

Town Meeting

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1 Mr. Skinner was a rich old man. Some people thought that all he wanted was to be richer. He didn't smile much. And people didn't smile at him. If someone's dog came home limping, people said Mr. Skinner probably kicked him.

2 Sammy lived in the same town

where Mr. Skinner lived. Sammy was interested in everything, and he smiled a lot. If people needed a good home for their dog while they took a trip, Sammy was glad to keep him.

3 One day Sammy's father was going to the town meeting, and he took Sammy along. Mr. Skinner stood up

and told the mayor he was going to build a big factory beside the park.

4 "But that will make our lake dirty," said the mayor.

5 "It will take away our swimming place," said the mailman.

6 "The smoke will kill our flowers and ruin our park," said the grocer.

7 "But it will make money for the town," said Mr. Skinner. And he walked out.

8 "He means it will make *him* richer!" somebody said.

9 "We must stop Mr. Skinner from building the factory. Somebody must go to see him," people said.

10 They looked at the mayor.

11 "Not I," said the mayor. "He has a right to build a factory on his own land."

12 "Not I," said the mailman. "He owns the house I live in, and he might make me move."

13 "Not I," said the grocer. "He might stop buying in my store."

14 Sammy stood up. "Mr. Skinner can't take anything away from me. I don't have anything to lose. I'll go."

15 Sammy knocked on Mr. Skinner's front door.

16 "Well, what do you want?" Mr. Skinner growled.

17 Sammy smiled. "I came to ask you to go fishing."

18 Mr. Skinner was surprised that somebody would come to see him without asking him for something.

So he said yes.

19 They fished in the lake in the park, and Mr. Skinner caught a nice fat fish. He almost smiled.

20 The next day he heard another knock on his door. It was Sammy again. "Would you like to go swimming in the lake?"

21 Before he knew it, Mr. Skinner said yes.

22 They dived in the lake and swam along the shore. Sammy had brought some pears and sandwiches, and they had a picnic.

23 Mr. Skinner almost smiled.

24 At the next town meeting Mr. Skinner got up to speak. Everyone was afraid he was ready to build his factory.

25 "Hrrumph," he said. "This town needs a bigger park. Instead of building a factory, I'm planning to give you my land for a park."

26 He looked around him and added, "You people should get out and go fishing. Don't you know there's more to life than making money?"

27 Mr. Skinner looked at Sammy and smiled.

28 Everyone else looked at Sammy in amazement.

29 "What did you do to make Mr. Skinner change his mind?" they asked him later.

30 "I didn't do anything," Sammy said. "We just had fun."

How Well Did You Understand?

- A** Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a*, *b*, or *c*.
- 1** This story is mostly about
 - a** how a boy teaches a rich man to fish
 - b** how a boy tries to make an old man smile
 - c** how a boy helps a rich man change his mind
 - 2** The people didn't want a new factory because it would
 - a** ruin many nice things
 - b** make the town too crowded
 - c** help Mr. Skinner get richer
 - 3** If Sammy hadn't gone to the town meeting, Mr. Skinner would probably have
 - a** built the factory
 - b** gone fishing more often
 - c** made the mailman move
 - 4** At the end of this story, Mr. Skinner was
 - a** worried about making money
 - b** thinking about having fun
 - c** mad at the townspeople
 - 5** From this story you can tell
 - a** that Mr. Skinner was not as mean as people thought
 - b** that Sammy was not as good a swimmer as Mr. Skinner
 - c** that Mr. Skinner was not as rich as the mayor

Learn about Words

- B** Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Directions: Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.) Write the word.

- 1** walking as if sore or lame (1)
- 2** most likely (1)
- 3** head of a city government (3)
- 4** place in a city with grass and trees (3)
- 5** spoil (6)
- 6** someone who sells food (6)
- 7** jumped headfirst (22)
- 8** land at the edge of a lake (22)

- C** A word may have more than one meaning. Its meaning will depend on how it is used.

My dad is a football fan.

He keeps cool with an electric fan.

Directions: Look at each word in **heavy type**. Note the paragraph number. Look back at the paragraph. Which meaning does the word have there? Write *a* or *b*.

- 9 trip** (2)
 - a** journey
 - b** stumble
- 10 store** (13)
 - a** stock of supplies
 - b** shop; place to buy things

Think about It

D Complete the story map. Which word in the box best fits into each sentence? Write the word.

changes smiles like
park afraid

- 1 People don't ____ Mr. Skinner very much.
- 2 He never ____ at them.
- 3 Sammy isn't ____ of Mr. Skinner.
- 4 So Sammy is the one who ____ Mr. Skinner's mind.
- 5 Mr. Skinner decides not to build a factory beside the ____.

E ~~bake~~ + er = baker
 ~~taste~~ + ed = tasted
 ~~come~~ + ing = coming

When a word ends with *e*, you drop that *e* before adding the endings *er*, *ed*, and *ing*.

Directions: Each word below ends with *er*, *ed*, or *ing*. Write the word as it would be without the ending. For example, if you read *racing*, you would write *race*.

- 6 smiled
- 7 surprised
- 8 nicer
- 9 dived
- 10 making

How Did You Do It?

Have you ever tried to get people to change their minds? Why did you want them to change their minds? What did you do or say to make them think differently? Did your ideas work? Why or why not?