Student Name:_____ Date:_____

Not All Fun and Games

Sandeep and his sister Sheela lived on a small, quiet street in a small, quiet house. Sundays were especially quiet around their neighborhood, and for Sandeep and Sheela they were downright lazy. They typically finished their homework on Friday, their friends visited on Saturday, and they had their Sunday cleaning done before breakfast. As a result, they often found themselves feeling bored by the time Sunday afternoon rolled around. They liked their free time, certainly, and didn't mind reading or lounging all afternoon, which was what they usually ended up doing. But they often wondered about what they could do if they had a car, or faster bikes, or a computer with Internet access - something to take them out of the lazy, slow pace of Sundays.

One day, Sandeep came up with an idea. He had been reading a book about a sport called cricket, which was kind of like a different form of baseball played in faraway places like England, Pakistan, and India. Sandeep got to thinking about all of the different games and sports he knew: football, baseball, basketball, Frisbee golf, tennis, soccer, table tennis, hockey, roller hockey, and now cricket - there were just so many ways to have fun and play games. That's what he and Sheela needed to do on their Sundays - they could invent any number of sports and games to play, even a new one every week!

With visions of interesting Sunday afternoons floating in his mind, he decided to take the lead and invent a game for their first week. He had always wished there were some way to make use of the yard that wrapped around their small house, and he thought of a perfect way to do it! He and his sister would go outside and stand on one side of the house. One player would throw the Frisbee in a curve, to get it around the corner, to try and get it to fly as far as possible along the other side, while the other player would run and try to catch it or knock it down. It was a pretty simple game, but Sheela looked just bored enough to be ready to try it. She was stretching and yawning as she finished another book. She scratched her belly as she stood up to get another soda from the fridge.

"Wait!" said Sandeep. "Before you sip another soda, I have an idea for what to do with the rest of our day."

"What?" said Sheela. "You know we can't drive anywhere, and my bike has a flat tire."

"This we can do right here in our own yard," said Sandeep, and he immediately explained the game with such enthusiasm that Sheela couldn't resist. She cracked a smile, starting to feel more energetic, and they both raced outside to play. The game was a hit; they ran and threw the Frisbee all afternoon until it was too dark to see. They laughed and set records and challenged each other, and both got better at the game very quickly.

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Seeing how much Sheela liked to play, Sandeep proposed his plan.

"See, we don't have to sit around all day on Sundays. So how about next week YOU come up with a game, and I'll do it the week after, and we'll keep going like that?"

"I like it," said Sheela, already starting to think of a game for the next week.

With their new plan, their Sundays seemed a little shorter and a lot more fun. They still liked to read all morning, but now in the afternoon they had something much more interesting to do. They jokingly called their Sundays "Sluggish Sundays", and giggled to themselves about how they had managed to make them very UN-sluggish.

One of Sheela's turns took advantage of several old mattresses their parents had in the house. They dragged the mattresses outside and bounced around playing mattress tag, where you couldn't touch the ground off the mattresses.

One time Sandeep's idea was to have rowing races on skateboards, pushing themselves along with large wooden sticks. They raced for short distances, then longer and longer down the street. Sandeep and Sheela were evenly matched, and they both came up with ideas to make the races more interesting, like putting up obstacles and only using one hand.

Perhaps the greatest game of all, though, was Spaceball. This involved the first player kicking a rubber ball down the street. The other player then chased it on a bicycle and brought it back, while the first player ran four bases in a row, back and forth, one point per base. They set records for each other, racked up points, and played and played all afternoon. They liked it so much that they decided to play it the following week, and the next week after that.

In fact, it was this game that almost put an end to Sandeep and Sheela's fun on Sluggish Sundays... forever.

By the fourth week of Spaceball, the game had become quite elaborate: you could hit chalk X's and O's down the street for extra points. If you didn't count your bases as you ran, you lost your points, and the player on the bicycle had to count to three before going to chase the ball. Sheela held the record for most points in one play (44!), and Sandeep held the record for fastest retrieval of the ball (10 seconds!).

They had been playing all afternoon, when they both felt ready to break the others' records. In fact, the level of competition had risen almost to the point where the two were ready to argue. It was Sandeep's turn to kick the ball, and Sheela's turn to retrieve it. They narrowed their eyes and exchanged challenging looks. Sandeep taunted his sister with the words, "You'll never be as fast as me!"

Sheela muttered to herself, "That's what you think," as she vowed to make her brother admit her superiority.

With a last snarled challenge, they both faced forward and geared up to go all out. Sandeep booted, Sheela counted, Sandeep bolted for the bases, Sheela raced after the ball, Sandeep began to shout out points, "1... 2... 3... 4..." and Sheela watched the ball arc high and start to drop... right over a fence into Mrs. Johnson's yard!

Mrs. Johnson was known to keep the most fearsome dogs alive. The dogs were tall,

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lean and jet black with big teeth, and Mrs. Johnson trained them as guard dogs to attack anything that came over the fence - she even gave each dog a spiked collar to look scarier. "No!" cried Sheela, afraid for their only good rubber ball. She immediately jumped up on the fence to get a good look, torn between her fierce desire to impress Sandeep with her speed and ability and her fear of the dogs.

Sandeep came running as soon as he saw her pull herself up on the fence. "What do you think you're doing?" he shouted from across the yard, as he sprinted to reach her before she could do anything foolish. Sheela glanced behind her and saw her brother rushing toward her. She quickly turned back and scanned the yard in front of her. It looked completely empty, with nothing but dry yellow grass and the red rubber ball rolling to a stop against the house. She made up her mind.

With one last look at her brother hurrying her direction, she hoisted herself over the fence and lowered herself into the yard as quietly as she could. All was still quiet, eerily quiet, without a peep from the dogs or Mrs. Johnson. Swallowing her fear, Sheela told herself that she'd better get out as soon as she could!

"What... are you... doing...?" Sandeep whispered to Sheela as he pulled himself up on the fence so he could see her in the yard. Suddenly, they heard a growl from the other side of the house and then a sudden, terrible ROAR of barking and snarling attack dogs running their way.

Sheela leaped after the ball, and just as she reached it, she saw the dogs come around the corner of the house and straight for her. From the fence, she heard her brother yell, "Hurry up! Get over here!" He held out his hand, and Sheela darted over and grabbed it. Her brother yanked her up with superhuman strength so she could scramble over the fence. As she was pulled up, Sheela felt a quick tug at her heel. She let out a high-pitched wail, and then both she and Sandeep fell to the ground on the other side of the fence. They both sat up, breathless, as they heard the snarls and sharp barks hit the other side, with scratches and pounding on the wooden fence slats - inches away from them.

It didn't take them long to hustle their ball and their scared selves out of there - fast! As they neared their house and slowed down, panting, Sandeep noticed Sheela limping.

"What happened? Are you hurt?" he looked at her, worried. She looked at her left foot, and held it up for both of them to see. Her foot was perfectly OK - they could see - because it was sticking out of a gaping hole in her shoe. The dogs had torn a large chunk of her shoe right off! Sheela and Sandeep thanked their lucky stars that she had made it back OK, and, still a little shaky, they gathered their bikes and the bases to go inside.

When Sandeep and Sheela collapsed on the couch, they looked at one another and decided that no amount of competition was worth risking each other's life for. "Next week," Sandeep said, "Let's think of a game where we're both on the same team."

His sister's smile told him she thought the idea was a great one.

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1. **How did Sandeep and Sheela feel on Sunday afternoons?**
   - **A.** They were tired from visiting friends all day Saturday.
   - **B.** They were bored because there was nothing fun to do.
   - **C.** They felt lazy from reading and playing games all day.

2. **Where did Sandeep and Sheela get mattresses for the mattress game?**
   - **A.** From the house.
   - **B.** From the alley.
   - **C.** From the back yard.

3. **What gave Sandeep the idea to create a sport each week?**
   - **A.** Wanting to use the yard around the house.
   - **B.** Reading about a sport called Cricket.
   - **C.** Being very bored one Sunday afternoon.

4. **When did Sheela decide to jump over the fence?**
   - **A.** When Sandeep ran towards her.
   - **B.** When Sandeep yelled at her.
   - **C.** When she saw the yard was empty.

5. **Which game did Sheela invent when it was her turn?**
   - **A.** Mattress Tag.
   - **B.** Skateboard Races.
   - **C.** Spaceball.

6. **What best describes Sandeep?**
   - **A.** He liked competition.
   - **B.** He was good at inventing things.
   - **C.** He was very cautious.

7. **What showed that Sandeep and Sheela were intelligent and creative?**
   - **A.** They were able to come up with new games to play every week.
   - **B.** They read every Sunday morning before playing their games.
   - **C.** The games became more and more complicated the more they played them.

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8. **Why didn't the children want to get their ball out of Mrs. Johnson's yard?**
   A. The guard dogs in the yard were scary.
   B. Mrs. Johnson was known to be fearsome.
   C. They were tired of chasing the ball.

9. **What is probably the reason Sheela agreed to be on the same team for the next game?**
   A. She was tired of the games they had been inventing and just wanted to read.
   B. She wanted to agree so Sandeep wouldn't be mad that she jumped the fence.
   C. She was reacting to having such a big scare so recently regarding the dogs.

10. **What was the biggest problem in this story?**
   A. How Sandeep and Sheela would entertain themselves on Sundays.
   B. How to get their ball out of Mrs. Johnson's yard.
   C. How competition came between a brother and sister.

11. **How was the winner determined in the game of Spaceball?**
   A. Number of points gathered and fastest ball retrieval.
   B. Most bases run and fastest bicycling throughout the game.
   C. How far the ball was kicked and who hit the most X's.

12. **Why did Sheela decide to go over the fence to get her ball?**
   A. It was the only rubber ball they had, and she couldn't afford a new one.
   B. She wanted to prove she was better than Sandeep at something.
   C. She decided the risk was minimal when she looked over the fence.

13. **What would Sandeep probably have done if it had been his turn to chase the ball that went into Mrs. Johnson's yard?**
   A. Wait a longer time to make sure the dogs aren't in the yard.
   B. Call it even and come up with a new game without a ball.
   C. End the game and ask Mrs. Johnson for their ball later.

14. **How many weeks had Sandeep and Sheela been playing Spaceball when they began to compete the most?**
   A. Three.
   B. Four.
   C. Five.

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15. **What is this story mostly about?**
    - **A.** Competitiveness can lead to bad decisions.
    - **B.** Love for siblings can lead to great strength.
    - **C.** Boredom can lead to creative ideas.

16. **How was Sandeep able to pull Sheela over the fence?**
    - **A.** He braced himself against the fence to make it stable for her to climb up.
    - **B.** He had gotten stronger from so much exercise from games on Sundays.
    - **C.** His fear of her getting hurt pushed his strength beyond the normal range.

17. **What made Sheela limp after she retrieved the ball?**
    - **A.** Her shoe had a chunk out of it from the dog attack.
    - **B.** Her toes hurt because they were bitten by the dogs.
    - **C.** She twisted her ankle when she jumped from the fence.

18. **How did Sheela feel towards her brother?**
    - **A.** She liked him and played his games to keep him happy.
    - **B.** She looked up to him and liked to impress him.
    - **C.** She thought he was too careful and a little bossy.

19. **What did Sandeep do to get Sheela to play the first game?**
    - **A.** He said if she played his game she could make up the next one.
    - **B.** He waited until she finished her book and was taking a break.
    - **C.** He made her feel excited about the game by his enthusiasm.

20. **Why did Sheela not see the dogs when she looked in the yard?**
    - **A.** She was in too much of a hurry to notice them.
    - **B.** They were around the corner of the house.
    - **C.** They had been chained by their spiked collars.

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