



Read the passage carefully. Then answer the questions using clues from the text.

The Horse's Gentle Nudge: What Can We Infer?



Liam walked into the barn with his shoulders slumped. He didn't even look at Willow, his horse, as he usually did. Willow watched him carefully. Her ears swiveled forward, then back, listening to the quiet way his boots scuffed the ground. Liam sighed a deep, shaky breath as he leaned against a stall door, not even opening it to greet her.



Willow took a slow step closer. She lowered her head, nudging his arm softly with her nose. It wasn't a demand for food or a playful push. It was a gentle, almost questioning touch. Liam looked up, surprised, and met her large, dark eyes. She let out a soft whicker, a quiet sound that seemed to ask, "Are you okay?"

Liam slowly reached out and stroked Willow's soft muzzle. He started to talk, telling her about his difficult day. Willow stood patiently, her head resting near his shoulder. She didn't move away or get restless. Her calm presence seemed to make Liam feel a little better, and a small smile finally touched his lips.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

(1) Based on the passage, what can you conclude about Willow?

- A Willow often tries to cheer Liam up.
- B Willow is good at sensing how Liam feels.
- C Willow only likes Liam when he is happy.



D Willow wants Liam to give her treats.

(2) What does the passage suggest about why Willow nudged Liam's arm?

A She wanted Liam to open her stall door.

B She was trying to comfort Liam because he seemed sad.

C She was asking Liam to give her some hay.

D She wanted to go outside for a walk.

(3) The author mentions Willow's ears swiveling most likely to show that...

A Willow was listening for sounds outside the barn.

B Willow was getting ready to run away.

C Willow was paying close attention to Liam's actions and sounds.

D Willow's ears are very large and can move a lot.

(4) Which statement is NOT well-supported by evidence from the passage?

A Liam was feeling sad when he entered the barn.

B Willow stayed calm while Liam talked about his day.

C Liam often ignores Willow when he is happy.

D Willow used her nose to gently touch Liam.

(5) What clues in the passage helped you infer that Willow sensed Liam's sadness? Use details from the passage.



