

## Reading Comprehension 1

## MONSTERS AND FANTASY CREATURES

Here are some fantasy creatures, both good and bad. They often turn up in fantasy stories. The questions that follow are all about their magical powers.



The Greeks thought of the basilisk as the King of Snakes. It was born from a rooster's egg and hatched by a toad. It could kill any creature by looking at it. Its breath wilted plants. The only way to destroy it was to hold up a mirror in front of its eyes so that it died of fright.



The Greeks also believed in the existence of unicorns. They had heard stories of them living in India. They were considered to be magical creatures with special powers: the ability to heal the sick and purify poisonous water. Only young girls could tame them.



Brownies are invisible elves that live in farmhouses in Scotland. While the family is asleep, they do the housework. They always protect the family. If a brownie is badly treated or offered payment for their work, they disappear. Only children are able to see them.



In Russian folk tales, the firebird is miraculous. With eyes of crystal, its feathers are silver and gold. It is nocturnal, lighting up the land wherever it flies. When it sings, pearls fall from its beak. Hearing its song can cure illness and return sight to the blind.

1. All of these creatures had magical powers. Draw lines to link each creature with its power.

Basilisk

invisible except to children

Unicorn

it made blind people see

Brownie

its breath wilted plants

Firebird

it could purify poisonous water

2. What two strange things had to happen to produce a basilisk?

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3. What was the only way you could destroy a basilisk?

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4. If it existed, why would it be dangerous to be near a basilisk?

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5. Where did the Greeks think unicorns came from?

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6. Only one sort of person could tame a unicorn. Who?

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7. Where do brownies live?

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8. How are brownies helpful to the families they live with?

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9. Write down **two** reasons why they might disappear.

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10. What does the firebird look like?

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11. What is supposed to happen when the firebird flies at night?

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12. What happens when the firebird sings?

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13. Most of these fantasy creatures were believed to be helpful to human beings. Circle the one that was not helpful.

basilisk

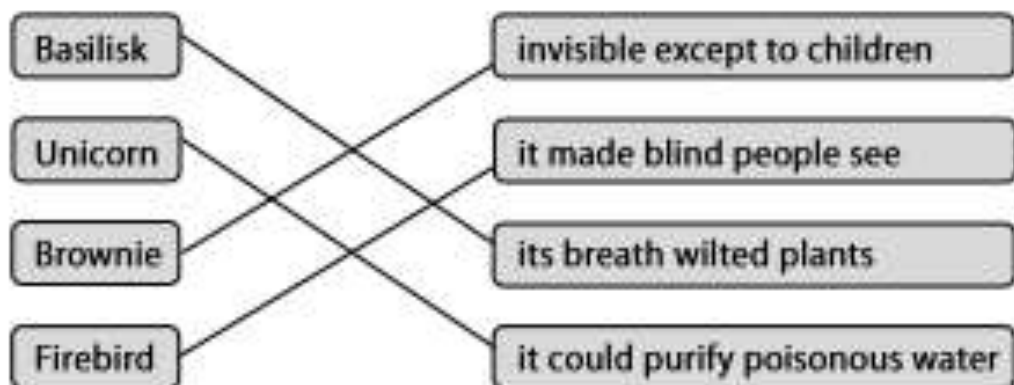
unicorn

brownie

firebird

## Reading Comprehension 1 Answers

1. All of these creatures had magical powers. Draw lines to link each creature with its power.



2. What two strange things had to happen to produce a basilisk?

An egg had to be laid by a rooster and hatched by a toad.

3. What was the only way you could destroy a basilisk?

A mirror had to be held in front of its eyes so that it died of fright.

4. If it existed, why would it be dangerous to be near a basilisk?

It could kill you just by looking at you.

5. Where did the Greeks think unicorns came from?

India

6. Only one sort of person could tame a unicorn. Who?

a young girl

7. Where do brownies live?

In farmhouses in Scotland.

8. How are brownies helpful to the families they live with?

They do the housework (and they protect the family).

9. Write down two reasons why they might disappear.

They disappear if they are badly treated or offered payment for their work.

10. What does the firebird look like?

Its eyes are crystal.

Its feathers are silver and gold.

11. What is supposed to happen when the firebird flies at night?

It lights up the land wherever it flies.

12. What happens when the firebird sings?

Pearls fall from its beak.

13. Most of these fantasy creatures were believed to be helpful to human beings. Circle the one that was not helpful.

basilisk

unicorn

brownie

firebird