

# A Lesson in History



“Twice history has repeated itself, and now,” thought Shona, “it looks all set to do it again.”

The first time it happened was one bright summer’s day in July, seven years ago. She could remember it like it was yesterday. She had been only six years old at the time and hadn’t understood what all the fuss had been about.

They had been at the beach, the whole family. Shona remembered wearing her new swimsuit—black with big, blue flowers. She had been playing at the edge of the river, by the river mouth, when she had stepped into a big hole. Under she went.

Luckily her mother had been close by and had pulled her out of the water quickly. It had happened so fast that Shona hadn’t really had time to be scared—and then she’d been safe in her mother’s arms. However, her parents had made such a big fuss about it that, by the time they got home, she felt scared of the water. That fear had stayed with her as she grew up.

The second time happened at school. Their teacher took the class to the local pool and, while he walked along the edge shouting instructions, all the kids had to get in and swim. Shona didn’t mind the pool too much because it felt safer and it was such hot weather that it was nice to get cool, but she still couldn’t really swim properly. She could only swim for as long as she could hold her breath, then she had to stand up to get another big breath of air. Shona managed one length of the pool, with a lot of effort, but as she got to the middle of the pool for the second time, she ran out of breath again.

Shona shuddered as she remembered what happened.

You see, the middle of the pool was the deep part and Shona was a very small girl for her age. This time when she stopped to take a breath, she didn’t have the energy to start off again—she had exhausted herself on the first lap—so she floundered, then panicked. Luckily, one of the other swimmers realized she was in trouble and pulled her to the edge of the pool.

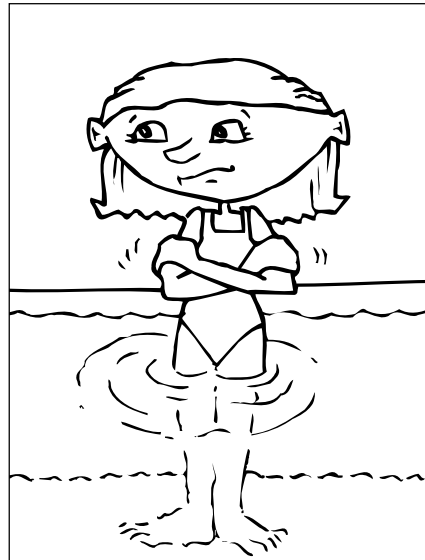
Since then she had avoided water, except for her daily bath or shower. Now, today, she was taking the risk of it all happening for a third time.

She stood in the water, trembling despite the hot sun and looking at the lady in front of her. She gave a crooked smile and said, “Okay, I’m as ready as I’ll ever be.”

The lady grinned back and replied, “Well done, Shona. Getting wet is the first step towards learning to swim. Let’s take it from there. I’ll be right beside you all the way.”

Shona looked at the other people in the learners’ swimming group. Some were about her age and some were more like her parents’ age. Well, she wasn’t going to leave it that long before she conquered her fear of the water and learned to swim.

She paused for a moment in thought. “I wonder what comes first—losing the fear of water to learn to swim, or learning to swim to help you lose your fear?” Either way, Shona decided, the only way to beat her fear was to feel the fear and do it anyway.

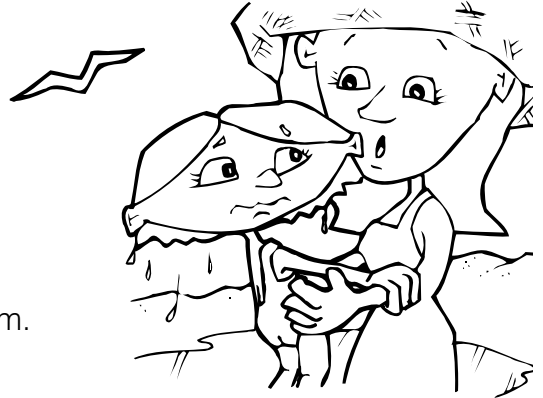


# A Lesson in History

**A. Fill in the circle that gives the best answer for each question or statement.**

**1.** The reason Shona gained a fear of the water in the beginning was because ...

- ☐ (a) she had fallen into a hole at the edge of the river and gone under when she was six.
- ☐ (b) her parents had made a big fuss about her going under at the river.
- ☐ (c) she had never liked taking a bath.
- ☐ (d) her dad had squirted her with the hose.
- ☐ (e) she only swam at the pool.



**2.** What did Shona do about her problem?

- ☐ (a) She didn't swim at all.
- ☐ (b) She went to swimming classes to learn to swim.
- ☐ (c) She only went swimming with other people.
- ☐ (d) She went for walks at the beach and the river a lot.

**3.** Choose the word that explains what avoided means in this sentence: "Since then she had avoided the water except for her daily bath or shower."

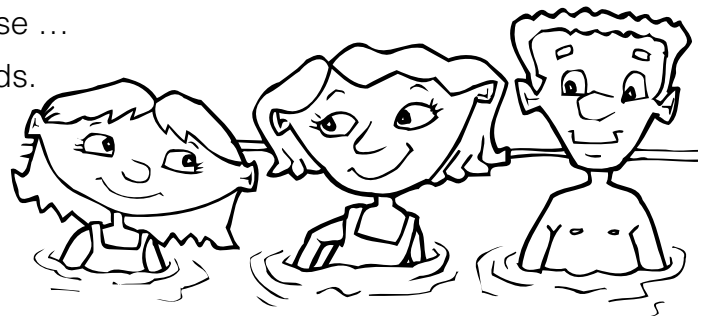
- ☐ (a) enjoyed
- ☐ (b) kept away from
- ☐ (c) sorted out
- ☐ (d) feared
- ☐ (e) disliked

**4.** Shona didn't mind going to the pool because ...

- ☐ (a) she was with her class.
- ☐ (b) she felt safer.
- ☐ (c) she liked getting cool.
- ☐ (d) both (a) and (b).
- ☐ (e) both (b) and (c).

**5.** Shona was "trembling" in the pool because ...

- ☐ (a) the sun had gone behind the clouds.
- ☐ (b) she was frightened.
- ☐ (c) it was a cold day.
- ☐ (d) the pool water was very cold.
- ☐ (e) she was excited.



# A Lesson in History

## B. Complete each activity.

1. Write the sentence that tells you Shona was nervous about the swimming class.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Based on Shona's actions in the story, write three words which describe her character.

(a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Write what you think the conversation would have been like between Shona and her parents just after she was pulled out of the water at the river.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are the three main parts of the story?

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

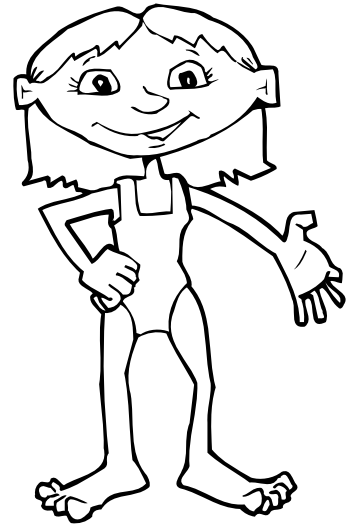
\_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(c) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



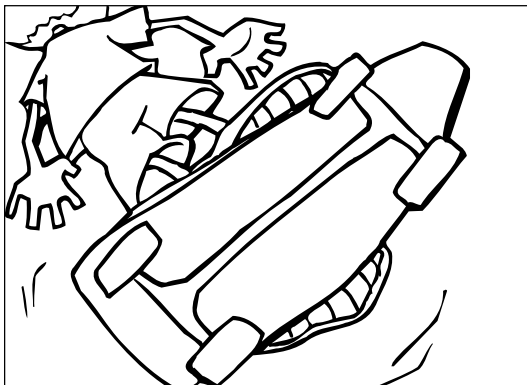
5. Do you feel confident in water? Rate your feelings.



Why do you feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Skateboard Star



The sun was shining and a gentle breeze was blowing. It was a nice day to be outside.

The silence was broken by shouts and yells. Looking through the bushes you could see who was making all the noise—eight boys aged between 10 and 12, racing around on skateboards at the skateboard area. They skimmed over the humps and hills, trying to jump the wooden ramps that were placed around. You could tell they were having some kind of contest. They were all trying to do better than each other.

One after the other they would glide around the course, leaping about, with their skateboards looking like they were glued to their shoes. Twisting and turning, they would jump high into the air in a display of total control of their boards—well, maybe not quite total control. The shouts and yells were loudest when someone came off and landed on the concrete. A bit of blood seemed to make it even more fun for them. It was easy to tell that these boys had been practicing for years—they were good; in fact, they were very good.

There was a ninth boy, about seven years old, standing near, just watching them, his skateboard in his hand.

The older boys finally finished their fun. They were tired and hot.

“Come on, kid,” one called. “It’s all yours now. Show us what you can do.”

The boy shook his head and looked down at his shoes.

“There’s no way I’m going to try anything in front of them,” he thought. “They’re too good. I can’t really do anything yet, so they’d probably have a good laugh at me.”

“Suit yourself, kid,” the older boy said. “Come on guys, let’s go up the street and get a drink.”

As he watched them go, the small boy put his board on the ground and started to skate with it. He hadn’t had it long. His grandmother had given it to him for his birthday six months ago, in the middle of winter. He hadn’t used it much then, but now it was summer and he wanted to learn how to use it.

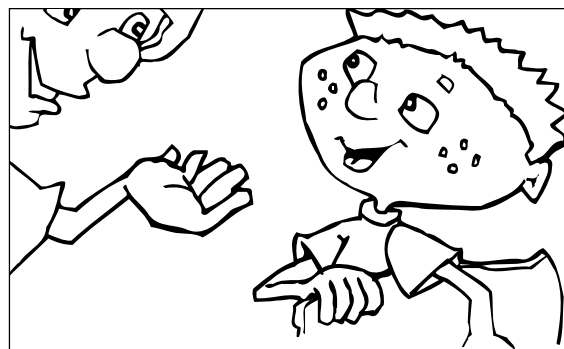
Jeremy (that was his name) lived close to the park, so he had decided that he was going to come often to practice. He’d seen these boys before when he’d come to practice, but he’d watched them through the bushes for a while and then gone home again. Today he’d decided that it was his park too, so he’d just wait for them to go away and then he’d have a try.

It was lots of fun just kneeling on the board and going down the little hills—he could do that for ages. He was having so much fun that he didn’t hear the older boys come back until someone started to laugh.

He looked up and his face turned red. Oh no! They’d been watching him.

Before he could run away, the boy who’d spoken to him before said, “Hey, kid. It’s OK. Don’t let Dion here bother you. He’s just an idiot. How long have you had your board? It looks quite new.”

“I got it for my birthday, six months ago. I’m just learning, not like you guys—you’re great!”



# Skateboard Star

"Well, sure we are," he replied. "But do you know why we're great? I'll tell you—it's because we learned the moves and then we practiced them, lots! Would you like us to show you how to do some things?"

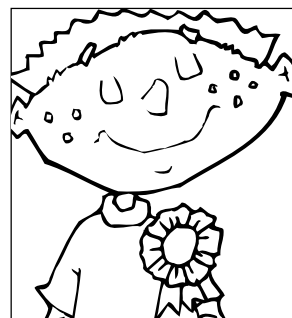
"Oh, boy! Would I? You bet!" Jeremy answered, his eyes bright with excitement.

They were there for two hours, showing Jeremy how to balance, stop and turn. The only shouts were when he did something well. The older boys found that they kind of liked helping a little kid—it made them feel good. At the end of two hours, Jeremy knew all their names and they knew his.

"See you next Saturday then, Jeremy?"

"You bet, Sam. And thanks, you guys, it was cool!"

Running home to show his mother what he'd learned, Jeremy smiled to himself. It was so cool to have big kids to help teach you stuff and all he'd have to do to be like them was to practice and practice and practice! But, hey. No big deal. Practice was fun when you liked what you were doing! Who knows, one day he could be a skateboard champion!



## A. Fill in the circle that gives the best answer for each question or statement.

1. Jeremy had ...

- ☐ (a) owned his skateboard for six months.
- ☐ (b) owned his skateboard for several years.
- ☐ (c) just got his skateboard.
- ☐ (d) borrowed the skateboard from a friend.

2. After the boys had left ...

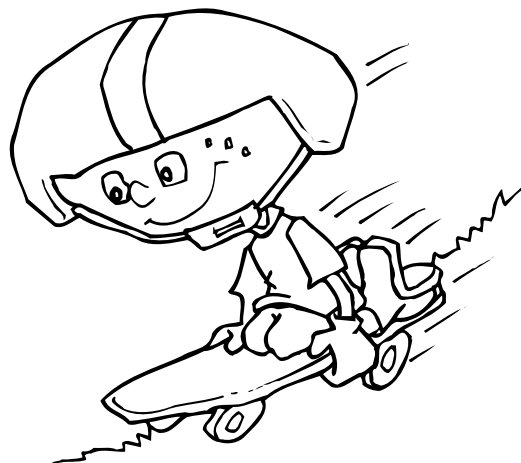
- ☐ (a) Jeremy went home.
- ☐ (b) Jeremy tried going over the jumps.
- ☐ (c) another group of older boys arrived.
- ☐ (d) Jeremy tried kneeling on the board and going down little hills.

3. At first Jeremy didn't want to show the older boys what he could do because ...

- ☐ (a) he was scared he'd fall off.
- ☐ (b) he thought they would laugh at him.
- ☐ (c) he was embarrassed that he would be better than they were.
- ☐ (d) he thought they'd tell the kids at school.

4. Sam was ...

- ☐ (a) older, unkind, skillful and generous.
- ☐ (b) Jeremy's age, understanding and kind.
- ☐ (c) younger, thoughtful, a good skateboarder and helpful.
- ☐ (d) older, caring, skillful and helpful.



# Skateboard Star

## B. Complete each activity.

1. Number these events as they happened in the story.

- ☐ (a) Jeremy went home to show his mother what he had learned.
- ☐ (b) The older boys were having a competition.
- ☐ (c) The older boys helped Jeremy.
- ☐ (d) Jeremy tried kneeling on his skateboard and going down little hills.
- ☐ (e) The older boys came back from the store.



2. Write another way the story could have ended. Start from: "He looked up and his face turned red. Oh no! They'd been watching."

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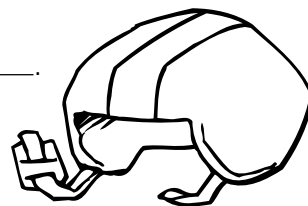
3. If you practice a skill often \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

4. Comment on the actions of the older boys towards Jeremy.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



5. (a) Is it good to share knowledge and skills with others? \_\_\_\_\_

(b) What skills could you teach others? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(c) Write how you would explain/teach one of these skills to someone.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Extra Help



Jason tried not to notice the whispering and giggling that was going on around him. He was so ashamed. Why did he have to be sent to a special teacher for extra help anyway? Sure he wasn't good with writing and reading, but so what? He still did his work. He still managed, didn't he? And now all the class thought he was a dummy. Well ... that's what they were thinking. Sometimes he did, too. He'd always had to work really hard just to keep up with the rest of the class. But he never did his homework. He hated it. And now he had to go to a special class for "special kids."

The next morning Jason walked into a small room at the back of his classroom while all the other children were starting to write their stories. Some of them saw him leave and pointed and giggled. Jason was quite scared, but he wasn't going to show it. He didn't know the teacher sitting at the table, and he didn't know what to expect. New things were scary for him. The teacher looked up as he came in and smiled. That made him feel a bit better.

"Good morning, I'm Mrs. Brown and you must be Jason. Come in."

"It's a funny class," he thought. "Just the two of us." He was sure he wouldn't get the chance to daydream here! Mrs. Brown asked him what he liked about school.

"I like art. I like sports too," he answered.

"That's great, Jason. Sports are good for you, and people are usually best at doing what they like. But reading and writing are very important as well, so I'm going to try to help you with them. But you have to help yourself too, OK? You will have to do the homework I give you every day."

Jason groaned, "Oh no. Not more homework to do!"

"Don't worry, it won't be a lot and it won't be hard, but it will help you very much if you do it. You need to understand something, Jason. I can teach you things ... but I can't make you learn them. That's up to you. When you do your homework, you're not doing it for me, you're doing it to help yourself."

"Now then, in the lessons we will be doing different things. We'll have a bit of fun and games." (Jason looked doubtful ... games and fun in class?) "And we'll have some spelling skills to learn," Mrs. Brown continued. "You remember when you were learning to play soccer? You had to learn things like how to pass the ball, how to make a goal, and which way to run so you wouldn't score for the other team."

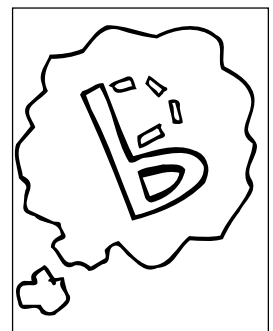
Jason nodded, thinking, "What's soccer got to do with spelling?"

"Well, those things are called skills. Soccer skills. I'll be showing you reading and writing skills."

Jason was quiet. He just listened. He wasn't sure he could learn "skills." Mrs. Brown was nice, though. She was friendly and she smiled a lot. She talked a lot, too!

"Did you know that the English language is really a mess? That's why it's so hard to learn." (Jason wondered if she was supposed to say that.) "It's a mix of many other languages. It's a wonder anyone can learn it. But there are some rules we can learn that can help us."

Then she said, "Kids know how to write a big 'B,' but they mix up a small 'b' with a 'd.'" ("I do that!" thought Jason.) "To remember how to write a small 'b,' you pretend you are writing a big 'B,' but you leave off the top bubble."



# Extra Help



"I can remember that," he thought. "Maybe I can learn skills after all."

For the first term Jason was very shy and quiet. He was scared of saying the wrong things. But Mrs. Brown gave him time to think. She waited.

One day, she waited and waited for Jason to answer and then she said, "Jason you don't have to be right all of the time. No one is. No one ever has all the right answers. The important thing is that you try. I'm not going to be angry if you get it wrong. We learn from our mistakes; that's how people learn best." After that Jason started talking more to Mrs. Brown. He wasn't so shy anymore.

The games they played were fun. Jason liked the word quiz best. The teacher would time him to see how fast he could read the word cards. He liked to beat his last time. Any he got wrong they looked at afterwards. He loved that quiz. He knew it was kind of a test but it was still fun. Jason was surprised to find that his homework was easy and fun. Sometimes she gave him homework sheets with puzzles and word or picture games. It was still all to do with spelling rules of course, but Jason didn't care ... he loved them. He showed them to his classmates. (He even forgot to be embarrassed about his "special" class!) The other kids thought they were great; they wanted some, too. They saw the games ... and they wanted to play, too!

So in the morning before the bell rang, Mrs. Brown would have a whole bunch of kids in her room wanting to play the word quiz or games. "Jason knows the rules so he can teach them to you," she said. Jason felt important because the others listened to him. When the bell rang they had to leave and he stayed. "Good," he thought. "I like my special class where I'm the only kid and the teacher gives me a lot of attention."

"Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Brown, can I come to your class?"

"Me too, can I come too?" The children were crowding around her. She looked down and smiled at them. "I'm sorry, but I can only manage to teach a few lucky children, so I have to have the ones who need my help the most."

They walked away sadly, muttering, "Lucky Jason, he gets all the fun!"

It was now the last week of the second semester and Mrs. Brown was talking to Jason.

Mrs. Brown was saying, "It seems you are just too good for me now, Jason, they want me to help another boy. You've done all the homework, and it's really helped you. You've learned all the skills you need to keep up with your class. Now, you must remember to use those skills."

"No ...," he thought. "That's not fair!"

"Your teacher tells me you have more confidence in yourself and he has noticed you are trying now to answer math questions that you wouldn't try before. And ... he said that you're getting a lot of them right! That's terrific, Jason, I'm so proud of you," Mrs. Brown continued.

Jason grinned. "Not half as proud as I am of myself," he thought, pleased with the praise.

"Do you remember what I said when we first started?" She waited for his answer.

Jason thought back to his first day. He remembered the giggles and stares. And he remembered what she'd said.

"You mean when you said you could teach me skills but I had to learn them?" He grinned. "I guess I did learn them, right?"

"You sure did, Jason, you sure did!"

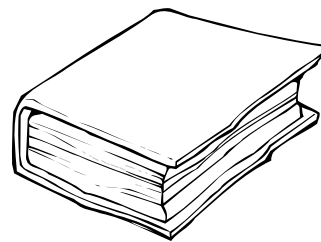


# Extra Help

## A. Fill in the circle that gives the best answer for each question or statement.

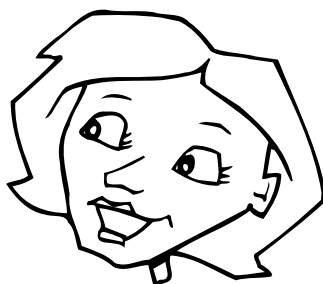
1. When Mrs. Brown asked Jason what he liked about school, what did he reply?

- ☐ (a) math and sports
- ☐ (b) art and sports
- ☐ (c) reading and science
- ☐ (d) sports and music
- ☐ (e) reading and writing



2. What was it that made Jason feel a bit better about the teacher when he first saw her?

- ☐ (a) She had a kind face.
- ☐ (b) She wasn't old.
- ☐ (c) She smiled at him.
- ☐ (d) She had a nice blouse on.
- ☐ (e) She had curly hair.



3. Which words best describe how Jason was feeling during his first lesson?

- ☐ (a) confused, doubtful, quiet, nervous
- ☐ (b) confused, angry, talkative, anxious
- ☐ (c) clear, doubtful, talkative, calm
- ☐ (d) confused, doubtful, talkative, calm

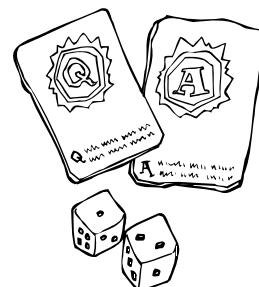
4. Which activity did Jason like best?

- ☐ (a) homework
- ☐ (b) picture games
- ☐ (c) word quiz
- ☐ (d) puzzles
- ☐ (e) writing



5. Why do you think Mrs. Brown let the other children play with the games before school?

- ☐ (a) Because they needed help with their reading and writing, too.
- ☐ (b) To give Jason more practice.
- ☐ (c) To help the other children understand what she did.
- ☐ (d) So they could try the games out to see if they worked.
- ☐ (e) Because they were at school early.

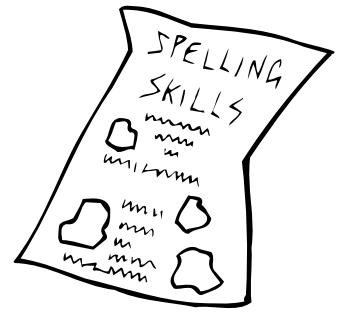


# Extra Help

## B. Complete each activity.

1. Number the events as they occurred in the story.

- ☐ (a) He taught his classmates the word quiz.
- ☐ (b) Jason found out he was attending a special class.
- ☐ (c) Mrs. Brown told him he didn't have to be right all the time.
- ☐ (d) Jason met Mrs. Brown.
- ☐ (e) Jason's math also improved.

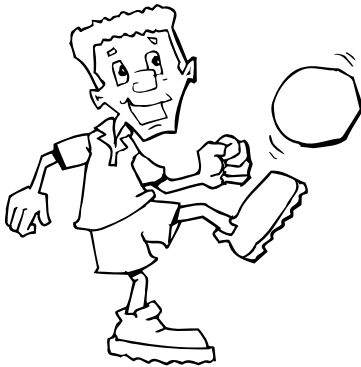


2. Explain how Jason's feelings about his extra help changed over time.

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3. "We learn from our mistakes, that's how people learn best."  
Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Say why.

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4. Think of four words which describe Mrs. Brown.

- (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) \_\_\_\_\_ (d) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Find a synonym in the story for these words.

- (a) grinned – \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) moaned – \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) laughed – \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) incorrect – \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) afraid – \_\_\_\_\_

6. Find an antonym in the story for these words.

- (a) easy – \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) same – \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) noisy – \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) forget – \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) afternoon – \_\_\_\_\_

# Answers

## Pages 6–8 A Lesson in History

- A. 1. (b) 2. (b) 3. (b) 4. (e) 5. (b)  
 B. 1. She stood in the water trembling, despite the hot sun.  
 2. Teacher check  
 3. Teacher check  
 4. (a) the incident at the beach  
 (b) the incident at the pool  
 (c) learning to swim at swimming classes  
 5. Teacher check

## Pages 9–11 Jokeman

- A. 1. (c) 2. (b) 3. (a) 4. (b) 5. (c)  
 B. 1. (a) false (b) true (c) false (d) false (e) true  
 (f) false

2.

<b>new</b>	old
<b>smiling</b>	frowning
<b>happy</b>	sad
<b>last</b>	first
<b>answered</b>	questioned
<b>finished</b>	begun/started

3. (a) serious (b) humor (c) giggled (d) brother  
 4. Teacher check

## Pages 12–14 Skateboard Star

- A. 1. (a) 2. (d) 3. (b) 4. (d)  
 B. 1. (b) (d) (e) (c) (a)  
 2. Teacher check  
 3. Teacher check  
 4. Teacher check  
 5. Teacher check

## Pages 15–17 Melissa's Story

- A. 1. (d) 2. (b) 3. (a) 4. (b) 5. (c)  
 B. 1. (a) Matthew (b) Melissa's brother  
 2. (a) true (b) false (c) false (d) true (e) false  
 3. Teacher check

4.

<b>adjectives</b>	<b>nouns</b>
rare bird's	eggs
living	creatures
china	cabinets
oldest	child/kid
Chinese	medicines

5. Teacher check

## Pages 18–20 Best Friends

- A. 1. (b) 2. (b) 3. (c) 4. (d) 5. (e)  
 B. 1. (c) (b) (d) (e) (a)  
 2. Teacher check  
 3. Teacher check  
 4. (a) dirty – filthy/unclean  
 (b) big – large/huge  
 (c) worried – stressed/anxious  
 (d) right – correct, trouble – bother/difficulty  
 5. (a) panic – a sudden terror  
 (b) missile – an object or weapon that can be thrown or shot  
 (c) loan – money given for a short time, to be repaid with interest  
 (d) imagine – to form a picture in the mind

6.

<b>pays money to ...</b>	<b>pays money for ...</b>
owner of the shop	rent
newspaper, signwriter	advertising
electricity company	electricity
manufacturer	bicycles
the bank	loan

## Pages 21–23 The Secret Wish

- A. 1. (c) 2. (c) 3. (a) 4. (b) 5. (b)  
 B. 1. (a) she wore outrageous clothes  
 (b) she rode a 10-speed bike  
 (c) she enjoyed playing spaces with Corey  
 2. (a) false (b) false (c) false (d) true (e) true  
 3. (a) Dane decided to teach his mother how to use a computer  
 (b) his mother became engrossed in playing computer games  
 (c) his mother began to use the computer to write stories  
 4. (a) outrageous – something that shocks or may offend some people  
 (b) anxiously – full of worry  
 (c) arcade – a covered passage with stores on either side  
 (d) total – complete or absolute  
 5. Teacher check

## Pages 24–26 Kid Sister

- A. 1. (e) 2. (e) 3. (b) 4. (b) 5. (e)  
 B. 1. Teacher check  
 2. (a) perhaps (b) yes (c) yes (d) no  
 3. Teacher check  
 4. Teacher check

# Answers

## Pages 27–29 No Party for Blake

- A. 1. (d) 2. (d) 3. (c) 4. (c)
- B. 1. (a) (b) (e) (c) (d)
2. (a) ... no one seemed to want him to join in  
(b) ... she was worried about him being so quiet  
(c) ... you got to eat the jellybeans at the end
3. Teacher check
4. (a) The kids all lined up quietly when the Cub leader shouted "pack, pack, pack!"  
(b) There were girls at Cubs.  
(c) He enjoyed himself.
5. (a) perfect (b) bunch (c) normal (d) proud
6. Teacher check

## Pages 30–33 Midnight Meeting

- A. 1. (c) 2. (b) 3. (a) 4. (d) 5. (c)
- B. 1. (a) They were grounded for a week and Douglas wasn't allowed to use Dad's video camera.  
(b) Teacher check
2. Teacher check
3. midnight, graveyard, headstones, everywhere, inside, anything, something, nightmare, hallway, raincoat, himself, awake, oncoming, homework
4. (a) tangible – real, able to be touched or felt  
(b) instinct – a natural urge or tendency  
(c) provoked – to urge or incite to action  
(d) sheepishly – awkwardly shy, embarrassingly

## Pages 34–37 Extra Help

- A. 1. (b) 2. (c) 3. (a) 4. (c) 5. (c)
- B. 1. (b) (d) (c) (a) (e)
2. Teacher check
3. Teacher check
4. Teacher check
5. (a) smiled (b) groaned (c) giggled  
(d) wrong (e) scared
6. (a) hard (b) different (c) quiet  
(d) remember (e) morning