

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 28

Part 1 of 5

“The Little Magician”

Part 1 of 5: My Dear Thomas

Directions

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

Executive Mansion, Washington

April 11, 1839

My Dear Thomas,

How magnificent it will feel to be back in Fairview in only a few short days! My dear friend, I believe I have never been in greater need of the piece of your tiny hamlet and the seclusion of your wooded cabin. The pressures of this office have all but exhausted me. If only I could shut my eyes right here at my desk and, upon opening them, be seated in a rocking chair on your quiet porch looking out upon your tranquil river.

As it is, I must bear the carriage's slow toil north, through the forests and hills. Thankfully, those will be the only roads I will travel during this holiday. As mentioned in my last letter, after my week in Fairview, we'll be met near the river by a great wooden ship, which will then carry us both home to New York.

This office has indeed tired me, Thomas, and I must now make a confession. The business of government is still my chief love, but lately I have been spending an improper amount of time on my other great interesting. In fact, I will be bringing with me to Fairview something I have been working on lately, a project that gives me true excitement. I am eager to share it with you upon my arrival, but it must remain a secret us between.

Yours sincerely,
M. Van Buren

Key

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

Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Question

Why is Martin so excited to get to Fairview?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 28

Part 2 of 5

“The Little Magician”

Part 2 of 5: The Potion

Directions

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

The carriage rattled over the bumpy forest path, popping the president from his seat. Rubbing his hairless head where it had knocked against the carriage ceiling Martin ordered the driver to slow down. The horses relaxed their trot, and Martin settled into his seat. Finally in Fairview, finally on vacation, he gazed for a minute at the passing trees. Then he carefully reached into a wooden chest at his feet and removed a small bottle.

With the care of a surgeon, Martin removed the bottles cork. The liquid inside was an angry dark blue, like the ocean just before a storm. The carriage hit another bump. Martin gasped, squirming out of the way of a single drop of escaped liquid. The drop landed on the seat a inch from Martin’s lap. It fizzed and hissed, burning a tiny hole in the leather.

Martin ordered the carriage to a stop. He got out and discovered they were on a bridge spanning a small creek. Martin stepped to the edge of the bridge and plucked a needle from an overhanging pine tree. He dropped it in the bottle, turning the liquid a mellow sky blue. Unable to help himself, Martin tipped the bottle, spilling a few drops into the water below.

A sudden and brilliant flash of light illuminated the forest. Fish leaped from the creek, landing on the banks. A joy Martin watched as the fish, as if possessed by some unseen force, started flopping toward him in unison.

A girl named Sarah and a boy named Zeke were fishing nearby. They’d scene everything.

Key

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

Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Question

In Part 1, Martin mentioned a project he would be bringing to Fairview. What is that project?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 28 Part 3 of 5

“The Little Magician”

Part 3 of 5: Protect This Place

Directions

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

“Just imagine the possibilities, Thomas,” said Martin. “A potion that can make others do what you wish. You should have seen the way the fish came to me, after I merely pictured it in my mind!”

Four days after Martin arrived in Fairview, he and Thomas Smith were in rocking chairs on Thomas’s porch. Thomas, tired and gray at age 83, was gently rocking himself to and fro, listening more to the calls of the distant birds than to the ramblings of his presidential guest. Martin understand. He noticed Thomas was gazing upon the river, where in a few short days, there would appear the ship that would take Thomas away from Fairview, his home for the last 63 years.

“New York is where you were born, Martin said, “but this will always be your home.”

“A fine home,” Thomas whispered.

“And an idyllic country escape for every American president since John Adams,” Martin added. He placed the bottle of sky-blue potion on the table next to Thomas’s trusty candle. Always lit, even when there was no need for light, the candle was Thomas’s companion. “What is it that you wish, my friend?”

But a commotion and delayed Thomas’s answer. Out of nowhere, a porcupine darted from a nearby bush. It knocked into the table, leaving the candle undisturbed but spilling the sky-blue potion all over the porcupine’s back.

“Protect this place,” Thomas whispered.

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 is the power of Martin’s potion?

What is Thomas’s wish?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 28

Part 4 of 5

“The Little Magician”

Part 4 of 5: Scramble

“The potion!” Martin shouted, popping up from his rocking chair. Wild-eyed, he looked at the porcupine, which now had a sky-blue haze hovering around its spiky body. Just as the creature darted back into the brush, Thomas whispered something else.

Ship.”

Martin saw a white sail floating above the river like a low-hanging cloud. “Blasted ship!” he shouted. “It’s three days early. And it won’t wait, not even for me.”

His wild eyes shot from the ship to the forest and back to the ship. “Thomas, you must pack. Quickly. I’ll be back soon to help, but first I must track down that enchantment porcupine.”

With that, Martin set out into the woods. He’d been in the young forest before. On his first visit to Fairview, Thomas had taken him and Andrew Jackson on hunting expeditions. But that was years ago, and Martin had never navigated these trees by himself. Soon, he came upon a scene that made his blood run cold.

A young boy and girl both with a porcupine quill in the leg, were lying on the ground just inside the forest’s edge. Martin hoisted the children up, one on each shoulder, and lumbered back into the forest. When he reached the cabin, Thomas was ready to go. They wanted to ensure the children were okay, but there was no time. Martin placed them on the cabin floor, and he and Thomas raced to the ship.

On their way out, Martin didn’t notice a frog playing in the puddle of spilled potion. As it hopped about, sky-blue spots were beginning to appear on its head.

Directions

1. Read the story
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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 two animals got drenched with the potion?

Do you recognize these animals from any previous Classroom Cereal stories?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 28

Part 5 of 5

“The Little Magician”

Part 5 of 5: The Little Magician

Directions

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

Back at Nancy’s Cafe in modern-day Fairview, them all stared at Jeremy. He folded his hands on the table in front of him.

“Can anyone tell me,” he said, “Martin Van Buren’s nickname?”

“The Little Magician,” wispered an astonished Mr. Nitman.

“So Thomas Smith was innocent,” added Jamie. “He didn’t hurt Sarah and Zeke. The porcupine that got doused with Martin’s magic potion did.”

“Thomas wasn’t scary at all,” said Charles. He turned red, remembering high schoolers were around. “I mean, he was only so secretive because of his guests.”

“His *presidential* guests,” Cooper corrected, shaking Charles by the shoulders. “Not just Martin Van Buren, but all most every president before him too. Thomas’s cabin was their retreat.”

“The board of education is about to learn that the forest was a vacation spot for America’s earliest presidents,” said Malina. I’d like to see Ryan McKay knock it down after that.”

“Wait,” said Jamie. “The frogs at the end of the story. Is it possible they—”

“There’s no time,” her brotherly interrupted. “If we want to stop Ryan McKay, we’ve got to get to work.”

Key

- Spelling error
- Add punctuation
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Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Questions

How can the story of Martin Van Buren put a stop to Fairview Heights Luxury Condominiums?