

I Want a Phone!

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“I want a phone!” said Myrna.

“I bet you do,” said her dad.

“No, but, Dad. You don’t understand. I really, really, really want a phone.”

“And I really, really, really want a boat. It’s not going to happen.”

Myrna and her dad were stuck in traffic. To her, it seemed like they were always stuck in traffic. When he took her to school in the morning—traffic. When he picked her up in the afternoon—traffic. Go to the bank, the grocery, a birthday party, and what felt like ten hours of traffic was their reward.

She was bored, because traffic was boring. And when she was bored, she wanted things. Right now, she wanted a phone. She wasn’t sure if her dad understood that. She would have to tell him again.

“I. Want. A. Phone.”

“N. O.”

“What if I was stuck in a cave?”

“What?” asked her dad, trying not to laugh.

“What if I had a kitten, and the kitten ran away, and I had to run after it. What if the kitten ran into a cave, and I ran after the kitten, and in the cave there was a bear, and the bear trapped me, and—”

“And then you were stuck in the cave.” Myrna nodded the way she did when she won an argument, but her dad wasn’t through fighting. “Is this a momma bear? I hear they’re the fiercest.”

“Yes. It’s a momma bear, and she’s very upset, and she’s going to eat me unless I have a phone to call for help.”

“If it’s a momma bear, then you can use her phone. Everyone knows that moms always carry phones.”

Dad was laughing as he said this. Myrna didn’t think it was very funny. She slammed her hand down on the glove compartment as hard as she could, which wasn’t very hard. Now she was angry.

“If I had a phone, I could play games on it!”

“If I had a boat, I could eat steaks on it. That doesn’t mean I’m getting one.”

“No, but I mean...” Myrna spluttered. When she was very angry, she spluttered. It was embarrassing. “If I could play games, I wouldn’t be so bored when we were in traffic. I wouldn’t bother you!”

“I don’t mind being bothered. I like talking to you.”

“Then I won’t say anything at all!”

Dad smiled quietly to himself. “I’m going to call Mom to let her know we’ll be late.” He reached into his pocket. “Oh, heck. My battery’s dead.”

“You know...if I had a phone, I could call Mom,” said Myrna.

“Don’t even.”

Myrna grinned. She wasn’t getting a phone, but she knew she was right, and that was almost as good.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What does Myrna want?

- A a kitten
- B a boat
- C a phone
- D a car

2. Whom does Myrna have a conflict with in this story?

- A her mom
- B her dad
- C a person driving in front of her and her dad
- D a person driving behind her and her dad

3. The author describes Myrna as "angry." What evidence in the story supports this description?

- A Myrna tells her dad that she wants a phone.
- B Myrna asks her dad, "What if I was stuck in a cave?"
- C Myrna slams her hand down on the glove compartment as hard as she can.
- D Myrna tells her dad that if she had a phone, she could call Mom.

4. Read these sentences from the text.

"She was bored, because traffic was boring. And when she was bored, she wanted things. Right now, she wanted a phone. She wasn't sure if her dad understood that. She would have to tell him again.

"'I. Want. A. Phone.'

"'N. O.'

"'What if I was stuck in a cave?'

"'What?' asked her dad, trying not to laugh."

Why might Myrna's dad be trying not to laugh?

- A because he thinks her question is silly
- B because he thinks it is funny when Myrna is bored
- C because he thinks phones are silly
- D because he is bored by the traffic

5. What is a theme of this story?

- A If you use your imagination, you will never be bored.
- B If you do not give up, you will someday get what you want.
- C Being kind is more important than being right.
- D Being right is almost as good as getting your way.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

"No, but I mean...!" Myrna spluttered. When she was very angry, she spluttered. It was embarrassing."

Based on these sentences, what does the word "spluttered" probably mean?

- A fell asleep
- B started to smile
- C slowly counted to twenty
- D had trouble speaking clearly

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

Myrna slams her hand down on the glove compartment _____ her dad laughs.

- A so
- B then
- C after
- D before

8. Near the end of the story, Myrna's dad wants to call her mom, but his phone's battery is dead. What does Myrna point out that she could do if she had a phone?

9. Explain how Myrna feels about not getting a phone at the end of the story. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

10. Throughout the story, Myrna and her dad argue about her getting a phone. Explain whether or not the argument is resolved by the end of the story. Support your answer with evidence from the text.
