How the Eagle Lost Its Feathers
ADAPTED FROM A CHIPPEWA LEGEND

In the early days of the world, animals could talk. One day, Owl called a meeting with all the animals in the forest. As usual, Eagle was late. When he did arrive, he strutted around showing off his shiny feathers.

The wise old Owl started the meeting. "I have been honored to be your leader for so many years. I have been thinking hard about who the new leader should be. I have decided..."

Eagle rudely interrupted him. "Of course, you've chosen me, Owl. Everyone knows I am the mightiest animal in the forest!"

Owl knew the other animals did not like Eagle. But, Owl thought, if it meant so much to Eagle to be the leader, so be it. So, Owl told the animals that, indeed, Eagle would be the new leader.

As Eagle left, he scoffed, "Ha! I knew I was the best!"

Owl turned to the other animals and declared, "Eagle will soon learn that it takes more than strength and beauty to be a good leader!"

One day soon after, Eagle was flying over an open field. A magician named Nanabush was wandering through the field. Nanabush was lost. He called to Eagle for help. Eagle ignored him. He flew into the clouds and disappeared. Nanabush decided to teach rude Eagle some manners.
Nanabush changed himself into a beautiful bird. Soon he caught up with the rude new leader. “Who dares to race with the mighty eagle?” asked Eagle.

“My name is not important now. Look! I am flying higher than you are, Eagle!” laughed Nanabush. Eagle rushed to fly higher. He did not want the stranger to win the race. Eagle flew higher and higher. The air grew very warm. Suddenly, Eagle realized he had flown too close to the sun. He had burned the top of his head.

“Are you sorry now that you have been so rude?” asked Nanabush. Eagle recognized Nanabush and knew he had been tricked. Nanabush told Eagle that a leader must always show kindness and respect to others, no matter how powerful and mighty he is. To remind Eagle of this lesson, Nanabush decreed that no eagle would ever again grow long feathers on the top of its head. “To people and animals, you will look bald,” declared Nanabush.

Nanabush flew away, leaving Eagle alone. Eagle was ashamed of his behavior and embarrassed about his bald head. After that day, Eagle spent much of his time in the air away from people. The Chippewa say that this adventure explains why the descendants of this eagle are known today as bald eagles.

— adapted by Amy Deckard
Write the letter of the best answer for each question.

1. Why did Owl choose Eagle to be the new leader?
   A. Eagle was the most kind, caring animal in the forest.
   B. Owl knew that Eagle really wanted to be the leader.
   C. No one else wanted to be the leader.
   D. Owl and Eagle were best friends.

2. Why did Nanabush decide to teach Eagle a lesson?
   A. Eagle ignored Nanabush's call for help.
   B. Nanabush was a mean person.
   C. Eagle needed a companion.
   D. Eagle and Nanabush were enemies.

3. What lesson did Nanabush teach Eagle?
   A. An eagle should never fly too close to the sun.
   B. A leader should always show kindness and respect to others.
   C. Don't make an owl angry.
   D. Help humans out whenever possible.

4. Which words best describe Eagle?
   A. calm and steady
   B. funny and clever
   C. self-centered and rude
   D. quiet and thoughtful

5. What would be another good title for this selection?
   A. The Eagle and His Friends
   B. Owl Makes a Mistake
   C. Eagles of North America
   D. Legend of the Bald Eagle

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Write the letter of the best definition of the underlined word.

1. Eagle strutted around showing off his shiny feathers.
   A. flew high over the forest
   B. crawled painfully around
   C. ran quickly
   D. walked in a proud, boastful manner

2. “I have been honored to be your leader for so many years.”
   A. confused or upset
   B. unhappy or sad
   C. excited and happy
   D. favored or privileged

3. As Eagle left, he scoffed, “Ha! I knew I was the best!”
   A. sneered
   B. played
   C. asked
   D. cried

4. Eagle was ashamed of his behavior.
   A. proud
   B. embarrassed
   C. unaware
   D. loud

5. Descendants of Eagle are known today as bald eagles.
   A. eagles who fly too close to the sun
   B. animals who lead other animals
   C. people or animals who do something wrong
   D. children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, etc.