

Name: _____

Date: _____

Coach Rivera's Tough Choice

Grades 5-6

Fiction

- 1 The Eagles were one game away from the championship, and everyone knew who would take the final shot: Jalen, the team's top scorer. What nobody knew was that Jalen had missed three practices that week.
- 2 Coach Rivera had one simple rule: if you skip practice without a reason, you sit out the next game. She had enforced it all season, even with players who barely played. But this was the semifinal.
- 3 At lunch, Jalen explained that he had been babysitting his little sisters while his mother worked extra shifts. He had been too embarrassed to tell anyone.
- 4 Coach Rivera thought about it all afternoon. The rule was about showing up for the team, but Jalen had been showing up for his family. She decided that he would play, but that he owed the team an honest explanation.
- 5 Before the game, Jalen stood in front of his teammates and told them the truth. The locker room was silent for a moment. Then Marcus, the backup point guard, said, "Next time, tell us. We can help." Two parents offered to share babysitting duties for the rest of the season.
- 6 The Eagles lost the semifinal by two points. Still, as the players walked off the court together, Coach Rivera felt that her team had won something more important than a game.

Draw your favorite part of the story.

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Questions: Coach Rivera's Tough Choice

Read the passage again if you need to. Circle the best answer.

1. Why had Jalen missed practice?

- ☐ a He was sick
- ☐ c He forgot

- ☐ b He was babysitting his sisters
- ☐ d He was on vacation

2. What was Coach Rivera's rule?

- ☐ a Top scorers always play
- ☐ c Everyone plays the same minutes

- ☐ b Skip practice without a reason and you sit out the next game
- ☐ d No talking at practice

3. How did the team respond to Jalen's explanation?

- ☐ a They were angry
- ☐ c They laughed

- ☐ b They offered to help
- ☐ d They ignored him

4. What does the last sentence suggest?

- ☐ a The team was unhappy
- ☐ c The coach wanted to quit

- ☐ b The team learned about honesty and supporting each other
- ☐ d Winning is all that matters

5. Do you agree with Coach Rivera's decision? Explain why, using details from the story.

Reading Comprehension: Answer Key

Coach Rivera's Tough Choice

1. b) He was babysitting his sisters
2. b) Skip practice without a reason and you sit out the next game
3. b) They offered to help
4. b) The team learned about honesty and supporting each other
5. Sample answer: Answers will vary. A strong answer states an opinion and uses details, such as Jalen missing practice to care for his sisters or the team offering to help.