The Quiet Part of the Play

LITTLE READERS



BEFORE YOU READ

Look and Wonder

1. What might the class do with these props?
2. What can an actor do without speaking?
3. When is it important to listen?



The class began rehearsing a short play.

Ben would play a lost traveler.

Mina would guide him through a forest.

Max would be the quiet helper.



Max read his part twice.

He had only one short line.

Ben had whole pages to practice.

Mina had a long speech near the end.



"I hardly say anything," Max said.
He laid his script on the table.
Ms. Lee pointed to the stage plan.
"Your part has some important actions."



Max would carry a small blue box.
He would place it beside a stump.
Inside it was a paper star.
The star showed the traveler his way.



Ben's traveler would miss the box first.

He would ask Mina for directions.

Then Max would quietly open the lid.

The bright star would catch Ben's eye.



Max practiced carrying the box carefully.
He put it beside the cardboard stump.
The folded star stayed hidden inside.
Then he waited near the paper tree.



Ben walked onto the pretend forest path.
He asked Mina where to go.
Mina spoke her long guiding speech.
Max waited for her final word.



At that word, he lifted the lid.

The paper star stood up inside.

Ben turned and pointed toward it.

Now the traveler could find the path.



The scene ended with everyone smiling.
Max closed the box for another try.
He had not spoken his line yet.
It came only in the last scene.



During break, Tara helped tidy the props.

She moved the box onto a shelf.

The stump looked clearer without it.

Max was getting a drink outside.



When he returned, rehearsal had begun again.
Ms. Lee asked him to wait offstage.
He could carry the box on later.
Max took it down from the shelf.



Ben entered the cardboard forest again.

Mina began her speech beside the stump.

Max waited behind the paper tree.

The blue box was still in his hands.



Mina reached the end of her speech.
Ben turned toward the empty stump.
There was no star to see.
He stopped with his hand half raised.



Max hurried the box toward its place.

But Ben had already looked away.

Mina stopped speaking and watched him.

The scene had lost its quiet surprise.



Ms. Lee called for a pause.
Nobody started the scene again yet.
She asked what had been different.
Ben pointed to the cardboard stump.



"The box was there last time."

Mina looked back at Max's hands.

"The star appeared just when I finished."

Max put the closed box down gently.



Tara came over from the prop shelf.
"I moved it while we tidied."
Ms. Lee thanked her for explaining.
Then she brought the stage plan over.



The plan showed a box beside the stump.
It had to be there before Ben entered.
Max's action was opening it at the cue.
Carrying it in late changed the story.



"I thought it was just a box."
Tara looked at the hidden paper star.
"It helps the traveler find the path."
Ben pointed to the painted forest road.



Max set the box back in place.
He checked that the star folded down.
Then he stood beside the paper tree.
The quiet part was ready before any speech.



Stop and Think

WHAT HAVE YOU READ SO FAR?

1. Why was the box missing from its place?
2. What happened when Ben turned?
3. Where should the box be before Ben enters?



Make a Prediction

USE THE CLUES

1. What will Max listen for?
2. What might Ben do when he sees the star?
3. How can they get ready for another try?



They tried the scene once more.
Ben came along the forest path.
Mina spoke while Max waited nearby.
His eyes stayed on her face.



At the final word, Max opened the lid.
The gold star rose above the blue box.
Ben saw it and changed his direction.
This time, the story flowed on.



They finished the last scene too.
Max finally spoke his one short line.
"Here is your way home."
Ben followed the painted path to the end.



Afterward, Ms. Lee asked about Max's part.
Ben pointed to the box and star.
"Without that, I do not know the way."
Mina nodded beside the cardboard stump.



"And it must happen at the right time."
Mina tapped the last word on her script.
Max looked at his small action note.
It filled less space than her speech.



But it changed what everyone could see.

The traveler went from lost to hopeful.

The star turned a plain box into a clue.

Max touched the folded paper gently.



Tara brought a blank prop checklist.
They drew the stump and blue box.
Max added a little closed-lid picture.
Ben drew the traveler's starting place.



Mina added the cue beside her speech.

Ms. Lee checked it with Max.

The checklist showed what came before what.

They placed it beside the prop shelf.



Tara practiced resetting the scene with Max.
First, the star folded into the box.
Then the lid closed over it.
The box went beside the stump.



Max checked its place from the audience side.
The star was hidden before the cue.
Ben could see it clearly after opening.
They did not need a bigger box.



On performance day, Max checked the props.

Tara held the little checklist nearby.

The blue box waited beside the stump.

Its paper star was safely folded down.



Ben practiced his first line quietly.
Mina took a slow breath beside him.
Max watched Ms. Lee's start signal.
All three were ready in different ways.



The audience settled into their chairs.

Ben walked onto the forest path.

Mina began speaking beside the paper tree.

Max waited with one hand near the lid.



He did not rush his quiet action.

He listened for Mina's final word.

Then he lifted the lid smoothly.

The star caught the warm stage light.



Ben turned toward the bright shape.
He smiled as the traveler found his way.
A younger child leaned forward to see.
Max stayed still beside the stump.



At the end, Max spoke his line.
Ben followed the path toward the others.
The three friends bowed together.
The audience clapped for the whole play.



Later, Tara helped pack the props.

She put the star in its flat folder.

Max closed the empty blue box.

Ben carried the cardboard stump away.



"Did your part feel small today?"
Ms. Lee asked beside the shelf.
Max looked at the folded stage plan.
"It was quiet, but I had to listen."



Mina put her script beside his.
Her long speech had a small cue mark.
His short part had the matching mark.
They had needed to work together.



Max kept the checklist with his script.
It showed more than words to say.
He drew a little star at the bottom.
Then he helped Ben stack the chairs.



Talk About the Story

LOOK BACK AT THE WHOLE STORY

1. How did the star help the traveler?
2. Why did Max wait for Mina's last word?
3. How did the checklist help the group?



Think and Discuss

CONNECT THE STORY TO YOUR LIFE

1. When have you helped by listening?
2. What is one job you can do quietly?
3. How do you know when it is your turn?



Put the Pictures in Order

Look at the four pictures.

Write 1, 2, 3, and 4 in the boxes.



A ☐



B ☐



C ☐



D ☐

Point to the pictures and tell the story.

Tell the Story

USE THE FOUR PICTURES ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE

First ...

Next ...

Then ...

Finally ...



Draw Your Stage Plan

Draw a path and one prop for a short play.

Show where the prop goes and when to use it.

My prop is ... _____

I will use it when ...

_____



The End

Max listened for his cue.

Every part helped tell the story.

