



People think it is so easy to be a dog.  
They scratch my head and say, “Elvis, your life  
is so easy.”

Boy, are they wrong. Being a dog is hard  
work! I don’t like what I do every day. I just  
can’t do it anymore!





I wake up on a cold, hard floor every day.  
I eat dry dog food for breakfast. Yuck!

Then I have to drag myself out the door to  
chase the mailman. I do NOT want to chase the  
mailman! He is a nice guy. He scratches my  
belly. He feeds me bananas.





What do I do next? I hide in a closet. I am trying to cough up a hairball.

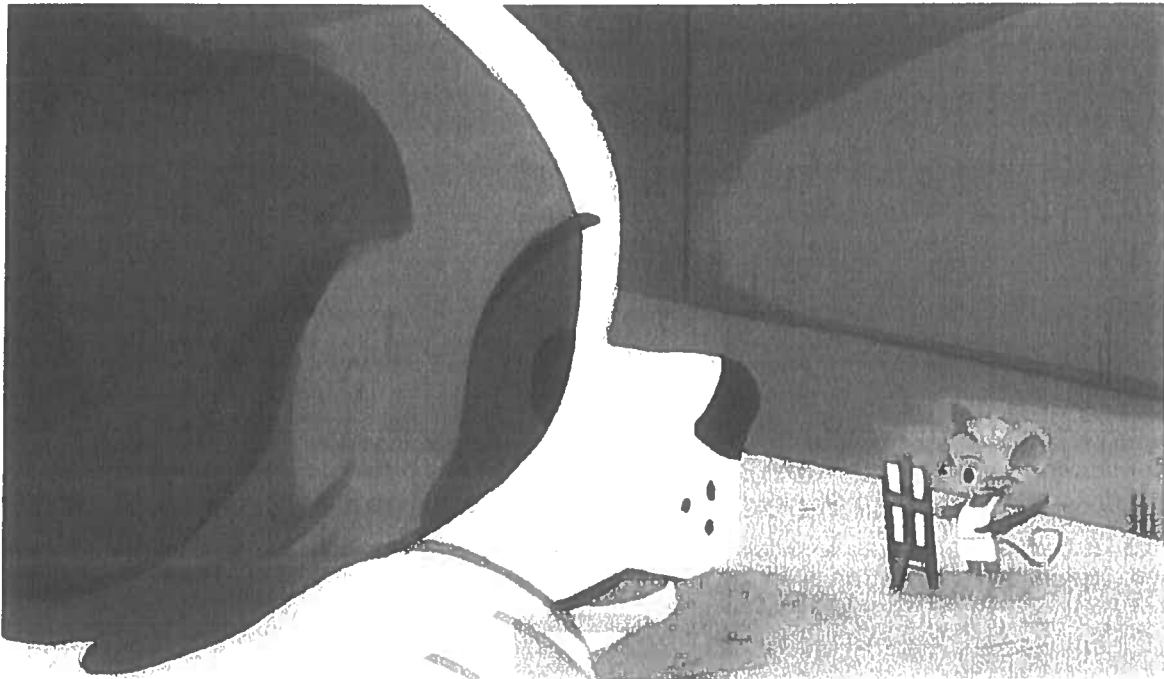
Then I hear someone call, “Elvis! Come!” And of course I come running. I see that someone has dropped some meatloaf. They want me to eat it off the floor. Gross!





Finally, I talk to my best friend, Maxwell.  
“What should I do?” I ask him. Maxwell lives  
under the dishwasher. He is a mouse. He is also  
a painter! Today he is painting a banana.

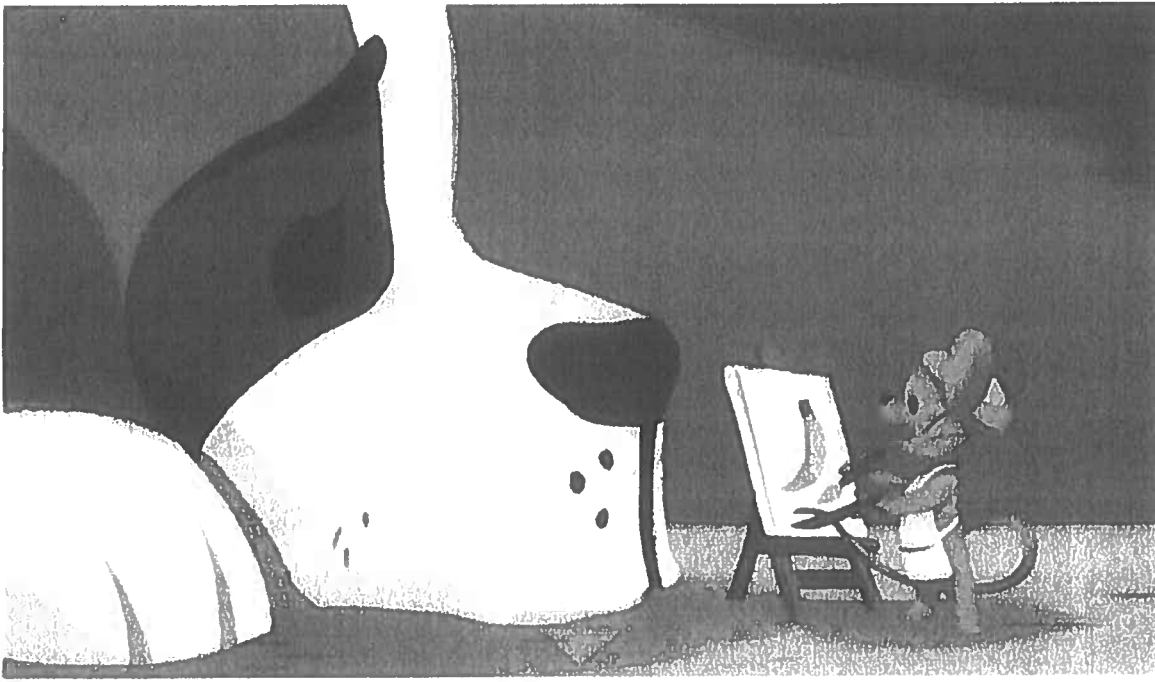
I say, “I don’t want to be a dog anymore,  
Maxwell. I have no time alone. The food stinks.  
And people throw balls at me!”





“I know what you mean,” Maxwell says as he paints.

“You have to do what makes you happy. That is why I paint beautiful fruit. It makes me happy. Other mice look for crumbs all day. That makes them happy. You have to do what makes YOU happy, Elvis.”





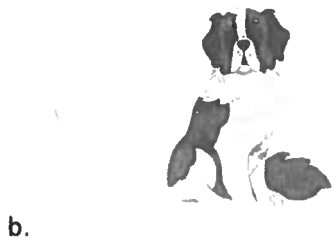
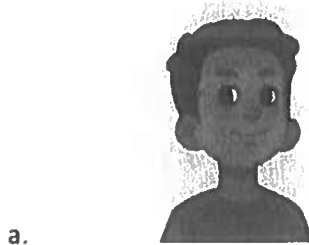
I think about this. Then I say, “Well, I like licking my paws! I like winding around people’s feet so that they trip. And I love drinking milk.”

“I’ve got it!” Maxwell cries. “It sounds like you have spent too much time being a dog. Why don’t you try being ... a cat!”



**Question 1** (for p. 1 of passage)

Which character is telling this story?



**Question 2** (for p. 2 of passage)

How is Elvis different from most dogs? Complete the sentence.

Elvis does not like to \_\_\_\_\_ the mailman.

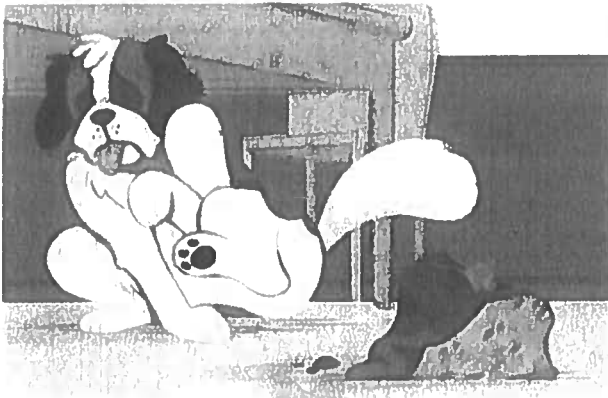
- a. chase
- b. drag
- c. scratch

**Question 3** (for p. 3 of passage)



What do I do next? I hide in a closet. I am trying to cough up a hairball.

Then I hear someone call, "Elvis! Come!" And of course I come running. I see that someone has dropped some meatloaf. They want me to eat it off the floor. Gross!



Look at the underlined text and the picture. What do you learn about Elvis?

- a. He does not want to eat the meatloaf.
- b. He does not want to hide in a closet.
- c. He does not want to come running.

**Question 4** (for p. 4 of passage)

Why does Elvis talk to Maxwell about his feelings?

- a. Maxwell is a little mouse.
- b. Maxwell is his best friend.
- c. Maxwell is a good painter.

**Question 5** (for p. 5 of passage)

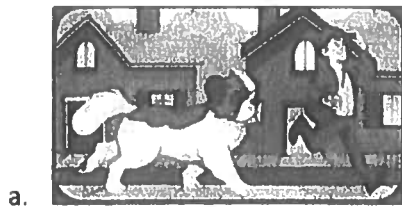
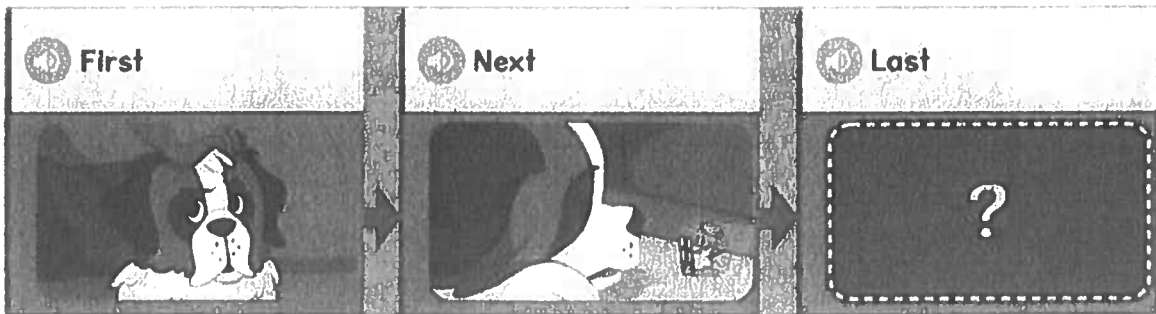
What does Maxwell tell Elvis to do? Complete the sentence.

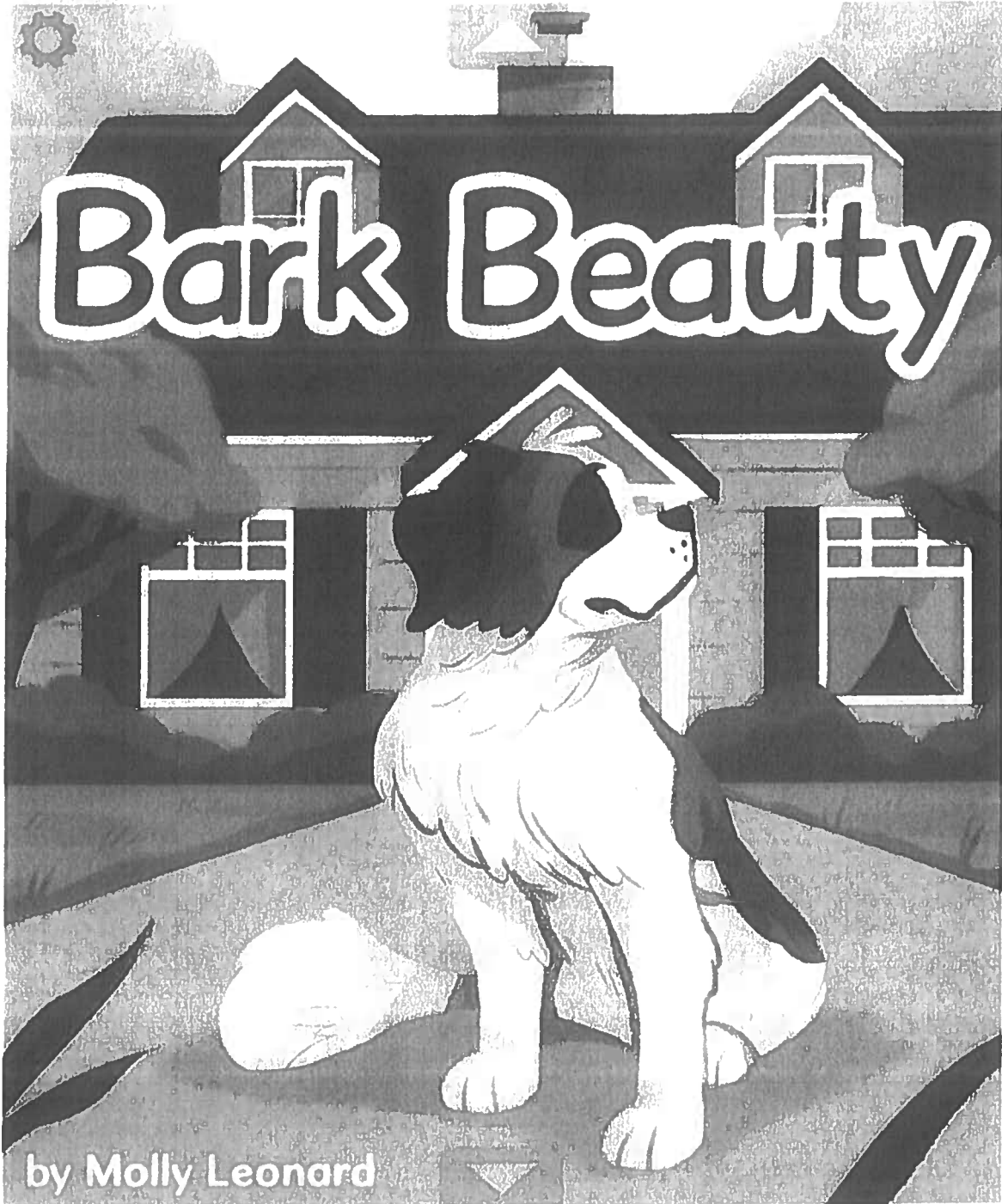
Do what makes you \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. beautiful
- b. you
- c. happy

**Question 6** (for p. 6 of passage)

Look at the events in the chart. What important event happens at the end? Choose the picture.

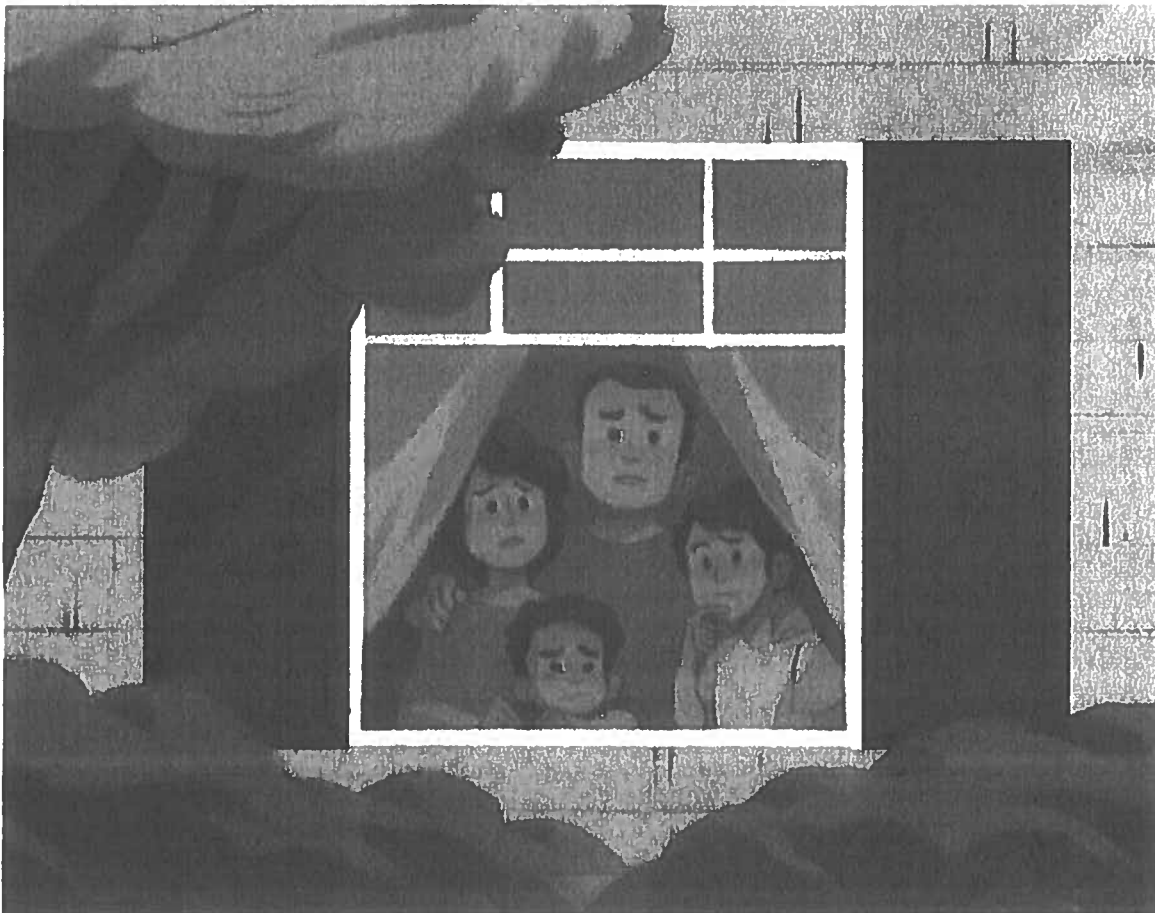






The Picklebottoms have a problem.  
Something is wrong with their dog, Elvis.

They are watching him from the window.  
What is Elvis doing?



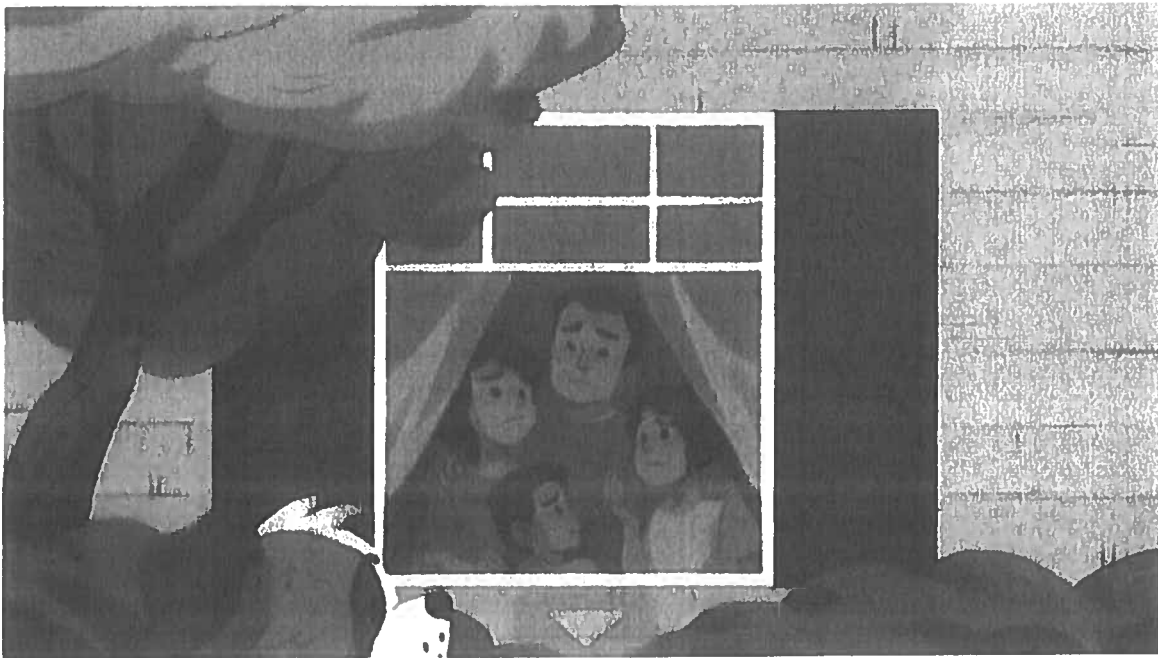


“Is he sick?” Penny Picklebottom asks.

“He has been sleeping standing up. Why would he do that?”

“And why would he gallop around the yard?” Mr. Picklebottom asks.

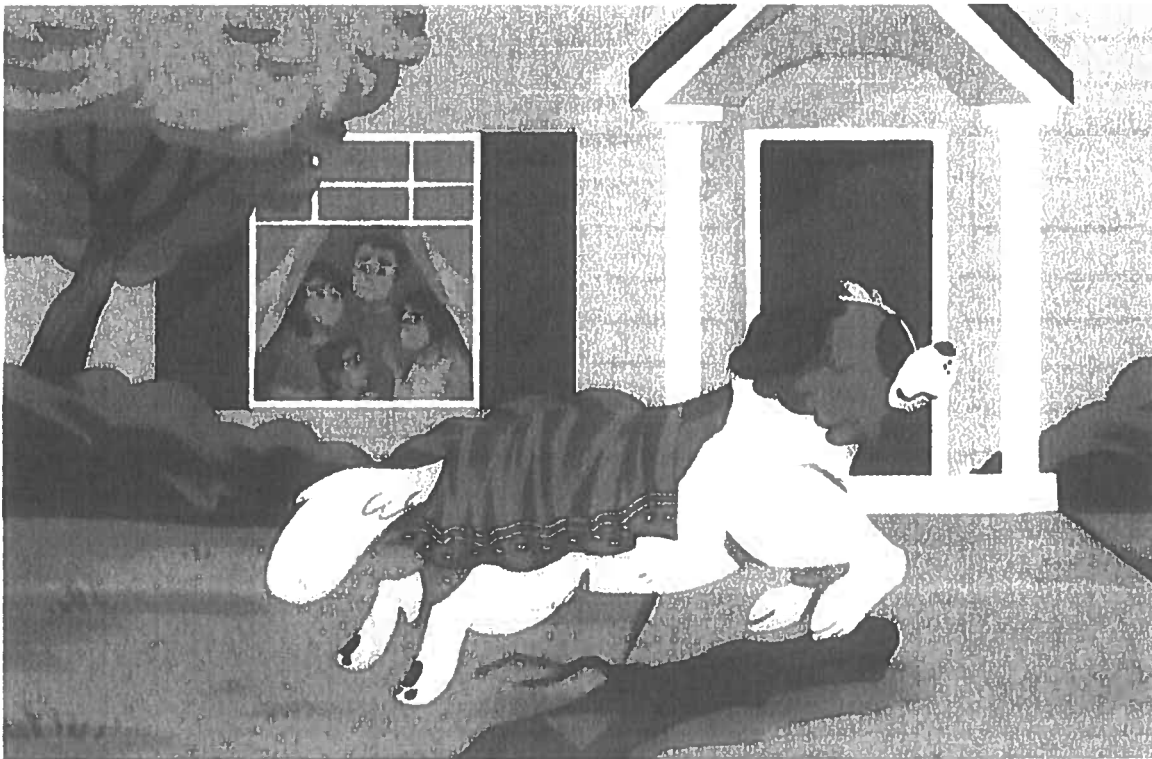
“And why steal my best blanket? Is he cold?” Mrs. Picklebottom adds.





Now everyone is quiet. They watch the dog. Elvis prances through the yard. He has thrown a blanket over his back.

Elvis shakes his head every few steps. His hair blows in the wind. Then he jumps over a low tree branch.





“What does that dog think he is doing?”  
Mrs. Picklebottom wonders. “Last week, he  
tried to sit in my lap like a cat. But now what?  
Dogs don’t prance. They don’t wear blankets.”

Mrs. Picklebottom is right. Elvis is acting  
strange. He is not acting like a dog at all!





Elvis runs inside. He dashes under Penny's legs. Then he stands up. Penny is sitting on Elvis's back!

Penny's eyes open wide. "He's a horse!" Then she yells, "Giddy-up, Elvis! Let's ride!" And into the garden they go.



**Question 1** (for p. 1 of passage)

What is the Picklbottom's problem?

- a. Something is wrong with their dog.
- b. Something is wrong with their window.
- c. Something is wrong with their tree.

**Question 2** (for p. 2 of passage)

What is this page mostly about?

- a. Elvis is feeling sick.
- b. Elvis is stealing things.
- c. Elvis is acting strange.

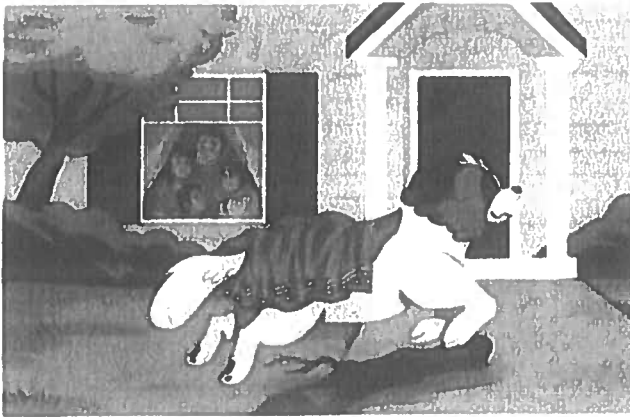
**Question 3** (for p. 2 of passage)

How do the Picklebottoms feel about Elvis?

- a. sad
- b. worried
- c. angry

**Question 4** (for p. 3 of passage)

Where is Elvis? Use the text and the picture to answer the question.

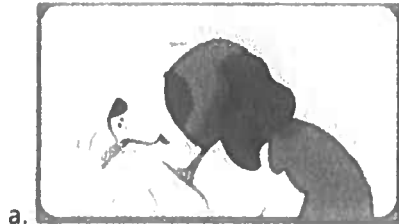


- a. in a forest
- b. in a yard

c. in a park

**Question 5 (for p. 3 of passage)**

How is Elvis acting in this part of the story?



**Question 6 (for p. 4 of passage)**

What did Elvis do last week?

- a. He sat on a lap.
- b. He wore a blanket.
- c. He pranced around.

**Question 7 (for p. 5 of passage)**

Which animal is Elvis acting like now? Complete the sentence.

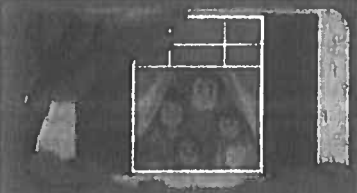


Elvis is acting like a \_\_\_\_\_.

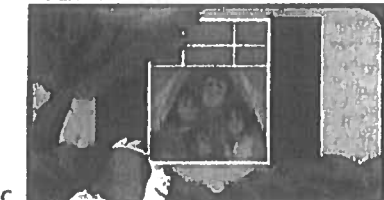
- a. bird
- b. horse

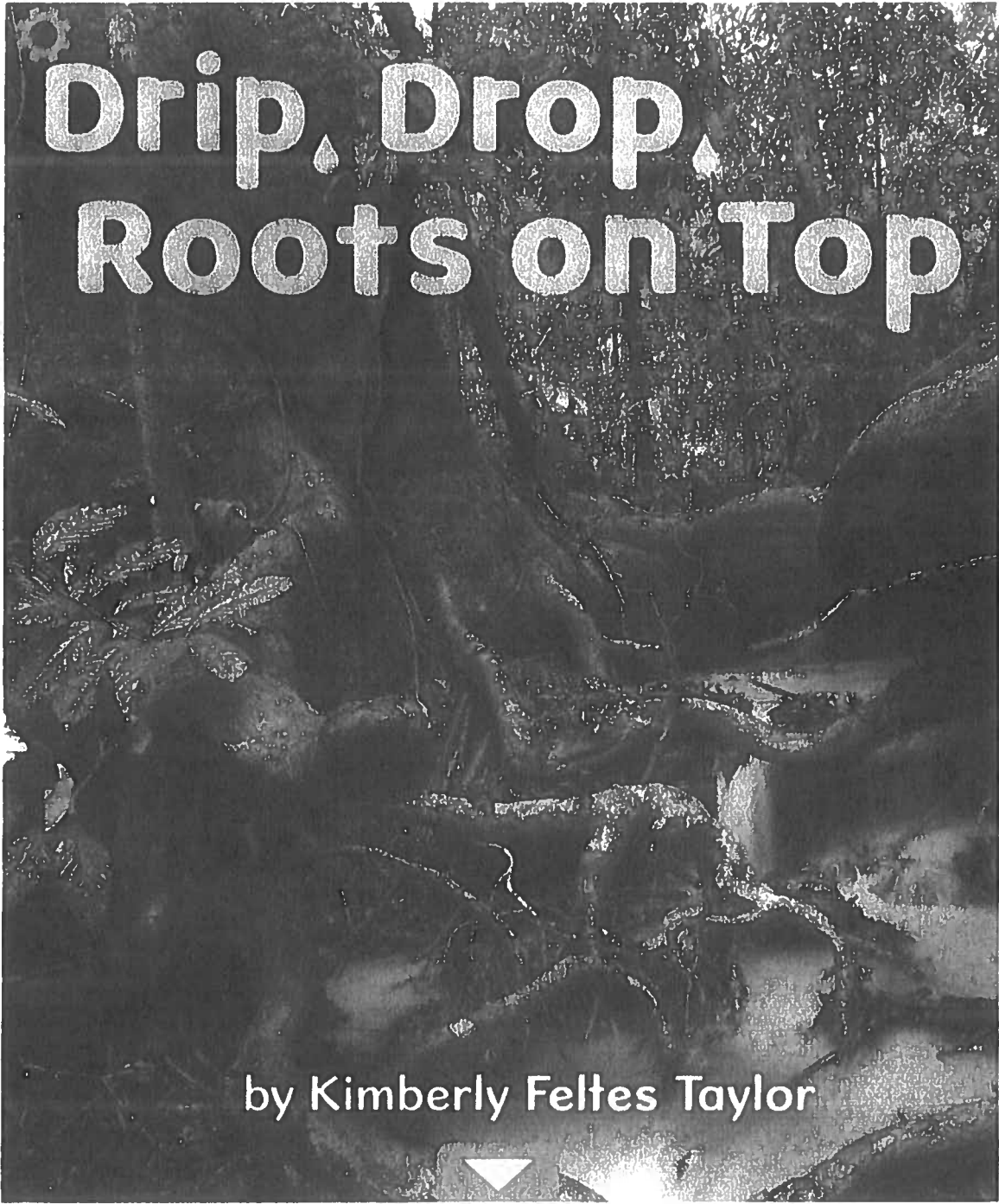
c. dog

**Question 8** (for p. 5 of passage)

Look at what happens first and next in the story. Choose the event that happens last.

🕒 First	🕒 Next	🕒 Last
		





©Roy Toft/Oxford Scientific/Getty Images



You are in a rainforest. The air is warm.  
Rain falls hard and fast. Soon, the rain stops.  
But the air still feels wet. Will it rain again? Yes,  
it will. This is life in the rainforest.



© Jason Bazzano/Alamy

A rainy day in a rainforest



## Drip Tips and Raincoats

Have you ever been soaked by the rain?  
Your clothes get wet. You need to dry off!

Plants need to dry off, too. Plants can die if they get too much rain. Drip tips can help. A drip tip is a pointy end on a leaf. Rain drips off the pointy part. The leaf dries off.

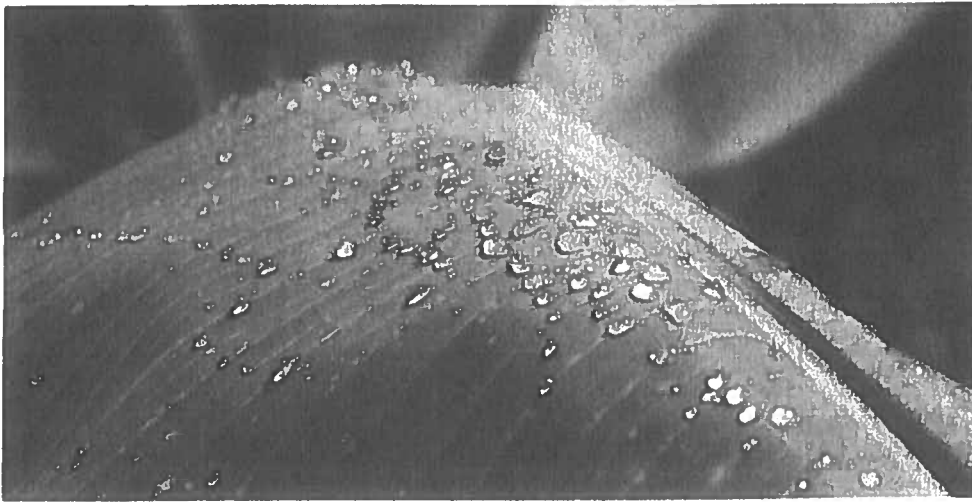


Leaves with pointy drip tips



You can wear a raincoat to stay dry. Some plant leaves make a waxy coating. This coating is like a raincoat. It stops water from soaking into the leaf.

Splat, splat, splat! Rain falls. The drops roll across the smooth, shiny coating. They slip and slide off the leaf. The leaf dries off.



©mr.kittisak taweekitpinyo/Shutterstock

Raindrops rolling off a waxy coating

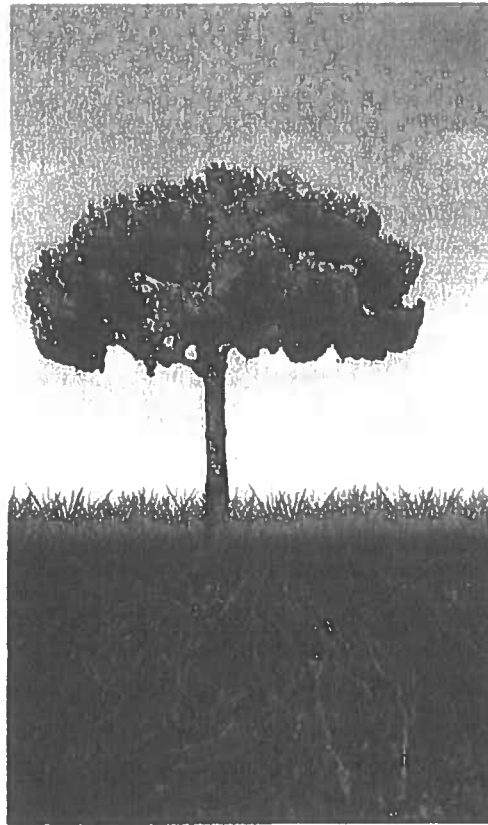




## Roots Get Food

Many plants have roots below the ground. The roots grow far down. They are hard to see.

The roots absorb, or soak up, food from the soil. The food is from dead plants and insects. The dead things fall apart and sink deep into the soil.



©mexrix/Shutterstock

Roots below ground



In a rainforest, roots peek out of the dirt. Some roots even stay above the ground. Why?

Roots stay on or near the top because the food is there. Dead plants and bugs wash away before they can sink into the soil. Roots need to stay on top of the soil to absorb this food.



©somnuk krobkum/Moment Collection/Getty Images

Roots above ground



Trees and plants live with a lot of rain in the rainforest. Plants stay dry with drip tips and waxy coatings. Roots soak up food before it washes away. Plants and trees survive in their rainy, rainforest home.

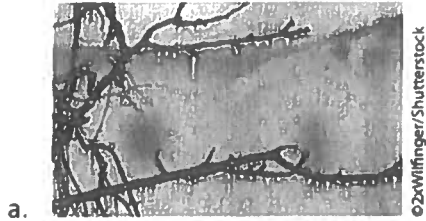


©iStock.com/bogdanhorita

Plants and trees in a rainforest

**Question 1** (for p. 1 of passage)

Which picture shows what the weather is like in a rainforest?



**Question 2** (for p. 2 of passage)

Which sentence tells how drip tips help a plant?

- a. Drip tips help rain soak the leaf.
- b. Drip tips are pointy ends of the leaf.
- c. Drip tips help water fall off the leaf.

**Question 3** (for p. 3 of passage)

How do a leaf's coating and tip help the plant survive in the rain?

- a. They dry off the plant.
- b. They slip and slide off the leaf.
- c. They stop rain from falling on the plant.

**Question 4** (for p. 4 of passage)

What does the word **absorb** mean?

- a. fall apart
- b. grow down
- c. take in

**Question 5** (for p. 5 of passage)

Why do roots grow above the ground in the rainforest? Complete the sentence.

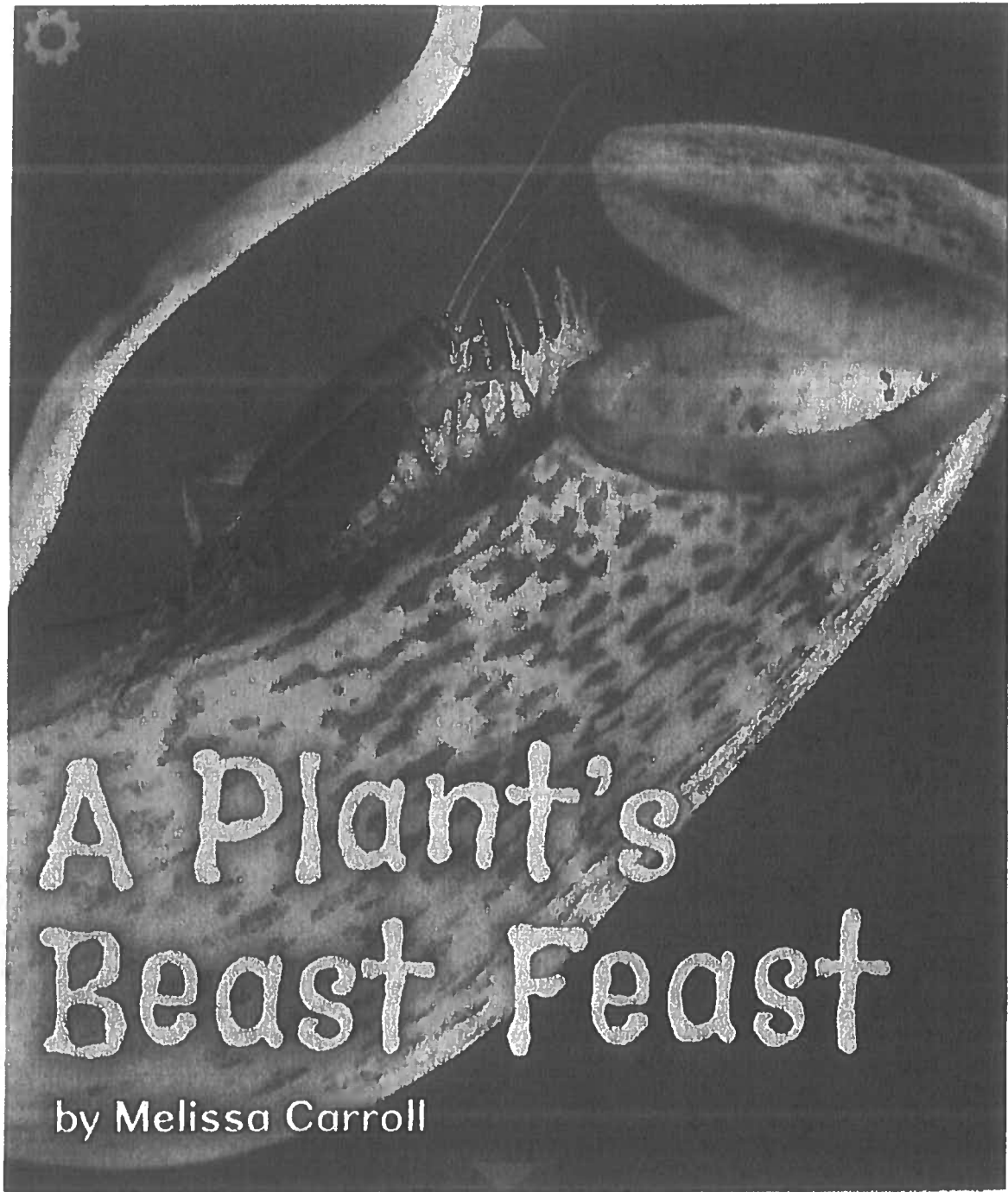
Roots above the ground can get food before \_\_\_\_\_ moves it away.

- a. the soil
- b. a forest
- c. the rain

**Question 6** (for p. 6 of passage)

How do roots on top help a plant survive in the rain?

- a. They get food deep in the soil.
- b. They wash away with the rain.
- c. They absorb food on the ground.



# A Plant's Beast Feast

by Melissa Carroll

©David Aubrey/Science Source



Many animals eat plants. And guess what? Some plants eat animals! The pitcher plant does this. It kills and eats bugs for food.

This plant lives in warm, rainy forests. It has a leaf that is shaped like a pitcher. The plant catches bugs in this special leaf.



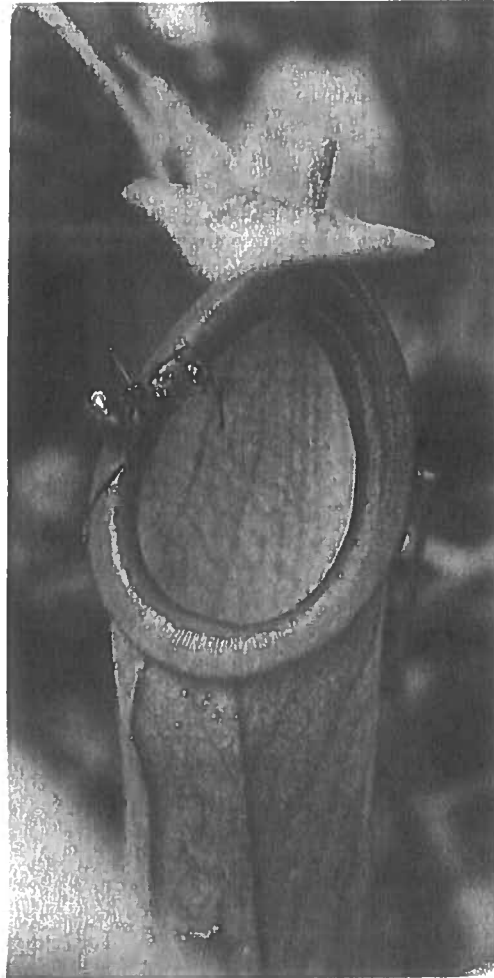
©Fletcher & Baylis/Science Source

Colorful leaves with a pitcher shape



## Bringing in Bugs

Pitcher plants get bugs to come to them. The plants can be orange, pink, or red. Bugs like bright colors. They go to the plants because these colors attract them.



©Ray Reinhard/500px

Ant on a bright plant



Some pitcher plants are dark green or brown. These plants have a different way to bring in bugs. The plants have a smell. Bugs follow the smell. They go to the plant.



©M Solomon/Shutterstock

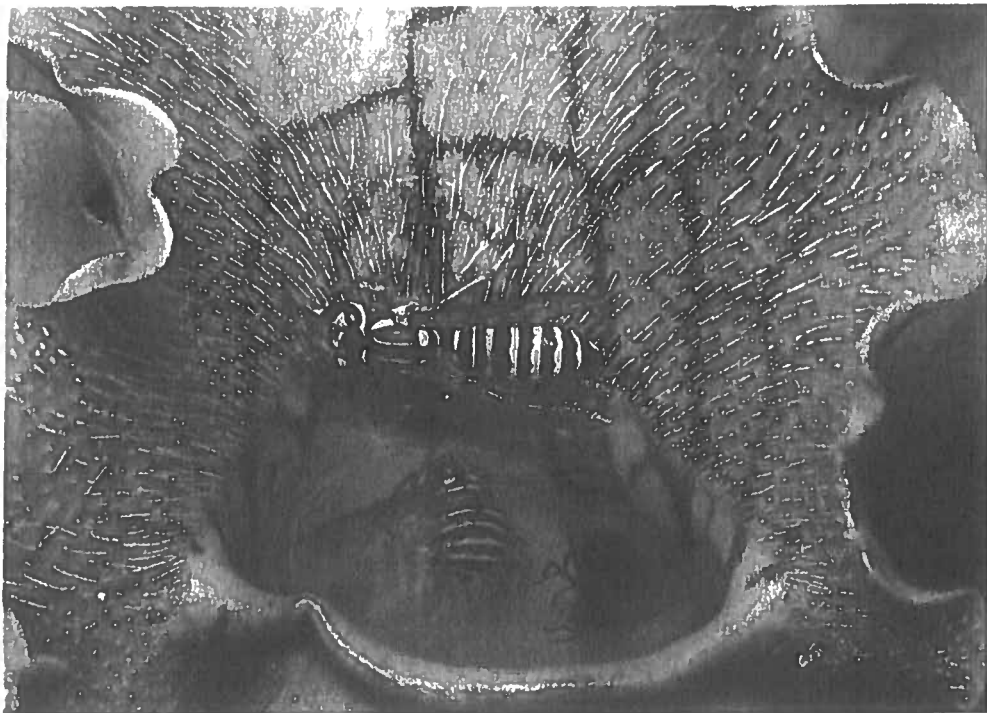
Fly on a smelly pitcher plant





## Eating Bugs

The bug lands on the plant. Pitcher plants have a special outside. The bug cannot hold on tight. It goes down inside the plant.



©Nature's Images/Science Source

Bug slipping into a pitcher plant



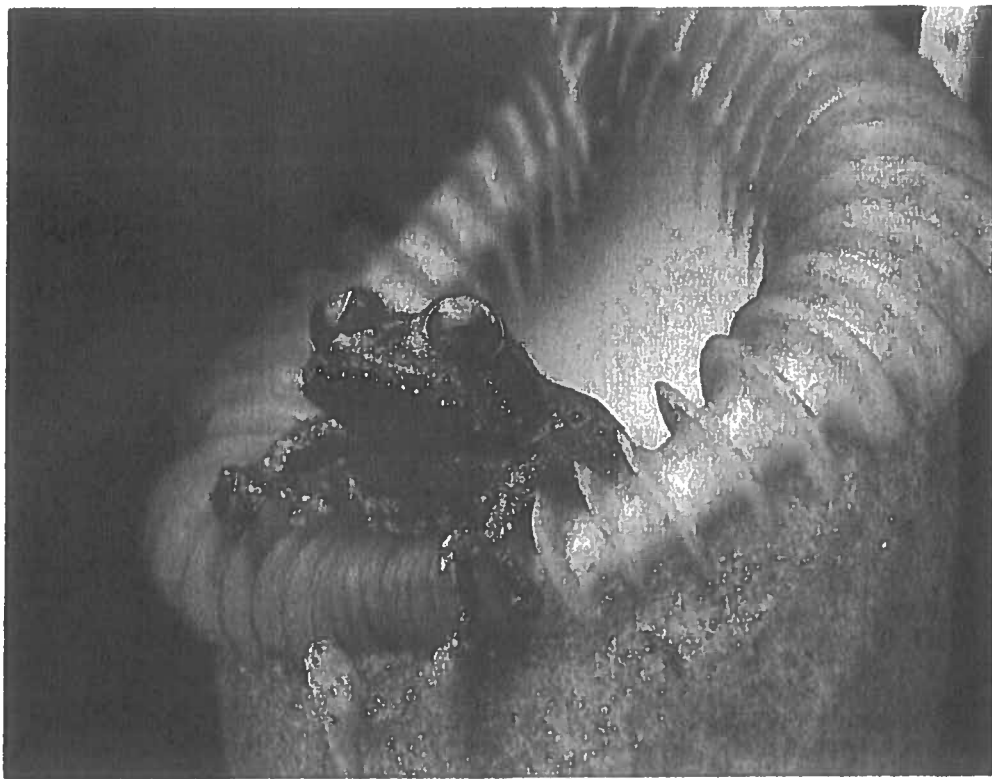


The plant is wet inside. It is so wet that the bug falls apart. It breaks into little bits. The plant takes in these parts of the bug. That is how a pitcher plant eats a bug.





A mouse or a frog can fall into a pitcher plant, too. The plant eats the animal, just like it eats a bug. A pitcher plant is always ready for its next meal.



©Chien Lee/Minden Pictures

Frog in a pitcher plant



**Question 1 (for p. 1 of passage)**

What does a pitcher plant do with bugs?

- a. It feeds them to animals.
- b. It gives them a special leaf.
- c. It catches and eats them.

**Question 2 (for p. 2 of passage)**

Why do bugs like pitcher plants?

- a. The plants have bright colors.
- b. The plants come to the bugs.
- c. The plants have ants on them.

**Question 3 (for p. 3 of passage)**

How do brown and green pitcher plants bring in bugs? Complete the sentence.

Bugs like the \_\_\_\_\_ of the pitcher plants.

- a. smell
- b. shape
- c. feel

**Question 4 (for p. 4 of passage)**

What happens when bugs sit on the plant?

- a. They fall down.
- b. They land nicely.
- c. They walk in.

**Question 5** (for p. 5 of passage)

What happens after a bug falls into a pitcher plant?

- a. It makes the plant wet.
- b. It drinks.
- c. It breaks up.

**Question 6** (for p. 5 of passage)

How does the pitcher plant eat a bug? Complete the sentence.

The plant \_\_\_\_\_ little bits of the bug.

- a. mixes with
- b. takes in
- c. bites into

**Question 7** (for p. 6 of passage)

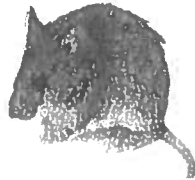
Which other animal might a pitcher plant eat?

a.



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b.



©Tsethmi/istock/Shutterstock

c.



©Beverly/istock/Shutterstock

**Question 8** (for p. 6 of passage)

How does the pitcher plant get food?

- a. It catches bugs.
- b. It chases bugs.
- c. It falls on bugs.