

Magic in the Classroom

by ReadWorks



On her first day at school, Emma wore a tutu, a red cape, and a pair of swim goggles that she kept over her eyes. Mr. Stephens said we were not under any circumstances allowed to make fun of her. "Emma is different," he said in that exasperating tone adults use to explain things while not explaining them at all. "She needs your support and understanding, and I will not tolerate bullying in my classroom."

Of course that didn't stop Sarah, who, as everyone knows, is a bully. The other day, Sarah turned to me and said, "Oh, Samantha, you're the best writer in our class. I only wish I could write as well as you do." She smiled sweetly at Mr. Stephens, who just happened to be passing by with our homework assignments. As soon as he turned his back, though, she stuck her finger right between my ribs and wiggled it. "Teacher's pet," she said. And then she looked away, tossing her hair. I still have a bruise.

So I wasn't surprised when Sarah offered to take Emma on a tour of the school. I was sure that this was phase one of her full-on attack against Emma and that bizarre outfit.

Because Mr. Stephens is an adult and all adults think Sarah is perfect, he agreed. "Sarah, I think that's a wonderful idea. Very thoughtful of you."

This was not a good sign. Sure, Emma seemed weird, but she certainly didn't deserve to be subjected to Sarah alone. *One-on-one*. And so I did something that would lead to one of the most fantastical, amazing experiences of my life. I raised my hand. "Mr. Stephens, would you mind if I went too? I'd love to get to know Emma better."

Mr. Stephens smiled. "Of course, Samantha. I have such wonderful students!"

Sarah glowered at me, but I didn't care. "Come on, Emma. Follow me!" I said.

Emma trailed behind me. "So, where are you from?" I asked her.

"Here and there," she said.

"What do you like to do for fun?" I asked. I was struggling to find a conversation.

"Magic," Emma replied. *Sheez*, I thought to myself. *This was not going to be easy*.

"Magic?" Sarah cried. "Maybe you could magic yourself some new clothes!" She laughed.

Emma's nose crinkled.

"I bet they kicked you out of your last school," Sarah continued. "I wouldn't be surprised if..."

"Enough, Sarah," I said. Her high-pitched squealing was getting to me.

And this is where things began to get strange, unbelievable, and downright *magical*.

Emma began muttering something quickly. She was so quiet that if I hadn't seen her lips move, I would have doubted that she was saying anything at all. She began moving her hands in small circles, and she stretched her head back so that I was sure she could see whatever was behind her.

"Stop it," Sarah said. "Stop it, stop it, stop it!"

Up until that point, I had been too busy watching Emma to notice what was happening to Sarah. She was hunched over, resting her elbows on her thighs. She was taking deep breaths. And then - and this is the absolute truth - frogs began jumping out of her mouth. Little ones at first, yellow and red frogs splotched with black polka dots, and then big ones, bullfrogs and warty toads that skipped out of her mouth and tumbled onto the floor.

I stared at Sarah without blinking. Hundreds of frogs had fallen out of her mouth and onto the floor. Then, suddenly, Emma snapped her fingers and all of the frogs disappeared.

"What'd you do to me?" Sarah asked fearfully.

"Nothing," Emma shrugged.

"What are you talking about, Sarah?" I giggled. "I didn't see anything."

Sarah went home from school early that day. She told Mr. Stephens she didn't feel well.

The next day, she came to school wearing a tutu, a red cape, and swim goggles. She turned to Emma with a smirk. "You're not the only one with tricks up your sleeves," she said.

"Some things never change," I whispered to Emma. She smiled. I had a feeling this was going to be a great year.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Who is identified as a bully in the passage?

- A. Sarah
- B. Emma
- C. Mr. Stephens
- D. Samantha

2. In the passage, Samantha asks to go with Sarah to take Emma on a school tour.

What motivates Samantha to ask to go on the tour?

- A. Samantha is bored with what's going on in the classroom and wants an excuse to leave.
- B. Samantha thinks it will be a good opportunity to learn some new things about her school.
- C. Samantha doesn't think Emma should be subjected to being alone with Sarah since she's a bully.
- D. Samantha forgot to do her homework assignment and wants to leave before needing to turn it in.

3. Read the following sentences: "I stared at Sarah without blinking. Hundreds of frogs had fallen out of her mouth and onto the floor. Then, suddenly, Emma snapped her fingers and all of the frogs disappeared."

Based on this information, what can be concluded about the disappearance of the frogs?

- A. Samantha makes the frogs disappear by staring at Sarah.
- B. Sarah makes the frogs disappear by closing her mouth.
- C. The frogs disappear without anyone doing anything.
- D. Emma makes the frogs disappear by snapping her fingers.

4. Emma tells Samantha that she likes to do magic for fun. What can be concluded about Emma's statement based on the events in the story?

- A. The statement is truthful.
- B. The statement is not truthful.
- C. The statement is not completely truthful.
- D. The statement is misleading.

5. What is this passage mainly about?

- A. a school year filled with magic
- B. Emma's relationship with Sarah and Samantha
- C. Emma's magical tricks on people
- D. how Sarah's plan to bully Emma backfires

6. How can Samantha's tone throughout the passage best be described?

- A. formal
- B. conversational
- C. disinterested
- D. mysterious

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

_____ Sarah offers to take Emma on a tour of the school, Samantha is sure that this is phase one of Sarah's full-on attack against Emma.

- A. Instead
- B. Therefore
- C. Even though
- D. Initially

8. After Sarah starts to laugh at Emma and say that she bets Emma was kicked out of her last school, Emma starts muttering and moving her hands in a circle. What happens to Sarah after that?

9. What are two things that happen during the tour of the school?

10. At the end of the passage, Sarah says to Emma, "You're not the only one with tricks up your sleeves." Explain what Sarah means by this. Use information from the passage to support your answer.
