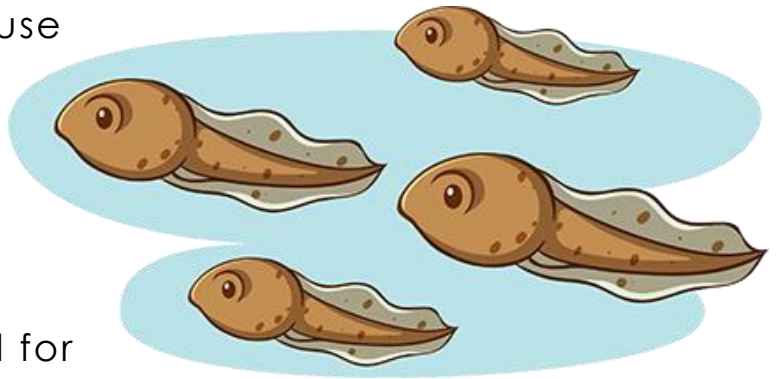


Read the short story. Then answer each question.

A Froggy Friend

Marcie loved frogs. She had a frog pillow. She had frogs on her bedspread. She had frog statues. She had stuffed frog toys. Marcie even had an aquarium in her bedroom with several frogs she had raised from tadpoles. She spent a lot of time with her frogs because there were no other kids nearby to play with.



One day, Marcie was out in the garden looking for food for her frogs. She crawled under the bushes and looked under each rock. She could not find any bugs.

Marcie sat on her knees and scratched her head. “What am I going to do?” she asked. “My frogs will be hungry.”

“Perhaps, you should let your frogs go,” a voice said. “They cannot be happy locked in a tank.”

Marcie looked around for the person who had spoken. She stood up and looked over the bushes. There was no one there. She craned her neck to look at her front porch. There was no one there.

Marcie scratched her head and thought. Finally, she said, "Who said that?"

"I did."

Marcie looked behind her. There was no one there. She looked over at the sidewalk. There was no one there.

Now, Marcie was getting upset. She knew she heard someone speaking.

Marcie stood up and looked around the yard with her hands on her hips. "I know someone's there."

"Look down."

Marcie looked down.
There was nothing there.

"Look under the bushes."



Marcie dropped to her knees and crawled under the bushes. There, beside the begonias, was a big, old frog. He was the biggest frog Marcie had ever seen. He had big yellow lines over his eyes that looked almost like eyebrows.

"Hello," Marcie said. "Are you the one talking?"

The frog nodded its head. "Yes." It hopped toward Marcie. "I think you should let your frogs go. Take me instead."

Marcie thought for a moment, then she picked up the frog. She carried it into the house and placed it beside her tank. She looked at the frogs inside. She did not want to let them go. She loved them.

"Sometimes, it is best to let go of the things we love. Those frogs will be happier living outside instead of in a tank. You have taken good care of them, but they would be better off if they were free," the big frog continued. "Love means thinking of the frogs instead of yourself."

Marcie understood what the big frog was saying, but she didn't want to let the frogs go. They were her best friends. Sure, she had a few friends at school, but Marcie lived in the country. There weren't a lot of kids to play with. The frogs were good company.

Should she let them go?

Marcie thought and thought.



The giant frog might be right. The giant frog might be wrong. Would her frogs really be happier outside?

Marcie chewed on her bottom lip and thought and thought some more.

Finally, Marcie took her frogs and carried them to the garden. She carefully placed them under the bushes and set them free. She went back inside with tears in her eyes.

“Now, I’ll be alone,” Marcie said. “I won’t have any friends at all.”

“Let me stay,” the giant frog said. “I’ll even sleep on your pillow.”

Marcie agreed.

That night, the frog slept on Marcie’s pillow. When she woke the next morning, the frog was gone.

“Hello! Mr. Frog!” Marcie called.

There was no answer.



Marcie looked under the bed. She looked down in the covers. She looked in the tank. She looked under her desk. She looked everywhere. The giant frog was gone.

Marcie cried. She knew letting her frogs go would be a mistake. Now she was all alone. She had no one.

“Good morning.”

Marcie turned to see a boy standing in her doorway. The boy had blond hair with thick blond eyebrows.

“Who are you?” Marcie asked.

“I am the frog,” the boy said. “I was cursed by an evil witch. Your kindness has broken the curse.”

Marcie stared with her mouth open. The boy smiled.

“Do you want to play?”

Marcie nodded, and the two went out to play.



Questions:

1. What animal did Marcie like best?

- a. Marcie likes dogs best.
- b. Marcie likes cows best.
- c. Marcie likes gummy worms best.
- d. Marcie like frogs best.

2. Who was talking to Marcie in the garden?

3. What did the giant frog want Marcie to do?

4. Put the story points in order.

- _____ Marcie and the boy go out to play.
- _____ Marcie looks for bugs for her frogs.
- _____ Marcie meets the old frog.
- _____ Marcie lets her frogs go.

5. Marcie had a tough decision to make. Would you have let the frogs go free? Why or why not?

Answers:

1. What animal did Marcie like best?

d. Marcie like frogs best.

2. Who was talking to Marcie in the garden?

A giant frog was talking to Marcie.

3. What did the giant frog want Marcie to do?

The giant frog wanted Marcie to let her frogs go.

4. Put the story points in order.

4 Marcie and the boy go out to play.

1 Marcie looks for bugs for her frogs.

2 Marcie meets the old frog.

3 Marcie lets her frogs go.

5. Marcie had a tough decision to make. Would you have let the frogs go free? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.