Xander entered the school fair and scanned the booths. There were tons of games, including beanbag toss, ring toss, bowling, and magnetic fishing. After he purchased a few tickets and signed a slip of paper, which he assumed they used for attendance, he headed straight for the booth run by his gym teacher, Mr. Stanford.

"Hey, Xander," his best friend Will said as Xander walked by a table full of raffle tickets. "Want to enter the raffle for that basketball hoop?" Will pointed to a brand new hoop on display about ten feet away.

Basketball was Xander's favorite sport, and he'd love to have a hoop of his own. But instead of jumping at the chance to enter the raffle, Xander shook his head and mumbled, "No thanks. I'm the most unlucky person there is. I'd never win."

Will shrugged. "It's only fifty cents for two tickets. Are you sure?"

Xander shoved his hands in his pockets and nodded. He walked over to the bowling booth.

"Hello, Xander," Mr. Stanford said, handing Xander a bowling ball. "First throw is on the house."

"Thanks." Xander lined up his shot. He knocked down all the pins.

"Nicely done!" Mr. Stanford said. "If you get another strike, you win a prize."

Xander handed Mr. Stanford a ticket and lined up his second shot.
He knocked down all but one pin.

“So close!” Mr. Stanford said.

Xander shrugged. “I knew I wouldn’t get a strike. I have the worst luck ever.”

“Well I hope you still had fun,” Mr. Stanford said.

Xander forced a smile and walked to the beanbag toss. He made the first toss but not the second. He played every game, coming so close to winning each time, but never get the prize.

Finally he’d had enough. He walked toward the door when Will ran up to him with a big smile. “You won!” Will said.

“Won what?” Xander asked.

“The raffle. Everyone gets one free entry in the raffle just for coming. You beat out people who bought over twenty tickets a piece.” Will handed Xander the slip of paper with his name on it.

“I won?” Xander asked.

“Yeah. Do you still think you’re unlucky?”

Xander smiled. “No, I guess I’m lucky after all.”

---

**About the Author**


Melinda is taking her first trip to the museum, and her mother promises it will be magical. But when the exhibits start coming to life in ways that only Melinda can see, she’ll learn the real magic of the museum.

1. At the beginning of the story, Xander signed a slip of paper, what did he think it was for?

   a. a raffle  
   b. attendance  
   c. a time sheet  
   d. to sign up for games

2. If basketball is Xander’s favorite sport, why didn’t he enter the raffle for the basketball hoop?

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

3. __________

4. How did this make him feel?

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

5. At the end of the story did Xander still think he was unlucky? What occurred that changed his opinion?

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
Unlucky
By Kelly Hashway

Match each vocabulary word on the left with the definition on the right. Write the correct letter on the blank line next to each word.

1. _____ scanned
   a. to have thought something was true without knowing if it was or not

2. _____ mumbled
   b. used strength or will power to do something

3. _____ forced
   c. raised and lowered your shoulders showing that you did not know or care about something

4. _____ shrugged
   d. paid money to get something in return

5. _____ assumed
   e. to put something where people can see it

6. _____ purchased
   f. looked over something quickly

7. _____ display
   g. to have said something quietly and unclear

❖ Now try this: Find all of the words above in the story and highlight them.
In the story, “Unlucky,” Xander is upset because he never seems to win any of the games he plays. As a result of this, he doesn’t have much fun playing games at the fair.

Do you think Xander was right to let his bad luck ruin his fun? Or, do you think he should have had fun anyway? Instead of getting upset about not winning, what are some other things Xander could have done to have a better time at the fair?

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
1. At the beginning of the story, Xander signed a slip of paper. What did he think it was for?

a. a raffle
b. attendance
c. a time sheet
d. to sign up for games

2. If basketball is Xander's favorite sport, why didn't he enter the raffle for the basketball hoop?

Xander didn't enter the raffle for the basketball hoop because he assumed it was pointless since he was unlucky and never won anything.

3. What was the first booth Xander visited at the fair?

a. beanbag toss
b. bowling
c. magnetic fishing
d. basketball

4. As Xander was playing the games at the fair, what kept happening on his second turns? How did this make him feel?

Every game Xander played he lost by a very small margin on his second turn. This was making him feel depressed and frustrated because he would come so close to winning but he never actually did.

5. At the end of the story did Xander still think he was unlucky? What occurred that changed his opinion?

At the end of the story Xander no longer thought he was unlucky. Xander was just about to leave the fair, because he was sick of losing, when he found out that he had won the raffle for the basketball hoop. The slip of paper that he signed at the beginning was actually an automatic submission into the drawing and he won. After this Xander no longer felt he was unlucky.
ANSWER KEY

Unlucky
By Kelly Hashway

1. f scanned
2. g mumbled
3. b forced
4. c shrugged
5. a assumed
6. d purchased
7. e display

Now try this: Find all of the words above in the story and highlight them.