The Pool

by Gabrielle Sierra

Alex and Karen were sitting in their backyard on a hot summer day. All they wanted to do was go swimming, but the local public pool was under construction, and all of the adults were too busy to give them a ride to the beach.

"I just want to sit in the cool water," said Alex, imagining how nice it would

feel. The two sat quietly as they thought about how else they could cool off.

"Let's blow up that kiddie pool that we have in the garage," suggested Karen. "We can fill that with water, and it will help us cool off."

The two ran to the garage and found the inflatable pool stuck in a box. They dragged it out to the lawn and looked at it.

"It needs to be blown up," said Karen.

Alex sat down and started blowing air into the pool through the nozzle, but after a while he realized it wasn't doing very much. He was exhausted and out of breath from all the blowing. The pool was too big for just one person to inflate, and at this rate it would take Alex all night. He sat back, defeated. "Okay, so how are we going to get it inflated then?"

Karen thought it over. Alex went back to the garage and got a bicycle pump, but the ends

didn't match up. Then Alex came back with an old vacuum, but that sucked air instead of pumping it.

Karen thought and thought, and eventually she realized something.

"Did we check the pool box and see if there is a pump at the bottom?" she

asked. They ran into the garage and tipped the box over. Out fell a pump. They

laughed.

"That was a very good idea," said Alex, as they went back to the yard and connected the pump to the pool. "We were so excited to find the pool that we didn't gather all of the pieces first."

Finally the pool was blown up. But as Karen and Alex looked at it they realized that it was slowly deflating.

"There must be a hole somewhere," said Karen. "We'll have to find it."

They each took a side and examined the pool, but couldn't find anything. "The hole may

be too small to see," said Alex. "How can we find it if it is too small to see?" "Maybe we

can feel it," suggested Karen.

She traced her finger along the pool, only to find that she couldn't feel

anything. "I know," said Alex, "let's listen and maybe we will hear the air

escaping."

They placed their ears next to the pool and listened. Sure enough, Karen heard a soft sound as air escaped through a hole.

"I found it!" she said. "That was a good idea. The hole was too small to see, but we could hear it. Now we have to patch it."

Alex ran into the house and grabbed a bunch of different things to try and patch the pool. First he suggested glue, but that didn't seem to make sense to Karen. It would have to dry, and they wouldn't be able to swim until it did. Then he suggested a Band-Aid, but that wouldn't stick around the hole. Last he pulled out a roll of gray, heavy-duty tape.

"That should do it," said Karen, cutting a piece and placing it over the

hole.They refilled the pool with air, and this time it stayed full.

"Now we have to fill the pool," said Alex.

But how would they get the water into the pool? Karen suggested filling buckets up from the kitchen and carrying them outside. At first this seemed to work but they soon realized that it would take them forever to fill up the pool. Then Alex suggested filling it from the spout in the backyard.

"That makes a lot more sense," said Karen. "Let's drag it over to the

spout." They did, and Alex turned on the water. The pool was soon full.

Alex and Karen went inside and put their bathing suits on. Then they ran back outside and sat in the pool.

"Well, we can't swim, but at least we found a way to stay cool," said Alex. "And we worked together."

Li Bing and the Flooding

by Vinnie Rotondaro

A very long time ago there were people who lived along a river in China. The river was named the Min River.

There was a problem with the Min River. The people who lived along it were scared of it

because it would overflow. This happened once a year, every year. When the river overflowed, water would flood the people's homes, and everything would get wet. This was a very bad thing for the people who lived along the Min River. It was a big problem. So some of the people got together and started to think about how they could fix it.

Eventually the governor of the people got involved. His name was Li Bing, and he was very smart. Li Bing investigated the problem. To investigate a problem means to study it carefully and learn as much about it as possible.

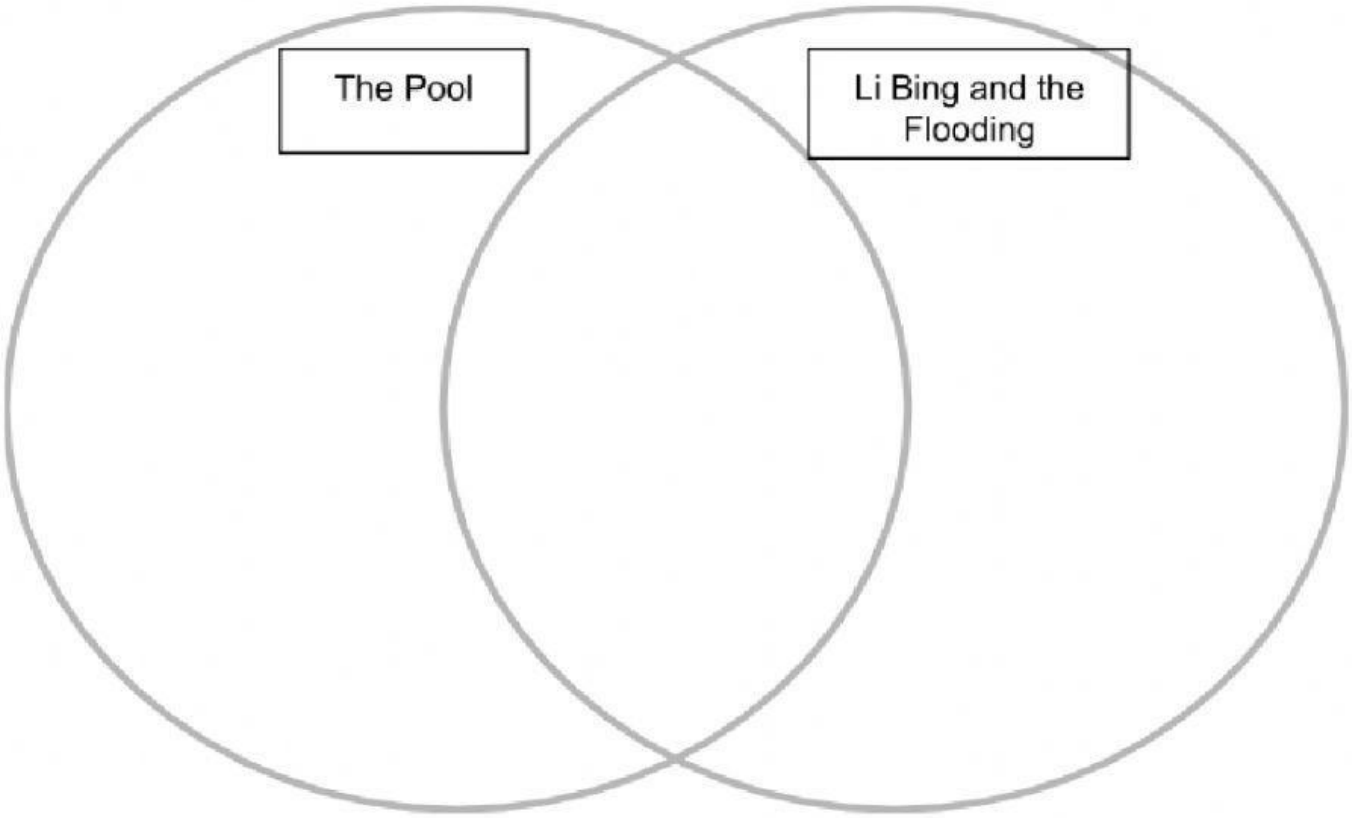
Li Bing found out that the problem of the flooding river started up in the mountains. The tops of the mountains were very high up in the sky, where it was very cold. When it was wintertime, it would get so cold that the tops of the mountains would become covered in snow. When springtime came, all the snow would melt. When snow melts it turns into water. The problem was that the melted water would fall down the mountains and go into the Min River. This is why it would overflow and flood people's homes.

Li Bing knew that the melting snow was the cause of the flooding. But he also knew that he couldn't stop the snow from melting. So he started to think about other ways that he could fix the problem. Then Li Bing had a great idea. He realized that the best way to solve the problem would be to turn it into an opportunity. An opportunity is a chance for something good to happen.

Away from the river there was a flat piece of land that had its own problem. It didn't have any water. It needed water. So Li Bing started thinking about how he could get the extra water that was bad for the people who lived along the Min River to the flat plain of land that needed water to grow plants.

Li Bing got a bunch of workers together and created a levee in the Min River. A levee is a big wall that people build to stop water from going somewhere. The levee makes the water go somewhere else.

Li Bing and his workers made the levee out of bamboo and stones. It took him and his men four years to build. When the levee was done, the water stopped flooding the homes of the people who lived along the Min River and started going into the land that was flat and needed water. Now the people who lived along the river didn't have to worry about the river flooding, and plants began to grow in the flat land.

Directions: Complete the Venn Diagram based on the story "The Pool" and the article "Li Bing and the Flooding". You should type at least three differences on each side of the Venn Diagram, and at least three similarities.

Grading: Each sentence in your venn diagram must begin with a capital letter and end with a punctuation mark and the Venn Diagram must be complete in order to earn full credit.