

The Great Zodiac Race Answer Key

1. The Jade Emperor organized the race to decide the order of the zodiac years.
2. The Rat couldn't swim well and needed the Ox's help to cross the river.
3. The Dragon was kind, helpful, and selfless, putting others before itself.
4. The Snake surprised the Horse by hiding on its hoof, causing the Horse to jump and lose a place.
5. The Goat, Monkey, and Rooster worked together, showing teamwork and cooperation can lead to success.
6. The Dog was playful and easily distracted, while the Pig was relaxed and enjoyed comfort.
7. Rat - Ox - Tiger - Rabbit - Dragon

Quick Tips for Teachers:

- **Before Reading:**
 - Show images of the twelve zodiac animals and have students predict which might win and why.
- **During Reading:**
 - Encourage students to visualize the race and note character traits as they appear in the story.
- **Differentiation:**
 - For **Grades 4-5:** Focus on sequencing events with simpler responses.
 - For **Grades 6-7:** Have students support their answers with text evidence or explore symbolism (e.g., why each animal represents certain traits).
- **Engagement Idea:** Use this as a launchpad for a creative writing extension: "If a new animal joined the race, how would it act and where would it finish?"