The Perfect Gift
by Kelly Hashway

Colin walked through the mall with his head down. He couldn’t bear to look at another window display of great Christmas gifts he couldn’t afford. There were only a few days left until Christmas, and Colin still didn’t have a present for his parents. He had only managed to save four dollars and seventeen cents. He patted the money in his pocket and sighed.

“Why don’t you make them something?” Colin’s older sister Whitney asked.

“Making presents is for babies,” Colin said.

“Hey, when I was your age, I wrote Mom and Dad a poem for Christmas. They loved it so much they had it framed.”

Colin knew that was true. The poem hung in the living room right above the fireplace. But Colin wasn’t good at writing poems, so that didn’t really help him.

“It doesn’t have to be a poem,” Whitney said. “It could be anything that makes them think of you whenever they look at it. That’s why homemade gifts are special—because they make you think of the person who made it.”

“But I don’t know how to make anything Mom and Dad would actually want,” Colin said, kicking a tiny pebble across the parking lot.
Whitney opened the car door. “Yes, you do! You’re always drawing those funny little comics. Why don’t you do a family portrait as a comic? Mom and Dad would love it!”

“Maybe.” Colin said. He thought about the idea the whole way home. He even pictured how he would draw everyone.

For the next two days, Colin drew sketch after sketch, trying to get everyone drawn perfectly. Finally he had everyone just right, even down to the little cowlick in his own hair. He wrapped the present and put it under the tree on Christmas morning.

After all the other presents were opened, Colin handed his gift to his parents. Colin held his breath as his Mom carefully unwrapped it. The moment she saw the comic, she started to cry.

“This is the best present you’ve ever given us, Colin,” his mother said.

“I know just where to put it,” his dad said with a smile. He took the drawing and placed it beside Whitney’s poem above the fireplace.

Colin stared up at the comic. It really was the perfect gift.
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1. How does Colin feel in the beginning of the story?  
   a. excited  
   b. angry  
   c. disappointed  
   d. curious

2. Who is Whitney?  
   a. Colin's older sister.  
   b. Colin's younger sister.  
   c. Colin's older brother.  
   d. Colin's mother.

3. Where did Colin's father put the gift?  
   ___________________________  
   ___________________________

4. Why did Colin's mom start to cry when she opened the gift?  
   ___________________________  
   ___________________________

5. What would be another good title for this story?  
   a. Colin and Whitney's Gift  
   b. A Gift for Colin's Mom  
   c. The Picture Perfect Present  
   d. Family Christmas Poem

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The Perfect Gift

Vocabulary

Fill in the missing letters to create a word from the story. Then, write the full word on the line.

1. __ __ __ __ __ __ e d
   clue: took the wrapping paper off

2. __ __ f __ __ __
   clue: to have enough money

3. __ __ __ __
   clue: sketch of a funny scene

4. __ __ __
   clue: very small rock

5. __ __ a __ e d
   clue: put a paper in a wooden or plastic case with a glass front

6. __ o __ __ n __
   clue: particular point in time

7. __ o __ __
   clue: written passage with rhymes

8. __ __ __ __ i c __
   clue: tuft of hair that is standing up or growing in a different direction

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1. How does Colin feel in the beginning of the story?  c
   a. excited
   b. angry
   c. disappointed
   d. curious

2. Who is Whitney?  a
   a. Colin's older sister.
   b. Colin's younger sister.
   c. Colin's older brother.
   d. Colin's mother.

3. What did Colin give his parents for Christmas?  d
   a. a poem
   b. a comic book
   c. a painting of his family
   d. a drawing of his family

4. Why did Colin's mom start to cry when she opened the gift?  
   She was overwhelmed with happiness.

5. Where did Colin's father put the gift?  
   Beside Whitney's poem above the fireplace

6. What would be another good title for this story?  
   a. Colin and Whitney's Gift
   b. A Gift for Colin's Mom
   c. The Picture Perfect Present
   d. Family Christmas Poem
The Perfect Gift
Vocabulary

Fill in the missing letters to create a word from the story. Then, write the full word on the line.

1. unwaqpped
   clue: took the wrapping paper off
   1. unwrapped

2. affor d
   clue: to have enough money
   2. afford

3. co
   clue:

4. pe
   clue:

5. framed
   clue: put a paper in a wooden or plastic case with a glass front
   5. framed

6. moment
   clue: particular point in time
   6. moment

7. poem
   clue: written passage with rhymes
   7. poem

8. cowlick
   clue: tuft of hair that is standing up or growing in a different direction
   8. cowlick

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