

A Bad Move

This was the fourth time this year that Lin was the new kid in school. Four moves in seven months--all because her mother's job kept them moving. She had decided back in December that making new friends was a waste of time. She would join no more clubs. She would add no new names to her phone list.

On her first day, the teacher welcomed her to the class and assigned a "buddy" to help her find her way around. This time, it was a girl named Marley, or Carly, or something. Lin had stopped paying attention to kids' names.

Lin knew that she would forget them all, just as the other kids from all those other schools had probably forgotten her. As the teacher was giving Lin papers filled with assignments to make up, Lin made her decision. At this school, she would be memorable.

The next day, Tuesday, instead of wearing the usual jeans and tee shirt, she wore a pair of bloomers from an old Raggedy Ann Halloween costume. She didn't brush her hair. On Wednesday, she wore an old dress of her mother's, along with soccer cleats. "At least they'll remember me after we've moved away," she thought on Thursday as she put on a plaid skirt, a tee shirt, and a pile of long beaded necklaces her grandmother had given her to play with.

On Friday, they called her mother to school. She was a bit worried about what her mom would say when she saw her outfit—a hula skirt from a vacation in Hawaii worn on top of a pair of tattered jeans. From inside the principal's office, she heard her mother and Mrs. Leonard talking.

"She'll be so excited," her mother said to Mrs. Leonard in the hallway. "We've moved so often, but this time, we're here to stay. I've got a new job in town. Finally, she'll be able to fit in."

Name: _____ Date: _____

“A Bad Move” Questions

- ___ 1. Now that Lin will be staying in town, how do you think she will feel about having worn such weird outfits her first week at this school?
 - a. sure the school authorities will punish her
 - b. uncertain about winning acceptance from her peers
 - c. proud to have displayed her unusual wardrobe
 - d. relieved to stay in one place long enough to shop

- ___ 2. The problem that Lin's odd actions represent is that she
 - a. misses the clothes she wore when younger.
 - b. wants to go back to her first home.
 - c. feels that she is never given the opportunity to make friends.
 - d. resents her mother having such a job.

- ___ 3. The title of the passage is “A Bad Move.” Which action is most likely the “bad move” in the passage?
 - a. Lin decides to not join clubs and to not add new names to her phone list.
 - b. Lin's mom tells Mrs. Leonard that she and Lin will be staying in the town.
 - c. Lin's teacher gave her assignments to make up.
 - d. Lin tries to be memorable by wearing unusual outfits to school.

- ___ 4. When Lin's mother gets a job in town, it solves one problem but creates another. The new problem is that
 - a. Lin does not like her new school.
 - b. Lin likes moving from place to place.
 - c. Lin's classmates may think she is strange.
 - d. Lin misses her old friends.

- ___ 5. What is the theme of the passage?

The Scavenger Hunt

Every year, Sophie's troop held a scavenger hunt. The theme this year was to locate an alphabetical list of things related to music. As usual, the troop split into four teams. Each team had one parent and four scouts. Last year, Sophie's team had followed the list in order, starting at the top.

The rules of the game said that if two or more teams had found the same object, it didn't count. Last year, when the theme was math, everyone had collected an **abacus**¹, beads, and calculators. So to make it more interesting, and to be sure they reached the end of the list, they decided they would start from the bottom--at Z. Then they'd make sure to have things that the other teams had not found. They had just eight hours to collect as many of the 26 items as they could. There wasn't a prize, but it was still fun to compete.

Jill's mom was in charge of the list. "Z!" she shouted. She was a cheerleader type and always like to show her enthusiasm. "Who can think of a Z for music?" Marisa shouted, "**Zither**²!" Then Anna said, "My father has a zither." For Y, they finally settled on "yodel" and decided they would simply yodel. X was easy--a **xylophone**³. They retrieved one from Jill's little sister's toy box. For W, they found a wind chime and for V they took the violin that Amy played in the school orchestra.

"Would it be cheating if we turned the xylophone upside down for U?" Jill asked. The group agreed that this was a great idea. The rules didn't seem to cover everything. T--a trombone, S--a song sheet and R--a recorder. Their packs were getting heavy.

By lunchtime, they had a picture of a pipe organ (for P and O), a needle from an old record player, a pair of **maracas**⁴, and a **lute**⁵. They had skipped Q, not sure if a quail song would qualify. (Besides, they didn't know where to find a quail.) Just 10 more things to find--and just two hours left. In Amy's attic, they uncovered a kazoo and a jukebox on the cover of an old album. At the library, they borrowed books on Icelandic music and holiday songs. Then the timer went off. It was time to meet the other teams.

¹ **abacus**: a device used for counting and math figuring

² **zither**: a stringed instrument

³ **xylophone**: an instrument made of metal or wood strips that produce a tone when hit with a mallet

⁴ **maracas**: a rhythm instrument that makes a swishing sound from seeds in a hollow gourd

⁵ **lute**: a guitar-like stringed instrument that is played by plucking

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The Scavenger Hunt” Questions

- ___ 1. What is the problem in this story?
- Some of the collected items did not count towards winning.
 - Several teams collected the same items.
 - The team couldn't find objects for letters A-G
 - The team has to collect one musical item for each letter of the alphabet.
- ___ 2. The climax of the story is when
- the team decides to use the xylophone for the letter U.
 - the team can't find an object for letter Q.
 - the timer went off.
 - the team loses the contest.
- ___ 3. What does the word *retrieved* mean in the sentence, “They retrieved one from Jill’s little sister’s toy box”?
- to remove and hide
 - to put in
 - to get and bring back
 - to see and then steal
- ___ 4. The strategy the team used to find the items was to
- look in an attic.
 - go to the library.
 - look in a toy box.
 - all of the above.
- ___ 5. What do you think will happen when the team brings back items from the end of the alphabet?

Practice with Prepositional Phrases

A **prepositional phrase** is a modifying phrase consisting of a preposition and its object. These phrases usually add details about "where" or "when."

Preposition + Its Object = Prepositional Phrase

example

under + the bridge = under the bridge

Directions: Use this method to record the parts of each prepositional phrase below.

<p>1. Sarah sprinted down the hill.</p> <p>Preposition = <u>down</u> Object = <u>the hill</u></p> <p><u>down</u> + <u>the hill</u> = <u>down the hill</u></p>	<p>2. I cleaned during the commercials.</p> <p>Preposition = _____ Object = _____</p> <p>_____ + _____ = _____</p>
<p>3. I have homework on the weekends.</p> <p>Preposition = _____ Object = _____</p> <p>_____ + _____ = _____</p>	<p>4. My mom is cheerful in the morning.</p> <p>Preposition = _____ Object = _____</p> <p>_____ + _____ = _____</p>

Directions: Complete each sentence with a prepositional phrase. Underline the preposition and circle the object. You may choose to select prepositions from the word bank or use your own.

Preposition Word Bank

in on at during around before over off for by to

- The princess lives _____ .
- Mr. Roberts, the math teacher, offers chapter review sessions _____ .
- My sister has a dental appointment _____ .
- The annual Springfield parade takes place _____ .
- We take turns saying what we're thankful for _____ .
- We traveled _____ .
- We veered right to turn _____ .

The British are Coming!

It was April 18. Winter still hung in the air, but the snows had melted. The inside of the cabin was warm, and the fire in the hearth made an orange glow. Mary and Jonah looked forward to evenings. This was the time of day that their parents sat and talked, while Mary and Jonah listened in.

"There's more talk of war," their father said. He went into town every Tuesday, all the way to Lexington, to bring in some of his carvings to sell. Even though he had given up life as a sailor and settled down to farm when he came to America, he still liked to carve things, as sailors do to pass the time. On a good week, he could earn a few **shillings**¹. Once he bought peppermint sweets at the general store.

Their mother, who was born in the **Colonies**², had mixed feelings about the war. Like many others whose parents and grandparents had been born in New England, she didn't think of herself as British. But still, she didn't like the idea of war. "People will be hurt. And, if we don't win, things could get very bad for us. They hang traitors, you know." Their father nodded. And even though he had been born in England and still sounded English, he was more inclined toward freedom. "What can a king thousands of miles away know about life here?" he asked.

As their parents talked, Mary and Jonah gathered up the wax that had fallen onto the table. They scraped wax from the **sconces**³ that were nailed to the wall. They would put these scraps into the ball of wax that their mother kept under the washbasin. In another week or so, they would melt it down again for new candles.

The fire in the fireplace turned to embers. The family trooped to bed. As she fell asleep, Mary had a feeling that something was about to happen that would change her life.

1 **shilling**: a former unit of British money

2 **Colonies**: British settlements in North America which became the United States of America after the Revolutionary War

3 **sconce**: a candlestick that is hung on a wall

Day 3

CONCEPTS OF COMPREHENSION: SETTING 5th GRADE UNIT

Reading Passage

She was awakened a few hours later by the pounding of hoof-beats coming from the road. She heard her father jump from bed. She could hear him grab his gun from the place by the door. "It's so late. Who could it be?" their mother asked. Soon the rider was upon them. "The British are coming! The British are coming!" the rider shouted. With that, their father rushed outside and unhitched his horse. Then he rode toward Lexington.

CONCEPTS OF COMPREHENSION: SETTING 5 TH GRADE UNIT
Question Sheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

“The British are Coming” Questions

- ___ 1. This passage is an example of
 - a. a newspaper article.
 - b. poetry.
 - c. historical fiction.
 - d. nonfiction.

- ___ 2. Although this story takes place on April 18th, the setting is described as
 - a. winter.
 - b. spring.
 - c. in the snow.
 - d. in the rain.

- ___ 3. We know the story takes place right before the Revolutionary War, because
 - a. Mary and Jonah’s father mentions “talk of war.”
 - b. their mother was born in the New England colonies.
 - c. a rider says, “The British are coming.”
 - d. all of the above.

- ___ 4. The climax in the passage is when
 - a. Mary and Jonah collect wax for candles.
 - b. their father grabs his gun and rides toward Lexington.
 - c. their parents talk about war.
 - d. their father bought peppermint sweets

- ___ 5. Where does the story take place? How do you know?

Twins' Luck

Mateo's apartment was on the second floor of the building, over the bakery. The house always smelled of sugar and vanilla, even though his mother cooked spicy foods at home, like **asopao**¹ and **mofongo**².

Mateo was ten and had a twin brother named Marcos. They did not look much alike. Marcos was short, with wide hands and thin hair, like an old man. He couldn't speak and could walk only by dragging his left foot behind him. He never got far. When they went out, he used a wheelchair.

Some days, while he was getting ready for school and while his father and mother were getting Marcos ready for the day, Mateo wondered what it would be like to be Marcos. They would bathe him and dress him. They would put him in a soft chair in front of the television. Then his father would leave for work and his mother would feed him a soft-boiled egg or a bowl of corn mush. She would put a bell at his side in case he needed anything. All his needs would be taken care of by someone else.

Mateo wondered how the two of them, who started out together, had wound up so different. Was it luck? Why wasn't life fair? When he was younger, he thought that Marcos was the lucky one, getting so much attention when *he* had to do things for himself. Mateo's parents never seemed to have time for him. Mateo never got to stay home and watch cartoons all day. Then one day, it hit him. The idea surprised him because he couldn't see how he hadn't realized it before. Marcos wasn't as lucky as Mateo thought.

¹ **asopao**: a type of rice soup

² **mofongo**: a food made with meat and fried plantain (a banana-like food)

Day 4

Name: _____

Date: _____


"Twins' Luck" Questions

- ___ 1. When Mateo was younger, he thought that his brother Marcos was the lucky one because he received so much attention. What important realization does Mateo come to one day?
- a. Mateo is not as lucky as Marcos.
 - b. Marcos and Mateo are very similar, despite their differences.
 - c. Marcos is luckier than Mateo thought.
 - d. Marcos isn't as lucky as Mateo thought.
- ___ 2. What is the main theme of this text?
- a. You shouldn't take advantage of people's weaknesses.
 - b. Someone's life may not always be what it seems.
 - c. Twins have a very strong bond they share for life.
 - d. People should not be defined by their disabilities.
- ___ 3. Based on the text, what can be concluded about Marcos's condition?
- a. He is recovering from an illness.
 - b. He is able to move around freely.
 - c. He has suffered an injury caused by an accident.
 - d. He has a disability.
- ___ 4. Based on the text, how do Marcos's parents feel about him?
- a. They feel Marcos is overwhelming.
 - b. They are resentful towards Marcos.
 - c. They are unsure about how to help him.
 - d. They care very deeply about Marcos.
- ___ 5. What is one thing that you can learn from this story? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE

Adding Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe nouns and pronouns. Adjectives set a mood and add interest to your writing. Below is a paragraph that needs your help. Write an adjective from the list into each blank. Pick adjectives that make sense and make the paragraph more interesting. Use each adjective only once in the paragraph.

 The sheriff walked into the stable. He put the saddle on the horse. He would ride to the ranch in the rain to see the lady. She might know where the cowboy had gone.

- | | | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|---------|------|-------|--------|
| old | sad | mean | gentle | tired | soft | warm | poor |
| young | glad | evil | big | black | slow | large | strong |
| dark | happy | dirty | small | brown | fast | nice | huge |
| bright | pretty | clean | light | distant | cold | rich | best |

The _____ sheriff walked into the _____ stable. He put the _____ saddle on the _____ horse. He would ride to the _____ ranch in the _____ rain to see the _____ lady. She might know where the _____ cowboy had gone.

Now add different adjectives to the same paragraph. Use each one only once. Try to make the paragraph mean something different than the first one.

The _____ sheriff walked into the _____ stable. He put the _____ saddle on the _____ horse. He would ride to the _____ ranch in the _____ rain to see the _____ lady. She might know where the _____ cowboy had gone.



Walk the Plank!

W.M. Akers

Walking the plank is not a fun thing to do. Here's how it works. A pirate sticks a long piece of wood off the side of his ship and makes you stand at one end. He puts his sword at your back and bellows, "Walllllk the plank!" You walk across the plank toward the water. When you run out of plank, you fall in the water. Probably there are sharks down there. The ship sails away, and that's the end of you.

The thing is, pirates never really made anyone walk the plank. This may surprise you, since it's in a lot of movies and TV shows. It's a nasty thing to do, and pirates were pretty nasty, so it *seems* like something they would do. But in fact walking the plank was imagined by Robert Louis Stevenson, a 19th century novelist, whose most famous book is *Treasure Island*. A fictional pirate like Long John Silver might make you walk the plank, but a real-life pirate never would.

That is what was going through Tommy's mind as he stood on the end of the plank staring out at his doom. His best friend Jack stood behind him. Tommy felt the point of Jack's wooden sword digging into his back.

"I said, walllllk the plank!" shouted Jack.

"The thing is," said Tommy, "pirates never really made people walk the plank. That was invented by Robert Louis Stevenson, who—"

"I'm a pirate! Do you think I care about books?"

They were standing on the edge of Jack's tree house, which had a lot of uses. Sometimes it was a submarine. Sometimes it was a spaceship. Sometimes it was just a tree house. That afternoon, it was serving as a pirate ship. They had been pirates all afternoon, and everything was going fine until Tommy made the mistake of criticizing his captain. Jack was always the captain, since this was his tree house. And Captain Jack's number one rule was that the crew must never question his orders.

So when the Captain ordered his first mate to hand over three chocolate chip cookies, Tommy was supposed to do so without complaint. But chocolate chip cookies were his favorite. He'd suffered through a whole boring bologna sandwich to get to them, and now that he was finished, Jack wanted to take them away. Tommy didn't care who was the captain. He stuffed all three cookies into his mouth and chewed as fast as he could. And so Captain Jack sentenced him to walk the plank.

"I'm getting tired of waiting, Mister Tommy. Walllllk the plank!"

Tommy looked at the ground. They had jumped out of the tree house tons of times, but it was easy when you had a running start. It would be harder to just walk into thin air. He could see why Robert Louis Stevenson thought this would be a scary thing. There was no way out. Unless...what would a pirate do?

Tommy didn't hesitate. He spun around as fast as he could and kicked his leg into the air. Jack's sword went flying, and before Jack knew what had happened, Tommy leapt onto the sword. He popped up and pointed it at Jack's back.

"Yaaargh!"

"What are you doing?" whined Jack.

"This is a mutiny! I'm the captain now. And I say that you have to walllllk the plank!"

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What were Jack and Tommy pretending the tree house was?

- A an island
- B a spaceship
- C a submarine
- D a pirate ship

2. What is the main conflict in this story?

- A Jack wants to eat all the cookies, but Tommy wants to share them.
- B Jack wants Tommy to walk the plank, but Tommy does not want to.
- C Tommy wants Jack to let him be Captain, but Jack does not want to.
- D Tommy wants to stop pretending to be pirates, but Jack does not want to.

3. Read these sentences from the text.

"So when the Captain ordered his first mate to hand over three chocolate chip cookies, Tommy was supposed to do so without complaint. But chocolate chip cookies were his favorite. He'd suffered through a whole boring bologna sandwich to get to them, and now that he was finished, Jack wanted to take them away. Tommy didn't care who was the captain. He stuffed all three cookies into his mouth and chewed as fast as he could."

Based on this evidence, what conclusion can you draw about how Tommy felt?

- A Tommy felt neutral and did not mind that Captain Jack wanted the cookies.
- B Tommy felt a little sad, but thought Captain Jack was being fair.
- C Tommy felt annoyed and thought Captain Jack's order was unfair.
- D Tommy felt calm, but thought Captain Jack's order was unfair.

4. Tommy is afraid to walk the plank. What evidence from the text best supports this conclusion?

- A "You walk across the plank toward the water. When you run out of plank, you fall in the water."
- B "A fictional pirate like Long John Silver might make you walk the plank, but a real-life pirate never would."
- C "[Tommy] could see why Robert Louis Stevenson thought [walking the plank] would be a scary thing."
- D "Tommy didn't hesitate. He spun around as fast as he could and kicked his leg into the air."

5. What is the main idea of this story?

- A While pretending they are pirates, Jack orders Tommy to walk the plank, but Tommy finds a way out.
- B While playing pirates, Jack orders Tommy to give him three chocolate chip cookies.
- C Although walking the plank is common in movies and TV shows, real pirates would not make someone walk the plank.
- D Jack and Tommy enjoy playing pretend in Jack's tree house.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

"So when the Captain ordered his first mate to hand over three chocolate chip cookies, Tommy was supposed to do so without complaint. But chocolate chip cookies were his favorite. He'd suffered through a whole boring bologna sandwich to get to them, and now that he was finished, Jack wanted to take them away. Tommy didn't care who was the captain. He stuffed all three cookies into his mouth and chewed as fast as he could. And so Captain Jack sentenced him to walk the plank.

"I'm getting tired of waiting, Mister Tommy. Walk the plank!"

As used in this context, what does the word "sentence" mean?

- A a kind suggestion
- B a complete unit in language
- C to order a punishment
- D to help or assist

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

Jack was always the captain _____ this was his tree house.

- A however
- B therefore
- C although
- D because

8. What did Tommy do that caused Captain Jack to sentence him to walk the plank?

9. How does Tommy avoid walking the plank?

10. Explain why Tommy decides to become the captain and order Jack to walk the plank. Support your answer with evidence from the text.
