

# Aviator of the Skies

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Joel relaxed on the grass in the small yard behind his apartment building. He studied the sky, watching an airplane move slowly across it.

"It's not actually going slow," Joel said to Puppet. Puppet lay beside Joel in the grass.

His tongue lolled out of the side of his mouth, and his tail wagged lazily. He barked once as if to let Joel know he was listening.

"Planes fly really fast," Joel went on. "They cover an enormous distance each hour!"

Puppet rested his head on his front paws with a whine. He was clearly uninterested in instruction about airplanes. Puppet might not be interested, but Joel definitely was!

Two days later, Mom was waiting for Joel in the kitchen when he came home from school.

"I have a surprise for you," Mom said. She held up two rectangular tickets. "We're going to visit your uncle in Wisconsin."

Joel gasped. "We are?"

Mom smiled. "Yep! We'll be flying on an airplane."

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Joel could hardly believe it. He had been dreaming of flying on an airplane for years!

When the big day arrived, Joel and Mom took a taxi to the airport. They took an elevator to the correct floor, checked their bags at the counter, and waited patiently to get through security.

While they waited for boarding to begin for their flight, Joel stood at the large airport window and watched airplanes land and take off along the runway. Some planes were large, and others were small, but they all roared as they lifted into the sky.

At last, it was time for Joel and Mom to board the plane. An attendant took their tickets at the hangar door. As they stepped into the plane, the pilot and co-pilot greeted them. One of them smiled at Joel. "Welcome aboard."

Excitement coursed through Joel, and his heart beat wildly in his chest. "Are you the pilot?"

"I sure am," the pilot said.

"Amazing!" Joel said.

"Would you like a tour of the cockpit?"

Joel widened his eyes. The opportunity was irresistible. "Really?"

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"Sure, come on in."

Joel looked at Mom. She nodded her approval, so Joel hurried after the pilot. The pilot talked about the levers and switches that surrounded him.

"Maybe one day you can be an aviator of the skies," the pilot said.

Joel felt the smooth buttons in the cockpit. "Do you really think I could?"

"I know it," the pilot assured him.

When they finished, Joel grinned the whole way to his seat, where Mom waited.

"How was it?" she asked.

"Unbelievable!" Joel said. It was all he could say because this was already the best trip he had ever taken, and he wasn't even to his uncle's house.

Joel watched out the window as they ascended into the sky. Chills raced through him. He would be sure to tell Puppet all about this experience when he got back to North Carolina. Wouldn't Puppet be surprised?

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- 1) Choose the sentence that is more formal.
  - a) Joe had to wait for ages before he could fly on an airplane.
  - b) Joe had to wait for many years before he could fly on an airplane.
- 2) What did the pilot talk about while he and Joel were inside the cockpit?

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- 3) Identify the figure of speech used in the sentence below.

Excitement coursed through Joel.

- a) onomatopoeia
  - b) allusion
  - c) metaphor
- 4) What was Joel thinking about watching out the window when the airplane ascended into the sky?

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- 5) Explain the metaphor used in the sentence below.

Chills raced through Joel.

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