"My father has been a fisherman since he was a teenager," Chau said. "He's spent almost every day out on the water. How come he has never mentioned anything like this?"

"He has been lucky enough never to need our aid," Alora said. "We have monitored your father's activities for years, though. He never takes more fish than he needs. He is the type of fisherman my people don't mind sharing the ocean with. Will you follow in his footsteps and be a fisherman as well?"

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Chau smiled. "I just have a vivid imagination, I guess."

# A Vivid Imagination

Chau sat at the stern of his father's fishing boat, a raging headache already pounding in his skull. This was not how he'd expected to spend his summer vacation. He didn't care for the smell of fishing and honestly, being on a boat made his stomach queasy as they rolled over waves.

His father hadn't wanted to hear any of Chau's protests, however. "Someday, you will join me in the fishing business, and you need to know how everything works here so you can run the show too."

Chau wanted to illustrate graphic novels when he grew up, not be a fisherman. No matter how many times he told his father this, however, the man refused to hear him and continued to chatter on about when Chau took over the family business.

"This is a perfect spot to get the best fish so let's lower the nets," his father said.

Chau slowly got to his feet, praying his stomach would settle and his breakfast wouldn't try to leave his body in a gross display.

"Don't worry," his dad said, patting Chau on the back. "You'll get your sea legs the more you're on the boat and get accustomed to the motion."

Chau wasn't sure he was going to make it through one day on this boat so how would he ever make it through the entire summer? Making a career of being on a boat sounded absolutely horrible to him.

"Make sure the nets aren't tangled as I lower them," his father ordered.

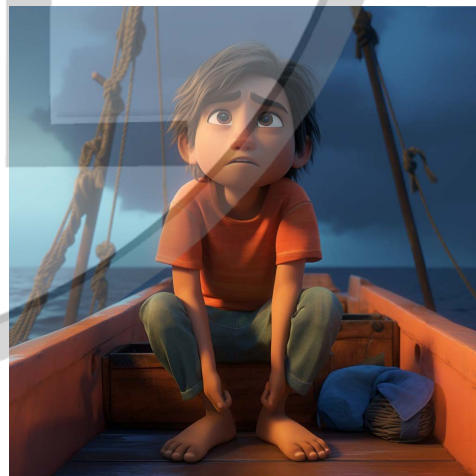
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"Hang on a minute," Chau told his dad, but he couldn't reach the net from his position on the deck, so he stepped up onto the bench that lined the starboard side.

At the same time, a high-speed motorboat zipped by, its engine roaring, and created a massive wake that violently rocked the fishing boat.

Chau tried to hold on but lost his balance, and in the next moment, he fell over the side of the fishing boat.

He didn't hit the water right away, though. Instead, Chau got caught up in the fishing net, his arm tangled in the mesh, and he let out a shout as his arm was wrenched back. Though the net was keeping him from plummeting into the water, it was painful to just dangle on the side of the fishing boat by one arm.





His father's face appeared over the side, worry etched into every wrinkle. "Hold on, Chau, and I'll cut you free!"

Chau couldn't help thinking that, first of all, of course he'd hold on, and secondly, he wouldn't need to be cut free if he was at home in his room, working on illustrations at his desk. His desk that never swayed or pitched or made him nauseous or tossed him overboard. He'd never heard one single story of an illustrator hanging like a holiday ornament from the side of a boat over the open ocean.

He tried to reposition himself because his caught arm really throbbed, but his movement loosened the net, and Chau plunged into the water.

*Don't panic; I know how to swim.* But when he tried to do just that, the arm that had been caught up in the net didn't want to cooperate. It wanted to send zaps of excruciating pain throughout his body instead. Chau managed to tread water, but he got tired quickly and felt himself slipping lower into the sea. He had to get to the surface before he ran out of oxygen, but the surface moved farther away with each moment that floated by.

Arms finally tightened around Chau, and he was relieved his father had gotten to him in time to rescue him. Instead of getting ferried up to the surface, however, Chau was pulled into the ocean's dark depths.

Finally, he ran out of air and passed out.

When Chau awakened, he was on a bed with the softest blankets, made of a material he couldn't identify. His arm didn't hurt at all when he tested it out, and he sat up to find himself in a room with walls that were made of pretty rocks, shells, and coral. A peek over the edge of the bed revealed a floor made of the whitest sand he'd ever seen.

"Oh, you're awake," a melodic voice said from behind him somewhere. "How do you feel?"

"Like I drowned," Chau said before turning in the bed to find a girl with long blonde hair wearing a shimmering blue dress walking toward him.

"You didn't drown," she said. "We were alerted to your presence in our home and your distress registered right away." She looked down at her clasped hands and then glanced back up at Chau. "When I saw you were injured, I brought you here for our healers to ease your pain."

"Who are you?" Chau asked, rubbing his arm that did, indeed, feel fantastic. "And where is here?"

"I'm Alora, and this is the kingdom of Westalia." She crossed the room and that was when Chau noticed a tail like that of a manta ray trailing out the back of her dress. She pulled open a pair of sheer curtains and the view outside the window behind them made his mouth drop open.

Water. There was water out there with fish swimming by and sea plants growing.

"Did I hit my head or something?" Chau immediately felt around his skull, searching for bumps or life-threatening gouges.

Alora turned to face him again, a worried expression on her face. "The healers made no mention of any head injuries, but do you still feel unwell?"

"No. Actually, I feel amazing, but the fact that I think I'm in an underwater kingdom in the ocean right now suggests I can't be all right."

Alora laughed, the sound as musical as her voice had been. "It is often hard to accept things your brain tells you are impossible." She came closer to the bed, that tail of hers rippling as she walked. "I assure you, however, this is all possible." She gestured to the room around them, then to herself, and then out the window at the sea outside.



"My father has been a fisherman since he was a teenager," Chau said. "He's spent almost every day out on the water so how come he has never mentioned anything like this?"

"He has been lucky enough never to need our aid," Alora said. "We have monitored your father's activities for years, though, and he never takes more fish than he needs. He is the type of fisherman my people don't mind sharing the ocean with. Will you follow in his footsteps and be a fisherman like him as well?"

"Now that I know about you and your kingdom," Chau said, "I think spending more time on the water might not be so horrible."

Alora swam Chau back up to his father's boat where his father pulled him on board and held him so tightly.

"Oh, Chau, I'm sorry I forced you to be on this boat when you dislike it so much." He gave Chau another squeeze before releasing him. "I thought you were lost to me forever. I'm so happy to have you back and promise not to pressure you into becoming a fisherman anymore."

Chau glanced over the side of the boat where Alora gave him a quick wave before diving back under the surface.

"It's okay, Dad," Chau said. "I think being out here has given me more ideas on drawings I'd like to make, and there's no reason I can't be an illustrator *and* a fisherman, is there?"

His father gave him another hug. They had the best summer together on the water. Chau's father especially enjoyed the illustrations of a certain mermaid-like creature Chau had made.

"Wow, how do you get her to look so real?" his father asked, marveling over Chau's latest drawing.

Chau smiled. "I just have a vivid imagination, I guess."

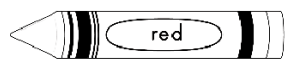


Under the Sea

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

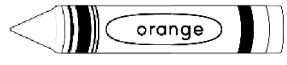
Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is not a crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

1. How do Chau's dreams for himself differ from his dad's dream for him?



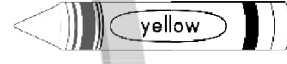
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2. Explain how Chau reacts once he falls into the water. How does he handle the situation?



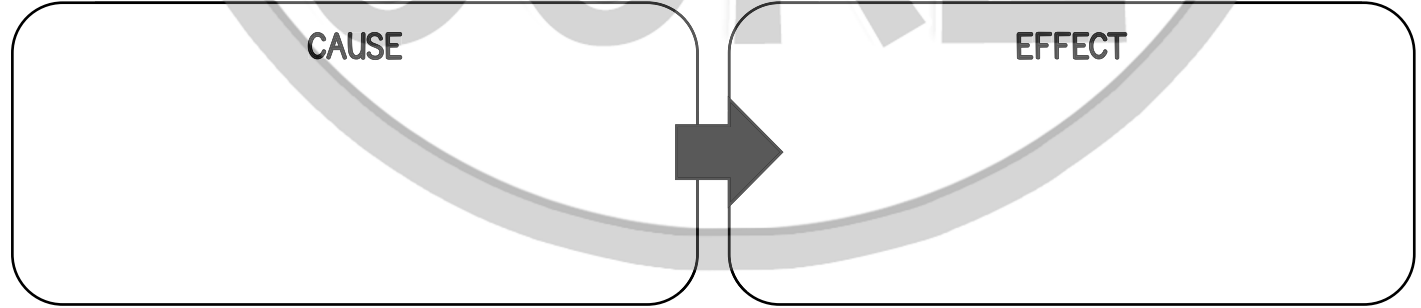
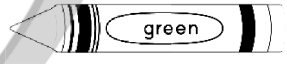
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3. Read this sentence from the passages, *"The fact that I think I'm in an underwater kingdom right now suggests I can't be all right."* What does this detail tell you about Chau in this moment?



- a. He is fearful for his life.
- b. He is familiar with this kingdom from dreams he has had.
- c. He thinks he is sleeping.
- d. He is confused by the fact he is in an underwater kingdom and thinks he might have a serious injury.

4. Examine the cause-and-effect relationship between Chau's experience underwater and his realization about his father and his future.



5. Describe how Chau and his father's relationship evolved throughout the story. Support your answer with details from the passage.



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# CHANGING FEELINGS

Characters often feel differently throughout a story because of the events that happen. Fill in the chart below to show how the narrator's feelings change throughout "A Vivid Imagination."

<b>EVENT #1</b>  Chau is riding in his father's fishing boat.	<b>HOW DOES THE CHARACTER FEEL?</b>  Chau has a <b>headache</b> and is <b>disappointed</b> to be spending summer on the boat.
<b>EVENT #2</b>	<b>HOW DOES THE CHARACTER FEEL?</b>
<b>EVENT #3</b>	<b>HOW DOES THE CHARACTER FEEL?</b>
<b>EVENT #4</b>	<b>HOW DOES THE CHARACTER FEEL?</b>
<b>EVENT #5</b>	<b>HOW DOES THE CHARACTER FEEL?</b>
<b>EVENT #6</b>	<b>HOW DOES THE CHARACTER FEEL?</b>

# A VIVID IMAGINATION RESPONSE

Our main character, Chau, is very different from his father. However, they also share many similarities. Write a response comparing and contrasting the two characters. Examine how they behave and react, their likes and dislikes, and their character traits.



# A Better Life

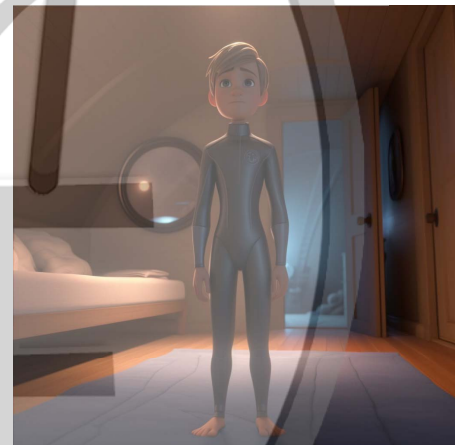
I swam through the West End tunnel. Then I dove for the first chute to New Underyork. I didn't think the sharks tailing me saw where I went. I couldn't be sure. I couldn't stay away much longer, though. My little sister, Mollie, would start to worry. I'd left her alone in our pod. I needed to make some deliveries. I was trying to earn us enough shells to trade for food. We hadn't eaten in three days. The sound of Mollie's stomach growling at night broke my heart.

I took several turns to make sure the sharks were truly gone. I swam to our pod and punched in the door code. The first door opened. It dumped me and some seawater into a small chamber. I let that drain and removed my helmet. The warm jets dried me off then I opened the second door.

Mollie immediately attacked my thighs. She had a tight grip a kid of her size shouldn't have.

"You were gone for so long!" she cried into my legs.

"It wasn't that long, Molls." I unzipped my wetsuit. I pulled out the packs of dried fruit, seaweed flakes, and tuna. I was able to get them at one of the only onshore markets that still had food. The selection there had been even less since the last time I'd visited. We were going to have to find something else to eat soon.



Mollie released her hold on me. She took one of the packs of fruit. "Can we open this one now?"

We really should wait until tonight. I found it hard to say no to my sister when she was so hungry. "Sure, go ahead. Only a few handfuls."

"I know." Mollie tore open the pack. She dumped out a tiny bit for both of us.

We munched quietly. We tried to savor every bite. We made it last in our mouths as long as possible. It wasn't always this way. Once, we lived with our parents in a cute little house on the beach. We had barbecues and ate ice cream. We drank lemonade. We even had a dog. He loved to run along the beach. He chased Frisbees and seagulls.

Then the Big Wave hit. That fun beach town was erased. Coastal cities around the globe were ruined too. The rains came next. They flooded the rest of the lands. We knew the water cycle was waging a war on us.



It was a war we couldn't possibly win.

So we retreated to the oceans. We quickly built underwater places to live. Our own parents were architects and helped with the construction. When an accident with a drilling machine occurred, they didn't survive.

Now it was just Mollie and me. We tried to exist on stale food and memories.

We should be thankful. At least we had this pod. The construction company responsible for the accident that took our parents gave it to us.

Mollie and I each ate a half-handful more of dried fruit. I then stowed all the food in our small kitchen area. I was about to suggest we play a game because Mollie loved games. It would take our minds off being so hungry. A chime sounded, though, letting us know someone was at the door.

I peeked out a circular window. I needed to make sure it wasn't a threat. I was surprised to find a woman treading water out there. Mollie had wiggled between me and the window.

"Do you know her?" she asked.

"I don't think so. It's hard to tell with her helmet on," I said.

The chime sounded again. I opened the first door. After the motors of the drying jets died down, I yelled through the closed door, "Who are you?"

"No one that plans to hurt you or your sister, Malcolm," the woman said. "I knew your parents."

Mollie and I had been in New Underyork for at least three years. No one had ever come claiming to know our parents. Curiosity made me unlock the second door. I made sure Mollie was behind me. I took a defensive stance, just in case.

The woman didn't attack, though. Instead, she smiled and stepped into our pod. "My, you look just like your father, Malcolm."

My throat tightened at that comment. I had one single picture of my parents. I thought I looked like my father too. It was different, however, to hear someone else say it out loud.

"And look at you, Mollie," she said. "The last time I saw you, you were just a baby."





“We’ve met before?” I asked.

“We have.” The woman extended a hand to me. “I’m Evelyn. I was the one who sold that beach house to your parents. You were just a little boy then. It’s okay if you don’t remember me.”

I didn’t, but I shook her hand anyway. “What are you doing here now?”

Evelyn reached into her suit and pulled out a tablet. After a few taps, she turned the tablet so it faced Mollie and me. It was a city with buildings like the ones we’d had in New York. They were far prettier, though, in pastel colors and with seashell decorations on their fronts. Cool mini underwater rovers zipped around the city. Evelyn tapped the screen. The image shifted to a neighborhood of cottage-like homes with little fenced-in yards. The neighborhood was inside a giant, clear bubble that sat on four pillars.

“These are drawings for an underwater city and neighborhood your father designed,” Evelyn said, confirming what I had already known. The details in the pictures and the creativity instantly reminded me of him.

“They’re so pretty,” Mollie said, her brown eyes wide.

“They are,” Evelyn agreed. “They’re also real.”

“What?” Mollie and I said at the same time, making Evelyn laugh.

“They’ve been built, deep in the Atlantic Ocean. I’m here to take you both there.”

Mollie and I just stood silently. We stared at Evelyn like she was a fairy godmother or something. Evelyn’s hand landing on my shoulder jolted me out of my stunned state.

“It’s because of your father’s genius ideas that we were able to make this city and not just one, but multiple neighborhoods,” Evelyn said. “You and Mollie deserve to have a home there. We have underwater farms, so food is plentiful. We even have several nice families that are willing to have you join them. You don’t have to be all on your own anymore.”

Mollie tugged on my arm. “Can we go, Malcolm? Can we?”

I looked at Evelyn. “Give us ten minutes to pack.”

“You got it.”

It only took us five minutes. Then we were on our way to a whole new life... a better

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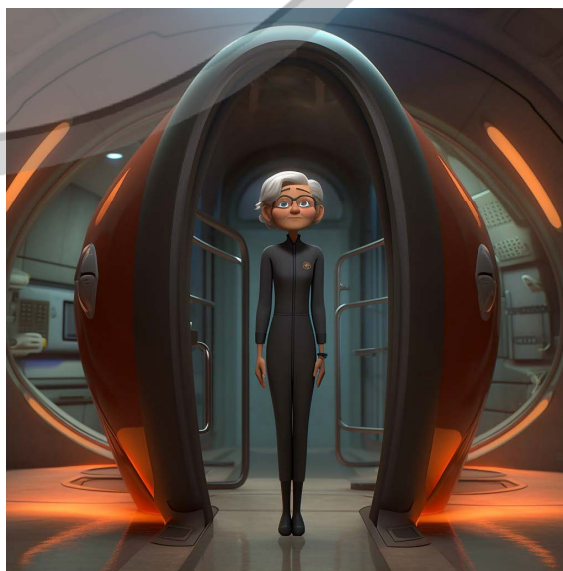
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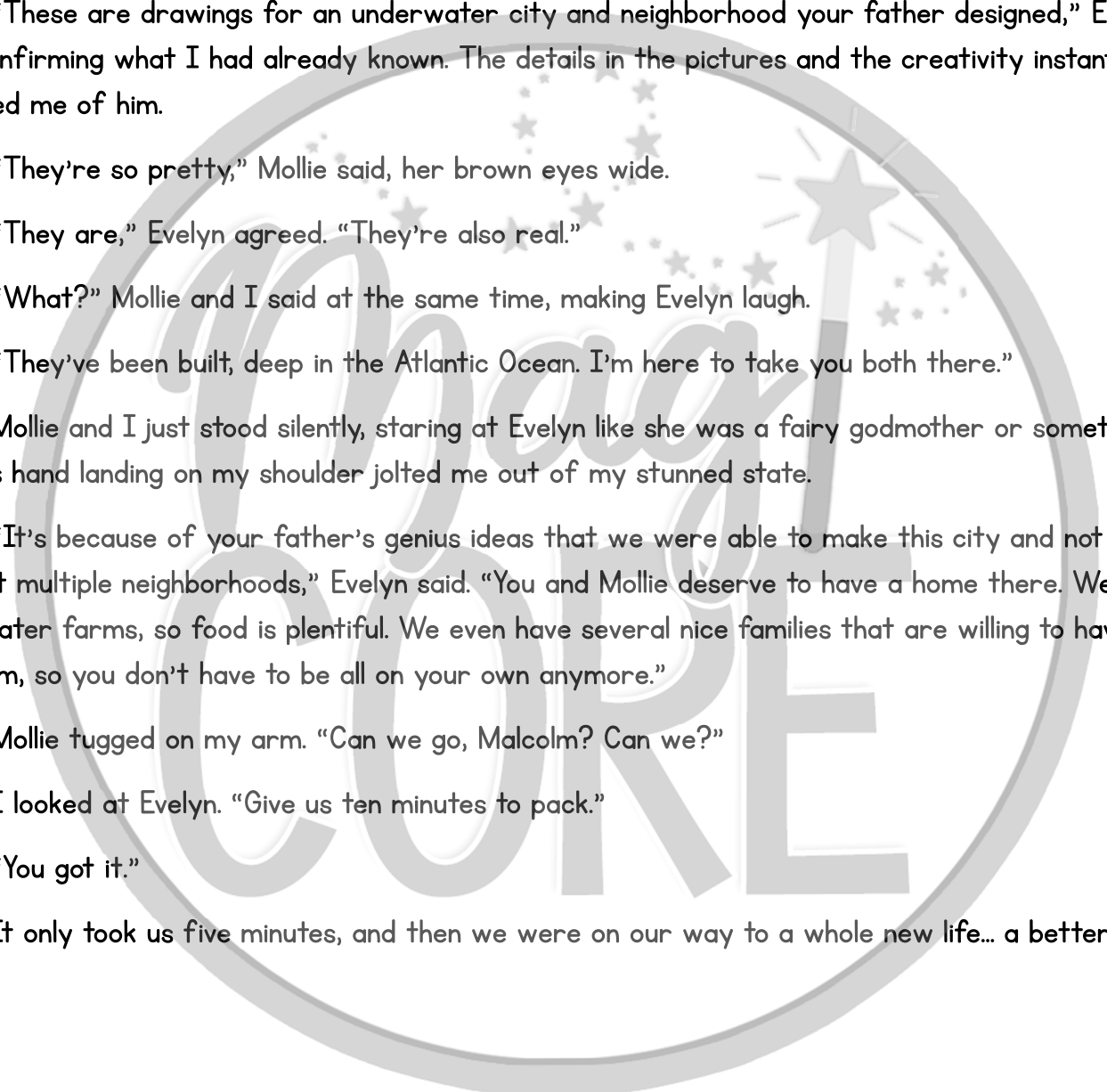
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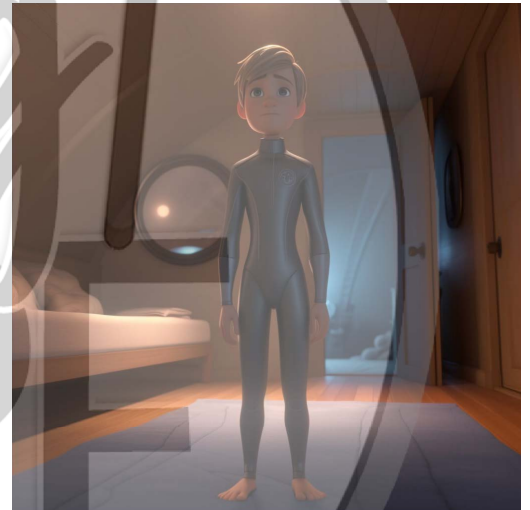
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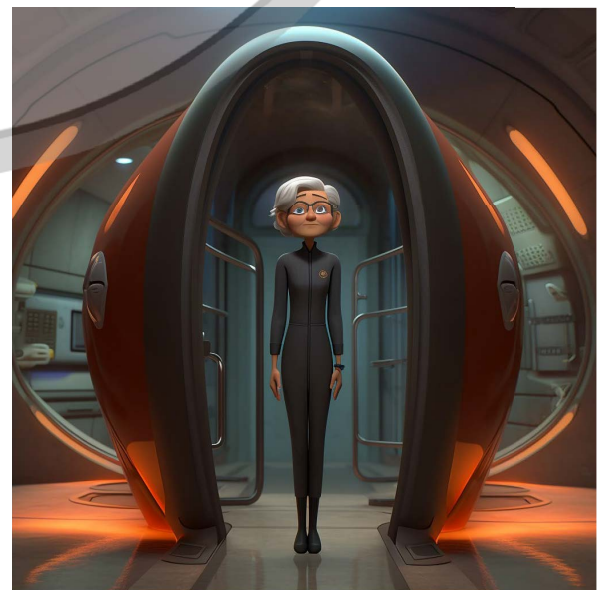
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"And look at you, Mollie," she said, putting her hands to her cheeks. "The last time I saw you, you were just a baby."

"We've met before?" I asked, searching my dusty memory and still not recognizing her.



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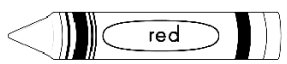


Under the Sea

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions. Underline the text evidence in the color indicated. If there is not a crayon next to the question, you will need to infer the answer. You should still look for text evidence to help you infer.

1. What point of view is this story told in?
  - a. third person
  - b. first person
  - c. second and third person
  - d. second person



2. How would you describe the relationship between our narrator and Mollie? Support your answer with evidence from the passage.




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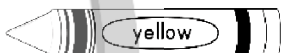
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3. Read this sentence from the passage, *"We knew the water cycle was waging a war on us."* What kind of figurative language is the author utilizing here?

- a. foreshadowing
- b. simile
- c. metaphor
- d. sensory details



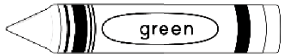
Justify your response: \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Examine how Malcolm and Mollie's parents impact their lives, even after they are gone. Support your response with details from the story.




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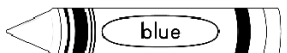


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5. Summarize the problem and solution of this story.



**Problem**

**Solution**



# MAKING INFERENCES

Make inferences based on the passage.

## Evidence

Details from the text



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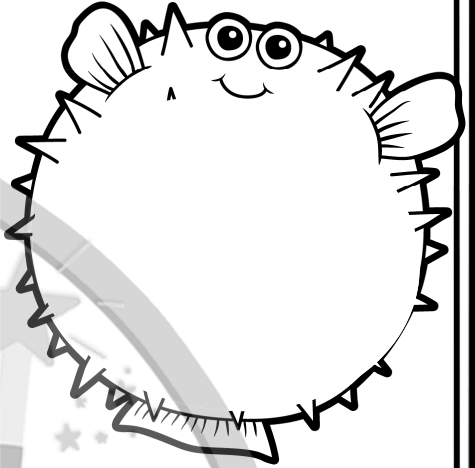
## Schema

Ideas from my brain



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## Inference or Prediction



## Evidence

Details from the text



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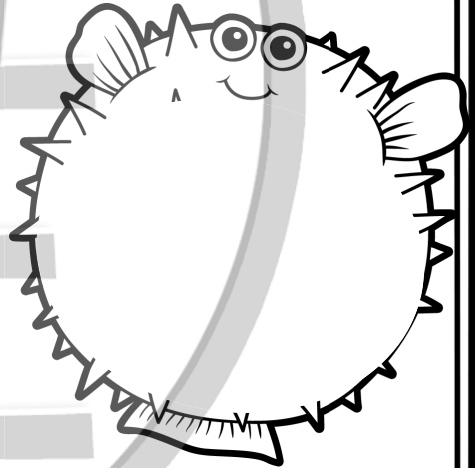
## Schema

Ideas from my brain



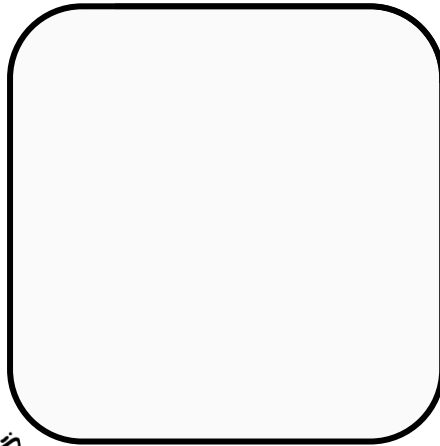
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## Inference or Prediction



## Evidence

Details from the text



+

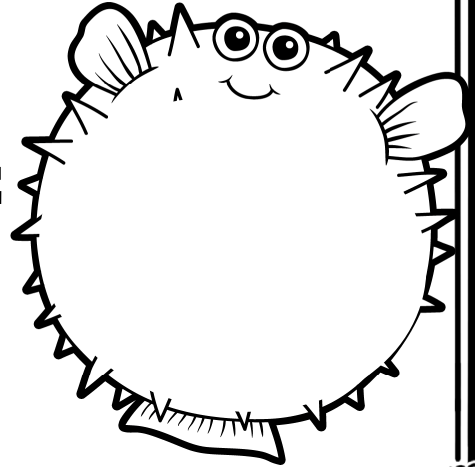
## Schema

Ideas from my brain



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## Inference or Prediction





# A BETTER LIFE RESPONSE

Analyze the setting of this story. Look at when the story takes place, what major events impact the setting, and how the setting helps create an engaging story. What is unique about this setting and how does this impact the story?



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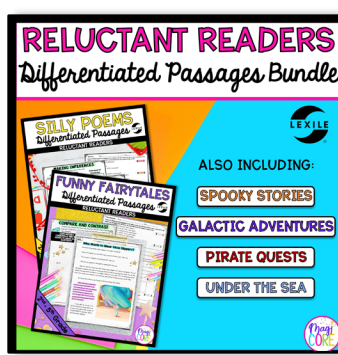


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