

Name: _____

Date: _____



Classroom Cereal

Story 16

Part 1 of 5

“The Corn Muffin Incident of 1997”

Part 1 of 5: Best Friends

Directions

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

Malina couldn't wait to get back to school. After meeting Howard McKay at Nancy's Cafe, she couldn't stop wondering about his story. Howard's son had nearly died, Ryan McKay, when he was a student at Fairview Middle School. It happened during an event Malina had heard teachers mention but otherwise knew nothing about — the Corn Muffin Incident of 1997. Malina knew just the person to ask about it — Mrs. Rose, Fairview Middle's beloved front office secretary.

“Of course I remember the Corn Muffin Incident of 1997, my dear,” Mrs. Rose told Malina on Monday morning. “That was one of the most frightening days in the history of Fairview Middle School. You know, one of our teachers was a student here around that time. She may have known Ryan McKay. Do you know Ms. Martinez?”

Malina thanked Mrs. Rose and sprinted out of the office and down the hall. Malina has forgotten that Ms. Martinez, one of her favorite teachers from seventh grade, had been a student at Fairview Middle in the late 90s.

“Oh my gosh, Ryan McKay?” Ms. Martinez said to Malina a few minutes later. “I haven't heard that name in years. He was one of my best friends. Take a seat. I'll tell you what happened to Ryan on that day back in 1997.”

Key

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

Checklist

1. ☐
2. ☐
3. ☐
4. ☐
5. ☐

Questions

Do you know people who were around in the late 90s? How old were they in 1997?

Ask your teacher

How was middle school in 1997 different than middle school today?

Name: _____

Date: _____



Classroom Cereal

Story 16

Part 2 of 5

“The Corn Muffin Incident of 1997”

Part 2 of 5: Game Boy

Directions

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

“Today,” the teacher announced, “we’ll be making corn muffins!”

It was an unseasonably warm February day in 1997. On the third floor of Fairview Middle School, the home economics classroom hummed with activity, Room 310. As the bell rang, some students shuffled in front of the shiny sinks and stoves of their kitchen stations. Others, who were depositing or retrieveing notes at the Spice Cabinet at the back of the classroom, scurried into the hallway. Ryan McKay discretely played his Game Boy Pocket, trying to keep it hidden from the teacher’s view.

“Ryan, can you hand me the canola oil?” someone asked a few minutes later. Without looking up from the Game Boy, Ryan reached into the cabinet next to him and handed his classmate a plastic bottle.

“Psssst. Ryan!” whispered someone at the door. “Can you drop this note at the Spice Cabinet for me?” It was Melissa Martinez a fellow seventh grader and one of Ryan’s best friends. Still playing his Game Boy, Ryan took the note from Melissa and returned to his station. He tossed the note on the counter.

About thirty minutes later, when the corn muffins were finished, Ryans attention was finally ripped from his Game Boy by the sound of someone choking.

“Gah!!!” a classmate coughed. “These muffins are disgusting!!! Ryan!!! You gave us liquid soap, not canola oil!!!”

As Ryan moved to help his choking classmate, smoke billowed over his shoulder. Melissa’s note had drifted onto the stove and set the counter on fire.

Key

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

Checklist

1. ☐
2. ☐
3. ☐
4. ☐
5. ☐

Question

Ryan is distracted by his Game Boy. What two problems did this cause?

Name: _____

Date: _____



Classroom Cereal

Story 16

Part 3 of 5

“The Corn Muffin Incident of 1997”

Part 3 of 5: Something Shiny

Directions

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

Eight minutes later, all of Fairview Middle School was outside on the soccer field.

“Come on, people! Keep moving! Seventh graders by the softball field! Eighth graders over here!” shouted Mr. Mellon, a young teacher He was trying to organize the students flooding out of the school, ushering them to their designated evacuation places. The students weren’t really listening to him, though. Most were migrateing toward the hangout spot known as the Backstop, the area behind the softball field’s home plate where students liked to carve their initials into the benches and trees. Ryan McKay was standing firmly in the middle of the field, still transfixed by his Game Boy.

“Come on, people!” Mr. Mellon continued. “This is *not* a drill!”

Suddenly, on this abnormally warm february day, the sun started dancing off something shiny. It reflected off the Game Boy’s screen and into Ryan’s eyes, distracting him from his game. Ryan tried to use his arms to block the glare, but it was no use. Finally, unable to ignore the glimmer, Ryan lifting his head. The shine was coming from the edge of the haunted forest. Curious, Ryan cautiously approached the mysterious twinkle. When he arrived at the forest’s edge, he nelt down and picked up the source of the shine. It was an old, but still clearly gold, coin.

Key

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

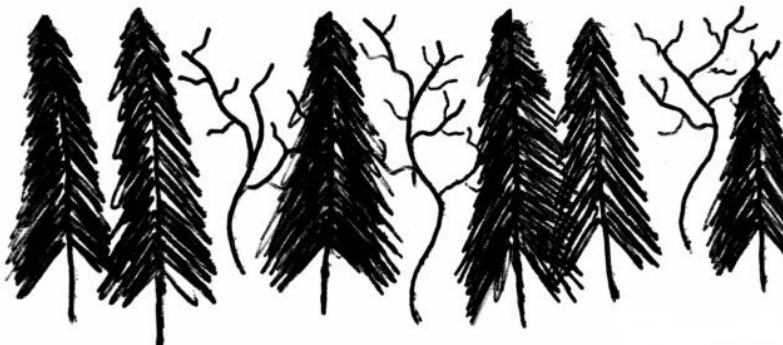
Checklist

1. ☐
2. ☐
3. ☐
4. ☐
5. ☐

Questions

What did Ryan find at the end of Part 3?

Did another character find something similar in an earlier story?



Name: _____

Date: _____



Classroom Cereal

Story 16

Part 4 of 5

“The Corn Muffin Incident of 1997”

Part 4 of 5: In the Haunted Forest

Directions

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

Rolling the coin through his fingers, Ryan discreetly looked over his shoulder. The rest of the School was still chaotically dispersed throughout the soccer field. Ryan stuck his Game Boy in his pocket and took a deep breath. Then he stepped into the haunted forest.

The forest's dense trees extinguished the sunlight. Only a few yards into the brush, Ryan could still hear the shrieks of his classmates but and the wails of fire engines beginning to arrive at Fairview Middle, but he could hardly see his own shoes. He gingerly took a step and snapped a stick. Suddenly, a frightened porcupine darted out of a bush. It shot its quills into Ryan's right hand. Ryan screamed and clutched his wrist. The coin fell to the forest floor.

With his throbbing hand, Ryan frantically swiped through the leaves and dirt, desperately looking for his fallen treasure. after a few minutes, Ryan stopped his search, defeated. When he looked up, he miraculously spotted another golden glimmer deep in the forest. Mesmerized, he pursued it. When he reached this second gold coin, Ryan picked it up and immediately spotted yet another golden flicker, this one even deeper in the forest. Soon, Ryan could no longer here the shrieks of his classmates or the wails of the fire engines. It was nighttime and he was lost deep in the haunted forest, with a throbbing, purple hand and a pocket heavy with gold coins.

Feeling dizzy, Ryan sat down against a tree. Just as he began to doze off, a beam of light cut through the darkness. It was a teacher coming toward him with a flashlight, Mr. Nitman.

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 clues in Part 4 suggest the forest really is haunted or in some way magical?

Name: _____

Date: _____



Classroom Cereal

Story 16

Part 5 of 5

“The Corn Muffin Incident of 1997”

Part 5 of 5: The Incident’s End

“Hang tight, Mr. McKay. You’ll be out of here soon,” Mr. Nitman said. He had Ryan slung over his shoulder, lugging the sick seventh grader through the forest. He noticed Ryan’s hand, which was purple, swollen, and certainly infected. Mr. Nitman could hear Ryan whimpering in pain. “You must be eating your Wheaties, Mr. McKay,” the teacher said. “You might weigh as much as I do. And you certainly carry a lot of change. For the video arcade, I suspect. I hear it jingling in your pocket. That must be five pounds worth of quarters.”

When they reached the edge of the field, Mr. Nitman put Ryan down. The field was dark and the students were gone. Some teachers, Ryan’s dad, and a few police officers were huddled with flashlights near the softball field. Ryan thanked Mr. Nitman and slowly meandered across the field toward the adults. Mr. Nitman noticed two items on the ground where he had placed Ryan. He nearly called after him, but he stopped when he saw what they were. One was a Game Boy Pocket. The other was a gold coin.

Malina was nearly falling out of her chair. “Where are Ryan now?” she demanded when Ms. Martinez finished her story.

“Not sure,” Ms. Martinez replied. “I haven’t seen him since high school.”

“Ms. Martinez, do you trust Mr. Nitman?”

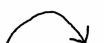
“Why do you ask?”

“There’s a treasure in the haunted forest. Cooper found a gold coin like Ryan’s a few months ago. He told Mr. Nitman about it. I know Mr. Nitman is after the treasure for himself.”

Directions

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

Key

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Checklist

1. ☐
2. ☐
3. ☐
4. ☐
5. ☐

Question

If you were Malina, what would you do next?