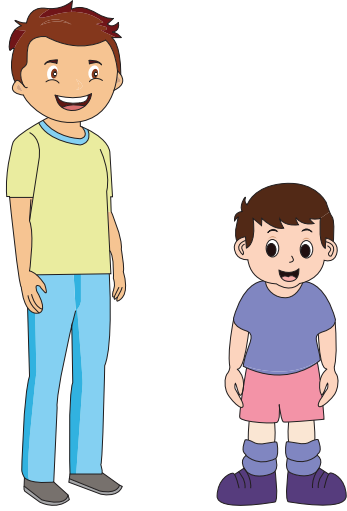


The Alternate Sitter



Garrett stared at Mom with his mouth hanging open. "You want me to babysit? I can't do that!"

Mom waved her hand. "Sure, you can. Brody is such a good little boy, and Doctor Q needs you to watch him for only an hour. Her babysitter cancelled."

Dr. Q was one of their neighbors, and Brody was her son. Of course, Dr. Q wasn't her actual name. It was only an abbreviation. Her name was much longer and more complicated, and Garrett didn't know how to pronounce it.

"What if something goes wrong?" Garrett asked.

"I'll be available here if you need me," Mom said.

Garrett huffed, though he didn't really mind. Rather, he felt intimidated by the responsibility of watching his neighbor's son.

He obeyed and trudged over to Dr. Q's house. She was waiting for him and greeted him with a smile. "Good afternoon, Garrett. You're really a lifesaver. I will be out for only about an hour, but I have left my cell phone number in the kitchen." She welcomed him inside and showed him to the den. "Brody is watching his favorite television show. Do you feel comfortable?"

The Alternate Sitter

Garrett looked around at the spacious den, which was clean and bright. "Yes, ma'am," he said. "I am very comfortable, and my mom is only a few houses away."

Dr. Q smiled and then kissed Brody goodbye. Once she was out the door, Garrett sat next to Brody.

"Hey buddy," he said.

Brody smiled at him but went back to his television show.

"Do you want to play something?" he asked. Really, he would rather watch television, but he thought he should confirm and make sure.

Brody perked up. "Can we play hide-and-seek?"

Garrett shrugged. "Sure, I'm good at that game. I'll count first, and you hide."

Brody grinned and hurried from the den.

Garrett counted loudly until he reached twenty. "Ready or not, here I come!"

He searched all around the house, but he didn't find Brody. Maybe the boy had gone to the backyard. When Garrett checked the door, though, it was still locked.

"I give up, Brody!" Garrett called. "Where are you?"

When he didn't hear a peep, Garrett's heart began to race. What if he couldn't find Brody? Should he call Mom?

The Alternate Sitter

Just then, a commotion came from the closet.

Garrett hurried to the closet and opened the door. Brody sat on the floor smiling.

"Found you!" Garrett said with relief.

Brody climbed from the closet. "Your turn to hide!" he said.

"You got it," Garrett replied. Maybe being an alternate babysitter wasn't so bad, after all.

The Alternate Sitter

1) What was Brody doing when Garrett reached Dr. Q's house?

2) The neighbor was called Dr. Q because

- a) she had a long and complicated name.
- b) her name was unknown.

3) Identify "perked up" in "Brody perked up" as a transitive or intransitive verb, and write the meaning.

4) Identify the figure of speech used in the underlined part of the sentence below.

When he didn't hear a peep, Garrett's heart began to race.

- a) metaphor
- b) alliteration
- c) verbal irony

5) Where did Brody hide when he and Garrett played hide-and-seek?
