

## Duet

Victoria waited backstage before the talent show. She tapped her foot and walked back and forth. ‘What if I’m off key?’ she thought. ‘What if I forget the words?’ She wondered if she should pretend to be sick so she wouldn’t have to perform.

Meanwhile, Ruth was busy putting on her stage makeup. She admired her sequined costume in the mirror and smiled widely. She hummed her song in her head. She was ready for the spotlight.

When Ruth’s name was called, she strode onto the stage. She held the microphone in her hand and struck a pose. The music started and she opened her mouth, ready to belt out the opening words.

But nothing happened. Ruth closed her mouth and opened it again. Still nothing came out. Ruth was frozen in the spotlight. She had forgotten her song entirely.

The stage manager stopped the music. He put it back to the beginning and started it again. Would the restart help Ruth get back on track?

It did not. Ruth stood like a statue on the stage. A tear rolled down her cheek. She had no idea what the words were or how to get them out of her mouth. She was petrified.

Victoria watched from backstage. She couldn't believe it. Her worst fears were coming true, but not for her. She felt terrible for her friend. Ruth had been so excited for this performance. She had been sure she would win first prize in the talent show. She had practiced for weeks and perfected her song. She had perfected her costume and her make up too. And now this had happened. It didn't feel fair.

Even though she had been so nervous just a moment before, Victoria walked onto the stage to stand with Ruth. She held her hand and squeezed it. She opened her mouth and started to sing Ruth's song.

Victoria's singing gave Ruth the help she needed to start singing too. They finished the song as a duet, dancing and smiling together. Then, with a nod to the stage manager, they performed Victoria's song together too.

Each girl took a turn singing a solo during her own song. Mostly, they sang together. At the end, they took bows as the audience clapped and cheered. They thought maybe they would win first prize? But it really didn't matter. They had had so much fun. They gave each other big hugs. Friends were better than firsts. Always.



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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What did Victoria worry about before the talent show?
  - a. That she would be off key
  - b. That her costume would rip
  - c. That she would slip and fall on the stage
  - d. That she wouldn't win first prize
  
2. What did Ruth do right after she held the microphone?
  - a. Opened her mouth
  - b. Forgot the words to her song
  - c. Struck a pose
  - d. Cried
  
3. How do you think Ruth was feeling before the talent show?
  - a. Nervous
  - b. Confident
  - c. Embarrassed
  - d. Jealous
  
4. Why do you think Victoria wasn't nervous when she went out on stage?
  - a. Because she knew she wouldn't forget the words
  - b. Because she was sure she would win first prize now
  - c. Because she didn't care what anyone thought
  - d. Because she was focused on helping her friend

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.

1. What did Victoria worry about before the talent show?
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