The "Clumsy" Mule

One summer afternoon, a farmer was at the local market. He was there to pick up some apples, flour and sugar for his wife to make pies with. The farmer brought his mule along to carry the heavy load.

After packing the items onto the mule, the two began to walk home. Along the way, they came to a shallow river. They crossed this river many times without problem. On this day, however, the mule accidentally slipped and fell. The fast-moving river washed most of the apples, flour and sugar away. The farmer sighed. "It's too late to go back and buy more," he thought. The two continued on their way home, with the mule happy to find how much lighter his load had become.



The next morning, the farmer and his mule returned to the market to buy the same ingredients. On the way home, they once again found themselves at the same river crossing. Remembering what had happened the day before, the mule fell in the water on purpose to lighten his load. "You clumsy mule!" shouted the farmer, as he watched the goods float away. The farmer marched the mule back to the market.

Once there, he packed the same apple pie ingredients onto the mule, along with two jugs of drinking water. After that, the farmer and the mule took a much longer path home using a bridge. Now, the "clumsy" mule found himself walking an hour longer under the hot sun, with no river to help him with a heavier load.

1 **What happens right after the mule accidentally slips and falls into the water?**

- **A** The farmer marches the mule back to the market to pick up the same ingredients again.
- **B** The river washes away most of the apples, flour and sugar.
- **C** The farmer tells his wife why he came home without the apples, flour and sugar.
- **D** The farmer takes the mule on a different and much longer path home.

Scan the text for the word "slipped" to find what happens right after.

2 **What did the farmer do right before he led the mule on a longer path home?**

- **A** The farmer yelled at the mule for being lazy.
- **B** The farmer used a bridge to cross the river.
- **C** The farmer sighed at how clumsy his mule was.
- **D** The farmer packed apples, flour, sugar and two jugs of water onto the mule.



3 **Fill in the box with what happens between events 1 and 3 in the story.**

1	2	3
On the second day, the farmer and the mule go to the market to buy the same ingredients again.		The farmer shouts at his mule in anger, calling it a "clumsy mule!"

4 **Fill in the circles to create a summary of the story by putting the events in the correct order.**

	[1]First	[2]Next	[3]Then	[4]Finally
The two march back to the market to get the same ingredients, plus two jugs of water.	A	B	C	D
The farmer buys, then loses his goods again when the mule falls in the river on purpose.	A	B	C	D
The farmer and his mule take a longer path home, using a bridge to cross the river.	A	B	C	D
The farmer goes home empty-handed because the mule accidentally fell in the river.	A	B	C	D



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