

Survival Vocabulary Stories

Learning Words in Context

Katherine
Whitten



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Story 1

“Did you do your homework?”
Hank asked. He and Vic were on the
way to school.

“Oh, *no*. I left my homework on
my desk at home,” said Vic. “I
should run home to get it.”

“If you do, you will be late for
first period,” said Hank. “The bell
will ring. And you will be late. Then you will have to go to the office and
talk with the principal.”

“If I don’t have my homework, the teacher will send me to the office
anyway,” said Vic. “Maybe if I say I’m sick, I can go see the nurse. Then I
could be dismissed.”

The boys walked a little farther. “If you get dismissed, you won’t be able
to go to gym. You will also miss mapping the microchips in computer class,”
Hank said.



“I like surfing the Internet best,”
said Vic. “It’s almost as much fun
as gym.”

As the boys neared the school, they
could see a long line of kids outside
the cafeteria.

“Wonder what happened,” Hank
said. “Why is everyone standing
outside?”

“Maybe there was a fire drill,” Vic answered. “I wonder if we can go in the
auditorium to wait.”

The bell rang. The line of kids moved slowly inside. Hank could smell
cookies baking in the cafeteria.



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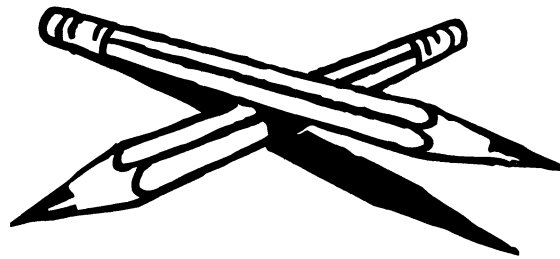
“Sure smells good,” he said to Vic.

“Sure does,” Vic agreed. “I hope the class periods go by quickly before lunch. Maybe I won’t go to the nurse to get dismissed. I don’t want to miss gym *or* lunch.”

The principal was standing outside the office.

“Good morning,” he said to Hank and Vic.

“Good morning,” Hank said. Vic mumbled something.



“Do you think he knows that I don’t have my homework?” Vic asked.

“Don’t be silly,” Hank answered. “He doesn’t know *everything*.”

The boys got to their class. They sat down at their desks. The teacher said, “Take out your homework.”

Vic took out a piece of paper and a pencil. He hoped the teacher would think it was his homework. Kids started calling out answers. The teacher wrote the answers on the board with chalk.

Vic kept his head bent over his paper. He couldn’t wait for his next class. In the auditorium, the band began to play. The fire drill seemed like it had happened hours ago. The school day had started.



Name _____

Unit 6

Date _____

School Words

Story 1: Exercise

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. **Main Idea:** This story is about a boy who
 - (a) left his homework at home
 - (b) left his lunch at home
 - (c) left his lunch money at home

2. **Details:** Vic left his homework at home on his
 - (a) kitchen table
 - (b) desk
 - (c) bed

3. **Sequence:** The bell rang. Then the boys
 - (a) smelled smoke
 - (b) saw a long line of kids
 - (c) smelled cookies baking

4. **Cause and Effect:** If Vic goes home to get his homework,
 - (a) he will be late for gym
 - (b) his mother will be angry
 - (c) he will be late for first period

5. **Drawing Conclusions:** Vic took out a piece of paper so that
 - (a) the teacher would think it was his homework
 - (b) he would have something to do
 - (c) he could make a paper airplane

6. **Activity:** Tell what happens in your school if you forget your homework.



Story 2

Already it was the second week of school. The week would end with the big bonfire and pep rally. Jeff, the senior class president, called a class meeting in the auditorium after first period. The senior class always built the bonfire and planned the pep rally.

“OK. Quiet down,” Jeff hollered. “We need to talk about the bonfire.” The kids began to settle down and listen. “As you know it’s coming up Friday night.”

“First, we need someone to get a fire permit from the fire department.”

Sally raised her hand. “I’ll do that,” she said.

“Thanks. Next someone has to talk to the principal and ask teachers to come and help that night.”

Mr. Stern, the class adviser, raised his hand. “I’ll take care of that,” he said.

Just then, the loudspeaker came on. “All soccer players report to the gym.”



“Uh-oh,” said Jeff. “I have to go to that meeting. Meg, can you take over here?” He turned to Meg, the class vice president.

“I guess so,” Meg said. “But I’m not sure what else we need to talk about.”

“I can tell you,” said Mr. Stern. “Here’s a pencil and paper to pass around. The kids can sign up to help gather wood for the bonfire.”

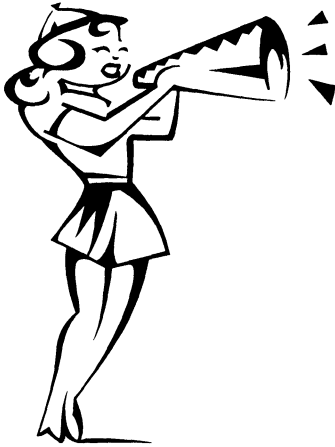
“OK. We need lots of help Friday after school,” Meg said. “Meet in the cafeteria right after the bell. Does anyone have any questions?”

“I do.” Mary raised her hand. “Let’s do something different this year.”

“Like what?” Meg asked.

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“Like get that old chicken coop from behind Mrs. Sims’s house. We could drag it over to the field. Then Friday night, we could have a *big* blaze.” The class started to cheer.

“Wow. That’s a great idea,” Meg said. She turned to Mr. Stern. “What do you think?”

“I’m not sure. Someone will have to ask Mrs. Sims if she wants to get rid of that chicken coop. Also, how would we get it here?”

Several kids offered to put it in the back of their pickup trucks.

Mary wasn’t done. “We could put some old desks inside the coop. Then we could paint the name of the school we’re playing on the outside.”

“I get it,” Meg said. “We’re going to *burn* that team when we play them.”

The class roared.

“We could stuff the chicken coop with newspaper,” said Jason.

“Yeah,” said Dave. “Then pour a little gas on the whole thing, and poof! We would have some bonfire!”

“Just a minute,” said Mr. Stern. “Forget about the gas, or the whole thing’s off. Mary, since this is your idea, why don’t you ask Mrs. Sims about the coop. Then get back to me. I’ll talk to the principal about it.”

The bell rang. “Hold it a minute,” said Meg. “If you signed up to help, be sure to be in the cafeteria Friday afternoon.”

“We will,” the kids all said at once.

“This is going to be the best bonfire ever,” Meg said.

At lunch time, Mr. Stern went to the office to talk with the principal. Together they walked out to the field to look for the best place to have the pep rally.

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“I’m a little worried about this bonfire,” Mr. Stern said.

“Me, too,” the principal agreed. She drew a line with her foot. “I’ll ask Coach Anton to make a chalk line here. Put pails full of water all around the chicken coop on this line. Don’t let anyone get any closer to the fire,” she said.

“I think I’ll ask the nurse to come that night, just in case anybody gets hurt,” Mr. Stern said.

“Everything will be fine, I’m sure,” said the principal.

Friday afternoon came. Twenty kids were in the cafeteria waiting for Jeff and Meg to tell them what to do.

They all went out to the field. Some kids were dragging Mrs. Sims’s chicken coop off a truck.

“Some of you can start filling the pails with water,” Jeff said. “The rest of you can pile boards and papers inside the chicken coop.”

“I’ve got a lot of old computer paper,” said Jason. “I could fill this thing with that.”

All the kids helped. Soon the chicken coop looked like a small one-room schoolhouse. They painted the name of the rival team’s school on the side in big white letters. They painted “Burn Central High” on the other side.

By 4:00, everything was ready. Since the bonfire wasn’t until 8:00, everyone went home.

No one was on the field at 6:00 to see someone splashing liquid from a red can inside the chicken coop.



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At 8:00, the school band started playing a spirited song. Soccer players ran onto the field, carrying torches to light the fire.

The first player tossed his torch into the chicken coop. There was a huge *bang*. Flames shot out of the doorway. The sides of the coop were pushed out, then pulled in. The flames started to roar. Bits and pieces of wood and paper flew out. Small fires started all over the field.

“Jeff, call the fire department,” Mr. Stern yelled. “Meg, Jason, Dave. Quick! Dump these pails of water on the small fires. Oh dear. I was afraid something would go wrong.”

The fire department came with sirens blaring. Soon the fire was under control. One soccer player had been hurt by a flying piece of wood. There were no other injuries. The cheerleaders tried a few cheers. But no one had much pep left for the rally.



Mr. Stern spoke to Jeff and Meg. “If you find out who put gasoline on this fire, let me know. That person can expect to have a long talk with the principal—and probably with the police, too.”

Jeff and Meg looked glum. “The chicken coop was such a great idea,” Meg said.

“Yeah. Too bad someone had to ruin it,” Jeff replied.



Name _____

Unit 6

Date _____

School Words

Story 2: Exercise

Fill in the blanks with the best answer.

1. **Main Idea:** The seniors were having a class meeting to

2. **Details:** Mr. Stern said he would

3. **Sequence:** Just before the soccer players ran onto the field,

4. **Cause and Effect:** If someone puts gas on the fire,

5. **Drawing Conclusions:** Next year when the kids ask the principal if they can have a bonfire, she will probably say

6. **Activity:** Write about a pep rally or assembly you have had at your school.
