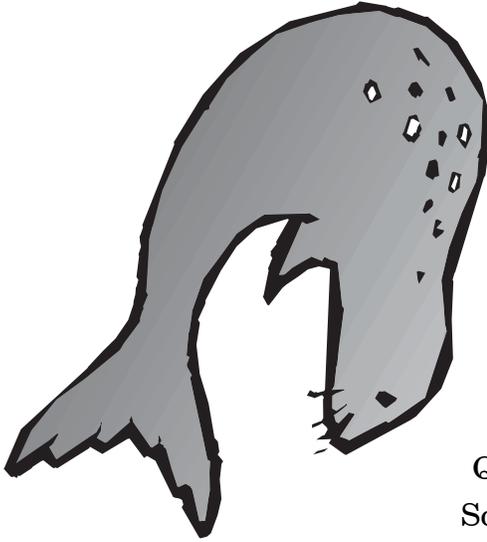


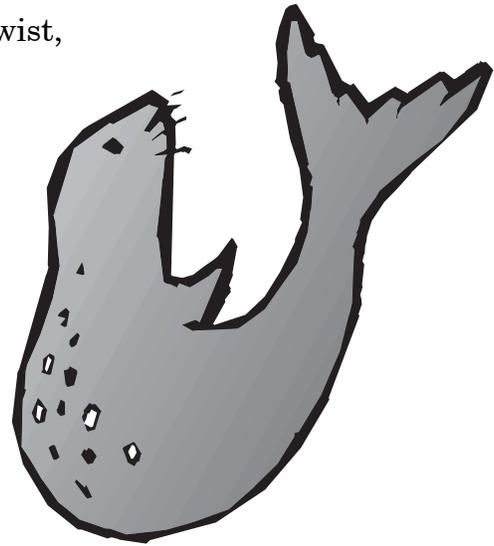
As you read this poem, imagine how a seal moves. Then answer the questions that follow.

Seal

by William Jay Smith



See how he dives
From the rocks with a zoom!
See how he darts
Through his watery room
Past crabs and eels
And green seaweed,
Past fluffs of sandy
Minnow feed!
See how he swims
With a swerve and a twist,
A flip of the flipper,
A flick of the wrist!
Quicksilver-quick,
Softer than spray,
Down he plunges
And sweeps away;
Before you can think,
Before you can utter
Words like "Dill pickle"
Or "Apple butter,"
Back up he swims
Past Sting Ray and Shark,
Out with a zoom,
A whoop, a bark;
Before you can say
Whatever you wish,
He plops at your side
With a mouthful of fish!



"Seal" from *Laughing Time: Collected Nonsense* by William Jay Smith. Copyright © 1990 by William J. Smith. Reprinted by permission of Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus & Giroux, LLC.

1. What is the **main** purpose of this poem?
- A to convince people to keep seals as pets
 - B to give information about seals in a humorous way
 - C to raise funds for aquariums that have seals
 - D to warn people not to get too near to seals
2. What is the seal doing in this poem?
- A chasing other seals
 - B playing with fish
 - C diving into plants
 - D looking for food
3. Why does the seal plunge down?
- A He is showing off for people.
 - B He has to stay away from the sting rays and sharks.
 - C He has to go deep into the water to find fish to eat.
 - D He is playing with the other animals in the water.
4. Why is this poem written so that the lines curve?
- A to show that the word “seal” begins with an “s”
 - B to describe how a seal catches fish
 - C to show the movement of a seal
 - D to explain how the author feels about seals
5. Which words **best** describe the seal in this poem?
- A “See how he swims”
 - B “Quicksilver-quick”
 - C “Words like ‘Dill pickle’”
 - D “He plops at your side”
6. What does the author of the poem **most likely** think about seals?
- A He thinks seals are serious.
 - B He thinks seals are dangerous.
 - C He thinks seals are careful.
 - D He thinks seals are playful.

End of Set

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*Answers to
Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Sample Items*

Passage Title	Question Number	Correct Answer	Category	Thinking Skill	Objective Number
Seal	1	B	Interpretation	Generating	2.04
Seal	2	D	Cognition	Knowledge	2.01
Seal	3	C	Interpretation	Generating	2.05
Seal	4	C	Critical Stance	Analyzing	3.03
Seal	5	B	Interpretation	Analyzing	2.04
Seal	6	D	Critical Stance	Analyzing	3.01