

Name: _____

New Teacher Troubles

by Kelly Hashway

As the bus pulled into the school parking lot, Liam slouched in his seat. Last year he loved going to school. He had class with most of his friends, and Mr. Hiller was a great teacher. But this year he had Mrs. Chompsky. He'd heard all about how strict she was and how she didn't let the students talk during class. Liam had begged his parents to call the school and get his teacher changed, but they insisted Liam would be fine.



He followed the other kids off the bus and headed to room 213. All the teachers were standing out in the hallway, greeting their new students. But the door to room 213 was closed, and Mrs. Chompsky wasn't standing in the hallway.

Liam gulped as he reached for the doorknob. He hesitated. "Should I knock?" he muttered aloud to himself.

"That would be very polite," came a voice behind him.

Liam turned to see Mrs. Chompsky, holding a big box. "But why don't you go on in and hold the door for me?"

Liam opened the door and held it for Mrs. Chompsky. He looked around the room. There weren't any posters and the bulletin boards were completely bare. Nothing about the room was welcoming.

Liam sighed. "Where should I sit?" he asked, already expecting that Mrs. Chompsky was the type to make the students sit in alphabetical order.

"Name?" she asked.

"Liam..." He paused not wanting to say his last name, but Mrs. Chompsky raised an eyebrow at him. "Abbot."

"Ah, first seat, first row."

Of course. Liam sat down and watched as the other students came in and were directed to their assigned seats. Then Mrs. Chompsky stood in front of the room and clapped her hands. Everyone jumped. "Rules first. I like order. I like quiet. I expect you to do your best. Look around. This is your classroom as much as it is mine. Your first assignment is to decorate the room."

Decorate the room? That sounded almost... fun.

"I believe in working together and respecting each other. I won't talk when you're talking, and I expect you to listen when I'm talking. Fair enough?"

Liam couldn't help nodding. It was fair. No one liked to be talked over or ignored.

"Good." Mrs. Chompsky smiled. "Let's start brainstorming ideas for how to decorate."

Kids raised their hands, and one by one everyone got to have a say in how the room would get decorated. Mrs. Chompsky liked order but she treated everyone as an equal.

"How about you, Liam?" Mrs. Chompsky asked. "Do you have any suggestions for us?"

Liam smiled. "Yeah." This year was looking good already.

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1. Who was Liam's teacher last year?
- a. Mr. Abbot
 - b. Mr. Hiller
 - c. Mrs. Chompsky
 - d. Mrs. Abbot

2. Why was Liam confused when he first found room 213?

3. Why wasn't Liam's new classroom decorated?

4. Why did Liam's teacher make him sit in the first seat of the first row?

- a. because he was the first one to arrive
- b. because she thought he was a nice boy
- c. because she wanted to keep a close eye on him
- d. because his last name began with the letter A

5. Which sentence best describes how Liam felt at the end of the story?

- a. He felt great because he realized his teacher wasn't very strict after all.
- b. He was sure he'd love everything about his new teacher.
- c. He was very worried and wanted to go home.
- d. He felt a little better because his first assignment was fun.

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the story. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. ___ t ___ i ___ t

hint: stern; insisting that rules are followed

2. ___ a ___ l ___ y

hint: long, open area with doors to different rooms

3. ___ e l ___ m i n g

hint: feeling of being accepted or wanted

4. ___ i r ___ t ___

hint: told where to go

5. ___ s ___ g n ___ n ___

hint: task; something a person is told to do

6. ___ a ___ e

hint: undecorated; nothing added

7. ___ ___ i t e

hint: well-mannered

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In the article, "New Teacher Troubles," Liam is nervous about having Mrs. Chompsky for a teacher. He begins to feel better when he receives his first assignment, which is fun.

When you started the school year, what were you worried or unsure about? Write a paragraph describing some of your own first-day fears.

ANSWER KEY

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1. Who was Liam's teacher last year?
- a. Mr. Abbot
 - b. **Mr. Hiller**
 - c. Mrs. Chompsky
 - d. Mrs. Abbot

2. Why was Liam confused when he first found room 213?

The door was closed. The other teachers were all standing in the hallway, but Mrs. Chomsky was not there.

3. Why wasn't Liam's new classroom decorated?

Mrs. Chompsky wanted her students to decorate the room.

4. Why did Liam's teacher make him sit in the first seat of the first row? **d**

- a. because he was the first one to arrive
- b. because she thought he was a nice boy
- c. because she wanted to keep a close eye on him
- d. **because his last name began with the letter A**

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ANSWER KEY

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the story. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. s t r i c t **strict**
hint: stern; insisting that rules are followed
2. h a l l w a y **hallway**
hint: long, open area with doors to different rooms
3. w e l c o m i n g **welcoming**
hint: feeling of being accepted or wanted
4. d i r e c t e d **directed**
hint: told where to go
5. a s s i g n m e n t **assignment**
hint: task; something a person is told to do
6. b a r e **bare**
hint: undecorated; nothing added
7. p o l i t e **polite**
hint: well-mannered