

One of Those Days

by Harry Rains



1 Lena was having one of those days.
You know the kind—a day where nothing
goes the way you think it should. The
kind of day where you wish you had
stayed in bed. Luckily, Lena had gotten
out of bed. The end of her day was
worth it.

2 When Lena woke up, her first thought
was, “Today’s my birthday, and I’m so
excited.” Lena was now twelve years old.
She couldn’t wait to see what she looked
like. She ran into the bathroom to look in
the mirror. She was quite disappointed.
She still needed the step stool to see in
the mirror. Plus her reflection looked the
same as it did yesterday.

3 Then Lena went down to breakfast.
She thought maybe her family would say
something about this being her special
day. No one even looked at her. Her
mom kept reading the paper. Her dad
kept slicing his banana. Her brother kept
listening to his music and pouring
orange juice. Her sister kept leaning on
one hand and spooning cereal into her
mouth. Lena grabbed some toast and
ran to catch the bus.

4 Of course the way things were going
already, she expected to miss the bus.
And she did. Lena went back in the
house to tell her parents. They scowled
and growled about being late for work
now because the school wasn’t really on
their way. Lena could not believe this! It
was her birthday, and she was getting
yelled at!

5 At school, someone had put paper in
the guinea pigs’ cage. Lena saw that
Harriet, the big guinea pig, was starting
to eat the paper. She didn’t want Harriet
to get sick, so she tried to take the paper
away. That was a big mistake! Harriet bit
Lena so hard her finger started bleeding.
Her teacher frowned and didn’t really
want to hear an explanation. He just told
Lena to go to the school nurse and get it
taken care of. Obviously, the teacher had
missed the announcement that this was
Lena’s birthday.

6 After school, Lena was eating a snack
when her grandmother, who lived next
door, called. She wanted Lena to come
over and help her clean out the garage.
On my birthday? Lena thought. She
didn’t want to hurt her grandmother’s
feelings so she went. It took two hours,
and it was hard work. Her grandma gave
her a kiss, thanked her, and sent her
home. Even Lena’s grandmother
seemed to have forgotten her birthday.

7 Lena was feeling sad when she
opened the kitchen door of her house.
The room was dark so Lena turned on
the light. As soon as she did, Lena
heard a hearty “Surprise!” Her parents,
brother, sister, teacher, and all her
classmates were in her house. They
were giving her a surprise birthday
party! No one had forgotten after
all. Now that was a day Lena will
never forget.

COMPREHENSION

A Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a*, *b*, or *c*.

1 Another good name for this story is

- a** Harriet the Guinea Pig.
- b** Cleaning the Garage.
- c** Lena's Up-and-Down Day.

2 Lena's parents were upset with Lena because

- a** it was her birthday.
- b** they were going to be late for work.
- c** they wouldn't get to finish their breakfast.

3 Lena's teacher was unhappy that

- a** Lena was late for class.

b Lena had been bitten by a guinea pig.

c it was Lena's birthday.

4 You know Lena's grandmother was helpful because she

- a** was at Lena's birthday party.
- b** had a garage.
- c** kept Lena busy while others set up for her party.

5 Lena thought no one noticed her, but really everyone

- a** disliked Lena.
- b** liked Lena.
- c** helped Lena.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

B Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.)

Write the word.

- 1** with good fortune or luck (1)
- 2** not having one's hopes met (2)
- 3** an image you can see in something shiny (2)
- 4** resting on something for support (3)
- 5** looked at with anger or disapproval; wrinkled brow (4)
- 6** the story of what happened (5)

7 a public message told to a group of people (5)

8 said with strong feeling; said warmly (7)

C **too** = also

two = the number after one

Words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings are called homophones. *Too* and *two* are homophones.

Look at each word in **bold type**. Note the paragraph number. Look at the paragraph and find the homophone for the word in bold type. Which of the homophones fits in the blank in the sentence? Write the word.



LEARN ABOUT WORDS (continued)

9 wear (1)

Lena wanted to _____ something special on her birthday.

10 weigh (4)

Lena did not _____ any more on her birthday than she had the day before.

THINK ABOUT IT

D A contraction is a short way of writing words. An apostrophe (') shows where letters are left out. Some contractions are made by putting a verb and *not* together.

isn't is made from *is not*

Other contractions are made by putting a pronoun and a verb together.

it's is made from *it is*

we've is made from *we have*

Read each sentence. Which two words make up each underlined contraction? Write the two words.

- 1 Lena was excited about her birthday and couldn't wait to get going.
- 2 If Lena thinks anyone will notice her, she's going to be let down.
- 3 Lena thought, "Maybe I'll look different today."
- 4 Lena knew she mustn't disappoint her grandmother.
- 5 Lena learned that you don't always know what people are thinking.

E A pronoun is a word that replaces one or more nouns.

Janet gave a book to Jerry and Gail. She gave it to them.

Read each sentence. Which pronoun in the box should take the place of the underlined word or words? Write the pronoun. (*Hint: You may use a pronoun more than once.*)

he	they	she	her
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- 6 Harriet started to eat paper.
- 7 Lena's grandmother called to ask Lena to help.
- 8 Lena did not want to clean out the garage on her birthday.
- 9 Lena's father came to the party.
- 10 The classmates came to the party too.