

## Lucky Returns

As soon as Kyle finished his homework, he charged out the kitchen door, his ball and glove in hand. Baseball season was around the corner, and Kyle couldn't wait to get back on the mound. His dad had taken a rope and had hung a tire from the branch of the old oak tree. It was just the right height for Kyle to practice throwing curveballs and fastballs through the hanging target.

After a minute of throwing fastballs, Kyle spotted a cat in the distance. "Lucky, is that you?" he called. The cat ignored him and walked through the barn door.

A short time later, Kyle's dad pulled into the driveway. "How's the target working?" he called, as he climbed out of the car.

"Good!" replied Kyle. "Hey, Dad, I think I just saw Lucky walk into the barn!"

"That old cat is back again? I thought for sure she was gone for good this time. She sure seems to be a cat with nine lives. Hey, go to the barn and find my glove. We can play catch for a few minutes before I have to go feed the cattle."

Kyle ran into the barn. He rummaged around, trying to decide where his dad might have placed his glove. He spotted some boxes in the corner. *I bet his glove is in there*, he thought.

As he bent down to look through the first box, he heard several high-pitched cries. He looked behind the box and smiled. "Now I see what you've been doing while you were gone, Lucky!"

1. What had Lucky been doing while she was away? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the setting of this story?  
A. a treehouse      B. a baseball field      C. a back alley in the city      D. a farm
3. What is Kyle's position on the baseball team?  
A. shortstop      B. outfield      C. pitcher      D. catcher

## Turn it Down

Josh was sprawled out on his bed when his bedroom door flew open, startling him.

"Turn that awful music down!" shouted his dad. "I can't even hear myself think!"

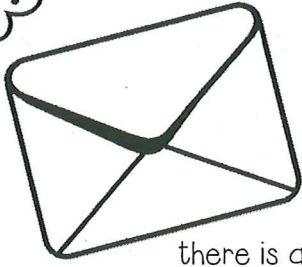
Josh groaned. "It's not *that* loud," he said as he leaned over and hit a few buttons on his iPod.

"I just don't know how you can listen to that stuff. It's not even music- it's more like angry people rambling into the microphone," complained Dad.

Josh snickered. "All of the guys on my team listen to this before our meets, Dad. This music gets us pumped up to go out on the mat and take down our opponent."

"Well, whatever works, I suppose," Dad said, as he left the room.

1. What type of music was Josh listening to?  
A. rap      B. classical      C. country      D. opera
2. In which sport does Josh participate? \_\_\_\_\_



## Waiting for Eddie's Letter

Mary Ellen saw the mail carrier opening her gate and dashed outside to meet Mr. Whipple. Before she had a chance to even ask him if there was a letter from Eddie, the mailman shook his head. "I'm sorry, Mary Ellen, but I don't think there is anything but bills in this pile again today."

"But he promised he'd write, and he hasn't even written once yet," Mary Ellen said quietly. "I hope he's okay."

"Try not to worry, because worry won't help a thing," said Mr. Whipple. "Maybe he just hasn't had time to write. I served in the first war, and they kept us mighty busy over there."

"Mom and Dad tell me not to worry, too, but I can see the worry in *their* eyes," replied Mary Ellen.

Mr. Whipple patted Mary Ellen on the shoulder. "Maybe tomorrow I'll have a letter to deliver to you." He turned and walked toward the next house.

Mary Ellen trudged inside. Her mother looked up from her sewing machine hopefully, but her eyes dropped quickly when she saw the look of disappointment on Mary Ellen's face. "No letter from Eddie, I guess." Suddenly, she stood up and walked over to the telephone hanging on the wall. "I think I'll call Carol, and ask if *she* has received a letter from Eddie yet. Judging from the tears I saw streaming down her face at the train station the day he left for the war, I'm guessing *she* might receive a letter from Eddie before *we* will."

1. What is the nature of the relationship between Eddie and Mary Ellen?
  - A. friends
  - B. siblings
  - C. father and daughter
  - D. cousins
2. Who is Carol?
  - A. Mary Ellen's friend
  - B. Mary Ellen's aunt
  - C. Eddie's girlfriend
  - D. Mom's best friend

## Scribbles

"Today is Library Day, and I can't find my library book. Have you seen it?" Nathan asked his mother.

"Oh, yes. I forgot to tell you about that little ordeal," she answered as she opened a drawer and pulled Nathan's library book out. "Here. Tell Mrs. Finney that we had a slight mishap at our house, and she needs to let us know how much the book costs so that we can replace it."

Nathan's stomach dropped. He took the book from his mother's hands, opened it, and found red scribbles on nearly every page. "Kayla scribbled all over this book! Now I'm going to have to listen to Mrs. Finney's long lecture about taking care of library books."

"Oh, surely Mrs. Finney will understand that it was an accident. She won't care, as long as we pay to replace it," reasoned Mom.

Nathan shook his head. "Mom, you don't know Mrs. Finney very well, do you?"

1. Who is Kayla?
  - A. Nathan's twin sister
  - B. Nathan's teenage sister
  - C. Nathan's younger sister
2. Based on what you read in this passage, which character trait best describes Mrs. Finney?
  - A. understanding
  - B. kind
  - C. greedy
  - D. stern