

Name: _____

Date: _____

Identifying Theme:

Directions: read each short story and determine the theme or message in the story. Remember that a good answer will focus on big world lessons, not small world details of the story.



The Soccer Game

Kaity didn't sleep very well last night. She was so excited for first period gym class because they were finally playing soccer. Every time she closed her eyes, she imagined the perfect corner kick and all of her classmates applauding and cheering as the ball went in the net.

Every time they picked teams, Kaity was picked last. She wasn't very good at tennis the first week of school, so Rachel picked her last for their basketball unit. Kaity wasn't very good at basketball either, and ended up breaking her finger when she tried to catch the ball the only time it was passed to her. After that, Jacob didn't want her on his kickball team. When she was the only one standing in line, he scowled.

Today was going to be different. Kaity hadn't told any of her classmates and the only people that knew she was on the soccer team at her last school were her best friends. She had only made two friends since she moved to this school. Everyone else thought she was clumsy. They often tripped her in the hall and laughed, mocking her for not being able to walk on her own feet.

Kaity stood in line with everyone else in her class. Rachel was captain for the red team again and Kaity's best friend, Anna, was captain of the yellow team. Rachel picked Jacob first. Anna picked the tall boy from their math class. Kaity was disappointed, but thought that it was a good move to pick the tall boy first. He was good at every sport they've played in gym class. Kaity figured Anna would pick her next.

The team captains were almost done choosing players. Kaity and another girl were the only two left. Anna picked the other girl and Kaity joined Rachel's team. As they were walking out to the field, Kaity met up with Anna.

"Why didn't you pick me, Anna?" Kaity whispered.

"Kaity," Anna said. "You made Jacob's team lose the kickball game last week. I'm finally team captain and we can't lose."

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Kaity spent most of the game on the bench, cheering on her teammates. Nobody sent her in to play. When the game was tied 1-1 at the end of the class period and all of the players on the field were tired, Rachel sent her in to play. “Let’s just get this over with so we are on time for our next class,” Rachel whispered to Jacob. They laughed as Kaity ran out to the field.

Jacob had control of the ball down the field, but suddenly met up with the tall kid from the other team. He backed off and let Kaity take the ball. It had been awhile since she played, but she dribbled the ball down the field like she used to at her old school. Without even thinking about it, Kaity went for the goal and scored. Jacob cheered, ran over to her and gave her a high five. She could hear the rest of her team cheering from the side of the field.

As they walked back to the gym, Kaity was busy thanking everyone who kept coming to congratulate her, but she found a spare minute to find Anna and tell her that her team played well too.

“Yeah.” was all Anna said to her.

Rachel and Jacob invited Kaity to sit with them at lunch that afternoon. Kaity thought it might be fun to sit with her team and talk about how much fun the game was. She also thought it might help her get on the same team for their next game. When she saw Anna sitting alone, she decided it wasn’t that important and joined her best friend for lunch.

What is the theme of this story?

What happens in the story that leads you to believe this?
