



Pesi's Snail Race

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities

Pesi's Snail Race

Pesi finds the snail by the front steps, right after the rain.

It is small and brown, with a swirly shell, and it is moving across the wet pavement at about the speed of a sleepy turtle. Pesi crouches down. Its two little horns wave at her.

"Hello," she whispers. "I'm Pesi."

The snail doesn't answer. It just keeps going.

She runs inside for a jar. "Can I keep him, Mommy?"

"Snails are happiest outside," says Mommy. "But you can watch him for a little while."

So Pesi sits on the step with her chin in her hands. She names the snail Shabbat, because he takes everything so slowly. She watches him cross the first cracked square of the walk. It takes five whole minutes.

"You're so slow," she says. "You'll never get anywhere."

Her older brother Yoni comes out with a soccer ball. "What are you doing?"

"Watching a snail. We're having a race."

Yoni looks at the snail. "You're racing a snail?"

"Not me. He's racing himself. He's trying to get to the grass."

Yoni laughs. "That's going to take all day."

He kicks his ball against the garage and goes off to find a friend. Pesi stays. After a while, her friend Miri comes by with a jump rope. "Want to jump?"

"I can't. I'm watching Shabbat."

"The snail? That's boring."

Pesi shrugs. "It's not boring if you look closely."

Miri crouches down. She squints. The snail has left a shiny, silvery trail behind it, like a ribbon.

"Whoa," says Miri. "That's pretty."

"And look," says Pesi. "When he's about to go over a bump, he stretches his neck out first, like he's checking."

They watch together. The snail reaches the edge of the pavement and slides onto a blade of grass. It seems to pause. Then it starts up, slowly and steadily.

"He's not stopping," whispers Miri.

"He's never stopped," says Pesi. "He just doesn't hurry."

At that moment, Yoni comes back, out of breath from his game. "Did your snail finish?"

"Almost," says Pesi.

He peers down. The snail has made it across the whole walkway, a trip as long as three of his own giant steps. "That's incredible," he says. "It took him an hour, but he did it."

"He did it his way," says Pesi.

Later, at dinner, Pesi tells Totty about it. "I used to think slow meant bad. But the snail was slow, and he made a beautiful trail, and he got there."

"Slow and steady," says Totty. "Do you know what I notice? You like to take your time, too."

Pesi thinks. It is true. She is always the last one to finish her math. She takes longer to tie her shoes than everyone else. Sometimes she feels like she is behind.

"Do you think that's bad?" she asks.

"Not at all," says Totty. "Some people run. Some people stroll. The important thing is that you keep going, and you do it carefully."

Pesi smiles. She goes to bed that night thinking of Shabbat, wherever he is, leaving a shimmering trail on the grass.

The next morning, she goes out to the front steps. There, along the edge of the walk, in the soft morning light, is a thin silver line. It sparkles like a ribbon all the way to the garden.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. What does Pesí name the snail?

2. What does the snail leave behind?

3. Who joins Pesí to watch?

4. What does Totty say about going slowly?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. The snail crosses the walkway in about an hour. Fact / Guess
2. Yoni thinks the snail is fascinating at first. Fact / Guess
3. Pesí sometimes finishes her math last. Fact / Guess
4. There is a silver trail the next morning. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. Do you like to go fast or slow? Why?

2. What does Pesí notice by looking closely?

3. What could you watch closely this week?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: SNAIL, SHELL, SLOW, TRAIL, GRASS, STEADY

W	W	F	W	N	C	S	S	R	R	J
T	Y	T	W	O	O	P	M	L	A	V
Y	I	E	W	M	M	V	M	K	O	K
M	T	V	S	T	E	A	D	Y	W	W
K	S	O	N	G	R	T	K	L	P	U
D	A	E	M	G	R	N	I	I	B	M
S	K	B	R	I	B	A	K	A	A	J
T	R	A	I	L	O	C	S	N	U	P
S	S	E	L	I	C	P	R	S	T	A
H	W	N	F	D	S	H	E	L	L	T
V	A	U	R	U	F	T	P	V	E	E



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. SINAL = _____

2. HELLS = _____

3. ARLIT = _____

4. UMPJ = _____

5. NBOIRB = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"I like to take my time."

"Let's look closely."

"I'm going at my own pace."

Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Pace Chart

Day / moment	What I did	How fast	What I noticed
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw the snail with the swirly shell and a shining silver trail behind him.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing a snail and its trail.



Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. Shabbat
2. A shiny silver trail
3. Miri
4. Some people run, some stroll, and what matters is that you keep going

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: SNAIL, SHELL, TRAIL, JUMP, RIBBON

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.