



Storytelling

EVALUATION SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS

Please review the instructions for evaluating the performances of the storytelling contestants. The following criteria are of equal importance to evaluating contestants. Terminology used is only intended to help the judge identify criteria for determining a winner. Please make your comments using language understandable to the contestant. Students and instructors appreciate constructive narrative comments. Please do not confer with other judges before ranking students. Judges' decisions are an individual responsibility.

Speaker Number _____

Speaker Name _____

Round ☐ Prelims

Section _____

☐ Finals

- | | | |
|-----|----|---|
| Yes | No | Did the contestant communicate effectively with the audience? |
| Yes | No | Did the contestant command attention? |
| Yes | No | Did the contestant tell the story with ease? |
| Yes | No | Did the contestant exhibit enthusiasm? |
| Yes | No | Did the contestant utilize facial expressions, vocal variety and characterization? |
| Yes | No | Did the contestant make good eye contact? |
| Yes | No | Did the contestant use good posture? |
| Yes | No | Did the contestant speak clearly? |
| Yes | No | Did the contestant use gestures effectively? |

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS FOR THE CONTESTANT:

Judge's signature _____



Storytelling Contest

Invitational Meet 2024-25

“Career Day”

Grades 2 and 3

by Sherri Maret

We started career day last week at school. I got to hear about what it was like to be a firefighter, police officer, mail person, lawyer, librarian, and construction worker.

Our teacher took us to the library so we could learn about more careers. I was disappointed because there weren't any books on the job I wanted.

I asked the librarian, “Are these all the books you have?”

She said there was information on the computer, and she showed me how to search for my career.

Nothing came up.

“I can't find anything about my career,” I told my teacher.

“What career is it?” she asked.

“I want to be a magician,” I told her.

She looked a little surprised. That's probably because I'm pretty quiet and shy.

“Really? Interesting! I think the librarian and I can find something for you,” my teacher said.

The next day there were some papers on my desk. It was a couple of magazine articles about being a magician. Yes! This was going to be very helpful.

In two weeks, we had to give a short presentation about what we wanted to be when we grew up. It was kind of like a show and tell but about a job we wanted to do. What my teacher didn't know was that I actually knew a magician.

"Aunt Maggie, I am doing a presentation on being a magician. I wondered if you could help?" I asked her.

"Really! That's awesome! I'd be happy to help!" she said giving me a high five.

See, Aunt Maggie is a magician. She is also a doctor. She learned magic to help little kids when they were scared about getting a shot or anything like that. When my cousin fell off his bike and broke his collar bone, Aunt Maggie was there doing magic for him.

Aunt Maggie said I could come over to her house so she could help me. She is the best aunt in the world!

When I was little, she would do magic tricks for me. When I told her I wanted to learn magic, she began to teach me how to do simple magic tricks. It was so much fun to do!

Aunt Maggie cooked us some dinner while I worked on a poster. She said, "So you know there are rules about being a magician, right?" I nodded.

"Yes, don't do a magic trick and then show people how it's done," I replied.

"That's right," she replied. "What else?"

“Well, if someone really wants to be a magician and does a lot of homework on it like I did, then you can share some simple tricks with them because they are a magician in training,” I told her.

“Okay, good,” she nodded. She finished making spaghetti and we sat down to eat.

“So what else do you need to do for this assignment?” Aunt Maggie asked.

“First, I have to tell my class what I want to be when I grow up. Then I have to describe the job. Then I have to share a few interesting facts about it. I also have to have my poster with some information on it,” I explained.

“Have you thought about those interesting facts yet?” she asked me.

“Well, I was going to talk about you being a doctor and that you learned magic to make little kids feel better when they were sick or hurt,” I told her. “I also wanted to talk about Houdini.”

“I doubt anyone knows much about Houdini in your age group,” she told me.

I said, “I did a little research on the great magicians so I thought I would talk about him.”

She told me that I was on the right track. Then I explained that I would do a few magic tricks.

“What a great idea,” she said.

Then it was time to do my presentation.

“Break a leg,” Aunt Maggie said the night before I had to do my presentation. “How do you feel about doing it? I know you get a little nervous sometimes.”

“When I put on my cape and top hat, I don’t feel as scared,” I told her.

She gave me a big hug and wished me luck.

The next day I was the last one to give the presentation. After seeing the other ones, I felt pretty good. I’m not the only kid who gets nervous when talking to a group all by myself. When I stood in front of the class, I felt like I was someone else. It was a little like magic.

I started with saying, ‘Abracadabra!’

That got a laugh. I felt better already!

I went through the information and showed my poster. I did a few magic tricks, and the class seemed amazed.

After my little tricks, I thought it would be funny to tell them I would do my final trick.

“Now, this magician will disappear! Abracadabra” Then I did by removing my cape and hat and sitting back at my desk.

My teacher said it was excellent and was the most fun presentation she had ever seen.



Storytelling Contest

Invitational Meet 2024-25

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Grades 2 and 3

by Sherri Maret

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1. In the narrator’s classroom, it is career day. When the narrator arrives at the library to research careers, they do not see books about becoming a magician.
2. The narrator receives information on becoming a magician from their teacher and the librarian. The narrator must prepare a presentation on their career choice for their class.
3. The narrator’s Aunt Maggie is both a doctor and a magician. She learned magic to help her patients feel more comfortable. Aunt Maggie teaches the narrator a few tricks for their presentation.
4. The narrator is nervous for the presentation, but after putting on a cape and top hat and saying “abracadabra!”, they feel more confident.
5. The narrator’s teacher says it was the most fun presentation she had ever seen.



Storytelling Contest

Invitational Meet 2024-25

“Summer at the Lake”

Grades 2 and 3

by Sherri Maret

When school started, my teacher asked everyone in the class to write about something that had happened during the summer.

She said she wanted it to be a story. It could be funny or maybe something that happened when we learned something new. I thought about my time at the lake with my family.

Summer started and my mom and dad said we were going to a cabin and having a family reunion there. I was so excited! All my cousins would be there. I have eleven of them. Three are babies, five of us are in elementary school, and the rest are in junior high or high school.

“All my cousins will be there?” I asked.

“All of them,” mom said and smiled at me because she knew this was a big deal.

Our whole family had never been together at one time.

“Where will everyone sleep?” I asked.

“There is a bunkhouse for the older kids including you. The younger kiddos will be with their moms and dads,” she explained. “Grandma and Grandpa will be there too.”

Wow, this is going to be awesome! Then dad said something that made my heart pound.

“We need to get to the pool so we can make sure you’re comfortable in the lake,” he said.

Oh NO! You see, I was a little afraid of swimming. That’s not true. I am a lot afraid of swimming.

I remember falling into the pool when I was four and I sank. My dad grabbed me and pulled me up. It was scary!

That night I didn’t sleep very well. I decided I didn’t want to go.

The next morning my mom and dad talked about when my swim lessons would start.

“I don’t feel good,” I told them.

My mom said that she knew I wasn’t too comfortable in the pool, but she wanted to make sure I knew the basics.

Dad said that if I didn’t want to go into the lake, that was okay. He did want me to try the lessons and know how to float if I ever fell into the water.

I know that makes sense, but I was still afraid.

On the first day of swim lessons, I saw a kid I knew from school. I was surprised he didn’t like the water either.

Then our swim teacher showed up.

“Aloha! I’m Koa. I grew up in beautiful Hawaii. I was born swimming,” he said. We all laughed. He was funny.

He went through some rules and then told us to get into the shallow end and hang on to the side of the pool. He kept me laughing which made me forget that I didn't like being in water.

He showed us how to put our faces under water and blow bubbles. We learned to float on our backs and stomachs. The lesson ended so quickly.

"OK! Great job everyone! I think we may have some future Olympic swimmers in this class," he said. That made us all laugh again.

My mom read a book during the lesson and watched me some of the time. She smiled and waved when she saw that Koa had said we could go rinse off in the showers.

"That wasn't so bad, was it?" she asked.

"No. Koa is funny," I said as I wrapped my towel around me.

I didn't love the pool but now I didn't hate it either. I think Koa being funny helped a lot.

The next lesson was about the same.

"Okay. Everyone hold on to the kick board and see how fast you can get to the other side," Koa said and then blew the whistle.

We all kicked like crazy, and I didn't come in last.

"Nice work, everyone! Now let's do some review drills," Koa called.

At the end of the lesson he said, "I think tomorrow is a good day to do the first jumps into the deep end."

I got a funny feeling in my stomach, but it didn't hurt too much. Maybe I could do this.

Koa knew that some of us were a little nervous, so he showed us some of his amazing dives off the high board. He told us, "I've got to be honest. The first jump off the high diving board was scary for me. Now I can't imagine being scared doing something I love."

Everyone did great in the deep end. The rest of the lessons were fun, and I decided I was sad that they were ending.

Finally! The time had come to pack up to go to the lake. My family was one of the first ones there.

"Aloha!" I said to my grandparents and gave them both hugs.

They showed us where we were sleeping. They had been swimming and asked us to come down to the dock.

"You don't have to change unless you want to," my grandmother said. She knew how I had felt about swimming.

I surprised them when I did a cannonball off the dock! I am so glad that I learned to swim! I'm telling you this because I learned that if you're afraid of something, it is best to face that fear. If I can do it, so can you.



Storytelling Contest

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Directions to Judges: Each speaker must include at least one of the following elements from the story in his or her presentation. Words may vary. It is up to the judge to decide if the speaker has included one of the elements.

1. The narrator must write a story about their summer. They decide to write about going to the lake with their family.
2. The narrator and their family, including their eleven cousins, are going to a cabin on the lake and having a family reunion.
3. The narrator’s parents want the narrator to learn to swim so that they can have fun swimming in the lake. The narrator is nervous and scared to be going in the water after sinking in a pool as a child.
4. The narrator takes swim lessons with Koa, who is Hawaiian. Koa is funny and makes the narrator more comfortable swimming, diving, and being around the water.
5. When the narrator arrives at the lake, they do a cannonball off the dock to show off their newly learned swimming and diving skills. The narrator is happy to have overcome their fear of swimming.



Storytelling Contest

Fall/Winter District 2024-25

“Whoppers”

Grades 2 and 3

by Sherri Maret

Have you ever had a friend or relative who was always making up wild stories?

I remember when my teacher read the story, The Boy Who Cried Wolf, and that is a little like a cousin of mine.

Last summer, my cousin, J.J. got a little too crazy telling made-up stories pretending they were real. Some of my friends at school said that he was telling lies.

Here's what happened last summer.

Some of my friends and I went to a fun day camp. J.J. was going too.

My mom dropped me off and I had my lunch and backpack. We were told to bring our swim stuff every day. There wasn't a pool. We were told there would be water sports. I was super excited.

J.J. and I are the same age, so we were going to be in the same group.

“Campers!” yelled one of the leaders. “Look around and find your leader. You are grouped by age. We all have a room for each group but when we are outside we may be together again.”

I saw my group and there was J.J. I said hi and asked how his summer was going.

“Okay. I wish space camp wasn't cancelled. I would rather be there,” he told me.

Now I knew that this was made up and you want to know why. He is always saying this kind of thing. I just rolled my eyes and looked around at the other campers.

Our leader got us in a circle, and we had to say our name and tell a little bit about ourselves. J.J. again said he was supposed to go to space camp. No one knew him so they believed him. They were excited to learn more about it.

We went to a room and put our backpacks and lunches away. The leader said we were going outside for the morning and then come in when it got hot.

“First up is some soccer fun,” the leader told us. She said to line up and do a few drills. After that we got together with another class and split into teams. Our leader asked for two players to be the goalies. J.J. volunteered because he wasn’t good at dribbling.

We played and every shot on our goal got past J.J. His excuses were:

“Sorry. The sun is so bright I can’t see very well. I should have brought my sunglasses.”

“Oops! I was distracted because I saw an eagle fly by.”

“I would have caught that one, but I didn’t see that kick coming because Casey was blocking my view.”

“I thought I saw something shiny in the sky and thought it might be a shuttle or something.”

Pretty soon the team realized J.J. wasn’t fun to have on the team.

We took a break for drinks and a snack. Then it was time for water sports, so we changed into swimsuits.

We could choose different things, and I chose to get a giant squirter and goggles and have some fun.

I told J.J., “You need to quit saying crazy stuff. No one wants to be around you because of it.”

After I told him that, I saw that he was alone a lot of the time.

We went inside and ate lunch. After that we played board games. J.J. talked about what he would have been doing at space camp. The other kids ignored him.

The rest of his day didn't look good to me.

The next morning my mom picked up J.J. to go to camp. We talked a little before we got dropped off.

"Do you like the camp?" I asked him.

"Not really. No one likes me," he said.

"Maybe if you would quit telling those crazy stories it would be better. No one likes it. Just try it. I've told you this before, but you ignored me," I told him.

Our leader told us we were mixing things up again and we were doing groups of four. We were doing timed obstacle courses.

The team with J.J. ended up doing the best.

"Hey! You did great!" I told him.

"My team is the best team! YES! We were on fire!" he told me with a big smile.

"Did you tell any crazy stories to the others on your team?" I asked.

"No. I was too busy having fun and winning," he replied.

I told him, "My mom always has said that the best person to be is your true self."

J.J. replied, "I think she is right. Also, thanks for helping me. I think I'll have more fun here being the true me."

And he did.



Storytelling Contest

Fall/Winter District 2024-25

“Whoppers”

Grades 2 and 3

by Sherri Maret

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Directions to Judges: Each speaker must include at least one of the following elements from the story in his or her presentation. Words may vary. It is up to the judge to decide if the speaker has included one of the elements.

1. The narrator has a cousin named J.J. who tells made-up stories but pretends they're real.
2. J.J. and the narrator go to summer camp together. J.J. tells the narrator he wishes he was at space camp instead. The narrator knows that this is another made-up story.
3. J.J. tells the other campers about space camp. The kids believe him and want to be friends, but then J.J. makes excuses for playing soccer poorly, all of which are made-up stories. The campers get tired of J.J. lying.
4. The narrator tells J.J. to stop saying made-up stuff if he wants people to like him.
5. J.J. plays with the other campers and doesn't tell any stories, he just has fun and plays along. His team wins at an obstacle course and J.J. learns to just be himself.



Storytelling Contest

Fall/Winter District 2024-25

“Flat Tire”

Grades 2 and 3

by Sherri Maret

When my friend knocked on my door to see if I could go out and play, she had bad news for me.

“When I got my bike out to ride, I saw that your tire is flat,” Terri said.

“I need to check my bike,” I called to my mom.

I followed Terri to the bike rack. Yep, I had a flat.

“Just my luck. We are rushing to get packed up for our move to the new house.”

“When is the truck coming?” asked Terri. I told her tomorrow we were packing the truck to move all the big stuff.

“I’m going to miss you,” Terri told me. “What’s your house like?”

“Since I’m not changing schools, we’ll still see each other,” I said.

I described my house which has a big yard and was only a couple of blocks from our school.

“We’ll still see each other. I’m sure our moms won’t mind getting us together over the summer.”

Terri said, “It sounds really nice.”

“Dad’s going to put up a tire swing for me,” I said.

I was so excited that my room was going to be so much bigger than the one I had.

Then Terri said, “You’ve had that bike for a while. Isn’t it too small for you?”

I had been thinking the same thing. My grandmother told me I was growing like a weed and then took me to get some more pants.

I really wanted a bike for my birthday but that was a long time to wait. Summer wouldn’t be great without a bike to ride. It also wasn’t easy to pedal since I grew so much.

“I need to go finish packing. See you later,” I said.

While I walked back to our apartment, I wondered if summer was going to be awful. My bike had a flat and was too small. Then I had a terrible thought. What if there weren’t any kids in my neighborhood? I became a little worried.

Terri’s mom and my mom wouldn’t be happy driving back and forth so we could play.

I walked in the door and my mom asked, “What’s up with your bike?”

I told her about the flat and she said we could work to get it fixed after the move. I sighed but was okay with that. I went to finish packing my clothes.

Mom called out, “Ready for lunch?” I was, so we got out paper plates and made sandwiches.

“What do you think about having a pizza move-in party tomorrow night?” she asked. “Then we will work on unpacking the days following.” I thought that was a great idea.

The next day was crazy!

My dad asked, “What do you think of your room?”

“It’s awesome!” He smiled and got back to work.

The movers put in the furniture, and I helped move boxes to the rooms where they belonged.

“Your bike is in the garage. We’ll get it fixed soon,” my father promised.

I still had been thinking about a new bike. That night we had pizza and a movie. My little brother fell asleep before the ending. We were all pretty tired.

The next few days we got a lot of stuff unpacked. I kept my eyes open for kids on my street but didn’t see any. I was beginning to feel worried that there were just a bunch of old people on my street.

Dad went to the store to get a few things. He surprised me when he handed me a new tube for my bike tire.

“Thanks!” That evening we fixed it in under an hour.

On Saturday I wanted a break. “Mom! Can I explore a little while?”

Mom said, “Why don’t we all go? I saw a couple of garage sales so maybe we can meet our neighbors.”

I had a little money just in case I found something good to buy. My little brother was happy to explore, too.

Then I saw someone I knew!

“Hey Marco!” I waved at a boy who was in a grade older than me. He lived at the end of the block and had a lot of stuff out for a garage sale.

He seemed happy that I was his new neighbor. At one time we were on the same soccer team. We talked as I looked at what they were selling. One thing was a bike that would be perfect for me!

“How much is this bike?” I asked Marco and his mom. She told me but it was a little too much.

Marco’s mom asked, “Do you like it?”

I nodded but told her I didn’t have enough money. I also told her I had a bike, but it was too small.

Marco showed me his soccer goal set up in his backyard. My summer was looking better now!

I saw my mom and Marco’s mom talking. My mom called me to come over. Marco’s mom asked, “Would you want to trade your bike for this one? Instead of selling Marco’s bike, we’ll just sell yours.”

“That would be GREAT!” I was so surprised and happy. Marco walked with me and my mom to our house to get my bike. I tested my new bike and it felt just right.

After Marco took my bike, waved, and left, my mom said, “That was really nice of Louisa and Marco to do. Why don’t we invite them over for a spaghetti dinner once we get settled?”

I agreed. “Mom, Marco said he needed to work on their garden for his mom. Would it be okay to go and help him? Then he can play sooner.” My mom thought that was a great idea.

I was glad my summer looked like it was going to be much more fun than I had thought!



Storytelling Contest

Fall/Winter District 2024-25

“Flat Tire”

Grades 2 and 3

by Sherri Maret

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1. The narrator is going to ride bikes with their friend Terri. Terri points out that their bike tire is flat and that the bike is too small for the narrator.
2. The narrator is moving tomorrow and doesn't have time to fix the flat, so they cannot ride with Terri. They are sad about not being able to ride for a while.
3. After moving into their new house, the narrator is worried that there won't be any kids in their new neighborhood.
4. The narrator decides to explore their new neighborhood and visit some garage sales. The narrator runs into a friend named Marco who used to play on the same soccer team.
5. Marco's mother Louisa is selling a bike and offers to trade the narrator for their bike, since the new bike is a better size. The narrator is very happy to have a new bike and to have a friend in the neighborhood.



Storytelling Contest

Spring District 2024-25

“Water Park”

Grades 2 and 3

by Kathryn Gonzales

It was one of the hottest summers the kids had experienced, and the Johnson family was ready for a day out of fun.

Mom, Dad, Lily, and Eric were heading to the biggest water park in the area. The kids had been looking forward to this day for weeks and could barely sit still on the ride over.

As they pulled into the parking lot, Eric called out with excitement, “Look at the slides!” He pointed to the large structures towering over the park walls.

Lily bounced in her seat, exclaiming, “I can’t wait for the lazy river and the wave pool!”

Once parked, they grabbed their bags and set off towards the entrance. They were greeted by the sounds of splashing water and laughter as they walked through the gates and settled at their table.

“Let’s start with the big slide!” Eric said, tugging at his dad’s hand.

Dad chuckled, “Alright buddy. Let’s do it.”

The Johnsons made their way to the elevated water slide. Lily and Eric raced ahead with their bare feet slapping against the wet pavement. They climbed the stairs, hearts pounding with anticipation, as they climbed higher and higher.

Once at the top, it was finally their turn.

“Ready. Set. Go!” Dad yelled, and they were off, sliding down and screaming with delight with every twist and turn before reaching the pool below.

“Again!” Eric shouted, already running back to the stairs.

“How about we try something different first?” Mom suggested. “What about the lazy river?”

With the rest of the family in agreement they headed to the lazy river. After hopping into their inner tubes, they let the gentle current carry them along.

Lily and Eric splashed each other playfully, while mom and dad floated side by side holding hands and relaxing in the warm sun.

“This is so nice,” Mom said, closing her eyes and coasting along.

After a relaxing float, the siblings were ready for more action.

“I think it’s time for the wave pool!” Lily said, her eyes wide with excitement. They rushed to the pool just in time for the next set of waves to start.

The water began to rise and fall, creating captivating waves for everyone to jump and ride.

Eric and Lily held hands, laughing as they tried to jump over each wave.

“Watch out!” Dad shouted playfully as a big wave knocked him off his feet.

Mom giggled and splashed him. “You’re such a big kid,” she teased.

Once they had their fill of the wave pool, the Johnsons decided it was time for lunch. They headed back to their table that was covered by a giant umbrella and unpacked their picnic.

Sandwiches, fruit, chips and cookies were devoured quickly as they recapped their favorite parts of the day so far.

“I loved the big slide, I can’t wait to do it again,” Eric said through a mouthful of sandwich.

“The lazy river was my favorite,” Lily added.

“Well, there’s still more to explore,” Dad said, standing up and stretching.

“How about we try the obstacle course next?” The obstacle course was a sequence of floating beams, ropes and slides.

The kids darted ahead eager to show off their skills. Eric was the first to take on the beams, his arms outstretched for balance. Wobbling, but not falling, Eric was successful.

Lily climbed the rope wall with determination, then slid down the other side with a celebratory yell. Dad followed behind, helping and encouraging them when needed.

“Good Job, Lily!” He said, while high fiving her as she completed the course.

Once the obstacle course was completed, they decided to end their day with one last ride down the family raft slide. They all climbed into the large inflatable raft and held on tight as it hurdled down the slide, twisting and turning.

When the raft reached the bottom and made its big splash into the huge pool, Eric shouted “That was awesome!”

Everyone laughed in agreement, all of them dripping wet.

As the sun began to go down, the family gathered their things and made their way out of the park.

“Today was so fun,” Lily said, holding her mom’s hand.

“It really was,” Mom agreed, smiling at her family.

“We’ll have to come back again soon.” Dad wrapped an arm around Mom’s shoulders. “Best family day yet,” he said.

Eric nodded, “Definitely”.

They walked to their car, the sounds of the water park fading behind them, already looking forward to their next family adventure.



Storytelling Contest

Spring District 2024-25

“Water Park”

Grades 2 and 3

by Kathryn Gonzales

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1. The Johnson family decides to go to a water park to have some fun.
2. Lily and Eric and their parents explore the park and ride the big slide, float the lazy river, and splash in the wave pool, having a great time.
3. When they take a break for lunch, both kids express how much fun they're having and what they want to do with their afternoon.
4. After lunch, the family decide to go on the obstacle course, followed by another trip to the big slide.
5. The whole family had a great day at the water park.



Storytelling Contest

Spring District 2024-25

“Genie in a Jar”

Grades 2 and 3

by Kathryn Gonzales

It was a sunny afternoon when James, Sarah, and Cody decided to explore the old, abandoned house at the edge of town. As they approached it, they saw the overgrown yard was thick, and the exterior of the house was covered in vines.

The house was a place of many rumors and stories, but the people in the town were hesitant to believe.

“Come on, let’s see what’s inside” James urged, sparking with excitement as he waved his friends forward.

Cody and Sara nodded, and the three children crept through the creaky old gate, pushing open the damaged front door.

Once inside they couldn’t escape the dust, and the floorboards groaned with every step they took.

“Look at this place,” Cody said quietly, but his voice echoed and carried in the large empty hall. “I bet we’re the first people to be here in a long time.”

The friends decided to split up and explore to cover more ground. Sarah found an old, tattered book in the living room, while Cody discovered a broken rocking chair. James, on the other hand, was feeling brave and ventured into the basement where he saw it.

It was an old jar, with an elaborate design just sitting on top of a crate.

“Guys, you have to come see this!” James called out to his friends with a slight tremble in his voice from the excitement.

Sarah and Cody rushed down the stairs as fast as their feet would allow. Curious about his findings, they gathered around the jar examining its carvings.

“What do you think it is?” Sarah asked, brushing the dust off the lid.

“I don’t know” James replied. “But let’s open it and find out.”

With a little effort, the three friends managed to pry off the lid. Almost immediately a large blue cloud of smoke began to fill the room. The children stepped back, coughing and waving their hands through the air to clear it.

As the smoke began to settle and clear, a figure emerged—a tall, magnificent genie in a flowing robe that had a similar design to the jar they had just found.

“Who has awakened me?” The genie exclaimed, her voice echoing in the basement.

“We did,” Cody said as he took a slight step forward, his eyes wide with wonder. “Are you a real Genie?”

“Indeed, I am,” the genie replied. “And as your reward for freeing me from my jar, I shall grant you three wishes. Choose wisely.”

The children huddled together, minds racing with possibilities.

“Our first wish should be something incredible, something all three of us can enjoy,” Sarah suggested.

Cody and James nodded in agreement.

James turned towards the genie. “How about a tree house with everything we need for our adventures?”

“We can put it in my back yard,” Cody quietly chimed in.

The genie smirked and waved her hand, and a large flash of light took over the basement. The children covered their eyes and when the light faded, the friends found themselves in Cody’s backyard standing in front of a grand tree house, complete with everything they needed to stay and play or go out into the world and explore.

“Wow, this is perfect!” James exclaimed.

“Thank you, Genie!” Sarah added, bouncing and clapping her hands together with joy.

As they climbed and explored their new tree house, Cody reminded them, “We still have two wishes left and should start thinking about the next one.”

James turned towards the others, hesitant of what they would think and asked, “What if...we could fly?”

Sarah and Cody looked at each other for a moment, then looked back at James with wide eyes.

“Yes!” Sarah yelled. “That would be amazing!”

Cody nodded and they looked to the genie.

“We wish we could fly,” James said. The genie nodded and waved her hand again.

The children started to feel a sensation in their bodies when suddenly they noticed they were floating above the ground. They called out with joy as one by one they soared around the tree house doing flips and tricks.

“This is wild!” Cody shouted, doing a loop the loop.

“We’re like superheroes!” Sarah added while gliding through the air.

As the sun began to set, the friends landed gently on the ground, ecstatic but knowing they had one wish to fulfill.

“What about the last wish?” James asked, looking at his friends.

Sarah thought for a moment and said, “We should wish for something that helps everyone, not just us.”

Cody agreed and suggested, “What if we wish for the old house to be restored and turned into a place or the people in the town to come? Maybe a community center, that way, everyone can enjoy it.” James and Sarah smiled.

“That’s the best idea we’ve had all day.” James said. The children turned to the genie. “For our last wish, we wish for this old house to be turned into a community center.”

The Genie nodded and waved her hand one last time.

The children watched in awe as the old, deteriorating house transformed. The vines fell away, windows repaired themselves and just like that, you would never have known an old crumbling house was where the new community center stood.

“Thank you, Genie!” The children said smiling up at the majestic figure.

The genie replied, “You have chosen wisely, may your generosity bring joy to many”.

With the final wish complete the genie disappeared in a puff of blue smoke.

The three friends took a moment looking at each other in amazement of what just happened.

“Let’s go tell everyone!” Sarah said, and the three took off racing into town ready to share the news of their adventure and the community center with their friends and family.



Storytelling Contest

Spring District 2024-25

“Genie in a Jar”

Grades 2 and 3

by Kathryn Gonzales

Directions to Contest Directors: Give a copy of this sheet to each judge before the contest begins.

Directions to Judges: Each speaker must include at least one of the following elements from the story in his or her presentation. Words may vary. It is up to the judge to decide if the speaker has included one of the elements.

1. James, Sarah, and Cody decided to explore the old, abandoned house on the edge of town. The house is rumored to hold many secrets.
2. Inside, the house is very dusty and creaky. While exploring, James finds an elaborate jar and yells for Sarah and Cody to come see it.
3. The kids open the jar and a genie appears. The genie promises the kids 3 wishes for freeing her from the jar.
4. The kids wish for a new treehouse in Cody’s backyard with their first wish. With the second wish, they wish that they could fly.
5. After flying around, they decide that for their final wish, they would like the abandoned house to be repaired and turned into a community center.