Surprise Pies

By Neal Levin

Matilda loved tasting pies, which was silly for a goose. Every pie she tried was delicious.

"Guess what?" her friend Benedict said. "There's a pie-tasting contest at the fair tomorrow."

"Sign me up!" said Matilda. "I love tasting pies."

"Don't be silly," said Benedict. "The judges do the tasting. You have to bake the pie."

"Oh," said Matilda. "I don't know if I can do that."

"It's easy," said Benedict. "Easy as pie."

"Yes, baking a pie is easy," Matilda said. "The hard part is deciding which kind."

"Right," said Benedict. "The winning pie must stand out. It must be special. And tasty."

"All pies are tasty," Matilda said. "All pies are special. I don't know what to do."

"Why don't you sleep on it?" Benedict told her.

"You mean use a pie as a pillow?"

"Don't be silly. I mean wait until morning. Maybe you'll come up with an idea."

So she did. In the morning Matilda had the best idea ever. It gave her goosebumps.

She rushed to the market to buy ingredients. Then she hurried home.

"I'll make an apple pie," she announced to herself. She took out a small pie pan, sliced apples, rolled dough, and put everything together.
“Next I’ll make a cherry pie,” she said. She took out a bigger pie pan and prepared the cherries and crust. Then she put the apple pie inside the cherry pie.

Finally, Matilda made a gooseberry pie—her favorite—and put the cherry pie inside of that. She popped the whole thing in the oven.

“Three pies in one!” Matilda exclaimed.

She carried her entry to the fair and found Benedict waiting for her.

“Am I late for the pie-tasting contest?” she asked.

“You’re just in time,” Benedict said. “But it isn’t a pie-tasting contest after all. It’s a pie-eating contest. Everyone has to eat the pie they brought. That’s right up your alley.”

Mmmmm. The apples are absolutely appetizing.”

“You silly goose!” Benedict yelled. “You can’t win the contest if you start ahead of time.”

“Who said anything about winning?” Matilda told him. “I just love tasting pies, and all of these pies are delicious!”
4. Reread the following sentence from the story.

“You silly goose!” Benedict yelled.

“Silly goose” is another common figure of speech. We use it to tell people they are acting silly. But the author is not using it as a figure of speech in this story. Why?

__________________________________________________________________________
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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the story. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. a ___ l ___ y
   clue: a narrow space between buildings

6. g ___ o ___ e ___ b ___ ___ r ___ e s
   clue: mostly-sour berries that look like grapes

7. a p ___ e ___ i z i ___ ___
   clue: when something looks tasty; appealing

8. d ___ ___ g h
   clue: bread before it is baked

9. g o ___ ___ e ___ u m ___ s
   clue: can get them when cold, scared, or excited

10. n ___ r e d ___ e n ___ s
    clue: parts used to make something
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In the story, Surprise Pies, you read about a goose named Matilda who loves baking and eating pies. She likes many different flavors.

Write a paragraph about your favorite type of dessert. Does it come in different flavors? If so, what is your favorite? Or, if you are like Matilda and can’t pick one, what are your top two or three? Describe them!
ANSWER KEY

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1. What was Matilda's big idea for the contest?

2. What surprise did Matilda learn about the contest?

3. A **figure of speech** is a word or saying that uses words to mean something other than their exact definition. The following figures of speech are used in the story. Complete the table to explain what they mean.

   - Matilda really is a goose.

   - Wait until morning

   - Something you're good at

“Silly goose” is another common figure of speech. We use it to tell people they are acting silly. But the author is not using it as a figure of speech in this story. Why?

   **Matilda really is a goose.**
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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the story. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. a ____ l ____ y
   clue: a narrow space between buildings
   ____________________

2. ____ l o ____  ____ o u s
   clue: amazing; beautiful; wonderful
   ____________________

3. ____ r e ____  ____ r e
   clue: to get something ready
   ____________________

4. j ____ d ____ e
   clue: someone who decides about something
   ____________________

5. a n ____ o u n ____  ____
   clue: to share news
   ____________________

6. g ____ o ____  ____ b ____  ____ r ____ e
   clue: mostly-sour berries that look like grapes
   ____________________

7. a p ____ e ____ i z i ____  ____
   clue: when something looks tasty; appealing
   ____________________

8. d ____  ____ g h
   clue: bread before it is baked
   ____________________

9. g o ____  ____ e ____ u m ____ s
   clue: can get them when cold, scared, or excited
   ____________________

10. ____ n ____ r e ____  ____ e
    clue: parts used to make something
    ____________________

ANSWER KEY

1. alley
2. glorious
3. prepare
4. judge
5. announce
6. gooseberries
7. appetizing
8. dough
9. goosebumps
10. ingredients