

Dragon at Dawn

It was still dark out, but CeCe's eyes were open even before her dad came to wake her up. She had been waiting for this morning for weeks. She had packed her red backpack the night before and laid out her hiking clothes. Today was the day that CeCe and her dad were going to climb the Dragon's Tooth.

They ate their oatmeal quickly and packed their snacks for the day. They brought bananas, nuts, granola bars, and of course lots of water. Then they laced up their hiking boots and set off in their little, yellow car towards the Appalachian Trail.

The sky was still dark as they parked in the lot, just past the small grocery store. The store wasn't open yet. There were no other humans around. Only the birds were stirring, chirping to each other as the sun began to rise.

CeCe's dad pointed out the blue blazes that marked the trail. Those were the markings they would be following as they made the steep climb to the top of the Tooth. CeCe had butterflies in her stomach. She couldn't wait to see the sunrise as they hiked. And she knew view from the top would be amazing. But she worried she wouldn't be able to make it all the way up.

CeCe and her dad had been doing shorter hikes for weeks. These outings were CeCe's favorite time with her dad. Walking along the Appalachian Trail together, it sometimes felt like they were in a different world. CeCe didn't have to think about school and her dad didn't have to think about work. There were no dishes to do or rooms to clean or errands to run. It was just CeCe and her dad together, talking quietly or listening to the sounds around them.

Today's hike was their hardest one yet. It would take three hours, and some parts were almost straight up. As the sun rose, CeCe felt hot. Sweat dripped down her back as she continued to climb.

About half way up the Dragon's Tooth, CeCe stumbled. She felt tired. But the sunrise colors in the sky and her dad's gentle encouragement urged her on. She picked herself up and felt the first rain drops splat on her arms and legs.

CeCe and her dad stopped for some water before they started the last scramble up the rocks to the top. The rain stopped and the sun came out. As they made it to the summit, a rainbow arced over the Dragon's Tooth, welcoming them to their goals. CeCe hugged her dad hard. They did it!



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What did CeCe do the night before her climb?
 - a. Lay out her hiking clothes
 - b. Pack her snacks
 - c. Lace up her hiking boots
 - d. Hug her dad

2. What color were the blaze markings on the Dragon's Tooth trail?
 - a. Green
 - b. Yellow
 - c. Blue
 - d. Red

3. How do you think CeCe is feeling when she has butterflies in her stomach?
 - a. Scared and sad
 - b. Excited and nervous
 - c. Worried and angry
 - d. Happy and upset

4. What do you think is most special to CeCe about her hikes with her dad?
 - a. They are getting exercise
 - b. They see rainbows and sunrises
 - c. They get to unplug from their devices
 - d. They are together with no distractions

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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