

9.6.5 A Bet

Russell finished running a **relay** and joined his friend Becky in the cafeteria. He asked, "What's for lunch?"

"**Sesame** chicken. It's OK, except the meat's **charred**. Oh, and watch out for the chili peppers," Becky said.

"Chilies don't bother me!" said Russell.

"My stepmother says you should be careful with them," replied Becky.

An argument **ensued** about eating chilies. "Chilies aren't so bad. I bet I can take more bites of this chili than you," Russell said.

Becky was **wary** of eating the pepper. Despite her **reluctance**, she didn't want to say no to the bet. She **wavered** about whether to do it or not. She **negotiated** the details. "What will the winner get?" she asked.

"The loser has to carry the winner's books for a year! I'll even let you go first."

Becky replied, "Fine, but to **clarify**, you'll carry my books for the entire school year, right?"

Russell **restated** the agreement, "That's right I'll carry your books all year if you win—which you won't!"

His **dogged persuasion** convinced her. The chili looked **benign**, but Becky knew it could cause a lot of pain. She bit the bottom of the pepper. Surprisingly, she felt nothing.

"My turn," said Russell. He bit the middle of the chili. Immediately, he seemed to be in **distress**. He **gasped** and his face **alternated** between brave and pained expressions. He experienced an **overdose** of spice. He was on the **verge** of tears and finally let out a horrible cry.

"Take this," said Becky, handing him her drink.

"That was awful!" he said, continuing to **sip** from the glass.

That night, Becky researched chilies. The next day she said in an **apologetic** voice, "I read that the hot part of chilies is in the middle, where the seeds are. I'm sorry—I feel like I cheated by going first."

Russell was relieved, not only did he learn something new about chilies, but he learned that Becky was a good friend.

Reading Comprehension

Part A: Mark each statement T for true or F for false.

Rewrite the false statements to make them true.

- _____ 1. Becky was having charred sesame chicken for lunch.
- _____ 2. The argument ensued because Becky wavered about whether to run the relay.
- _____ 3. After Russell and Becky negotiated the bet, they decided that whoever lost would carry the winner's books for a year.
- _____ 4. Russell was wary about eating the pepper even if it looked benign.
- _____ 5. Becky was apologetic because of her choice to take the first bite of the pepper.

Part B: Answer the questions.

- 6. Why did Becky take the bet in spite of her reluctance?
- 7. Why did Russell have to restate the terms of the bet?
- 8. How did Becky know that Russell was in distress and had an overdose of spice after he ate the pepper?
- 9. Who warned Becky about chilies?
- 10. What did Russell do after he ate the chili?