

The Diving Board

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Katie is tired of being the little sister. She wants to do everything her older brothers can, but one day she bites off more than she can chew. Students will read the passage and answer follow-up questions about character and other story elements.

Katie was six years old. She was part of a big family. She lived with her mom, dad and three older brothers. Her older brothers all played sports. They rode their bikes around town. Katie wanted to be just like them when she got bigger.

One summer day, the boys all decided to go swimming at the neighborhood pool. Katie wanted to go, too.

"But we're riding our bikes," said Tom. He was the oldest.

"You're too slow because you still have training wheels," added Mike, the next oldest.

"Boys, I want you to take Katie swimming with you," said Dad. "It will be fun."

The third brother, David, sighed. "Fine," he said. "But you'll have to peddle fast."

All four children put on helmets and got on their bikes. The boys rode fast. Katie did her best to keep up, but her brothers were right. She was slower than they were. Soon she fell behind.

"Wait for me!" Katie cried. But her brothers were so far ahead they didn't hear her.

Katie wasn't going to give up. She pumped her legs up and down hard, and soon she arrived at the pool. Her brothers were waiting at the gate.

"Let's go!" said Tom. He paid the entrance fee, and they all went inside to put their beach towels on the chairs they liked best.

The boys splashed around in the shallow end of the pool with Katie. They felt bad about leaving her behind and wanted to make sure she had fun. But soon the boys noticed that their friends were all in line at the diving board. One by one, the brothers joined the big kids taking turns jumping off the springboard into the deep end of the pool. Some kids tried to make the biggest splash. Others worked on special jumps and dives to show off. Everyone was laughing and having fun.

Katie was not having fun. She wanted to dive, too! She wanted to show her brothers she was big enough to play with them.

Katie got in line for the diving board. As she made her way to the front of the line, she started to feel nervous. She had never jumped into the deep end before. What if she forgot how to swim?

Soon it was Katie's turn to dive. She stepped out to the edge of the board and looked at the water below. She started to cry.

Then she felt an arm around her shoulders. "It's okay, Katie," said Tom. "I was scared to jump when I was your age, too. Let's go get some ice cream."

Katie stepped off the diving board and walked toward the snack bar with her brother. She never knew that Tom got scared before. That made her feel much better. There was plenty of time to learn to dive when she was older.

Questions

1. What are Katie's brothers' names?
2. According to the story, what is a springboard?
3. Why does Katie want to try the diving board?
4. Do you think Katie should have tried to jump off the diving board? Why or why not?