

Night of The Crabs



a short story for English reading and speaking

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Introduction

Have you ever seen a strange or unusual animal in real life or on the news? What was it?

What comes to mind when you think of the sea or the beach? Is it a relaxing or dangerous place? Why?

What would you do if you discovered a giant creature in your town? Who would you tell first?

Why do you think people are fascinated by mysterious or unknown creatures?

Night of The Crabs

Laura Denham had never seen anything like it in all of her career.

As a marine biologist, she had photographed some of the most incredible sights anyone could wish to see in the oceans of the world.

But to see all of this on a beach in a small town in the south-west of England was something else.

At this time of year, the beach was usually filled with red-skinned tourists.

Now it was filled to capacity — with crabs.

And not just the usual kind of crabs that naturally lived in Cornwall.

These were huge things. She wasn't even sure what species she was looking at.

All she could see so far were their huge glittering shells as they crawled over each other. Their great, thick legs clawing

over each other to gain purchase.

And the claws.

As big as a man's body. And strong enough to snap any of the tourists in half.

They had reached the promenade wall and could not get any further.

"So far, that is the only thing holding them back," said the police officer to Laura. "There are the two pathways leading down to the beach, but we have successfully blocked those."

He pointed to the pathways at either end of the promenade.

Big steel drums had been placed in the way.

Crabs clawed at the rows of drums but could not move them out of their way.

"We need to know what to do with them," said the young cop. "That's why we called you."

Laura gazed out at the beach filled with crabs.

It was an incredible sight.

"I am not sure what species these crabs are," she said.

“But I think we can safely ascertain that they are not from here.”

“Just let us know what to do to get them back in the sea,” said the policeman.

A young man had climbed over the promenade railing, aiming for a close-up shot of the crabs. Their large claws reaching up to him from below.

The policeman jogged towards the guy and pulled him back. His two friends laughing and enjoying the show.

Laura pulled her camera up to her face and started to take pictures of the large crabs on the beach.

She was able to get a few close-up pictures using her zoom lens.

Back at the B&B, Laura wasted no time uploading the photos.

She sat in front of her computer, comparing her own pictures to pictures she found online.

The crabs on the beach resembled a species of crab from the Pacific Ocean. But what were they doing here? Cornwall

was miles away from their home.

Why had they travelled all this way?

And the species she found online were all black. These crabs had reddish claws.

She flicked through website after website, crab database after database, but couldn't find anything that exactly matched the crabs she saw on the beach.

Finally, she sent her pictures to someone she knew.

She hated asking for help. Pride told her she should identify the species herself.

She had always forced herself to work alone, determined to find answers using only her own research.

Laura had worked with Professor Edmund Price in Greece a few years back and since then they had been in regular contact. The professor's expertise lay in crustaceans.

"I have been knee-deep in crabs most of my life," he said.

It was true that there was very little he did not know about crabs.

She sent the email and then had dinner in the local area.

She ate fish and chips alone.

In the small restaurant, she overheard some of the town residents talking about the huge crabs that had taken over the beach.

A combination of fascination and fear. Some wondering where they were from and how they got there. Others wondering what the police would do about it.

The owner of the fish and chip shop injected some humour by saying maybe he could cook up a load of crab and make a few quid out of it.

After a restless dinner, she felt compelled to see the beach again under cover of darkness.

Laura walked back along the seafront.

Police marked the territory. They didn't allow anyone too close to the beach area.

Laura showed her card and was allowed to peer over the edge of the railing. In the darkness, the crabs had a far more sinister appearance.

The sound of claws scraping over shells. And the eerie

hissing and clicking from their mouths.

Like they were waiting to enter the town itself.

Laura wandered back to the bed-and-breakfast. She watched TV for a little while — some late-night drama was on — but then she felt sleepy and went to bed.

She fell asleep almost immediately.

Her dreams were filled with strange luminous crab-like creatures, taking over a small town in the English countryside. Using their huge machine-like claws to rip cars in half.

After what felt like just a few minutes of sleep, Laura was awoken by the sound of her computer beeping.

It was the sound of an incoming email.

Laura knew she had work to do, and she dragged herself out of bed. She plugged the small kettle in to boil some water, while she went to the bathroom.

Outside, she could hear the sound of people calling out to each other. Their voices raised in alarm.

Word had clearly spread about the crabs. Now, people

wanted a better view.

A police siren wailed down the street.

Laura poured herself a cup of instant coffee and sat down at the computer.

There was a narrow street just outside her window and she could hear the neighbours yelling at each other.

Then a scream — sharp, panicked. The street below erupted in chaos.

She clicked open the email window on her computer and saw a reply from Professor Price.

She read it once. Then again. The words didn't make sense.

Laura blinked at the screen.

'Extinct for over ten thousand years...' the professor had written. 'Toxic claws capable of killing sharks.'

Her eyes fell to the illustration. Red claws. Massive bodies. Exactly what she had seen on the beach.

Then came the unmistakable sound — the clatter of giant claws on stone.

A thud. Then another.

Laura rushed to the window.

And saw them.

Night of The Crabs — story and reading comprehension questions

This is the story divided into clear sections with the reading comprehension questions below each section.

You can find model answers to the questions at the end of the lesson plan.

Section 1

Laura Denham had never seen anything like it in all of her career.

As a marine biologist, she had photographed some of the most incredible sights anyone could wish to see in the oceans of the world.

But to see all of this on a beach in a small town in the south-west of England was something else.

At this time of year, the beach was usually filled with red-skinned tourists.

Now it was filled to capacity — with crabs.

And not just the usual kind of crabs that naturally lived in Cornwall.

These were huge things. She wasn't even sure what species she was looking at.

All she could see so far were their huge glittering shells as they crawled over each other. Their great, thick legs clawing at anything within reach to gain purchase.

And the claws.

As big as a man's body. And strong enough to snap any of the tourists in half.

Reading Comprehension Questions

- What is the name of the story?
- Where does it take place?
- Who is the main character?
- What is her profession?
- How does she usually spend her time in her career?
- What unusual sight does she see on the beach?
- How are these crabs different from typical ones found in Cornwall?
- How big are the crabs' claws?

Section 2

They had reached the promenade wall and could not get any further.

"So far, that is the only thing holding them back," said the

police officer to Laura. “There are the two pathways leading down to the beach, but we have successfully blocked those.”

He pointed to the pathways at either end of the promenade.

Big steel drums had been placed in the way.

Crabs clawed at the rows of drums but could not move them out of their way.

“We need to know what to do with them,” said the young cop. “That’s why we called you.”

Laura gazed out at the beach filled with crabs.

It was an incredible sight.

“I am not sure what species these crabs are,” she said. “But I think we can safely ascertain that they are not from here.”

“Just let us know what to do to get them back in the sea,” said the policeman.

Reading Comprehension Questions

- What is currently stopping the crabs from entering the town?
- How have the police tried to block the crabs?
- Why was Laura called to the scene?
- What does Laura believe about the origin of the crabs?
- What do the police want Laura to help them with?

Section 3

A young man had climbed over the promenade railing, aiming for a close-up shot of the crabs. Their large claws reaching up to him from below.

The policeman jogged towards the guy and pulled him back. His two friends laughing and enjoying the show.

Laura pulled her camera up to her face and started to take pictures of the large crabs on the beach.

She was able to get a few close-up pictures using her zoom lens.

Back at the B&B, Laura wasted no time uploading the photos.

She sat in front of her computer, comparing her own pictures to pictures she found online.

The crabs on the beach resembled a species of crab from the Pacific Ocean. But what were they doing here? Cornwall was miles away from their home.

Why had they travelled all this way?

And the species she found online were all black. These crabs had reddish claws.

She flicked through website after website, crab database after database, but couldn't find anything that exactly matched the crabs she saw on the beach.

Reading Comprehension Questions

- What is the young man trying to do?
- How did the policeman respond to this?
- What did Laura do with her camera?
- What does she do with the pictures back in her bed-and-breakfast?
- What did she notice when comparing her photos to online images?
- What feature made the crabs different from the known Pacific species?

Section 4

Finally, she sent her pictures to someone she knew. She hated asking for help. Pride told her she should identify the species herself.

She had always forced herself to work alone, determined to find answers using only her own research.

Laura had worked with Professor Edmund Price in Greece a few years back and since then they had been in regular contact. The professor's expertise lay in crustaceans.

"I have been knee-deep in crabs most of my life," he said.

It was true that there was very little he did not know about crabs.

She sent the email and then had dinner in the local area.

She ate fish and chips alone.

In the small restaurant, she overheard some of the town residents talking about the huge crabs that had taken over the beach.

A combination of fascination and fear. Some wondering where they were from and how they got there. Others wondering what the police would do about it.

The owner of the fish and chip shop injected some humour by saying maybe he could cook up a load of crab and make a few quid out of it.

Reading Comprehension Questions

- Why was Laura reluctant to ask for help?
- Who is Professor Edmund Price?
- What does Professor Price specialise in?
- What does Laura eat for dinner?
- How does the town react to the crabs on the beach?
- What joke does the fish and chip shop owner make?

Section 5

After a restless dinner, she felt compelled to see the beach again under cover of darkness.

Laura walked back along the seafront.

Police marked the territory. They didn't allow anyone too

close to the beach area.

Laura showed her card and was allowed to peer over the edge of the railing. In the darkness, the crabs had a far more sinister appearance.

The sound of claws scraping over shells. And the eerie hissing and clicking from their mouths.

Like they were waiting to enter the town itself.

Laura wandered back to the bed-and-breakfast. She watched TV for a little while — some late-night drama was on — but then she felt sleepy and went to bed.

She fell asleep almost immediately.

Her dreams were filled with strange luminous crab-like creatures, taking over a small town in the English countryside. Using their huge machine-like claws to rip cars in half.

Reading Comprehension Questions

- After eating, where does Laura go?
- Are the police still there or not?
- What does Laura show to get closer to the railing?
- How were the crabs different at night?
- What sounds did the crabs make?
- Back at her B&B, what does Laura do?
- What did Laura dream about?
- What does the dream suggest about her feelings?

Section 6

After what felt like just a few minutes of sleep, Laura was awoken by the sound of her computer beeping.

It was the sound of an incoming email.

Laura knew she had work to do, and she dragged herself out of bed. She plugged the small kettle in to boil some water, while she went to the bathroom.

Outside, she could hear the sound of people calling out to each other. Their voices raised in alarm.

Word had clearly spread about the crabs. Now, people wanted a better view.

A police siren wailed down the street.

Laura poured herself a cup of instant coffee and sat down at the computer.

There was a narrow street just outside her window and she could hear the neighbours yelling at each other.

Then a scream — sharp, panicked. The street below erupted in chaos.

Reading Comprehension Questions

- What woke Laura up?
- What could Laura hear outside her window?

- What machine does she turn on? Why does she do this?
- How had the situation with the crabs changed?
- What was the public's reaction?
- What happened in the street that indicated things were getting worse?

Section 7

She clicked open the email window on her computer and saw a reply from Professor Price.

She read it once. Then again. The words didn't make sense. Laura blinked at the screen.

'Extinct for over ten thousand years...' the professor had written. 'Toxic claws capable of killing sharks.'

Her eyes fell to the illustration. Red claws. Massive bodies. Exactly what she had seen on the beach.

Then came the unmistakable sound — the clatter of giant claws on stone.

A thud. Then another.

Laura rushed to the window.

And saw them.

Reading Comprehension Questions

- What did the email from Professor Price say?
- How long had the crab species supposedly been extinct?

- What alarming fact did the professor mention about the crabs?
- What sound did Laura hear that confirmed the danger?
- What does the final line suggest about what Laura saw?

Reading Comprehension Questions

These are all the reading comprehension questions in full.

You can find model answers to the questions at the end of the lesson plan.

What is the name of the story?

Where does it take place?

Who is the main character?

What is her profession?

How does she usually spend her time in her career?

What unusual sight does she see on the beach?

How are these crabs different from typical ones found in Cornwall?

How big are the crabs' claws?

What is currently stopping the crabs from entering the town?

How have the police tried to block the crabs?

Why was Laura called to the scene?

What does Laura believe about the origin of the crabs?

What do the police want Laura to help them with?

What is the young man trying to do?

How did the policeman respond to this?

What did Laura do with her camera?

What does she do with the pictures back in her bed-and-breakfast?

What did she notice when comparing her photos to online images?

What feature made the crabs different from the known Pacific species?

Why was Laura reluctant to ask for help?

Who is Professor Edmund Price?

What does Professor Price specialise in?

What does Laura eat for dinner?

How does the town react to the crabs on the beach?

What joke does the fish and chip shop owner make?

After eating, where does Laura go?

Are the police still there or not?

What does Laura show to get closer to the railing?

How were the crabs different at night?

What sounds did the crabs make?

Back at her B&B, what does Laura do?

What did Laura dream about?

What does the dream suggest about her feelings?

What woke Laura up?

What could Laura hear outside her window?

What machine does she turn on? Why does she do this?

How had the situation with the crabs changed?

What was the public's reaction?

What happened in the street that indicated things were getting worse?

What did the email from Professor Price say?

How long had the crab species supposedly been extinct?

What alarming fact did the professor mention about the crabs?

What sound did Laura hear that confirmed the danger?

What does the final line suggest about what Laura saw?

Essential Vocabulary

alarm	extinct	research
ascertain	fascination	residents
biologist	glittering	scraping
capacity	illustration	sights
chaos	incoming	sinister
combination	pathways	species
crustaceans	poisonous	terrace
determined	promenade	toxic
erupted	regular	zoom
expertise	scraping	luminous

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or

phrase.

For example:

Extinct – *no longer existing; when a species of animal, plant, or other organism has died out completely.*

Ascertain – *to find out something for sure; to make certain of something, usually by checking or investigating.*

Then write a sentence of your own that uses the new word or phrase correctly.

Many animals have become extinct due to loss of habitat and climate change.

The doctor needed to ascertain the cause of the patient's symptoms before starting treatment.

Do this with all the vocabulary and, over time, this will help improve all your English skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening.

True or False?

Look at the list of statements below.

Decide whether they are true or false according to the story.

If you think a statement is false, then change it and make it true.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan.

Laura Denham is a marine biologist who has studied crabs all her life.

The crabs on the beach were ordinary crabs found in Cornwall.

The police placed steel drums to block the crabs from coming into town.

Laura took close-up photos of the crabs using her phone.

A young man climbed over the promenade railing to take pictures of the crabs.

Laura identified the crabs as a known species from the Pacific Ocean.

Laura sent the crab photos to Professor Edmund Price for help.

The locals were amused and joked about cooking the crabs.

At night, the crabs looked peaceful and less threatening.

Laura dreamed of giant crabs destroying cars.

Professor Price confirmed the crabs were a newly discovered species.

The story ends with the crabs beginning to enter the town.

What is the Correct Synonym?

Look at the table below.

Match the words on the left with the correct synonym on the right.

A synonym is a word of similar meaning.

You can find all the answers at the end of the lesson plan.

Word	Synonym
alarm	interest
ascertain	exploded
biologist	threatening
capacity	skill
chaos	volume
fascination	warning
sinister	determine
erupted	vanished
expertise	disorder
extinct	scientist

What is the Correct Antonym?

Look at the table below.

Match the words on the left with the correct antonym on the right.

An antonym is a word of opposite meaning.

You can find all the answers at the end of the lesson plan.

Word	Antonym
glittering	indecisive
toxic	open space
regular	smoothing
incoming	dull
combination	visitors
determined	outgoing
residents	guesswork
research	harmless
scraping	separation
territory	irregular

Gap-Fill Exercise

Look at the table below.

alarm	incoming
ascertain	sinister
chaos	zoom
crustaceans	eruption
fascination	glittering

Now place all of the words in the correct sentences below.

You can find all the answers at the end of the lesson plan.

The scientist used a microscope to _____ in on the tiny sea organism.

When the volcano exploded, it caused a violent _____ across the entire island.

There was complete _____ in the station after the fire broke out.

The detective tried to _____ the facts before making an accusation.

The school rang the fire _____ to begin the emergency drill.

After watching a documentary, she developed a deep _____ with marine life.

The necklace was _____ in the light, catching everyone's attention.

The captain warned the crew of the _____ storm headed their way.

The room went cold as he entered, and his voice had a _____ tone.

Scientists believe that _____ are among the oldest living creatures on Earth.

Words and Meanings

Look at the table of words below.

Now match each of the words with the correct meaning below the table.

You can find all the answers at the end of the lesson plan.

eruption	fascination
research	chaos
biologist	marine
sinister	expertise
ascertain	capacity

The state of complete disorder and confusion.

To find out or learn something with certainty.

Causing fear or the impression of something evil or threatening.

The total amount that something can contain or produce.

The ability to do something very well because of training or experience.

A professional scientist who studies living things in the sea.

The act of examining or investigating a subject carefully in order to discover facts.

A person with expert knowledge in a scientific field who studies living organisms.

The attraction or interest that someone has in something unusual or exciting.

A sudden violent outbreak or release of something, often destructive.

Discussion Questions

Look at the list of questions below.

Discuss these together in your class. Or with your friends or study mates.

There are no correct answers to many of these questions, as they are subject to personal opinion.

Story-Based Questions

What was Laura Denham's job, and why was she called to the beach?

How did the police try to stop the crabs from entering the town?

What do you think the young man on the promenade was trying to do? Was it brave or foolish?

Why did Laura send her photos to Professor Price? Would you have done the same?

What clues suggested that the crabs were not native to

Cornwall?

Why was Laura uncomfortable asking for help? Do you think it's okay to ask for help in a difficult situation?

What was strange about Laura's dream? What do you think it meant?

How did the atmosphere change when Laura visited the beach at night?

What was the local community's reaction to the crabs? How would people in your town react?

What did Professor Price's email reveal about the crabs?

Imaginative & Personal Questions

What would you do if you saw giant crabs on the beach in your town?

If you were Laura, how would you respond to the police officer's request for help?

Imagine you're a journalist sent to report on the event — what questions would you ask Laura?

What do you think might happen next in the story? Write or explain a possible ending.

If the crabs entered the town, how would people try to protect themselves?

Why do you think these crabs reappeared after being extinct for 10,000 years?

Have you ever seen a strange or mysterious animal in real life or in the news?

If you could study any kind of animal, what would it be and why?

What would make this story even more terrifying or suspenseful?

Do you enjoy stories with mystery and science-fiction elements? Why or why not?

Role Play

This is a role play activity.

Role Play: "Crisis at the Beach"

Objective:

Students will role play a fictional emergency situation where giant crabs have invaded a beach town. Each student adopts a specific role and must work with others to respond to the crisis.

Set-Up:

Divide the class into small groups of 4 to 6 students. Each student takes on a character role and receives a short description of their responsibilities.

Roles:

Laura Denham – Marine Biologist

You have studied sea life for years and have taken pictures

of the crabs. You're unsure of their species and feel torn between solving the mystery alone or asking for help.

Police Officer in Charge

You're responsible for public safety. You've blocked the paths to the beach, but the situation is becoming dangerous. You want fast answers.

Professor Edmund Price – Crustacean Expert

You have received an urgent email from Laura with photos. You've just confirmed the crabs are from an extinct species and have toxic claws.

Local Mayor or Government Official

You must make decisions about the town's safety, manage panic, and speak to the press. You're under pressure to act quickly and reassure the public.

Young Photographer (who climbed the barrier)

You took dangerous risks for the perfect photo. You now realise it might have been foolish. You can describe the crabs up close and how people are reacting.

News Reporter or Local Resident

You are trying to gather information and interview people.

You may have strong opinions or concerns. You want to understand what's happening and what should be done.

Task:

As a group, hold a town crisis meeting.

Discuss:

- What do we know so far about the crabs?
- Are they dangerous?
- What proof do we have?
- What should we do next?
- Should the public be warned or kept calm?
- Can we return the crabs to the sea?
- If not, what alternatives are there?

Try to use vocabulary from earlier lessons:

– *Words like sinister, ascertain, fascination, chaos, expertise, glittering, eruption, capacity, scraping, research.*

– *Phrases like: “I believe we should...”, “What if...”, “How can we be sure...”, “Let’s consider...”*

Imaginative Scenarios to Introduce:

A crab has escaped the beach zone and was seen in a local street.

A tourist is missing – last seen near the promenade.

The government wants to send in the military — do you agree?

The crabs might be a rare scientific discovery — should we protect them?

Debrief (Post-Role Play Questions):

- What decisions did your group make?
- Was it easy or difficult to agree?
- What vocabulary or phrases did you use that were helpful?
- What would you do differently if this were real?

Writing

Creative Writing Exercise: Into the Deep – What Happens Next?

Objective:

Students will use imagination, storytelling skills, and descriptive language to write a continuation or inspired piece based on the short story Night of the Crabs.

Option 1: Continue the Story

Task:

Write the next part of the story. Use your imagination to describe what happens after Laura looks out the window and sees the crabs entering the town.

Suggestions to include in your writing:

- How do the townspeople react?
- Does Laura try to stop the crabs?
- Does she contact Professor Price?

- What new information do we learn about the crabs?
 - How does the situation escalate or get resolved?
1. Use suspense and descriptive vocabulary to build tension.
 2. Target length: 250–400 words
 3. Tense: Past simple or past continuous
 4. Perspective: Third person or First person (Laura’s point of view)

Option 2: Inspired Writing Prompts

Students may choose one of the following creative prompts instead of continuing the original story:

You are a scientist who discovers a new species deep in the ocean that glows in the dark and seems to understand human communication. What happens next?

You wake up one morning to find your town completely silent. No people, no sound—just huge tracks in the street. What do you do?

A strange storm hits your seaside village. When it clears, the beach is covered in mysterious, living creatures. Describe your experience.

A local myth says the cliffs near your town are haunted by sea monsters. One day, you see something moving in the water...

You receive an email from a scientist who claims that your town is sitting on top of an ancient undersea creature — and it's waking up.

- Target length: 250–400 words
- Focus: Build atmosphere, use detailed descriptions, and include some dialogue or inner thoughts if possible.

Language Goals:

- Use of descriptive adjectives and adverbs (e.g. glittering, eerie, massive, cautiously)
- Variety of tenses to tell a story clearly
- Imaginative vocabulary (drawn from earlier exercises: eruption, capacity, fascination, sinister, research, ascertain, etc.)
- Development of suspense and mood

Reading Comprehension Questions – Answers

These are the model answers to the reading comprehension questions.

Maybe your answers are very similar to the answers below.

Ask your teacher for verification.

1. **What is the name of the story?**

Night of the Crabs.

2. **Where does it take place?**

On a beach in a small town in the south-west of England, in Cornwall.

3. **Who is the main character?**

Laura Denham.

4. **What is her profession?**

She is a marine biologist.

5. **How does she usually spend her time in her career?**

She photographs and studies incredible ocean life around the world.

6. **What unusual sight does she see on the beach?**

The beach is covered with massive crabs.

7. **How are these crabs different from typical ones found in Cornwall?**

They are much larger, with glittering shells and huge claws.

8. **How big are the crabs' claws?**

As big as a man's body and strong enough to snap a person in half.

9. **What is currently stopping the crabs from entering the town?**

The promenade wall is holding them back.

10. **How have the police tried to block the crabs?**

They placed big steel drums across the pathways leading to the beach.

11. **Why was Laura called to the scene?**

The police wanted her expertise to identify the crabs and help remove them.

12. **What does Laura believe about the origin of the crabs?**

She believes they are not from Cornwall and may be from somewhere else.

13. **What do the police want Laura to help them with?**

They want her to figure out how to get the crabs back into the sea.

14. **What is the young man trying to do?**

He is trying to get a close-up photo of the crabs by climbing over the railing.

15. **How did the policeman respond to this?**

He ran over and pulled the man back to safety.

16. **What did Laura do with her camera?**

She took close-up pictures of the crabs using her zoom lens.

17. **What does she do with the pictures back in her bed-and-breakfast?**

She uploads them to her computer and compares them to images online.

18. **What did she notice when comparing her photos to online images?**

The crabs look similar to a Pacific species, but with key differences.

19. **What feature made the crabs different from the known Pacific species?**

The Pacific ones are black, but these have reddish claws.

20. **Why was Laura reluctant to ask for help?**

She was proud and believed she should solve the problem on her own.

21. **Who is Professor Edmund Price?**

An expert in crustaceans who worked with Laura in Greece.

22. **What does Professor Price specialise in?**

Crustaceans (like crabs and similar sea creatures).

23. **What does Laura eat for dinner?**

Fish and chips.

24. **How does the town react to the crabs on the beach?**

With a mix of fascination and fear. People are curious and worried.

25. **What joke does the fish and chip shop owner make?**

He jokes that he could cook up some crabs and make money from it.

26. **After eating, where does Laura go?**

She goes back to the beach to see the crabs at night.

27. **Are the police still there or not?**

Yes, they are still guarding the beach.

28. **What does Laura show to get closer to the railing?**

She shows her official card or ID.

29. **How were the crabs different at night?**

They appeared more sinister and threatening.

30. **What sounds did the crabs make?**

Scraping, hissing, and clicking noises.

31. **Back at her B&B, what does Laura do?**

She watches a little TV, then falls asleep.

32. **What did Laura dream about?**

Strange glowing crab creatures destroying a town with their claws.

33. **What does the dream suggest about her feelings?**

She is feeling anxious, fearful, and deeply disturbed by the crabs.

34. **What woke Laura up?**

The sound of her computer beeping because of a new email.

35. **What could Laura hear outside her window?**

People shouting, a police siren, and general chaos.

36. **What machine does she turn on? Why does she do this?**

She turns on a small kettle to make instant coffee.

37. **How had the situation with the crabs changed?**

More people had found out and were crowding the area, causing panic.

38. **What was the public's reaction?**

They were alarmed, curious, and trying to get closer to see the crabs.

39. **What happened in the street that indicated things were getting worse?**

A loud scream and rising chaos among the neighbours.

40. **What did the email from Professor Price say?**

The crabs were from a species thought to be extinct for over 10,000 years.

41. **How long had the crab species supposedly been extinct?**

Over 10,000 years.

42. **What alarming fact did the professor mention about the crabs?**

They have toxic claws capable of killing sharks.

43. **What sound did Laura hear that confirmed the danger?**

The clatter of giant claws on stone and heavy thudding sounds.

44. **What does the final line suggest about what Laura saw?**

The crabs had made it into the town — they were now close and very real.

True or False — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

How many correct answers did you have?

1. False – Laura is a marine biologist, but it was Professor Price who studied crabs most of his life.

✓ Correction: Laura Denham is a marine biologist, but Professor Price is the one who has studied crabs all his life.

2. False – The crabs were not ordinary; they were massive and unknown in the region.

✓ Correction: The crabs on the beach were huge and not the usual kind found in Cornwall.

3. True

4. False – Laura used her camera with a zoom lens, not her phone.

✓ Correction: Laura took close-up photos of the crabs using her camera with a zoom lens.

5. True

6. False – Laura could not match the crabs to any known species and needed help.

✓ Correction: Laura could not identify the crabs and found no exact match online.

7. True

8. True

9. False – At night, the crabs looked more sinister and threatening.

✓ Correction: At night, the crabs had a far more sinister appearance.

10. True

11. False – Professor Price said the crabs were from a species extinct for over ten thousand years.

✓ Correction: Professor Price confirmed the crabs belonged to a species extinct for over ten thousand years.

12. True

What is the Correct Synonym — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

What's your total score?

Word	Correct Synonym
alarm	warning
ascertain	determine
biologist	scientist
capacity	volume
chaos	disorder
fascination	interest
sinister	threatening
erupted	exploded
expertise	skill
extinct	vanished

What is the Correct Antonym — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

How many did you nail?

Word	Correct Antonym
glittering	dull
toxic	harmless
regular	irregular
incoming	outgoing
combination	separation
determined	indecisive
residents	visitors
research	guesswork
scraping	smoothing
territory	open space

Gap-Fill Exercise — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

Did you score full marks?

1. zoom
2. eruption
3. chaos
4. ascertain
5. alarm
6. fascination
7. glittering
8. incoming
9. sinister
10. crustaceans

Words and Meanings — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

Was that a perfect score?

Word	Correct Definition Number
chaos	1
ascertain	2
sinister	3
capacity	4
expertise	5
marine	6
research	7
biologist	8
fascination	9
eruption	10

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