Name: _____ Date: _____

The Turtles Made It

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 330 words

A turtle sat on a log in the warm sun. "Turtles lived with the dinosaurs," said Grandpa. Niko's mouth fell open.

"Then where did the dinosaurs go, and when?" Niko asked. Grandpa picked up a flat stone from the mud.

"It was 66 million years ago," said Grandpa. "That was long before any people. A rock came from space."

The space rock was huge. Stand it on a beach. It would be taller than any mountain.

Grandpa tossed his flat stone into the pond. Plop! "It crashed into the sea near Mexico," he said.

Little waves rolled across the pond. Back then, giant waves rushed over the land. Fires burned in forests far away.

Dust and soot shot high into the sky. They spread all around the world. The sky grew dim.

Without much sun, plants could not grow well. The days turned cold, and they stayed cold for years.

The big plant eaters ran out of food. Then the meat eaters ran out, too.

So nearly all the dinosaurs died out. T. rex was gone. Triceratops was gone, too.

Lots of other animals were lost. About three of every four kinds died out.

"But some animals made it," said Grandpa. "Most were small. They could hide in holes or in water."

Little furry animals made it. They were about as big as rats. They ate bugs and worms.

Some crocodiles made it. A crocodile can go for months without eating. And turtles made it, too.

Ferns were the first plants back when the sky cleared. Seeds had waited in the ground. Soon other plants grew, too.

"And one kind of dinosaur made it," said Grandpa. Just then, a duck flew over the pond. "Birds!" said Niko.

Niko looked at the turtle on its log. Its family had been there on that long-ago day. He waved to it, very softly.

When you see a turtle or a bird, look closely. Can you picture its family by a dinosaur long

ago?

Questions

1. When did the dinosaurs die out?

A. Last year
B. 66 million years ago
C. When Grandpa was a boy

2. Why did the plant eaters run out of food?

A. The meat eaters ate the plants
B. Plants could not grow well without sun
C. Turtles ate all the plants

3. What does "dim" mean when the book says the sky grew dim?

A. Not bright
B. Very hot
C. Bright blue

4. Which animals made it through?

A. T. rex and Triceratops
B. Small furry animals, crocodiles and turtles
C. Only the big plant eaters

5. Why did Niko say "Birds!" when the duck flew by?

A. Birds are the one kind of dinosaur that made it
B. He was scared of the duck
C. Grandpa wanted to feed it

Words to know

dinosaurs: long-ago animals
soot: black smoke dust
dim: not bright
ferns: leafy green plants
crocodile: big water reptile

Answer key: The Turtles Made It

1. B. 66 million years ago
2. B. Plants could not grow well without sun
3. A. Not bright
4. B. Small furry animals, crocodiles and turtles
5. A. Birds are the one kind of dinosaur that made it