

Best Practices

NEW EDITION

in Reading

Level
F



Build Comprehension!
Develop Critical Thinking!

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Julia and her brother Peter are out at the Great Barrier Reef with their Uncle Robert. Then something happens that turns their sightseeing trip into a real adventure!

Recognize Genre

An **adventure story** is one genre (ZHON-ruh), or type, of **fiction**. In an adventure story, the setting seems real, and the events could happen. The characters are made up by the author. Usually, there is an element of danger or risk, and something exciting happens to the main character.



Fill in the bubble beside the statement that you think best describes an adventure story.

- (A) The author tries to persuade a reader.
- (B) Animals act like humans.
- (C) The characters are risk-takers.
- (D) The main character is a real person.

Write the title of one adventure story you have read. Then write a brief summary of the main character's adventure.

Title: _____

Adventure: _____

Connect to the Topic

Reread the above introduction to "Dugong Rescue." List one thing you already know about undersea coral reefs.

Preview and Predict

Think about the title of this story, and look at the illustrations on the following pages. Predict what will happen in this story.

STRATEGIES

MAKE CONNECTIONS
VISUALIZE
QUESTION
UNDERSTAND GENRE

MAKE CONNECTIONS

When reading, connect new information to ideas, events, or people you already know.

I can connect to Peter and Julia because I have been on sightseeing trips myself.

In what other way does the author make Peter and Julia seem like people you know?

captivity (cap-TIHV-uh-tee) kept in a zoo or aquarium

marine biologist (muh-REEN by-OL-uh-jist) a scientist who studies sea animals

reef (REEF) a ridge of coral or rock close to or just above the surface of the water

snorkeling (SNOR-kuh-ling) swimming underwater using a breathing tube held in the mouth with the other end extending above the surface of the water

Dugong Rescue

“Do we have to go so slowly?” Peter complained as his uncle Robert carefully steered their motorboat around outcroppings of coral. “We could see more of the Great Barrier Reef if you go faster.”

“You could see more if you just look,” insisted Peter’s sister Julia, gazing down at the multicolored fish swimming through the clear water.

Julia and Peter were in Australia visiting their Uncle Robert, who was a **marine biologist**. He was taking them **snorkeling** out at the reef.

“We have to go slowly so the propeller doesn’t accidentally injure a dugong (DOO-gong),” explained Uncle Robert.

“What’s a dugong?” asked Julia. “Is it another species of fish?”

“No, a dugong is a sea mammal,” explained Uncle Robert.

“So are they like dolphins and whales?” asked Peter.

“Close,” said Uncle Robert, “but dugongs can’t hold their breath underwater for as long as those other sea mammals.”

“Maybe we’ll see one,” said Julia hopefully.

“That’s unlikely,” said Uncle Robert. “People rarely get to see dugongs, except in **captivity**.”

DID YOU KNOW?

A female dugong gives birth underwater to a single baby every 3 to 7 years.

A baby dugong is called a calf.

“So what exactly do they look like?” Julia asked.

“They look something like giant seals,” said Uncle Robert. “Some dugongs are about nine feet long and weigh more than 800 pounds.”

“They’re silvery-gray and have a large snout,” added Peter.

Uncle Robert was impressed. “Very good, Peter, I see you’ve been reading about the animals that live here at the reef.”

“Well, no, not exactly,” said Peter, pointing over the side of the boat. “I’m looking at one! There’s one right over there!”

Julia turned and saw a massive lump break the surface of the water. “It’s bigger than our boat!” she exclaimed.

Uncle Robert quickly shut off the motor, and they drifted close enough to the dugong to see its round head and small eyes.

Suddenly, the dugong started **thrashing** in the water.

“What’s wrong with it?” Julia sounded worried.

“It’s tangled in a net!” Peter exclaimed.

Uncle Robert grabbed his mask and dove over the side of the boat.

DID YOU KNOW?

Dugongs are also called seacows because they graze on seagrasses that form meadows along coastal areas.

VISUALIZE

Descriptive words in a story help you form a picture in your mind.

Circle or highlight descriptive phrases that help you imagine the dugong. An example has been done for you.

QUESTION

As you read, ask yourself questions about ideas, events, or words you’re not sure of. Reread or read ahead to find the answers.

I wonder, “Why did Uncle Robert shut off the motor when they spotted the dugong?” I think it was because he wanted to go slowly enough to see what was happening.

Why did Uncle Robert dive into the water?

thrashing (THRASH-ing) moving violently

UNDERSTAND GENRE

(adventure story)

In an adventure story, authors build excitement by creating problems that keep you in suspense, not knowing what will happen next.

The dugong
can't breathe underwater.
I wonder what is going to
happen to it!

How does the author build suspense in this part of the story?

How does the author end the suspense?

Julia and Peter put on their masks and snorkels and quickly pulled their swim flippers over their bare feet. When they dove into the water they could see that one of the dugong's fins was caught in the fishing net. They watched as Uncle Robert took a knife from his ankle **sheath**. He was about to cut the net when the dugong jerked and knocked the knife from his hand. The knife started to sink.

Julia quickly rose to the surface and took a deep breath. She placed her tongue over the mouthpiece to keep water from leaking through the snorkel. Then she dove down after the knife. If she couldn't find it, the dugong would drown! Something glittered on the ocean floor a few feet away. The knife!

Julia had just enough breath left to grab the handle and rise to the surface. Then she swam as fast as she could toward Uncle Robert and Peter, who were trying to loosen the net with their bare hands. She tapped Uncle Robert on the shoulder and carefully handed him the knife. He quickly cut the net, setting the dugong free. Julia watched the dugong rise to the surface to breathe, then it slowly swam away.

"What was that fishing net doing there?" Peter asked after they had all climbed back into their boat.

"Sometimes fishing nets break loose and drift into places they shouldn't," said Uncle Robert. "That dugong was lucky. If we hadn't seen it, it would have drowned in that net."

"I think we were the lucky ones," said Julia, "we got to see a dugong!"



THINK CRITICALLY

Think about the threats to dugongs. What advice could you give to people about protecting dugongs?

sheath (SHEETH) a case for a knife