

Day 5:

Language Arts- Reading Strategy Focus: Cause and Effect

You will be reading a short story called *One Minute to Midnight*. This story will be dealing with the element of cause and effect. Remember that a **cause** is something that makes something happen. An **effect** is what happens. To find an effect, ask yourself "what happened?"

Read *One Minute to Midnight*. Be sure to answer the discussion questions near the end of the story. After you answer the discussion questions, respond to the following open ended question: What would you have done if you were DeNyce and all your friends were inside the scary house? When answering this question, be sure to respond in complete sentences and with great detail.

Science- Our Solar System

Close your eyes and think about our solar system. How many planets are in the solar system? Of all those planets, do you know how many planets contain living things?

In one paragraph, identify which planet(s) contain living things. What must a planet have in order to keep living organisms alive? Why do certain planets contain living objects and others do not? You may use any resources that you have to help you answer these questions. Be sure you respond in complete sentences and give evidence to support your response.

Math-

Who Wants Pizza?

A Fun Way to Learn About Fractions

Use the website below for practice with fraction, equivalent fractions, and adding fractions.

<http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/fractions/index.html>

Social Studies-

Immigration

Follow the link to read the article about Immigration.

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/kids/ns/article/0,28391,1179509,00.html>

Use the article to help you answer the questions on "The Immigration Debate" sheet.



“One Minute to Midnight”

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The floor creaked under DeNyce's feet as
she crept through the dark old house.

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Halloween was not DeNyce's favorite holiday.

Oh, sure, when she was a little kid, DeNyce had liked dressing up in a costume and going trick or treating. But now she was getting a little old for all of that. In fact, the day after Halloween, DeNyce would turn 13.

DeNyce would never admit it, but she had one other big reason for not liking Halloween. When your birthday falls on November 1, no one ever makes a big deal out of it. It's hard to feel special when you've never had a birthday party. Or when no one wants to share your birthday cake because they're stuffed with Halloween candy.

At school on October 31, all DeNyce's friends could talk about was her friend Charlene's Halloween sleep-over later that night.


“This party is going to rock,” said Charlene, as she ate lunch with DeNyce and their two other best buds, Kara and Nancy. “Dad is going all out this year. He's even setting up a spooky haunted house in the attic. You know — the kind where you stick your hands in a bowl of spaghetti and they say it's really worms.”

“Dipping your hand into pasta? How exciting,” DeNyce said.

“After the haunted house,” Charlene continued, ignoring DeNyce's sarcasm, “Dad is putting a tent in the backyard. Since it's Friday, we can stay up all night outside, telling ghost stories.”

“Hello?” DeNyce said. “You call that fun? Why sleep on the cold, hard ground in a sleeping bag, when you've got a soft, warm bed indoors?”

The rest of the day dragged on. By the time school was over, DeNyce had decided not to go to Charlene's party. But, as she sat in her room doing math homework, watching leaves fall past her window, DeNyce changed her mind. Even if her heart wasn't in it, she knew her friends would be disappointed if she didn't go.



As it turned out, the party wasn't nearly as good as the girls had hoped. The haunted house Charlene's dad had set up in the attic was dumb, not scary. The horror movie they watched on DVD wouldn't have frightened a baby. Even the food wasn't very good.

It was almost midnight when DeNyce and the others settled down in the tent pitched in Charlene's backyard.

"So," Kara said, "anyone know any good ghost stories?"

No one said a thing.

"I guess maybe we're getting old for this sort of thing," Charlene said. The other girls nodded their heads. They looked bored and a little sad. DeNyce hated to see her friends looking that way.

"Why don't you tell us about the old, empty house next door, Charlene?" DeNyce said. DeNyce looked at her friends. "One night last summer, Charlene and I saw mysterious lights in the house, even though no one has lived there for years...."

"That? That was nothing," Charlene said. "My dad went over there the next day. Kids across the street had snuck in to play cards."

"That's not very scary," Kara said. The other girls agreed. They sat in the tent, staring at each other.

"I'm going to brush my teeth," Charlene said. She got up and left the tent. Kara and Nancy settled into their sleeping bags. As they were about to shut their eyes, they heard Charlene yelling in the yard. The three friends struggled out of their sleeping bags and crawled from the tent. Charlene stood near the hedge, looking at the dark house next door.

"My cat, Sheba, just ran into the old house!" Charlene said. "She goes over there all the time."

"Tell your dad," DeNyce said. "He'll go get her."

"I can't," Charlene whined. "If he knows she went over there again, he'll make me get rid of her. I'm going to go get her myself."

"We'll come with you," Kara said.

"No, just stay here," Charlene said. "If dad looks out, he should see a bunch of us in the tent. I'll be back in five minutes."

DeNyce and the other watched as Charlene snuck into the yard next door and tiptoed up to the back door of the big, old dark house. They watched her open the creaky door and slip into the house.

"I'm cold," Kara said. "Let's get back into the tent."

DeNyce nodded her head in agreement. She was shivering, but it wasn't because of the cold.



The three girls sat in silence for awhile.

"So, what's the story with that house?" Nancy asked.

"They say someone was murdered there years and years ago," Kara said. "They say the ghost of the person who was killed haunts the house."

"That's just a story," DeNyce said. "I went to the library and looked through old newspapers after we saw the lights there. No one was ever murdered in the house."

"That's not what I hear," Kara said. The girls sat in silence some more.

"How long has she been gone?" Nancy finally asked.

DeNyce checked her watch. "Almost ten minutes," she said. "That's it!" Kara said, crawling out of her sleeping bag. "I'm going to go find her."

"Should we come with you?" Nancy asked.

Kara shook her head. "Sit tight. If Charlene's dad comes out, tell him we went for a walk." Kara slipped out of the tent and into the night.

DeNyce was really shivering now. She sat opposite Nancy. Neither of them were smiling.

"Do you believe in ghosts?" DeNyce asked.

"Of course not," Nancy said. "Why? Do you?"

DeNyce forced a laugh. "Do I look like a little kid?"

The two girls sat quietly for a while.

"What time is it?" Nancy finally asked.

"Almost midnight," DeNyce said. "Kara has been gone for ten minutes."

Nancy sighed and pushed her way out of her sleeping bag. "I'm going to find them," Nancy told DeNyce.

"No!" DeNyce said. "Shouldn't we wait here?"

"Don't worry," Nancy said. "It's a big house. Maybe they got lost in there. We'll be back before you know it."

Nancy crawled out of the tent, leaving DeNyce alone.

DeNyce curled up in her sleeping bag, telling herself over and over that there were no such things as ghosts. So, what was going on next door? Her friends were split up in the dark house, looking for Charlene's missing cat. Yes, that must be it. They would all be back soon.

DeNyce looked at her watch. It was one minute to midnight. DeNyce gulped. Charlene had been gone for almost a half hour!

SHRIEEEEEEEEEEK! DeNyce nearly jumped out of her skin at hearing a loud, blood-curdling scream!





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *How does DeNyce feel about Halloween? Why?*
2. *Does DeNyce look forward to Charlene's party? How do you know?*
3. *What happens at the party?*
4. *Why does Charlene go to the house next door? Who follows her over there? Why? Predict what you think will happen next in this story.*

Now continue reading to see if you were right.

"Guys? Are you in here?" The floor creaked under DeNyce's feet as she crept through the dark old house. After hearing the scream, DeNyce had gone into Charlene's house, looking for her dad. He wasn't there! So DeNyce decided to go and find her friends for herself.

The old house was cold. As she entered the living room, DeNyce could feel a draft. Then she heard an eerie sound... it sounded like someone giggling. The strange laughter was coming from up the stairs.

DeNyce gathered her courage and walked up the steps. At the top of the stairs, she saw light glowing from under a closed door.

"Guys?" DeNyce asked. "Are you in there?" There was dead silence.

"Okay, guys, this isn't funny," DeNyce said. She walked up to the door. "I'm coming in now. Okay?"

DeNyce put her hand on the door knob. She closed her eyes, bit her lip, and threw open the door—

"SURPRISE!" Charlene, Kara, and Nancy stood at a table. Charlene's dad was with them. Birthday gifts and a birthday cake were on the table.

DeNyce staggered back as the girls, laughing, sang "Happy birthday."

Later, as the girls settled down for the night, Charlene smiled at DeNyce.

The girls laughed. "Sorry to scare you," Nancy said. "But that's the fun of having a birthday the day after Halloween. You can get scared on Halloween, and have a cool birthday, too!"

DeNyce smiled as she curled up in her sleeping bag. "You're right," DeNyce said. "But only if you have cool friends!"

Name Date



THE IMMIGRATION DEBATE

The United States is a nation of immigrants. An immigrant is a person who moves to one country from another. Some people enter the United States legally, while others are undocumented, or enter the country illegally.

Read this week's issue to learn more about the ongoing debate about U.S. immigration policies. Then answer the questions below.

1. Why do you think people come to the United States? Give two reasons. _____

2. President George W. Bush recently said, "No one should pretend that immigrants are threats to America's identity, because immigrants have shaped America's identity." What do you think he means?

3. What is the debate that people in the U.S. are having about immigration?

4. What are some ways that Americans are expressing their viewpoints on immigration?
Give one example.

5. Congress is in the process of writing a law that governs immigration. Who do you think should decide immigration policy? Why?

6. What advice would you give Congress and the President as they make decisions about immigration?

