

Ms. Page's Puzzle

Ms. Page was puzzled. She had collected all the stories from her 4th grade students. But there was one with no name on it. Whose was it? It was a mystery.

First, Ms. Page looked at all the other stories. She checked the names on the papers. She thought she could figure out whose story had no name through the process of elimination.

She would consider each student in her class. If they had turned in a story with their name on it, she would eliminate them from her list of possible authors of the no-name story. Whoever was left was the person who had written it.

But it wasn't that easy. It turned out that all the students in the class had given Ms. Page a story with their name on it. The no-name story was extra. It could have been written by anyone. Ms. Page was no closer to solving her puzzle.

Ms. Page looked at the handwriting on the no-name story. It looked almost the same as the handwriting on three other stories. The other stories belonged to Levi, Luna, and Kai. Ms. Page decided that the no-name story must have been written by one of these three students. They were her suspects.

Ms. Page read the stories that she knew were written by Levi, Luna, and Kai. Then she read the story without a name. She compared their styles to see if she could narrow down her list of suspects. The stories by Levi and Kai seemed most similar to the no-name story. Ms. Page eliminated Luna as a suspect.

Now Ms. Page was still puzzled. How could she figure out whether Levi or Kai had written the story without a name? She looked closely at the papers again. That's when she noticed it. There was a jelly stain on the corner of one of the pages of the no-name story. A clue!

Ms. Page quickly flipped through the story with Levi's name on it. Was there a matching stain? No. All the pages were clean. She picked up Kai's story. Sure enough, there was a jelly stain on page two!

Mystery solved. Ms. Page was no longer puzzled. Now she knew who had written the no-name story. And she couldn't wait to talk with him about his creative writing.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Why was Ms. Page puzzled about the story in the beginning?
 - a. Because it was extra
 - b. Because she couldn't read the handwriting
 - c. Because it was confusing
 - d. Because it had no name

2. How did Ms. Page narrow the suspects to Levi, Luna, and Kai?
 - a. By the style of their stories
 - b. By their handwriting
 - c. By stains on the paper
 - d. By their drawings

3. Who wrote the no-name story?
 - a. Levi
 - b. Luna
 - c. Kai
 - d. Ms. Page

4. What is the process of elimination?
 - a. When you consider and reject each possible choice until only one is left
 - b. When you consider each choice and erase the one that is correct
 - c. When you make an educated guess about the correct choice
 - d. When you make a random choice

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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 - b. Luna
 - c. Kai**
 - d. Ms. Page
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