Shy Simon Skating in the Park

Learning objectives

• Express and develop ideas through collaborative discussion.
• Sequence and retell story events while evaluating speech.
• Portray characters, settings, and events in detail based on inference and facts drawn from the text.
• Construct a conclusion using transitional words and sensory detail to describe character experiences and events.
• Enhance the use of adjectives and descriptive language.

Setting the scene
Shy Simon just got his very first skateboard. He doesn’t want anyone to see him practicing on it, so early one misty morning, he sets off for the local park. He doesn’t expect to see anybody at the park so early in the morning. But to his surprise, when he arrives, he sees that it’s full of people. It’s the weekend, and people have come out early with their picnic baskets to reserve their ideal spots.

Shy Simon steps gingerly onto his skateboard and rolls slowly away down a damp, slippery pathway. He suddenly becomes aware that he’s gaining speed, faster and faster he goes. He rattles unsteadily around a sharp bumpy bend and suddenly comes face to face with . . . !

Your task is to start and complete the story.

Building the story
Ask the students to work in teams. Have them brainstorm ideas and then create a storyboard for a three- or five-scene drama. They should consider: the scenario, time and place, characters, props, and the main events.

• Who or what does Simon bump into? How does he deal with this tricky situation? What is the story?

Reflecting
Encourage the students to discuss each scene of the story as they build. What are the essential details of each part? In what sequence should the scenes be arranged?

• What is Simon’s mood at the beginning of the story? Is he happy, excited, sad, or bored? Why?
• How does Simon interact with the other character he meets in the story?
• How is the excitement built up?
• How will Simon feel at the end of the story?
Sharing and documenting

Ask the students to focus on varying the style of their delivery when narrating or playing a character in front of an audience. Ask them to make use of descriptive language and speech punctuation when recording and writing.

Sample solution

1. Shy Simon phones his mother to tell her that he’s on his skateboard.
2. A tiny kitten runs out in front of him.
3. He crashes into a shy, young girl having a picnic.
4. He apologizes and helps her to tidy up the mess.
5. They become friends and end up sharing the picnic.

Extending

• What would have happened if Shy Simon had met another type of character with a different mood? Use the mood spinner and change the character’s mood accordingly. Think about the flow of the story and explain how the story would differ if the character’s mood was changed. What would the new dialogue be?

• Pretend you are a book publisher. You are about to launch a new book about what happened to Simon in the park. Design a poster to promote the book’s release.