

Read the short story. Then answer each question.

The Swift Runner

In the olden times, the animals were fond of sports. They often held contests with prizes for those that won.

One time a prize was offered for the animal who could prove himself the swiftest runner.

The reward was to be a pair of great antlers. Each animal was to carry the antlers on his head while running the race. The animal who won would receive the antlers.

A path through the woods was chosen for the race course. There were many bushes and brambles along the way.

All the animals gathered at the meeting place. They chose Black Bear to be judge of the race. It was decided that the rabbit and the deer alone should try for the prize.

“They are the best runners. None of the rest of us could hope to win,” said the other animals.

White Rabbit was given the first chance.

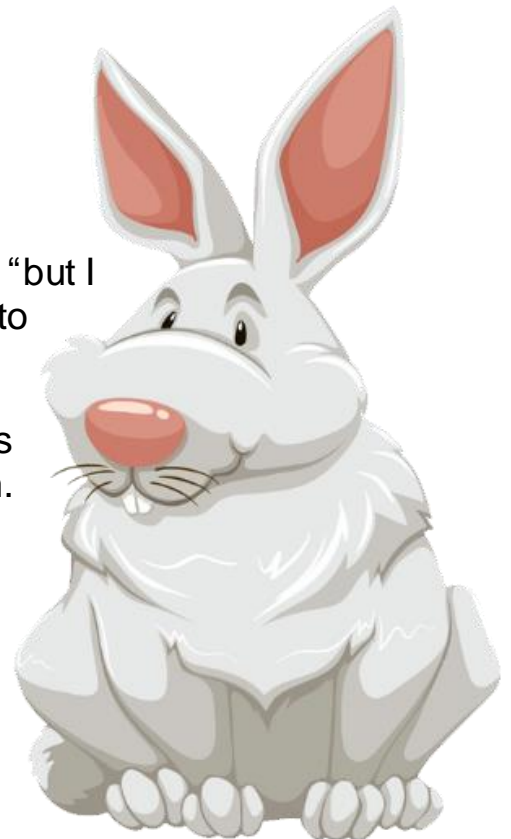
“I am willing to try for the prize,” White Rabbit said, “but I would like first to look over the ground where I am to run.”

So White Rabbit disappeared in the woods. He was gone so long that Red Fox was sent to look for him.

Red Fox found the rabbit hard at work cutting off twigs to clear a path to run on.

Red Fox went back and told the other animals what White Rabbit was doing.

Pretty soon White Rabbit came out of the woods.



He was all ready to put on the antlers and begin the race for the great prize.

“Oh, no,” said Judge Bear. “We cannot allow you to enter the great race. You are too fond of gnawing twigs. You may keep on gnawing twigs instead of trying for the prize.”

So little White Rabbit was not allowed to run for the prize.

Red Fox placed the horns upon the head of the deer and said, “It is your turn to try to win the race.”

Then the animals gave three loud cheers and told the deer to do his best.

The deer ran swiftly along the woodland path. He carried the antlers so skillfully that they were not once caught in the bushes.

When the deer returned to the meeting place, Judge Bear proclaimed him winner of the race.

As Black Bear gave the prize to the deer, he said, “Henceforth you shall wear the antlers on your head. You shall always be called the Swift Runner.”



Questions:

1. What could slow the runners down on the path?

2. Why is White Rabbit not allowed to run?

3. Why do you think the other animals did not want to race?

4. Which word best describes Judge Bear?

Answers:

1. What could slow the runners down on the path?
Bushes and brambles could slow the runners down.
2. Why is White Rabbit not allowed to run?
White Rabbit was too fond of gnawing at the twigs, so he was not allowed to run.
3. Why do you think the other animals did not want to race?
The other animals did not want to race because they knew they were slower than the rabbit and the deer.
4. Which word best describes Judge Bear?
The word the best describes Judge Bear is fair.