

Read the short story. Then answer each question.

Bruce and the Spider

There was once a king of Scotland whose name was Robert Bruce. He needed to be both brave and wise because the times in which he lived were wild and rude. The King of England was at war with him and had led a great army into Scotland to drive him out of the land.

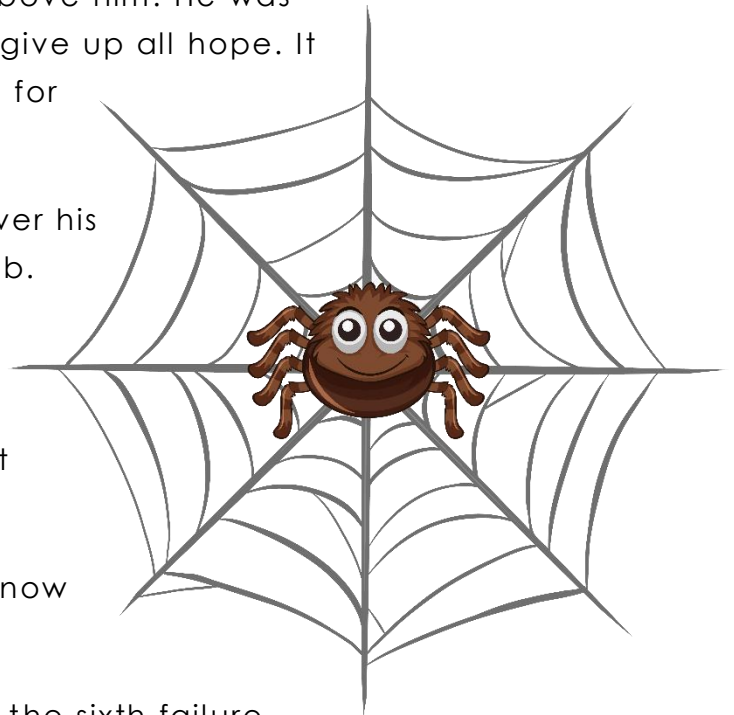
Battle after battle had been fought. Six times Bruce had led his brave little army against his foes and six times his men had been beaten and driven into flight. At last his army was scattered, and he was forced to hide in the woods and in lonely places among the mountains.

One rainy day, Bruce lay on the ground under a crude shed listening to the patter of the drops on the roof above him. He was tired and unhappy. He was ready to give up all hope. It seemed to him that there was no use for him to try to do anything more.

As he lay thinking, he saw a spider over his head making ready to weave her web. He watched her as she toiled slowly and with great care. Six times she tried to throw her frail thread from one beam to another, and six times it fell short.

"Poor thing," said Bruce: "you, too, know what it is to fail."

But the spider did not lose hope with the sixth failure. With still more care, she made ready to try for the seventh time. Bruce almost forgot his own troubles as he watched her swing herself out upon the slender line. Would she fail again? No! The thread was carried safely to the beam and fastened there.



Grade 5 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

"I, too, will try a seventh time!" cried Bruce.

He arose and called his men together. He told them of his plans and sent them out with messages of cheer to his disheartened people. Soon there was an army of brave Scotchmen around him. Another battle was fought, and the King of England was retreated to his own country.

After that day, no one by the name of Bruce would ever hurt a spider. The lesson which the little creature had taught the king was never forgotten.



Questions:

1. What did the spider teach Robert Bruce?

2. How did Robert Bruce show he was both brave and wise?

3. What does the word **crude** mean in the sentence "Bruce lay on the ground under a **crude** shed?"

4. How does the King of England show he is different from Robert Bruce?

Answers:

1. What did the spider teach Robert Bruce?
The spider taught Robert Bruce not to give up.
2. How did Robert Bruce show he was both brave and wise?
Robert Bruce showed he was both brave and wise by calling together his men and sending messages of cheer to his disheartened people. He was further brave by battling the English army and making them retreat to England.
3. What does the word **crude** mean in the sentence "Bruce lay on the ground under a **crude** shed?"
Crude means made in a simple or rough way.
4. How does the King of England show he is different from Robert Bruce?
The king of England is different from Robert Bruce in that he retreated to his own country after being defeated once by the Scottish army.