

**A.W. James Elementary
School**

English Language Arts

**Independent Learning
Packet**

Grade 3

Student Name _____

Name: _____

The Closet Creature

by Kelly Hashway

Bump! Bump! Scratch!

Adam opened his eyes and pulled the covers up to his chin. He stared around his room, searching the darkness for the thing that was making those scary sounds.

The closet door moved as something banged on it from the inside.

"Who's there?" Adam asked in a shaky voice.

The closet slowly began to open. Adam jumped out of bed and ran to the closet door, slamming it shut with his palms. He grabbed his desk chair and propped it against the door handle. Then he ran out of his room and down the hall. His brother's door was wide open, and Adam jumped onto David's bed.

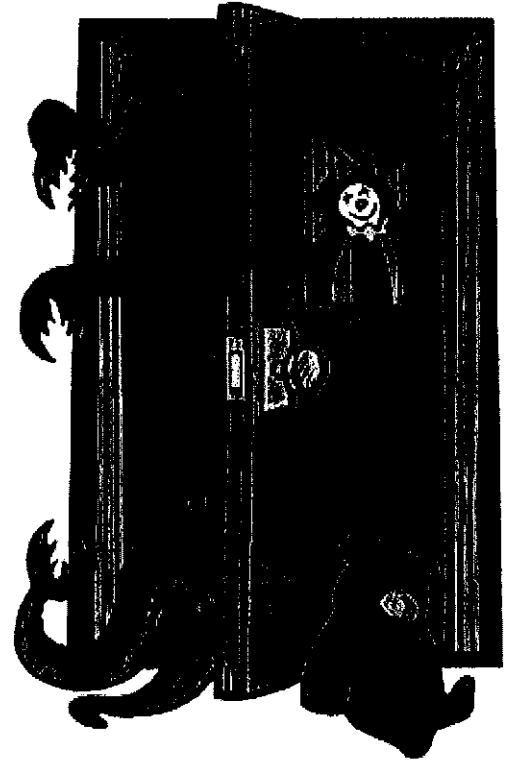
"Adam?" David asked in a groggy voice. "What are you doing in here?"

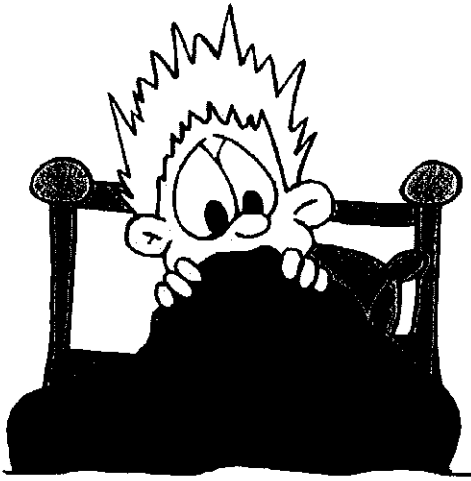
Adam tugged on David's arm. "There's something in my closet!"

"You probably had a bad dream. Go back to bed."

Adam yanked the blankets off the bed. "It wasn't a dream. I was awake, and the closet door started opening by itself!"

David sighed. "Fine. But when we don't find anything, you have to promise to leave me alone for the rest of the night."





Adam nodded. David reached into his desk drawer and pulled out a flashlight. Then they headed to Adam's room. Adam stopped in the doorway. He could hear something scratching his closet door.

"Do you hear that?" Adam asked.

David nodded. He walked over to Adam's bed and pulled the case off one of the pillows. He opened the pillowcase.

"You open the door very slowly, and I'll grab whatever it is."

Adam slid the chair to the side and pulled the closet door open a crack. Something banged against the door, trying to force it open. Adam took a deep breath and opened the door a few more inches. A small furry creature ran right into the pillowcase.

"I got it!" David said, closing the pillowcase and holding it in the air.

"What is it?" Adam moved closer as David peeked inside.

David put the pillowcase on the bed and an orange cat climbed out.

Adam scooped the cat up. "Apricot? How did you get trapped in my closet?"

David laughed. "The poor cat. If I was locked in your closet with your stinky shoes, I'd be banging on the door to get out, too!"

"Poor, Apricot," Adam said. "You were probably more scared than I was."

About the the Author

Kelly Hashway

Kelly Hashway is a children's book author. You may enjoy reading her latest book, *May the Best Dog Win*, which will be available in Spring 2011.

Name: _____

The Closet Creature

by Kelly Hashway



1. What happened right after David went into Adam's room?
- a. Adam jumped into David's bed.
 - b. David grabbed a flashlight from his desk drawer.
 - c. Adam awoke to strange sounds coming from his bedroom closet.
 - d. David heard the noise coming from Adam's closet.

2. What did David plan to do with the pillowcase?
- a. keep the creature from coming out of the closet
 - b. scare the creature in the closet
 - c. catch the creature in the closet
 - d. hit the creature in the closet

3. What was making the strange sounds in Adam's closet?

4. Write three adjectives that describe David. Tell why you chose each word.

_____ because _____

_____ because _____

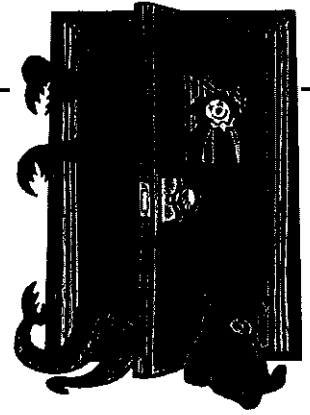
_____ because _____

5. What type of story is this?
- a. tall tale
 - b. non-fiction
 - c. mystery
 - d. fable

Name: _____

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Fill in the missing letters to create a word from the story.

Then, write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. _ _ o _ _ y

clue: sleepy

1. _____

2. _ l _ _

clue: past tense of slide

2. _____

3. _ _ _ m s

clue: inner surfaces of the hands

3. _____

4. _ i _ _ _ _ a _ _

clue: soft bag for keeping a pillow clean

4. _____

5. _ e _ _ e d

clue: went towards

5. _____

6. _ _ _ i _ o _

clue: orange fruit

6. _____

7. _ _ e _ e d

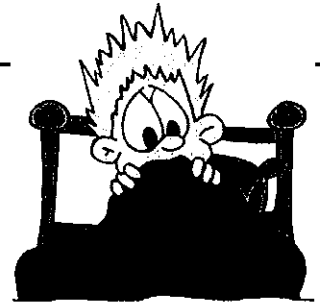
clue: took a quick look

7. _____

Name: _____

The Closet Creature

Parts of a Story



Characters: List the main characters and briefly describe them.

Setting: Tell where and when the story takes place. Be specific.

Problem: Describe the main character's problem.

Solution: Tell how the problem was solved, and how the story ended.

Personal Opinion: Tell whether or not you liked the story, and justify your opinion.

Name: _____

The Closet Creature

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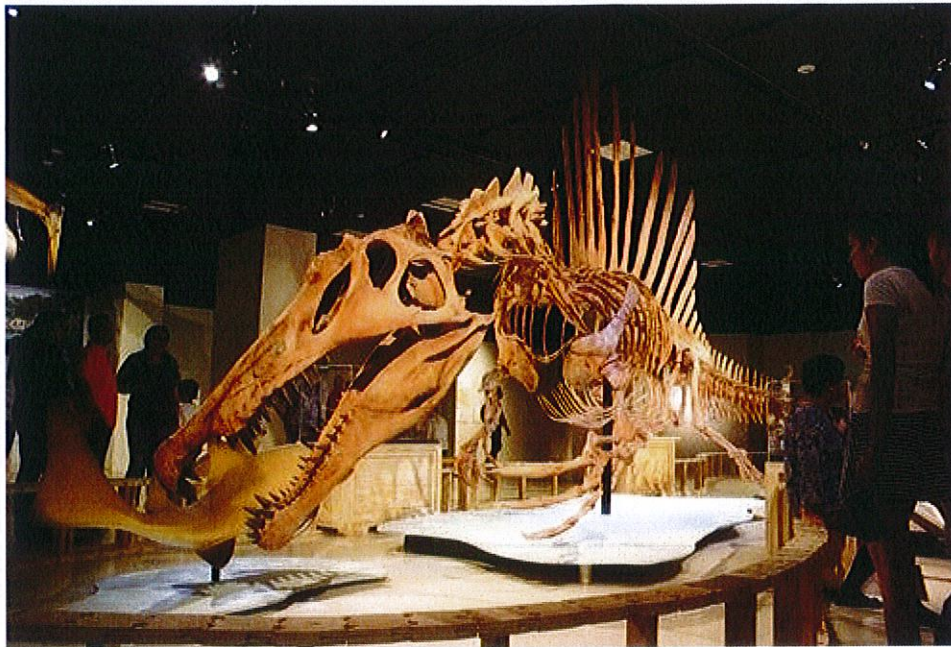


Retell "The Closet Creature" from the cat's point-of-view.
Then, on a separate sheet of white paper, draw a picture to accompany your story.

The Swimming Dinosaur

by ReadWorks

Hundreds of millions of years ago, dinosaurs walked the earth. Some of them were fierce predators, like the *T. rex* and *Velociraptor*. Most of these carnivorous dinosaurs stayed on land, hunting and living on solid ground. But the largest known carnivorous dinosaur is thought to have spent most of its time in the water. This 50-foot-long swimming dinosaur is called *Spinosaurus*.



By Ryan Somma, CC BY 2.0

Spinosaurus skeleton

The *Spinosaurus* lived about a hundred million years ago, during the Cretaceous period. It lived in North Africa, where there used to be many swamps and large rivers. It had many distinct features. One special feature was the set of spines for which it was named. The *Spinosaurus* had very long spines growing on its back. They were up to 7 feet long! They were likely connected by skin, forming what scientists call its "sail." It most likely was not used as the dinosaur swam, however.



By Ryan Somma, CC BY 2.0

Spines of a Spinosaurus

Scientists have studied *Spinosaurus* fossils to learn more about the dinosaur. The *Spinosaurus* fossils show that the dinosaur had plenty of features that suggest that it spent much of its life in the water. For example, its hind legs were shorter than the hind legs of other carnivorous dinosaurs, like the *T. rex*. Also, its feet were shaped almost like paddles, with wide claws. Additionally, the *Spinosaurus* had smooth, interlocking teeth shaped like cones. This is similar to today's fish-eating crocodiles and different from other predatory dinosaurs that stalked their prey on land. It suggests that the *Spinosaurus* ate large fish. The *Spinosaurus* also had nostrils on top of its head. This placement would have helped it as it spent lots of time in or under water. And finally, the dinosaur had very dense bones. Animals today with such dense bones spend most or all of their time in water. By studying the fossils of *Spinosaurus*, scientists have begun to piece together a better picture of this water-dwelling dinosaur.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What was the largest carnivorous dinosaur?

- A. *T. rex*
- B. *Velociraptor*
- C. *Allosaurus*
- D. *Spinosaurus*

2. What does this text describe in detail?

- A. the distinct features of the *T. rex*
- B. the distinct features of the *Spinosaurus*
- C. the way *Spinosaurus* swam
- D. the reasons why *Spinosaurus* had a "sail"

3. *Spinosaurus* spent most of its time in the water. What is one piece of evidence from the text supports this conclusion?

- A. *Spinosaurus* lived in North Africa, where there used to be many swamps and large rivers.
- B. *Spinosaurus* had very long spines growing on its back that were up to 7 feet long!
- C. *Spinosaurus* had nostrils on top of its head, which would have helped it spend lots of time under water.
- D. Scientists have studied *Spinosaurus* fossils to learn more about the dinosaur.

4. What is one way that *Spinosaurus* fossils differ from the fossils of predatory dinosaurs that lived on land?

- A. *Spinosaurus* fossils are less common than the fossils of predatory dinosaurs that lived on land.
- B. Fossils of *Spinosaurus* teeth are shaped differently than fossils of the teeth of predatory dinosaurs that lived on land.
- C. *Spinosaurus* fossils are found in different areas of the world than fossils of predatory dinosaurs that lived on land.
- D. The hind legs from *Spinosaurus* fossils are longer than the hind legs of fossils of predatory dinosaurs that lived on land.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. The many distinct features of *Spinosaurus* suggest that it spent most of its life in the water.
- B. One of the most distinct features of *Spinosaurus* is its set of tall spines, called a "sail."
- C. The *Spinosaurus* had smooth, interlocking teeth shaped like cones, like today's crocodiles.
- D. Scientists have studied *Spinosaurus* fossils to learn more about this dinosaur.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is a meaning of the word **feature**?

- A. a feeling of self-respect and personal worth
- B. a prominent attribute or aspect of something
- C. the people who inhabit a territory or state

2. What is another meaning of the word **feature**?

- A. a tool with a heavy head and a handle used for pounding
- B. a special or prominent article in a newspaper or magazine
- C. a wilderness at the edge of a settled area of a country

Please use each answer choice only once. Choose the one word that best completes the sentence.

3. It is _____ in an exhibit.

- A. feature
- B. featureless
- C. featured
- D. features

4. One popular type of story, which is found throughout a newspaper, is the _____ story.

- A. feature
- B. featureless
- C. featured
- D. features

5. The shadow square was a _____ field of black, without boundaries.

- A. feature
- B. featureless
- C. featured
- D. features

6. A region is an area that has certain _____.

- A. feature
- B. featureless
- C. featured
- D. features

7. Please write your own sentence using the word **feature**.

8. What would you like to remember about the meaning of the word **feature** so that you can use it when you write or speak?

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is a meaning of the word **suggest**?

- A. get something
- B. to make less
- C. to recommend

2. What is another meaning of the word **suggest**?

- A. to make more
- B. drop a hint
- C. to talk over

Please use each answer choice only once. Choose the one word that best completes the sentence.

3. Last month, my teacher _____ that my class choose a project to help our community in some way.

- A. suggest
- B. suggestion
- C. suggested
- D. suggests
- E. suggestions
- F. suggesting

4. Potted plants can be added around the stage to _____ trees if desired.

- A. suggest
- B. suggestion
- C. suggested
- D. suggests
- E. suggestions
- F. suggesting

5. As the name _____, electric guitars make their sounds with electricity.

- A. suggest
- B. suggestion
- C. suggested
- D. suggests
- E. suggestions
- F. suggesting

6. Ask another student to read your paper and make _____.

- A. suggest
- B. suggestion
- C. suggested
- D. suggests
- E. suggestions
- F. suggesting

7. He acted on the _____ at once.

- A. suggest
- B. suggestion
- C. suggested
- D. suggests
- E. suggestions
- F. suggesting

8. I shook my head no, so he started _____ other things.

- A. suggest
- B. suggestion
- C. suggested
- D. suggests
- E. suggestions
- F. suggesting

9. Please write your own sentence using the word **suggest**.

10. What would you like to remember about the meaning of the word **suggest** so that you can use it when you write or speak?

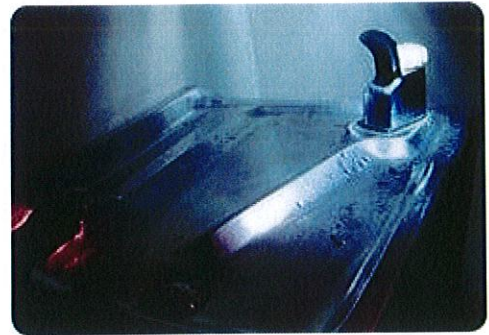
Germs Go to School!

Yuck! A health and safety group recently tested school surfaces for germs and found millions! Drinking fountains had the most germs. A cafeteria tray had more germs than a toilet seat! The testers also found germs lurking on desks and computer keyboards.

Kids miss 22 million days of school each year because of colds caught from germs. That number would be much lower if kids would just wash their hands, say health experts.

Not all germs are harmful, but some can make kids sick. "When you share things in a classroom, you increase the chance that you might get sick," the health and safety group's spokesperson, Jerry Bowman, told *Weekly Reader*. "Since we are right in the middle of cold and flu season, we have to be extra careful to wash our hands and cover up [our] coughs."

Health experts say drinking fountains would have fewer germs if they were cleaned more often.



Photos.com

Health experts say drinking fountains would have fewer germs if they were cleaned more often.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. In this passage, the author sounds

- A. concerned about germs in schools.
- B. happy to drink from school water fountains.
- C. fearful that he will get sick.
- D. like he is blaming schools for his cold.

2. The author seems to _____ with Jerry Bowman about the amount of germs in schools.

- A. disagree
- B. None of the above.
- C. argue
- D. agree

3. In the passage, the author compares the amount of germs on a cafeteria tray to a

- A. student's desk.
- B. playground.
- C. toilet seat.
- D. drinking fountain.

4. The following is caused by not washing hands:

- A. the spreading of germs.
- B. more children getting sick.
- C. germs being found on the water fountain.
- D. all of the above.

5. What evidence can you find in the passage that communicates how the author feels about the amount of germs in schools? Explain.
