

Super Speller

“Sandwich. S-A-N-D-W-I-C-H. Sandwich,” Jaleel said.

“Correct,” the judge said.

“Phew!” Jaleel took his seat.

The third grade spelling bee was hard. Jaleel had been competing for almost an hour. Now he was left standing on the stage with only two other students.

Nope, make that one other student. A girl named Maya. The boy, Marcos, had just made a mistake. Jaleel crossed his fingers. He hoped he wouldn't be eliminated next.

After several more rounds, Maya was up.

“December. D-E-C-E-M-B-E-R. December,” she said.

“Sorry, that's incorrect,” said the judge. “You need to say ‘capital D.’”

Jaleel felt bad for Maya as she went to sit down. That was such a small mistake. He could see that her face looked sad, and maybe there were even tears in her eyes. He understood. He would feel that way if he made a mistake too.

But now he had a chance to win! If he got the next word right, he would be the spelling bee champ. His palms were sweaty.



Jaleel got his word. Trophy. He thought he knew it, but he was starting to doubt himself. He took a deep breath.

“Trophy. T-R-O-P-H-Y. Trophy,” he said.

“Correct!” the judge said.

Jaleel couldn’t believe it. He had won! He smiled from ear to ear. It was kind of funny that he was getting a trophy for spelling trophy. He couldn’t wait to take it home to show his mom and dad.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Which word did Maya spell incorrectly?
 - a. Trophy
 - b. Sandwich
 - c. Presence
 - d. December

2. Why did Jaleel feel bad when Maya made a mistake?
 - a. Because he wanted her to win
 - b. Because he wanted her to lose
 - c. Because he knew how he would feel if he made a mistake
 - d. Because he liked Marcos better

3. What does the phrase “Maya was up” mean?
 - a. Maya was above Jaleel on the stage
 - b. It was Maya’s turn
 - c. Maya was winning
 - d. Maya was upset

4. Which two emotions best describe Jaleel’s feelings at the start of the story and then at the end?
 - a. Sad-Happy
 - b. Disappointed-Confident
 - c. Nervous-Proud
 - d. Angry-Afraid

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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