

Name: _____

Groundhog's Way

By Neal Levin



Gerald didn't mind winter. He just didn't like hibernating.

"I feel like I'm being grounded," he told his brother Rollo.

"Well, you are a groundhog, after all," Rollo said.

"Very funny. I don't want to be a groundhog," Gerald said. "I want to be a meteorologist."

"What do you know about predicting weather?"

"Plenty," Gerald said. "If I go outside and I see my shadow, there will only be six weeks until spring. If I don't, we'll have a month and a half left of winter."

"Big deal," Rollo said. "Six weeks is the same as a month and a half. Either way you're right."

"Exactly." Gerald smiled.

Rollo rolled his eyes. Then he rolled over and began to doze off.

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Gerald crawled out of his burrow. He didn't care whether he saw his shadow. He was more excited to see a rabbit.

"Want to hear a weather report?" he asked the rabbit.

"Okay," the rabbit said.

Gerald shut his eyes and pressed his paws against his forehead. "This week it will snow."

"Of course it will," the rabbit said. "It's winter."

A deer walked up to them. "What's going on here?"

"I'm predicting weather," Gerald said. "Did you know it will be ninety degrees this afternoon?"

"I highly doubt that," the deer said.

"Sure it will," Gerald said. "In Jamaica."

The deer and the rabbit both groaned.

"Something the matter?" a blue jay asked as it landed beside them.

"This groundhog thinks he's predicting weather."

"I've been right every time." Gerald shut his eyes again and

concentrated. "Now I predict that the sun is going to burn out."

He opened his eyes. Everyone looked up.

"The sun's still there," the blue jay said.

"It will burn out," Gerald insisted. "But not for another five billion years."

"You're not really predicting weather," the deer said.

After the animals left, Gerald sighed. "They're right," he said. "I haven't been predicting weather the real way. But I have been predicting it my way. And my way is a lot more fun."

He yawned and waddled back to his burrow. It was time for a nap.

When he was back underground, Gerald snuggled up next to his brother.

"Move over," Rollo said. "You're hogging all the ground."

Gerald smiled. "Well, I am a groundhog, after all."



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1. Rollo and Gerald play with the compound word **groundhog**. Write the meaning of the phrases they play with.

Being grounded – _____

Hogging the ground – _____

2. Which animal is the last to arrive?

- a. blue jay b. rabbit
c. deer d. groundhog

3. What do all of Gerald's predictions have in common?

- a. They are all about faraway places.
b. They are all going to happen.
c. They are all about temperature.
d. They are all untrue.

4. Based on information in the text, which of the following animals can you infer hibernates?

- a. rabbit b. deer
c. chipmunk d. Jamaican iguana

5. Why did the deer and rabbit groan at Gerald's prediction about the temperature?

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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. ___ e g ___ e ___ s
hint: unit of measurement for temperature

2. d ___ u ___ t
hint: to not believe

3. m ___ t e ___ ___ o l o ___ ___ s ___
hint: someone who studies and predicts weather

4. i ___ s i ___ t
hint: to say repeatedly or firmly

5. ___ i b ___ ___ n a ___ e
hint: to sleep through winter

6. ___ r e ___ i ___ ___
hint: to guess what will happen in the future

7. ___ a ___ d ___ e
hint: to walk with short steps, swinging side to side

8. b ___ r r ___ ___
hint: an underground den

9. ___ o z ___
hint: to sleep lightly

10. c ___ ___ c e n ___ r ___ t ___
hint: to think hard about one thing; to focus

ANSWER KEY

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1. Rollo and Gerald play with the compound word **groundhog**. Write the meaning of the phrases they play with.

Being grounded – **being punished; not having anything to do**

Hogging the ground – **taking up a lot of ground space**

2. Which animal is the last to arrive?

a. blue jay

b. rabbit

c. deer

d. groundhog

3. What do all of Gerald's predictions have in common?

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4. Based on information in the text, which of the following animals can you infer hibernates?

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5. Why did the deer and rabbit groan at Gerald's prediction about the temperature?

Answers will vary. Examples are: It is always warm in Jamaica, so his prediction

wasn't a real prediction. // They thought he was talking about where they live,

not Jamaica, and did not find his joke funny.

