

Name: _____

Shooting for Perfection

by Kelly Hashway

Jason cringed as the basketball bounced off the rim and fell to the ground. He'd made nine free throws in a row, but he'd missed the tenth. He watched the ball roll across the driveway and into the bushes.

"Hey, want to play a little one on one?" his older brother Xander asked, scooping up the ball.

"I can't," Jason said. "I'm trying to get my free throw perfect for tryouts next week."

"I was watching you through the living room window. You made most of your shots. I think you'll be just fine for tryouts."



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"All right," Xander said, tossing Jason the ball. "Let's see what you've got."

Jason lined up his shot, taking his time to make sure his form was perfect. He took his shot and smiled as it swooshed in the net.

"Nothing but net," Xander said. "Very nice. Try again." Xander bounced the ball back to Jason.

Jason repeated his shot, exactly as he had before. He sunk nine baskets. On the tenth try, his knees felt wobbly and his hands got sweaty. He held his breath as the ball left his fingers and headed toward the hoop. It hit the rim and bounced into Xander's hands.

"See!" Jason said. "Every time I get to my tenth shot, I miss."

A car slowed to a stop at the end of the driveway. Jason gasped when he saw it was Coach McElroy. He'd seen Jason miss the free throw shot!

Coach McElroy leaned out the window. "Hi, Jason. Nice to see you practicing. I wish more of my players would work on their free throws. Tryouts are just around the corner."

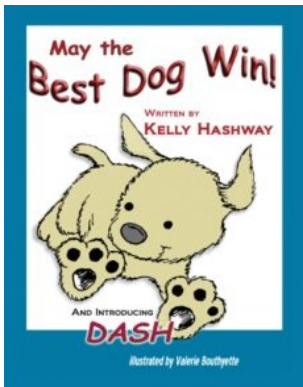
Jason nodded, nervously waiting for a comment about how he'd missed



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About the Author



Kelly Hashway's picture book, *May the Best Dog Win*, is now available!

Dash has the perfect life until the Super Sweeper 5000 shows up. Sweeper runs all over the house sucking up the leftover food scraps, and he even gets his own room! But Dash won't give up his place as the favorite dog without a fight.

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1. What was Jason doing at the beginning of the story?
 - a. Standing several feet from the basket and throwing the ball.
 - b. Running up to the basket with the ball and tossing it through the hoop.
 - c. Dribbling up to the basket and throwing the ball in.
 - d. Playing a game of basketball with his brother.

2. Coach McElroy said he wants his players to be able to...
 - a. make all free throws
 - b. make nine out of ten free throws
 - c. make over half of their free throws
 - d. just try their best



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4. What happened when Coach McElroy's car pulled up?
 - a. The coach saw Xander miss a free throw.
 - b. The coach saw the boys playing one-on-one.
 - c. The coach saw Jason make a free throw.
 - d. The coach saw Jason miss a free throw.

5. Which word best describes Jason? (circle one)

careless

perfectionist

confident

quiet

Explain why you chose the word circled above.

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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. ___ u s ___ s

hint: plants used for decoration near a house

2. ___ a ___ s i ___ g

hint: throwing gently



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hint: person who trains or leads a team

6. ___ o ___ e ___ t

hint: remark

7. r ___

hint: edge of a basketball hoop

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In the story, "Shooting for Perfection," Jason is nervous about basketball tryouts, so he spends a lot of time practicing to perfect his free throws.

Think of something that you have had to practice to become good at. Describe what you practiced, how long you practiced, and whether the practicing helped you achieve your goal.



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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. b u s h e s

bushes

hint: plants used for decoration near a house

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