OWLS IN THE FAMILY

BY
FARLEY MOWAT

Guide by Dr. Betty Powers Francis
READING RIGHT
© 2005, 1989
OWLS IN THE FAMILY

Billy lives in Saskatchewan, Canada and loves animals. He has gophers, rats, snakes, plus the usual dogs. Now he wants a pet owl. After a storm he finds a baby owl that he names Wol, after the Christopher Robin character. Weeps he saves from an oil barrel and a group of mean boys. Wol is the more outgoing of the birds and is always coming up with some new mischief including bringing a dead skunk home for dinner. Weeps is afraid of everything including flying. Mutt, the family dog, befriends Weeps and tries to protect him. Billy and his animals have a very interesting life.
1. In what time of the year does the story begin?

2. Why were Bruce and Billy looking for the owl’s nest?

3. Why did Bruce have a mouthful of eggshells?

4. What are owl pellets?

5. Underline the animals Billy has for pets.
   
   Gophers   Cats   Garter snakes   Rabbits   Rats   Parakeets   Fish

6. The author uses words that describe how things feel, smell, touch, look, or taste.
   For example: "The two crows which were "swooping" and "hollering" at us..."
   Describes how they sound. Find another time the author uses those types of describing words and write it down and the page you found it on.

7. Explain how you think Mr. Miller felt after his day trying to take pictures of the owl.
1. Where did the boys find the baby owl after the storm had destroyed its nest?

2. What foods did the boys feed the hungry baby owl?
   A. Sandwiches and mice
   B. Lettuce and plants
   C. A candy bar and mice

3. What happened when Mutt and the baby owl met for the first time?

4. Who is the first owl named after?

5. Underline the event, which happened last.
   Wol gets a new cage
   Offy, the maid quits
   A gopher scares Wol by biting him

6. Why didn’t the gophers want to make friends with Wol?
   A. Wol attacked them
   B. The gophers didn’t notice him
   C. Gophers knew owls ate them

7. How do you feel about someone who would drop stones on a hurt owl or animal?

8. Describe one example that shows how the two owls feel about each other.
1. Wol and Weeps had some habits that were more like people than owls. List two.

2. In the middle of chapter five there is a picture of an event from the story. Describe the event the picture is showing.

3. The boys are getting their pets ready for a special event. What is it?

4. What does "mauling" mean? ("Several times he saved weeps from a mauling."")

5. Put the following events in the correct order.
   ____ One of the judges wants to see the pet in the box
   ____ A dog chases a cat in a baby carriage
   ____ School was over for the year
   ____ The skunk in the parade was scared and sprayed everyone

6. Why were the owls like bodyguards for Billy?

7. If you could enter any kind of an animal in a pet parade what would you enter? Why?
1. Why was Weeps so fond of Mutt?

2. Describe one of the tricks Wol liked to play on Mutt.

3. What animal do horned owls not like?
   A. Cats
   B. Skunks
   C. Snakes

4. What does "nuisance" mean?
   (If Weeps got to be too much of a nuisance....")

5. Put a check by the event, which happened first.
   _____ The boys swimming and Wol joining them
   _____ The baby prairie chicks adopting Wol for their mother

6. How was the way Wol got along with Mutt different from the way Weep did?

7. Why were the tough boys from town scared when they heard Wol scream?

8. Explain how your parents might feel if you had two pet owls.
1. Why did one of the family's friends always wear a cap with earflaps when he came to visit?

2. Why did Billy have to give his pet owls away?

3. Do you think a whack from an owl's wing would hurt? Why do you think that?

4. Who told the story?
   A. Bruce
   B. A narrator
   C. Billy

5. What was your favorite part of the story? Explain why?

6. Choose a character (animal or person) from the story and tell one way you are alike.

7. From the description in the book, draw a picture of how you think Billy's family looked all packed in their car.
LESSON 1

1. The story begins in the spring.
2. Bruce and Billy are looking for an owl’s nest because they want a pet owl.
3. Bruce has a mouthful of eggshells because he was trying to bring the eggs down out of a tree. In order to free his hands for climbing down he had put the eggs in his mouth. When he fell the jolt caused the eggs in his mouth to break.
4. Owl pellets are balls of hair and bones that owls spit out after he has eaten.
5. The animals that should be underlined are: gophers, garter snakes, rabbits, and rats.
6. Answers will vary.
7. Answers will vary.

LESSON 2

1. The boys found the baby owl in a pile of brush near the owl’s tree after the storm.
2. A
3. The first time Mutt and the baby owl meant, the owl pecked him on the nose and the dog ran away.
4. Wol is named after the owl in the Winnie-the-Pooh stories.
5. The event, which happened last, was Wol getting a new cage.
6. C
7. Answers will vary.
8. Answers will vary.
LESSON
1. Some habits that the owls had that were more human than animal were: liking their food cooked, eating people food, walking instead of flying, and climbing trees.
2. The picture is when Wol fell out of the tree and everyone was laughing at him so he stomped off to his cage with hurt feelings.
3. The boys are getting their pets ready for a pet parade sponsored by a department store.
4. Mauling means to handle in a rough way.
5. The correct order is 3, 2, 1, and 4.
6. The owls were like bodyguards because everyone was afraid of them so they would not bother Billy.
7. Answers will vary.

LESSON 4
1. Weeps was fond of Mutt, the dog, because the dog protected him from the neighborhood animals.
2. Answers will vary. The tricks start in Chapter 7.
3. B
4. Nuisance means to bother or disturb.
5. The event, which happened first, was the boys swimming and Wol trying to join them.
6. Wol liked to tease Mutt every chance he got, Weeps on the other hand liked Mutt as a protector.
7. The boys from town were scared when Wol screamed because they thought it was a ghost.
8. Answers will vary.

LESSON 5
1. The friend always wore a hat because Wol liked to nibble on people’s ears and the man didn’t like that.
2. Billy had to give his pet owls away, his family was moving to the city.
3. Answers will vary. But since the owl has a large wingspan it would probably hurt a little.
4. C
5. Answers will vary.
6. Answers will vary.
7. Pictures will vary.