

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the reread strategy to make sure you understand what you have read.

Building Our Community

13 “Hey, Mom,” I said, dropping my backpack on the table. “Marla and I
24 were hoping you could take us to the mall next weekend.”

24 “Sorry, Tasha, I’m working at the hospital this weekend and next
35 weekend,” she said.

38 “Well, then what about Kevin?” I persisted, not ready to give up.
50 “Maybe he could take us.”

55 Mom smiled at my determination, but her answer was firm. “First of all,
68 you and Marla need a parent chaperone with you at the mall to keep you
83 safe. Second, Kevin is volunteering next weekend by giving time to help
95 build a home for a family that needs one.”

104 As soon as she said that, I remembered the way Kevin’s eyes had lit
118 up when he’d first told us about the project. He’s always been good at
132 building and fixing things. Now that he was seventeen, he was finally
144 old enough to take part in the home-building projects that our community
156 did twice a year.

160 “It’s not fair,” I complained. “Kevin can make a real difference
171 in a family’s life, but what can I do? I’m not old enough to help
186 build the house.”

189 Mom put on her serious face, which meant that she was about to give
203 advice. “Don’t think about it like that, Tasha” she said. “People don’t
215 make a difference by focusing on what they *can’t* do. They change things
228 by thinking about what they *can* do.”

235 I slunk off to my room as Mom’s words echoed in my head over and
250 over. Maybe she was right. I might not be able to physically raise the roof
265 on the new house, but what I *could* raise was money to help.

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The next day, I talked to my teacher about raising money to help build the house. "Well, there's not much time to put something together," Mr. Pham said thoughtfully, "but, we can brainstorm about it this morning. It's our class's turn to sell water at the soccer game this weekend. I bet your classmates will have some good ideas about what else we could sell to raise money. Teamwork will be the best way to make this happen."



After roll call, Mr. Pham gave me the floor to explain my idea. Brason raised his hand. "My uncle owns a T-shirt shop. Maybe he can print some shirts that we can sell."

"Great idea!" Mr. Pham said enthusiastically. "Now, if Brason can get shirts for us, we need something to put on them. Any ideas?" After a lively debate, we settled on "Building Our Community" as our slogan. Marla, our class artist, agreed to draw the design.

The next day, Brason announced that his uncle would donate 20 shirts. Marla shared her sketch of interlocked hands. Now, we had to get the word out.

By Friday, we were ready. I had posted details about the sale on our class Web page and taped flyers in hallways and the cafeteria. The T-shirts, our merchandise, were printed.

Our Saturday sale was a success. We earned \$125. Some people bought shirts. Others gave a dollar or two to our cause.

Kevin drove me to the local hardware store to buy a gift card that could be used for hammers, nails, lumber, and other equipment.

On the Friday before building was to start, our class took a field trip to the community center. I beamed with pride as I handed over the gift card. Mom and Mr. Pham had both been right. Everyone can do something, and together we can accomplish something great.