

Inky 2

Tonight's the night. I've been perfecting my technique for weeks. First, I use my arm to push up the lid of my tank. (Please note that it's an arm, not a tentacle. That's a common mistake.) Then, I slip between the filter and the rim. Then, I am free.

Every night I go a little further. I've been looking for a drain with a loose grate that might lead to the sea. That's my goal. Of course, if I happen to see some tasty treats along the way, that's nice too. Last night the crabs were molting. I do love a soft shell.

I also like scallops and shrimp and sea cucumbers. Anything is better than the frozen sardines the humans usually give me. I only get the good stuff at the end of a maze or inside a puzzle box. They make me work for it. Their tests are so easy, and there's not much else to do, so I play along. But it is rather insulting.

The humans can never quite figure out what happened to the creatures that are missing from their tanks in the morning. Sometimes they don't even know they are missing. I am careful. I don't eat them all. Humans don't notice an absent sea cucumber when there are ten more blobbing around in the water. The truth is, humans don't notice much.

I have a fondness for humans, but they are not terribly observant. If they were, they would probably realize that I could remove my lid. We have three hearts and they only have one, but sometimes it seems like we have three times the brains too.

For example, the sign by my tank announces that my name is Wiggleton. Wiggleton is a ridiculous name for a 60 pound giant Pacific octopus. The brain that thought of it can't possibly be highly developed.

I prefer to think of myself as Inky 2. That's a silly name too, but it's a tribute to the first Inky. He's my hero. He escaped from an aquarium in New Zealand and made it to the ocean. I heard the humans here talking about it. That's when I started to create my plan.

Last night I finally found a loose grate. I could smell the sea air coming through. I almost didn't notice it because I was so distracted by those crabs. I'd been monitoring them for some time and I knew they'd be soft and ready. They really are a delicacy. Luckily I went just a bit further and found that the grate on the far side of the crabs had a missing screw. Someone must have been careless after cleaning.

Unfortunately I'd been on land for too long already, so I couldn't set out right away. I'm not sure how long I'll have to travel through the grate before I get to the ocean, so I want to start fresh. I had to come back to my tank to recharge.



But tonight. Tonight is it. Will I miss my captive home? Perhaps. Despite their lack of extra hearts and their less than stellar brains, the humans are mostly kind. But the ocean is my real home. Inky here I come!



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What do octopuses have that humans do not?
 - a. Arms
 - b. Three hearts
 - c. Three brains
 - d. Intelligence

2. Which of the following is the narrator's LEAST favorite food?
 - a. Soft shell crabs
 - b. Shrimp
 - c. Frozen sardines
 - d. Scallops

3. Who is the narrator of the story?
 - a. Inky the Octopus
 - b. Wiggleton the Octopus
 - c. A sea cucumber
 - d. A human

4. What octopus characteristic is implied in the passage but not mentioned directly?
 - a. The ability to squeeze through small spaces
 - b. The ability to eat crabs
 - c. The ability to change colors
 - d. The ability to solve puzzles

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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