

The Audition

by Elizabeth Trach

"Don't forget to finish your math homework tonight," said Mrs. Falzone at the end of the school day. "And if you'd like to audition, or tryout, for the school play, be ready to sing a song for the director after school. Class dismissed."

Nancy was very excited about the school play. She had always wanted to be an actress. Nancy put on performances in her back yard all the time for her family. She knew someday she would be a big star.

First though, she had to get a part. That meant singing a song in front of other people. Nancy wasn't sure she could do it.

When she got home, Nancy found her mother in the garden. "How do you sing in front of people?" she asked.

Mom looked up from her garden spade. "Well, it can be hard. Do you feel nervous?"

"Yes," said Nancy. "I like to act and talk, but singing makes my stomach feel funny."

"That's called having butterflies," said Mom. "Sometimes when you get nervous, your stomach can feel like butterflies are fluttering around inside. The best thing to do is to practice your song as much as you can. When you get up on stage, don't look at anyone in the audience. Just look at the clock on the back wall instead."

Nancy went into her room to practice. She chose her favorite song because she knew it by heart. She practiced it a few times to make sure she knew all the words. Then she stood in front of her mirror and sang it louder. She made sure to smile, even though she felt nervous.

The next morning, Nancy did not feel like eating breakfast. She walked to school slowly, humming her song the whole way.

When she arrived in the auditorium after school, it was very dark. The only light was a bright spotlight that shone in her face. It made her eyes hurt, but Nancy realized she couldn't see the director. That made her feel less afraid.

"Go ahead, Nancy," said the director.

Nancy sang her song loudly and clearly. She didn't forget any words.

Nancy wasn't sure what part she would get in the play, but she felt very proud of her first audition.

Questions

1. Why is Nancy nervous about her audition?
2. How does Nancy prepare for the audition?
3. What does "having butterflies" mean?
4. What does audition mean?

Vocabulary List

Each of the vocabulary words below are used in the reading passage. As you read the passage, pay attention to context clues that suggest the word's meaning.

1. dismissed
2. fluttering
3. afraid
4. hard
5. audition

Context Clues

Using context clues from the sentences in the passage, underline the correct meaning of the word in boldface.

1) "And if you'd like to audition, or tryout, for the school play, be ready to sing a song for the director after school. Class **dismissed**."

- a. released b. quieted c. welcomed d. scolded

2) "Sometimes when you get nervous, your stomach can feel like butterflies are **fluttering** around inside."

- a. flying quickly b. diving nervously c. flapping slowly d. circle wildly

3) "That made her feel less **afraid**."

- a. excited b. confused c. ashamed d. scared

4) "Mom looked up from her garden spade. "Well, it can be **hard**. Do you feel nervous?"

- a. firm b. difficult c. confusing d. easy

5) "Nancy wasn't sure what part she would get in the play, but she felt very proud of her first **audition**."

- a. session b. practice c. tryout d. finale