

Name: _____

Groundhog or Woodchuck?

by Kelly Hashway

What's the difference between a groundhog and a woodchuck? Actually, they are the same animal. Groundhogs are also known as woodchucks and even marmots.

Groundhogs are the largest members of the squirrel family. They are a member of a special group of ground squirrels called



marmots. Groundhogs may not look like they would be good climbers, but they are. Even with their heavy looking bodies, they can climb trees to escape predators or check out their

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groundhogs prefer to be in burrows under the ground, which is where they make their homes. A burrow usually has anywhere from two to five exits to help the groundhog escape predators. Luckily, groundhogs have very strong limbs and curved claws that make digging easy. Once a burrow is made, the groundhog will stay close to it. This is why they make their burrows near

sources of food. Groundhogs eat mostly wild grass and other vegetation. But they do eat small animals like grasshoppers, snails, and grubs, too.

While groundhogs will eat nuts like squirrels do, they do not store food the same way. Groundhogs will eat and eat all summer long to build up fat in their bodies. Once the weather starts getting cold, they hibernate like bears in underground burrows.



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A cartoon illustration of a superhero character with brown hair, wearing a red suit with a blue cape and a blue shield emblem on the chest. He is flying through the air, holding a green bowl of vegetables in his left hand.

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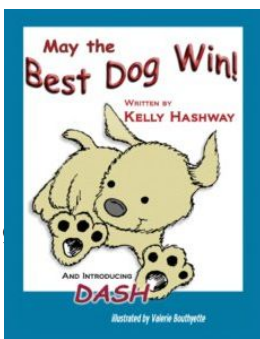
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About the Author



Kelly Hashway's latest book, *May the Best Dog Win*, is now available!

Dash has the perfect life until the Super Sweeper 5000 shows up. Sweeper runs all over the house sucking up the leftover food scraps, and he even has his own room! But Dash won't give up his place as the favorite dog without a fight.

Hashway, Kelly. *May the Best Dog Win*. ISBN: 9780984589081

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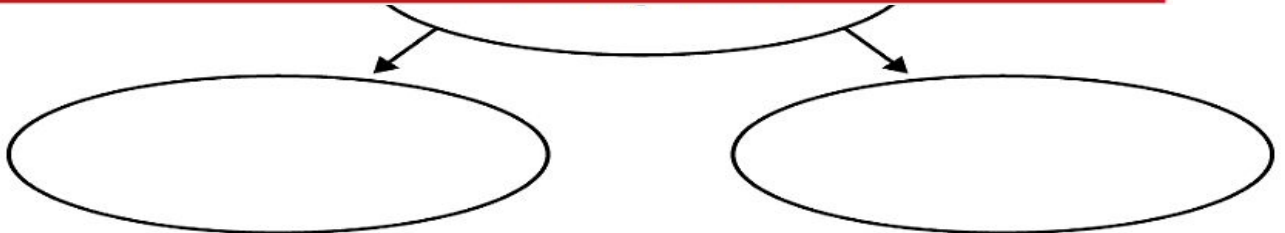
1. What is the difference between a groundhog and a woodchuck?
 - a. Groundhogs are larger than woodchucks.
 - b. Woodchucks climb trees, but groundhogs do not.
 - c. Groundhogs are marmots, but woodchucks are not.
 - d. Woodchucks and groundhogs are the same animal.

2.



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3. Explain how a groundhog's burrow is designed to keep the groundhog safe from predators.

4. Do you think a groundhog is likely to weigh more in early spring or late autumn? Explain.

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Vocabulary Activity



Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the story. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. ____ l e ____ ____

hint: quick to notice any danger

2. ____ l i m ____ ____ ____ s

hint: animals that can climb well

3. ____ ____ r ____ o ____

hint: underground animal home

4.

5.



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6. ____ s c ____ p ____

hint: get away from

7. ____ a r ____ o ____

hint: large ground squirrel

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In the article, "Groundhog or Woodchuck?", you learned many interesting facts about groundhogs.

Write a paragraph with four true facts about groundhogs. Also include one fact that is not true. Have a friend or family member read your paragraph. See if they can figure out which fact is not true.

A cartoon superhero character with brown hair, wearing a red suit with a blue cape and a blue shield emblem on the chest. He is flying through the air, holding a green leafy vegetable in his right hand.

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ANSWER KEY

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