

Eating Crab

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Nathan had never eaten crab before. He thought the creatures looked cool in the tank at the store, but they also looked scary. They certainly didn't look like food.

In fact, they seemed like huge, nasty spiders. Their claws were huge, and their legs were covered in hard shells instead of skin. They had lumpy carapaces around their main body, which gave them the appearance of toads.



Then there were their faces! Their faces had weird eye stalks and all sorts of little mandibles like an ant, only bigger and grosser! They had to be some sort of aliens, and now mom and dad wanted to eat the things. Nathan shivered, certain he'd be part alien too when he woke up tomorrow.

They'd gone and bought a big pile of frozen crab legs and were chatting happily over by the stove, where they had a huge silver pot filled with boiling water. At least they were cooking some vegetables and rice to go with the crab. He could fill up on that stuff and pretend to eat a leg or two of the crab.

"Time to eat!" Mom called, filling Nathan with dread.

They all sat down around the table and started dishing up. Mom and Dad filled their plates with rice, vegetables, some baked rolls, and then started snagging as many crab legs as they desired, which was a lot. They had bowls of melted garlic butter and crab claw crackers. They seemed to really enjoy it.

Nathan swallowed a few chunks of broccoli, actually enjoying it for once. He watched his mother and father crack and then suck the meat out of the claws and legs, dipping it in butter. They didn't seem to be turning into aliens.

Nathan grabbed his claw crackers and snapped them around the shell, which was a bit soft to the touch now. He squeezed and heard a crack. Carefully, he extracted the white meat. He moved it to his mouth, but paused. If it was going down, it was going down slathered in butter.

He dipped, put it in his mouth, and swallowed without chewing. It tasted like butter, garlic, and a little like fish. It wasn't bad. He waited to see if he'd explode or something weird, but he felt nothing.

Mom winked at him. "Good, isn't it?"

He shrugged and tried another piece. This one he chewed. "Good." He said, surprising himself.

Dad cracked open the biggest claw, exposing a nice chunk of white meat. He dunked it in butter and offered it to Nathan. Nathan took it, bit into it, and smiled. "It's really good."

After that, he ate so much crab he felt *sure* he'd turn into one, but all it actually did was fill his belly up really nicely. He had been scared to try it, but then he'd turned out enjoying it.

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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. Which statement best describes what Nathan thinks of crab at the beginning of the story?
 - A. It looks delicious.
 - B. It looks okay.
 - C. It seems a little weird.
 - D. It doesn't seem like food at all.

2. What does Nathan think will happen if he eats crab?
 - A. He thinks he will get sick.
 - B. He thinks he will turn into an alien or something.
 - C. He thinks he will not like it.
 - D. He thinks he will love it too much.

3. How would you BEST describe Nathan in the beginning of the story?
 - A. adventurous
 - B. happy
 - C. scared
 - D. picky about food

4. Which statement best describes what Nathan thinks of crab at the end of the story?
 - A. It is delicious.
 - B. It is okay.
 - C. It still seems a little weird.
 - D. It doesn't taste like food at all.

5. What lesson do you think Nathan learned in this experience?
 - A. If you try something, you might get sick.
 - B. Trying new things is a way to feel cool.
 - C. Some things, scary at first, are actually good if you try them.
 - D. Never give up.

Eating Crab – Answer Key

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