

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 8

Part 1 of 5

“Duck Hunt Detention”

Part 1 of 5: Spring Break Surprise

Directions

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

Cooper, Malina, and Rodgers knew about a door behind the cafeteria that was always unlocked. On one of the last days of spring break, they snuck through the door, down the deserted hallways, and up to the third floor. The floors looked extra shiny and the halls smelled like the first day of school. The trio nudged open the door marked with the plastic anti-bullying poster and eased into the abandoned home economics classroom inside.

The scent of mildew and old books wafted over them. Cooper and Rodgers, familiar with this forgotten room from their visit a few months earlier, marched confidently toward the Spice Cabinet in the back. Malina marveled at the enormous room’s dusty sinks and splintering cabinets. She glided along, staring at the ceiling’s dingy panels, when she suddenly slammed into Rodgers, who had frozen. Principal Mellon sat in front of the Spice Cabinet, holding a piece of paper.

“Oh, Mr. Mellon,” Cooper stuttered. “We wanted to show Malina the Spice Cabinet.”

“Superintendent Chase will be looking for a new principal of Fairview Middle School,” Mellon said flatly. He didn’t look up from the paper, but Malina could see that his eyes were shiny.

“I love this school,” the principal continued, looking down at the note in his hands. “I’ve loved it since September 5, 1985.”

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 do you think happened on September 5, 1985?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 8

Part 2 of 5

“Duck Hunt Detention”

Part 2 of 5: September 5, 1985

Directions

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

Dan Mellon hopped off the school bus and headed for the bike rack. Throughout seventh grade, Dan and his two best friends, Quincy and Kurt, always met at the bike rack before school. Now, on the first day of eighth grade, Dan was excited to reconnect with his buddies after summer vacation. He hadn't seen Quincy and Kurt much over the summer, which was why he was extra excited to show them what he had in his book bag.

Dan waited at the bike rack. He couldn't spot Quincy or Kurt in the swarms of kids in front of Fairview Middle School. He was expecting Quincy to jump on his shoulders and yell “WATER MELLON!” like he did every time they saw each other. Then Dan saw his friends near the front door. They were talking to Allison Carrow and one of her friends. Dan rushed over.

“KURTIS!” Dan yelled, grabbing Kurt's shoulders.

“Dude, take it easy,” said Kurt, smoothing his shirt.

“Check it out,” said Dan, unzipping his book bag. “I brought—”

“We're going inside. See you guys around,” Allison Carrow interjected. Quincy and Kurt grimaced.

“We'll see you at lunch, dude,” Quincy said. He and Kurt followed the girls into school.

Dan watched his friends leave. He zipped up his book bag, hiding the Nintendo video game system that he had been so excited to show them.

Key

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

Checklist

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Question

How does it seem things have changed between Dan and Quincy and Kurt?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 8

Part 3 of 5

“Duck Hunt Detention”

Part 3 of 5: Game Over

Directions

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

“Mr. Mellon, please pay attention,” said Mr. Nitman from the front of the classroom. He was in the middle of his usual first-day-of-school speech, which was mostly his list of classroom rules. Dan Mellon was in the back row, trying to get the attention of Quincy and Kurt a few rows ahead.

“Psssst. Quincy. Kurtis,” Dan whispered. Dan held his unzipped book bag at his hip, preparing to reveal his Nintendo as soon as they turned around. Quincy and Kurt, though, were busy trying to lodge bits of balled-up paper in Allison Carrow’s hair.

“Kurtis!” Dan said, this time in more of a hushed shout than a whisper.

“Mr. Mellon!” Nitman barked from the chalkboard. Quincy and Kurt didn’t even look up from Allison’s hair.

For the next few minutes, Dan kept his book bag at the ready, darting his eyes from Nitman to Quincy and Kurt, anxious to show his friends the prized possession he was hiding. But Quincy and Kurt continued to snicker and toss bits of paper at Allison. Dan became restless.

“Quincy. Look what—”

“Detention, Mr. Mellon!” Nitman shouted.

“GO TO HELL!” Dan yelled back. He ripped the Nintendo from his bag, lifted it over his head, and smashed it 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.

Question

What do you think the Nintendo might symbolize?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 8

Part 4 of 5

“Duck Hunt Detention”

Part 4 of 5: Detention with Devers

Directions

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

Dan sat in Principal Devers’s office with his face in his hands. His hatred for Quincy, Kurt, and Mr. Nitman mixed with his embarrassment for his outburst, and he cried like a kindergartener. Principal Devers entered. Dan furiously wiped his eyes.

Principal Devers pushed a cart with a TV on top. He glanced at Dan but didn’t say anything. The principal positioned the TV cart to face Dan, then went to his closet. Dan’s eyes widened when he saw Devers emerge with a Nintendo and two orange pistol controllers used for Dan’s favorite game, *Duck Hunt*.

Without a word, Devers sat down next to Dan and handed him a controller. Dan, stunned, gaped at the controller, then at the TV, then at the principal.

“Mr. Devers, I’m, um...”

“No need to explain, my boy,” the principal said casually. “I spoke to Mr. Nitman. He told me about Mr. Quincy’s and Mr. Kurt’s apparent newfound interest in the female gender.”

Dan shoulder-dried his cheeks as the game started. Devers shot at the screen, and the digital dog laughed when he didn’t hit any ducks.

“And I was so sorry to hear about your dad, Dan,” the principal said. Dan felt new tears coming and he shot at the screen.

“Eighth grade is a funny year,” Devers said. “Somehow, though, we always manage to get through it. Video games can help.”

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 what ways is Principal Devers a good principal?

Name: _____



Classroom Cereal

Date: _____

Story 8

Part 5 of 5

“Duck Hunt Detention”

Part 5 of 5: A Worthy Principal

Directions

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

Principal Mellon sat hunched over in front of the Spice Cabinet, unfolding and refolding the note in his hands. Malina, Cooper, and Rodgers sat in a semicircle on the floor around him. Principal Mellon shoulder-dried his cheeks, just as he had done in Principal Devers’s office 33 years earlier.

“That’s how we spent three afternoons of ‘detention.’ And dozens of afternoons after that,” Mellon said. “Just me and Principal Devers, playing *Duck Hunt* and talking about life.”

Malina handed Mellon a paper towel from a rusty dispenser on the wall.

“I had lost my dad that summer,” the principal continued. “By the time school started, my friends weren’t really my friends anymore either. I didn’t have anybody. Principal Devers helped me through the toughest time in my life. I’ve loved this school ever since. All I ever wanted was to be its principal, so I could help kids like Mr. Devers helped me. But I blew it.”

As they listened to their principal, Malina, Cooper, and Rodgers forgot about Principal Mellon’s flaws. His Instagram obsession and his strange love of Squirm Worms didn’t matter. Orn’s speech, the basketball calamity, and the TST security breach didn’t matter. They saw someone who truly loved Fairview Middle School. They saw a worthy principal.

“Sir,” Cooper said. “We’re going to help you keep your job.”

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 agree with Malina, Cooper, and Rodgers?
Does Principal Mellon deserve to keep his job?