

Read the short story. Then answer each question.

## Mouse Madness

The tunnel was dark, but Marty knew his way through it. He used his powerful nose to find the passage out. It smelled like his favorite food: cheese!

When he got to the edge of the passage, Marty paused. His mother had lectured him enough about dashing into the open without looking. It was dangerous. A zoo patron could see him and start screaming. Then zookeepers might bring in exterminators to shoo them out of their homes. There could be hawks around, ready to grab them. Marty was not ready to be devoured by a hungry hawk. He had to be careful.



He watched. He waited. Then slowly, carefully, silently he crept out a little further. He could see the nachos and cheese under the bench, where someone had carelessly left it. “Jackpot!” he thought. It must be the lunch rush now, because there were not many people over by the bird exhibit. He waited until the few guests turned away, and he ran to the nachos.

They smelled delicious. He would have liked to bring some back to his family, but they were too big for a mouse to carry. Marty took a bite. Mmmmmm! Just as he was about to take another bite, he saw a movement from the corner of his eye. Oh no! A hawk!

## Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

---

Marty ran as fast as he could back to the tunnel. It wasn't far, and he was desperately hoping that the hawk hadn't seen him when it landed. He was almost there, when he was suddenly lifted off the ground. Marty was terrified. His mother had warned him about this all of his life. He should have been more aware, instead of focused on the delicious nachos and cheese. Up they went, higher and higher. The view of the zoo was fantastic, but Marty was too scared to appreciate it. They were circling in the air, and Marty knew he had to do something, or he was going to be the hawk's lunch!

Think, think, THINK! He said to himself. The hawk's talons were surrounding him, but he had an idea. There was one talon close to his face, so he took a deep breath, and bit the hawk! The hawk swerved, but didn't let go. Marty did it again, clenching his little mouse jaws as hard as he possibly could!



Then, he was falling. Marty didn't even have a chance to think about anything but the feeling of falling, until, THUMP! He bounced off an umbrella. THUMP! He bounced off another one, and went flying into the bushes. He landed softly in the dirt. For a while, Marty stayed still. He could not believe that he was still alive. He didn't want to move; in case the hawk came back. Finally, his breathing started to slow. He was sore from hitting the ground, but he didn't feel seriously hurt. Marty stood up, and made his way to the closest tunnel. He was ready to go home. That was enough of an adventure for one day!

**Questions:**

1. Retell the story in your own words.

---

---

2. How would a different setting have changed the story? (For example, if “Mouse Madness” had been set in a pizza restaurant, Marty would have smelled pizza instead of nachos, and probably wouldn’t have been scooped up by a hawk.)

---

---

3. What does “*patron*” mean in the 2nd paragraph? How do you know?

---

---

4. How would a different point of view have changed the story?

---

---

5. What is another way Marty could have solved his problem? Which way would have been best, yours or the author’s? Why?

---

---

**Answers:**

1. Retell the story in your own words.

Answers will vary.

2. How would a different setting have changed the story? (For example, if “Mouse Madness” had been set in a pizza restaurant, Marty would have smelled pizza instead of nachos, and probably wouldn’t have been scooped up by a hawk.)

Answers will vary.

3. What does “patron” mean in the 2nd paragraph? How do you know?

The word *patron* means a customer, especially a regular one, of a store, restaurant. A zoo patron is a visitor who pays to enter the zoo.

4. How would a different point of view have changed the story?

Answers will vary.

5. What is another way Marty could have solved his problem? Which way would have been best, yours or the author's? Why?

Answers will vary.