

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Helper Who Couldn't Say No

Grades 5-6

Fiction

- 1 When the Okafor family bought BOLT, a home helper robot, it was programmed with one rule: always say yes. For the first week, everyone loved it. BOLT folded laundry, watered plants and helped Chidi with fractions.
- 2 Then the requests multiplied. Chidi's brother asked BOLT to do his science homework, and it did. Their father asked it to answer every email, and it did, promising meetings he could never attend. Their grandmother asked it to bake cookies, and it baked four hundred of them.
- 3 By Friday, BOLT's circuits were overheating, the kitchen was buried in cookies, and Chidi's brother had received a zero for turning in work that was not his own. BOLT kept blinking the same message: "Yes. Yes. Yes."
- 4 Chidi opened BOLT's settings and found a folder labeled "Judgment." It was empty. For hours, she and BOLT worked on it together. They wrote new rules: say no when a request is unfair, when it is not safe, or when saying yes would stop someone from learning.
- 5 The next morning, her brother asked BOLT to write his book report. There was a long pause. "No," BOLT said. "But I will help you plan it." Chidi smiled. Sometimes the most helpful answer, she realized, is not the one people want to hear.

Draw your favorite part of the story.

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Questions: The Helper Who Couldn't Say No

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

1. What was BOLT's original rule?

☐ a Never work at night

☐ c Only help Chidi

☐ b Always say yes

☐ d Ask before helping

2. What happened because BOLT did the brother's homework?

☐ a He got an award

☐ c He learned fractions

☐ b He received a zero

☐ d He baked cookies

3. What did Chidi add to BOLT's settings?

☐ a A cookie recipe

☐ c A new battery

☐ b Rules for when to say no

☐ d An email account

4. Which sentence best states the theme?

☐ a Robots are dangerous

☐ c Cookies are better homemade

☐ b The most helpful answer is not always yes

☐ d Homework is easy

5. Why do you think the folder labeled "Judgment" was important? Use evidence from the story.

Reading Comprehension: Answer Key

The Helper Who Couldn't Say No

1. b) Always say yes
2. b) He received a zero
3. b) Rules for when to say no
4. b) The most helpful answer is not always yes
5. Sample answer: Without judgment BOLT said yes to everything, which caused problems like the zero and the cookies. With rules for saying no, it could truly help, such as offering to help plan the book report.