Nobody moved and neither did the bear. The crows cawed in the trees. The trees rustled in the wind. The wind carried our scent to the bear. The bear took a step toward us.

We had been sitting on the deck when the bear came. It climbed over the rock wall that separates our backyard from the woods. It growled. Slobber dripped from its mouth. On the deck were me, my mom, my dad, and my little sister. When the bear growled, we gasped, and we became very still.

The bear took a step toward us, but we didn’t move. It was only one step, we thought to ourselves. No need to panic. We didn't want to spook the bear. We didn't want the bear to charge.

The bear took another step. *Okay, we thought, perhaps we should move.* But we didn't move.

The bear took a third step. We grabbed each other. I grabbed my dad, my dad grabbed my mom, my mom grabbed my sister.

The bear roared. My mom said, "Nobody move," which I thought was unnecessary. Slowly, very slowly, she backed away from the bear, away from us. She backed across the deck all the way to the door. Without turning around, she pulled the handle. Locked.

"I forget which one you're supposed to do," my little sister whispered. "Are you supposed to play dead, or are you supposed to try and scare the bear?"

The bear raised itself on its hind legs and roared even louder. It was eight feet tall. It had teeth the length of my fingers. It had eyes without fear or pity.

"Let's cover all our bases," I said. "Mom, you scare the bear. Dad, you play dead. Sis, you play bear. I'll scare the dead."

It was settled. The bear took one step closer, and we sprang into action. Dad collapsed in a heap. Mom raised her arms and jumped up and down. My sister got down on all fours and started growling. I ran over to my dad and at the top of my lungs I screamed, "BOO!"

It worked like a charm. The bear stopped growling. Mom says I'm making this up, but I swear I saw it raise one eyebrow in surprise. It almost seemed to shrug, and then it turned and lumbered off. I think bears are like people: they don't like surprises.
**action**  ac·tion

**Definition**

**noun**

1. something that is done for a specific purpose.

   *The doctor's quick action saved the child's life.*

**Advanced Definition**

**noun**

1. something that is done, is being done, or will be done.

   *As president, his first action was an attempt to stabilize the economy.*

2. a movement or series of movements.

   *Actions of the body combine with speech to communicate meaning.*

   *The language students are learning words for various actions such as jumping, waving, pointing, and skipping.*

3. vigorous activity.

   *It was a slow first half with very little action in the game.*

4. (usu. pl.) manner of behaving or conducting oneself.

   *As a teacher, her actions were not acceptable.*

5. the manner of a mechanism's moving or operating, or the mechanism itself.

   *The action of the clock fascinated the little boy.*

6. effect.

   *Scientists are still studying the action of the drug on the body.*

7. a legal proceeding wherein one party demands its right or claims that wrong has been done by another party; a lawsuit.

   *Why are the workers initiating this action against the owners at this time?*

8. military conflict; fighting.
Action was heavy during the first day of battle.

Spanish cognate

acción: The Spanish word acción means action.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. They promised to take action to end poverty.
2. It is time for firefighters to race into action.
3. Everything the body does, every action, is initiated in the brain.
4. Here are some ways that the plan is being put into action.
6. When they get a call about a fire, they have to be ready to spring to action.
7. To find out more about the project, Weekly Reader traveled to Guinea to see the Measles Initiative in action.
8. The American Red Cross invited Greg, his mom, and his teacher to visit Guinea to see the project in action.
spook  spook

Advanced Definition

noun
1. (informal) a ghost; phantom.
2. a spy or other person involved in espionage.

transitive verb
1. (informal) to frighten or cause (an animal or person) to be nervous.

The snake spooked my horse.

intransitive verb
1. (informal) to become frightened or nervous.

She doesn’t spook easily.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. We didn't want to spook the bear. We didn't want the bear to charge.

2. Although the hairy creatures spook many people, there isn't much reason to be afraid of spiders. "Most spiders are not very dangerous," said Bradley.

3. Spiders and bats may spook you, but nothing will make your skin crawl more than head lice. The tiny parasites can infest your hair, lay eggs, and suck your blood like a mosquito.
1. What are the narrator and the narrator's family doing when a bear comes?
   A. climbing a tree
   B. walking through the woods
   C. sitting on the deck
   D. climbing a rock wall

2. To solve the problem of the bear coming over, what does the narrator's mother do?
   A. She raises her arms and jumps up and down.
   B. She gets down on all fours and starts growling.
   C. She collapses in a heap.
   D. She runs up to the bear and screams, "BOO!"

3. The narrator and the narrator's family are scared of the bear. What evidence from the text supports this statement?
   A. "The wind carried our scent to the bear."
   B. "The bear raised itself on its hind legs and roared even louder."
   C. "When the bear growled, we gasped, and we became very still."
   D. "The bear took a step toward us."

4. Read these sentences from the text.
   The bear roared. My mom said, 'Nobody move,' which I thought was unnecessary.

   Based on the information in the story, why might the narrator think the mother's words are unnecessary?
   A. The narrator thinks that doing something would be more helpful than saying something.
   B. The wind is too loud for anybody to hear the mother's words.
   C. Nobody is moving when the mother says, "Nobody move."
   D. The narrator thinks the mother's words will anger the bear.
5. What is a theme of this story?

   A. People should spend more time in nature and less time indoors.
   B. Neither bears nor humans like surprises.
   C. Grown-ups always know what to do in an emergency.
   D. People should treat animals with respect and kindness.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

   The bear took one step closer, and we sprang into action. Dad collapsed in a heap. Mom raised her arms and jumped up and down. My sister got down on all fours and started growling. I ran over to my dad and at the top of my lungs I screamed, 'BOO!'

   It worked like a charm. The bear stopped growling. Mom says I'm making this up, but I swear I saw it raise one eyebrow in surprise. It almost seemed to shrug, and then it turned and lumbered off.

   Based on these sentences, what is the meaning of the phrase "it worked like a charm"?

   A. It worked very hard.
   B. It worked really well.
   C. It did not work at all.
   D. It did not work well.

7. Read these sentences from the text.

   The bear took a third step. We grabbed each other. I grabbed my dad, my dad grabbed my mom, my mom grabbed my sister.

   In the last sentence, what conjunction could be added after the second comma without changing the meaning of the sentence?

   A. and
   B. because
   C. or
   D. nor
8. Near the end of the story, the family springs "into action." Describe what each member of the family does at this time.

9. Explain whether the family's behavior near the end of the story surprises the bear. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

10. Explain whether the family's behavior near the end of the story is surprising to the reader. Support your answer with details from the text.