

Jamaica Tag-Along

By Juanita Havill

Jamaica ran to the kitchen to answer the phone. But her brother got there first.

"It's for me," Ossie said.

Jamaica stayed and listened to him talk.

"Sure," Ossie said. "I'll meet you at the court."



Ossie got his basketball from the closet. "I'm going to shoot baskets with Buzz."

"Can I come, too?" Jamaica said. "I don't have anything to do."

"Ah, Jamaica, call up your own friends."

"Everybody is busy today."

"I don't want you tagging along."

"I don't want to tag along," Jamaica said. "I just want to play basketball with you and Buzz."

"You're not old enough. We want to play serious ball."

Ossie dribbled his basketball down the sidewalk. Jamaica followed at a distance on her bike.

Buzz was already at the school court, shooting baskets with Jed and Maurice.

She parked her bike by the bushes and crept to the corner of the school building to watch.

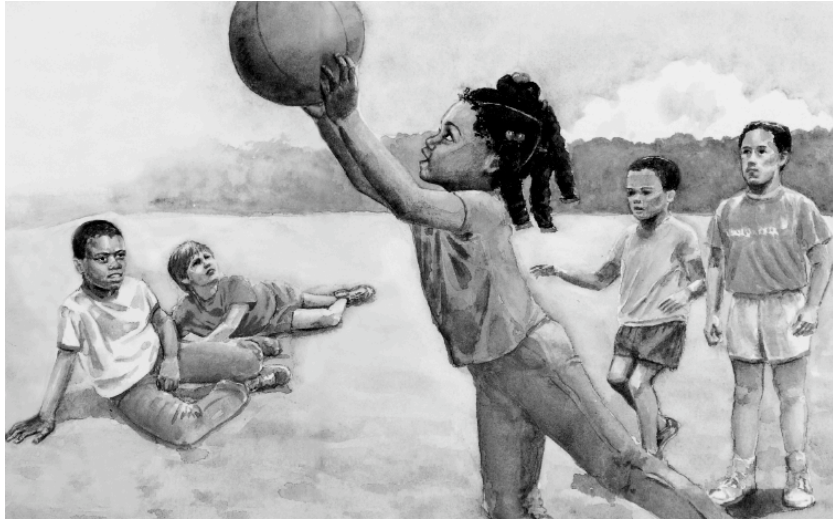
That's not fair, Jamaica thought. Maurice is shorter than I am.

Pom, pa-pom, pa-pom, pom, pom. The boys started playing, Ossie and Jed against Buzz and Maurice.

Reading Mini-Assessment Grade 3
LA.E.1.2.2 Plot/Conflict Form C

Jamaica sneaked to the edge of the court.

Maurice missed a shot and the ball came bouncing toward her. Jamaica jumped. "I've got the ball," she yelled.



"Jamaica!" Ossie was so surprised he tripped over Buzz. They both fell down.

Jamaica dribbled to the basket and tossed the ball. It whirled around the rim and flew out.

"I almost made it," Jamaica shouted. "Can I be on your team, Ossie?"

"No, N-O, Jamaica. I told you not to tag along."

"It's not fair. You let Maurice play."

"We need two on a team. Why don't you go play on the swings and stay out of the way?"

"I still think it's not fair." Jamaica walked slowly over to the sandlot.

She started to swing, but a little boy kept walking in front of her. His mom should keep him out of the way, Jamaica thought.

She looked up and saw a woman pushing a baby back and forth in a stroller.

Jamaica sat down in the sand and began to dig. She made a big pile with the wet sand from underneath. She scooped sand from the mound to form a wall.

"Berto help," said the little boy. He sprinkled dry sand on the walls.

"Don't," said Jamaica. "You'll just mess it up." Jamaica turned her back.

She piled the wet sand high. She made a castle with towers. She dug a ditch around the wall.

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Jamaica turned to see if Berto was still there. He stood watching. Then he tried to step over the ditch, and his foot smashed the wall.

“Stay away from my castle,” Jamaica said.

“Berto,” the woman pushing the stroller said, “leave this girl alone. Big kids don’t like to be bothered by little kids.”

“That’s what my brother always says,” Jamaica said. She started to repair the castle. Then she thought, but I don’t like my brother to say that. It hurts my feelings.

Jamaica smoothed the wall. “See, Berto, like that. You can help me make a bigger castle if you’re very careful.”

Jamaica and Berto made a giant castle. They put water from the drinking fountain in the moat.

“Wow,” Ossie said when the game was over and the other boys went home. “Need some help?”

“If you want to,” Jamaica said. Jamaica, Berto, and Ossie worked together on the castle.

Jamaica didn’t even mind if Ossie tagged along.



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Reading Mini-Assessment Grade 3
LA.E.1.2.2 Plot/Conflict Form C

Name _____ **Date** _____

Directions: Read the passage “Jamaica Tag-Along”, then circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. What is Jamaica’s BIGGEST problem in the story?
 - A. She hurts Berto’s feelings.
 - B. Berto steps on her sandcastle.
 - C. She is not a good basketball player.
 - D. Her brother will not let her play with him.

2. What happens AFTER the basketball game is over?
 - A. Jamaica starts to play on the swings.
 - B. Jamaica warns Berto to stay away from her castle.
 - C. Jamaica lets Ossie help her and Berto finish the castle.
 - D. Jamaica thinks it is not fair that Ossie won’t let her play.

3. Ossie tells Jamaica not to tag-along because
 - A. she is not as tall as Maurice and his other friends.
 - B. he knows that she will have more fun riding her bike.
 - C. he thinks that she’s not old enough to play serious ball.
 - D. there are already too many kids on each basketball team.

4. What is the FIRST event in the story that helps Jamaica begin to understand the problem her brother has with her?
 - A. She sits down in the sand and begins to make a castle.
 - B. She sees a woman pushing a baby back and forth in a stroller.
 - C. She sneaks onto to the court and sees that Maurice is shorter than she is.
 - D. She hears the woman say, “Big kids don’t like to be bothered by little kids.”

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5. How was Jamaica's problem solved?
- A. She discovers that playing with Berto is fun.
 - B. She tells Ossie not to tag-along with her and Berto.
 - C. She sees that the other players are shorter than she is.
 - D. She shows Ossie that she is a good basketball player.