

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Story 29

Part 1 of 5

Date: _____

“Operation Romeo Treehouse”

Part 1 of 5: A Secret Performance

Directions

1. Read the story
2. Find the five errors
3. Mark the errors using the key

It was mostly Malina’s idea. According to her, you could only feel the full effect of a Shakespearean play, like *romeo & Juliet*, which she’d just finished studying in freshman English, if you saw it performed. Their goal was to stop Ryan McKay from building Fairview Heights Luxury Condominiums on the site of Fairview Middle School and the haunted forest. To do this, they needed to tell the board of education the story of Martin Van Buren and Thomas Smith’s cabin. No, not tell, insisted Malina. The story must be *performed*.

The performance should be a surprise too, so it in secret must be planned. One afternoon in their own English class, Jamie and Charles were whispering about Operation Romeo Treehouse, the codename for the secret performance. Their teachers was out sick, and since Ms. Williams was the substitute, Jamie wasn’t trying all that hard to stay quiet.

“Charles, you *have* to play Zeke,” she said. “I’m Sarah, Cooper is Thomas, Rodgers is Martin, and Malina is the narrator.”

“Zeke?” said Ms. Williams, appeared behind them. “Like from the Legend of the Lone Candle?”

“The very same,” sneered an eavesdropping Kevin W. one desk over. “They seem to be planning some sort of skit. Something called Operation Domino Beachouse.”

“Can it, Kevin W!” Jamie shouted. “Ms. Williams tell Charles he has to do it.”

But Ms. Williams just smirked and strolled away. Charles looked neither encouraged nor amused about his role in the secret performance.

Key

-  - Spelling error
-  - Add punctuation
-  - Capitalize letter
-  - Remove word
-  - Wrong word
-  - Move word
-  - Make letter lower case

Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Question

What is Operation Romeo Treehouse?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 29

Part 2 of 5

“Operation Romeo Treehouse”

Part 2 of 5: I Quit

“Charles, you’ve got to shriek louder than that,” said Jamie.
“The audience really has to feel our fear in this scene. Right, Malina?”

“She’s right, Charles,” Malina agreed. “From the top!”

They were in the auditorium late Wednesday night, several ours into a rehearsal of Operation Romeo Treehouse. Malina, narrator and director, stood at the front of the stage, facing her actors. Rodgers as Martin Van Buren, in a bald cap with white hair on the sides, and Cooper as Thomas, a long gray beard taped to his face, stood stage right. Jamie and Charles were stage left in their Sarah and Zeke costumes. The entire cast was clearly exhausted, but Charles looked truly peeved.

“Sarah and Zeke tiptoed into the forest, when suddenly a wild porcupines attacked!”

Jamie dramatically tossed herself to the floor, while Charles let out a half-hearted whimper.

“Come on, Charles!” Jamie shouted, breaking character. “I know you can do better than that. Ive heard you shriek in real life like a million times.”

The high schoolers chuckled. Charles’s face burned bright red. “You know what?” he said. “I quit.”

“What?” Jamie popped up. “If you quit, we won’t be able to perform for the board. Fairview Middle will get knocked down.”

“I know,” Charles replied. “And next year we’ll go to Kettle Cross while they bild a new school. I’ll get to be with my friend Raymond, who’s actually nice to me.”

As Charles toward the exit stomped, not even Rodgers or Cooper could call him back.

Directions

1. Read the story
2. Find the five errors
3. Mark the errors using the key

Key

- Spelling error
- Add punctuation
- Capitalize letter
- Remove word
- Wrong word
- Move word
- Make letter lower case

Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Question

Do you support the decision Charles makes in Part 2?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 29

Part 3 of 5

“Operation Romeo Treehouse”

Part 3 of 5: Jamie’s Problem

Directions

1. Read the story
2. Find the five errors
3. Mark the errors using the key

For Jamie, Ms. Williams had become something like a teacher/mentor/big sister/sounding board. On Thursday morning, the day after Charles quit Operation Romeo Treehouse, Jamie got to school early and went right to Ms. Williams’s room.

“Let me get this straight,” said Ms. Williams. “You, Charles your brother, and his friends are planning to perform a skit at tomorrow’s board of education meeting. You’re hoping that the board will be so moved by the performance that they’ll put a stop to Fairview Heights Luxury condominiums?”

“Correct,” Jamie replied. “Accept Charles quit, so now we have no one to play Zeke.”

Ms. Williams eased back in her chair and studied Jamie, clicking her pen methodically.

“No problem,” she said finally. “Just find someone else to fill the role.”

“Yeah, but Charles is my friend. He was really mad. I shouldn’t have—”

“I know,” Ms. Williams interrupted. “Kevin W.”

“Ew!”

“Think about it. This is supposed to be a secret, right? You can’t risk telling anyone else, and Kevin W. about the skit already knows. He overheard you and Charles whispering about it yesterday.”

“But it’s *Kevin W.*”

“Ask him today at lunch,” Ms. Williams said. She seemed to have already solved Jamie’s problem for her.

Key

- Spelling error
- Add punctuation
- Capitalize letter
- Remove word
- Wrong word
- Move word
- Make letter lower case

Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Question

According to Ms. Williams, why is Kevin W. the right person to replace Charles?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 29

Part 4 of 5

“Operation Romeo Treehouse”

Part 4 of 5: The Politicians

Directions

1. Read the story
2. Find the five errors
3. Mark the errors using the key

Although Jamie had defeated him in the race for sixth grade class president, Kevin W. was still a shrewd politician. His I on the next election cycle, he greeted sixth graders at the cafeteria entrance most lunch periods, shaking hands and flashing his forced toothy grin. That’s where Jamie met him on Thursday afternoon.

“We need to talk,” she said, yanking him aside when he extended his hand.

“Hey!” Kevin W. shouted. “I’m laying the groundwork for next years campaign here.”

“I need a favor,” Jamie said. “How would you like to play a lead role in a play for the board of education?”

“Is this Operation Domino Beachhouse you’re talking about? What happened to Charles?”

“Shh! It doesn’t matter. The performance is tommorrow and hour last rehearsal is tonight. What do you say?”

Kevin W. crossed his arms and studied his political rival. The cafeteria was filling up, but the line at the vending machine was nonexistent.

“I’ll do it on one condition,” he said. “Polling shows that voter miss their favorite snack. You have to bring back *Inferno Snacks* and you have to tell everyone it was my idea.”

Jamie didn’t have the time or energy to negotiate. She grasped Kevin W.’s outstretched hand.

“Deal,” she said. “Rehearsal is in the auditorium at seven. Don’t be late.”

Key

- Spelling error
- Add punctuation
- Capitalize letter
- Remove word
- Wrong word
- Move word
- Make letter lower case

Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Question

Jamie and Kevin W. strike a deal. What is it?

Name: _____

Date: _____



Classroom Cereal

Story 29

Part 5 of 5

“Operation Romeo Treehouse”

Part 5 of 5: Sabotage

Directions

1. Read the story
2. Find the five errors
3. Mark the errors using the key

Kevin W. was on time for rehearsal, but he was late for the next day’s performance. *Very* late.

Inside Fairview City Hall, the board of education’s chamber was packed. Jamie, Cooper, Malina, and Rodgers stood in full costume at the front of the room. Their nameplates and microphones before them, the board members loomed above at their elevated mahogany desks. Spectators filled rows of metal chairs. Jamie spotted Charles near the back. He grimaced and turned away when he caught Jamie’s eye. Ms. Williams was in the front row. Why was she sitting next to Ryan McKay.

Finally, Kevin W. burst into the chamber.

“So sorry,” he whispered. “Ms. Williams gave me a last-minute detention for no good reason. I skipped out almost an our early.”

Ms. Williams? Jamie looked at her favorite teacher, who couldn’t hide her shock at seeing Kevin W. Then Jamie watched Ms. Williams’s mouth twist into a sinister smile. It couldn’t be. Ms. Williams had tried to sabotage operation Romeo Treehouse.

The next fifteen minutes were a blur. Somehow, Jamie was able to execute her role as Sarah flawlessly, and the performance went just as planned. They showed the board that the haunted forest had too much history to be knocked down for some flashy condos.

“It’s decided, the board chairman declared when the vote was complete. “For the condominiums project, the forest will go untouched. The demolition of Fairview Middle School is still scheduled for three weeks from today.”

He smacked his gavel, bringing the meeting to a close. For the second time in twenty minute, Jamie felt her stomach drop to the floor.

Key

-  - Spelling error
-  - Add punctuation
-  - Capitalize letter
-  - Remove word
-  - Wrong word
-  - Move word
-  - Make letter lower case

Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Questions

Why is Kevin W. late to the performance?

What does the board of education decide?