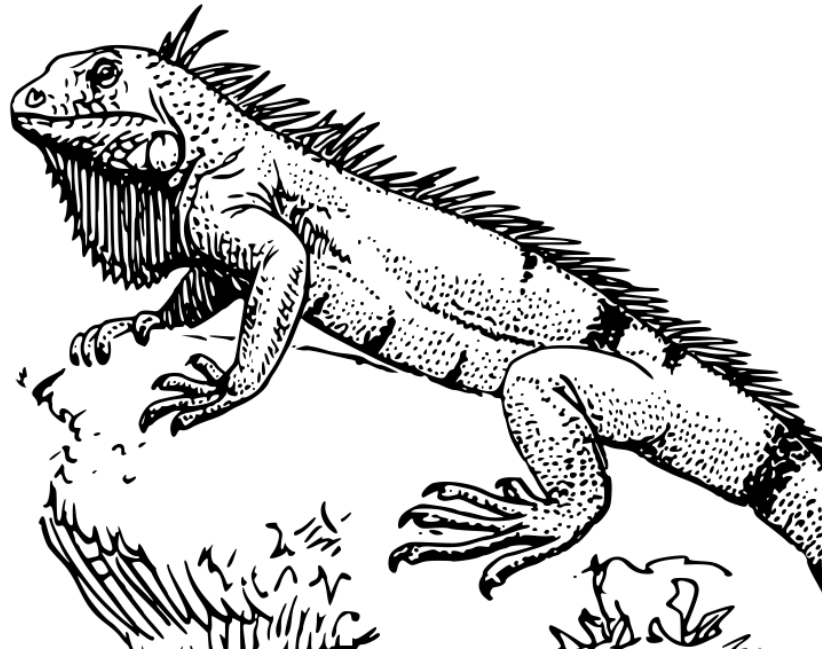


Iggie

Iggie had vanished. That's all there was to it. He had ventured outside before, whenever the window in the kitchen was left open, but Martin had always found him in the garden, sitting in the sun, usually munching on flowers. This time, Iggie didn't seem to be anywhere near the apartment.

Martin lived in an apartment with his Aunt Belle. A year ago, someone had left an iguana in a box in front of the pet store where Aunt Belle worked. She guessed that whoever had owned it left it there because the lizard had grown too big to take care of. But maybe the owner just didn't want it anymore. The pet store didn't have a cage big enough for a full-grown iguana, so Aunt Belle brought it home with her. That was just a week before Martin's birthday. Aunt Belle gave the iguana to Martin as a birthday present. Martin thought that Iggie was the best birthday present he had ever received!

Now Martin was worried. The nights were getting colder, and iguanas need to stay warm. Martin and his friend Arnold searched the garden, looking carefully under every bush and shrub. They knocked on apartment doors and talked to the people who happened to be at home. Mr. Kennon in 3A had seen an iguana outside the laundry room early that morning, so Martin and Arnold searched the laundry room. They looked behind the machines, under the tables, and even inside the washers and dryers. "Maybe Iggie got locked in someone's apartment by mistake," Arnold said. "We could check it out. He likes to sit in a sunny window."



Martin and Arnold walked around the apartments, looking in each window. The lady who lived in the apartment above Aunt Belle's jerked her blinds shut when she saw what the boys were doing, but in the apartment next to her, Aunt Mary waved enthusiastically and hollered, "Come on in!"

Martin asked Aunt Mary if she had seen Iggie. Aunt Mary wasn't really anyone's aunt; everyone just called her that.

"I've been in and out all day," Aunt Mary answered. "My sister's been sick, so I did some of her laundry to help her out. I drove a big basket of clothes over to her this afternoon, but I didn't see your iguana anywhere. If I had seen that green, scaly creature, I think I would have hollered real loud. You know I'm not much for animals without fur, but I hope you find him soon. Then again, I hope you don't!"

Martin and Arnold searched all around the parking lot, even under the cars. After watching a car zoom into a parking space, Martin said to Arnold, "Iggie would like the warm pavement here, but this sure wouldn't be a good place for an iguana."

"You got that right!" said Arnold. "Iggie would be so scared that he'd lose his tail here for sure." But neither Arnold nor Martin saw a lizard's long tail lying anywhere on the pavement.

"Let's look through the garbage cans," Martin suggested. "Iggie could have smelled something he wanted to eat, and there are always lots of bugs around those cans, too."

Martin and Arnold borrowed some gloves from Angela, one of the maintenance workers. Then they looked in all the garbage cans, holding their noses with one hand and shaking cans with the other. No long tails or spiny backs poked out of the garbage.

Back at the apartment, Martin set a bowl of mealworms and a piece of banana outside the front door.

"Iggie won't eat unless he's warm, but I guess it can't hurt to leave something out for him," Martin told Arnold.

At sunset, Arnold went home for dinner. Martin sat on a tall stool by the kitchen window as he ate the potato soup Aunt Belle had warmed up for him. Every few minutes, he looked outside. He also saw Aunt Belle looking out the window from time to time. “Aunt Belle must be worried, too,” he thought.

“You might as well give up for now,” Aunt Belle said. “Iggie probably found himself a warm spot for the night.”

“A warm spot! That’s it!” Martin thought. Iguanas always head for the warmest place around. He and Arnold had looked everywhere warm they could think of— the dryers in the laundry room, under the cars in the parking lot. But now, Martin suddenly remembered what Aunt Mary said about taking the laundry to her sister. A basket of warm laundry, right out of the dryer, was a perfect place for an iguana!

“Aunt Belle!” Martin shouted. “I’ve got to talk to Aunt Mary right away.”

“Her number’s by the phone,” Aunt Belle told him.

It didn’t take long for Martin to convince Aunt Mary that they ought to take a look at the basket of laundry she had taken to her sister. Aunt Mary got permission from Aunt Belle to drive Martin across town to her sister’s apartment.

“Now don’t get your hopes up, Martin,” Aunt Mary said as Martin climbed into her car. “I’m sure I would have noticed an iguana’s long tail poking out of the laundry basket if the creature had crawled in there.”

Aunt Mary’s sister was sitting in a chair watching TV when they arrived.

“Funny joke,” she said to Aunt Mary as she pointed to a motionless Iggie stretched out on top of the TV. “Where did you get such a real-looking stuffed toy? I think it looks real cute on top of the TV, don’t you?”

Martin and Aunt Mary laughed as they watched Iggie climb down the front of the TV and make his way over to Martin.

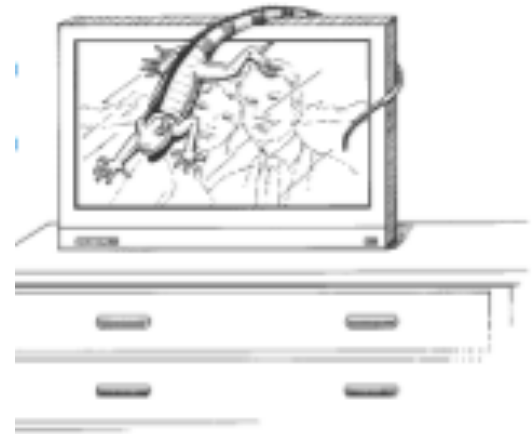
Aunt Mary’s sister shrieked, “It’s got batteries!”

Martin picked up Iggie and set him on his shoulder.

“It’s not a toy,” Aunt Mary told her sister. “Iggie is Martin’s pet. He must have crawled into the laundry basket this morning and hidden under the warm clothes.”

“I can’t believe I let a live lizard sit on my bed,” Aunt Mary’s sister squealed. “I carried it around the house all afternoon and even showed it to my neighbor.”

“Next time you’re sick, I’ll bring Martin and Iggie for a visit,” said Aunt Mary. “You look a lot better now. Iguana-sitting seems to agree with you.”



Questions About Iggie

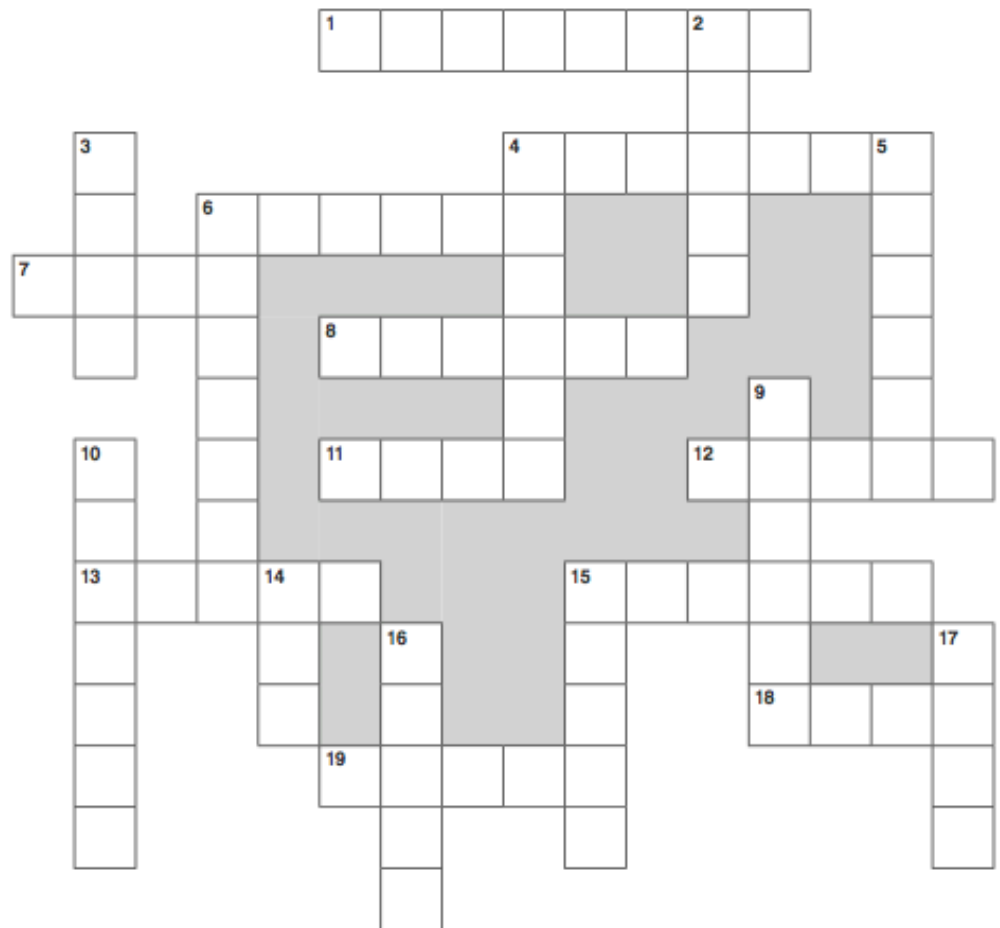
1. How did Martin get a pet iguana?
2. List the places Martin and Arnold looked for Iggie.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
3. What made Martin think that Iggie might have hidden in the laundry basket Aunt Mary took to her sister?
4. Explain why Aunt Mary's sister might have thought that Iggie was a stuffed toy.
5. What kind of person do you think Aunt Mary is? Use facts from the story to support your answer.

Action Verbs Crossword

Match the action verbs in the word box with the definitions below to complete the crossword puzzle.

Word Box

arrive	search
borrow	set
check	shake
convince	shriek
guess	stretch
head	suggest
holler	vanish
jerk	venture
knock	wave
munch	worry
poke	zoom



Across

1. to talk someone into doing or believing something; to persuade
4. to pull out or reach for greater length
6. to disappear suddenly
7. to push through
8. to reach a destination
11. to pull with sudden, sharp movements
12. to feel uneasy or concerned about someone or something
13. to state an opinion without being certain of the facts
15. to look for very carefully
18. to move the hand up and down at the wrist
19. to hit or rap with the knuckles

Down

2. to test an idea for accuracy or to look at the condition of something
3. to move quickly with a humming sound
4. to scream with fright
5. to yell or shout
6. to try something risky or dangerous
9. to take as a loan from someone
10. to offer an idea for consideration
14. to put down or place in position
15. to move up and down or back and forth with short, quick motions
16. to chew with crunching sounds
17. to move purposely in a certain direction

Describe Iggie

Fill in the blanks with adjectives from the story that describe Iggie.

1. size _____
2. with sharp ridges down his back _____
3. covered with thin plates _____
4. sitting absolutely still _____

Nouns to Know

Determine the meaning of the underlined word to help you answer each question.

1. What kind of **lizard** is Iggie?
2. Why did the **maintenance** worker have gloves to lend to Martin and Arnold?
3. Why might Iggie be found sitting on the **pavement** in the parking lot?
4. Why did Aunt Mary's sister shriek, "It's got **batteries!**"?
5. Why did Martin get **permission** to go with Aunt Mary to her sister's apartment?
6. Why would Iggie crawl into a basket of **laundry**?
7. Why did Martin put **mealworms** in a bowl outside his front door?

Summarizing

Write a headline that summarizes each part of the story. Then write two details that add more information for that part of the story.

Beginning:

Middle:

End: