

The Animal School by George H. Reavis

Once upon a time, the animals decided they must do something heroic to meet the problems of a "New World," so they organised a school. They adopted an activity curriculum consisting of running, climbing, swimming and flying. To make it easier to administer, all animals took all the subjects.

The duck was excellent in swimming, better in fact than his instructor, and made excellent grades in flying, but he was very poor in running. Since he was low in running he had to stay after school and also drop swimming to practice running. This was kept up until his web feet were badly worn and he was only average in swimming. But average was acceptable in school, so nobody worried about that except the duck.

The rabbit started at the top of the class in running, but had a nervous breakdown because she had so much time to make up in swimming.

The squirrel was excellent in climbing until he developed frustrations in the flying class where the teacher made him start from the ground up instead

of from the tree-top down. He also developed charley horses from over-exertion and he got a C in climbing and a D in running.

The eagle was a problem child and had to be disciplined severely. In climbing class he beat all the others to the top of the tree, but insisted on using his own way of getting there.

At the end of the year, an abnormal eel that could swim exceedingly well and also could run, climb and fly a little had the highest average and was valedictorian.

The prairie dogs stayed out of school and fought the tax levy because the administration would not add digging and burrowing to the curriculum. They apprenticed their children to the badger and later joined the groundhogs and gophers to start a successful private school.

charley-horses

stiffness or cramps in arm or leg

valedictorian

best student – American college system

gophers

American burrowing rodent

Questions for “The Animal School” by George H. Reavis

Why did the animals take the same subjects?

Did the animals benefit from taking the same subjects? Explain your answer.

Being average in all the subjects was accepted in the school. Did this suit the animals? Explain your answer.

Why do you think the squirrel wasn't allowed to fly down from the tree-top?

Why was the eagle seen as a problem child?

Why do you think the prairie dogs wanted digging and burrowing added to the curriculum?

Can you understand why the animals decided to not go to school? Explain your answer.

Why do you think the private school was a success? What subjects do you think were on the curriculum?

What point was the author trying to make in this story?
