

A

The New Girl

Plot Summary

Best friends Amanda and Julia go to basketball tryouts which are cancelled. New girl Stephania has also come to tryout. Julia feels left out when Amanda befriends Stephania. She confronts them and then they become best friends.

Character Descriptions

(All characters are 10 years old.)

Amanda: She is athletic and outgoing. She is also adventurous and bold. She makes friends easily, but her best friend is Julia. They live on the same street and are in the same class at school. Amanda is the leader of the two.

Julia: Best friends with Amanda since kindergarten, but much less out-going. She is timid and quite shy with strangers or in new situations.

Stephania: New girl at school, looking to make new friends. She is very pretty and graceful and speaks with a French accent.

Costumes

Amanda – Jeans with action figure Tshirt

Stephania – White track suit with a pink tank top underneath her jacket

Julia – Jeans and plain Tshirt, thick glasses

Lights: Warm wash up and down according to the script.

B

Setting

The time is the present. The action takes place on a street leading to the local elementary school. There is a park bench at the edge of the sidewalk. Amanda and Julia enter stage left.

(Lights come up: Amanda and Julia enter stage left. Amanda is carrying a basketball and Julia is carrying a piece of paper. They begin to walk across stage and then stop and sit on the park bench stage centre)

Amanda: SO! Are you excited about the tryouts or what? I love these things! Everyone watching you *(Julia cringes)* and being able to show off your best moves *(Julia shivers)* then when you become the star of the team you can shrug it off claiming it was nothing! *(laughs casually)*

Julia: Easy for you to say, you always get on the team and be the star! You leave no room for the under dog...wish me luck? *(blushes)*

Amanda: Sure! What are pals for right? *(hits her on the shoulder – Julia laughs but then turns from her and rubs it trying to doctor it before they get to tryouts without her noticing)*

Julia: *(stops)* You're not worried about that new girl are you? She seemed really good at sports an stuff in the gym today, and what is with her talking so funny!?! *(giggles and snorts)* It's like...it's like she's dumb or something!

Amanda: Hey! Who are you to judge!?! Besides, she seemed really nice! I thought if she was there tonight, ya know, we can ask her to come and hang out after school with us!

Julia: What!?! That's best friend time! You can't take that away! We'll never ever be bestest best friends anymore! You'll be too busy hanging out with funny talk! *(giggles with snorts)*

Amanda: What's wrong with having more than 1 best friend? Besides, we see each other EVERY day ALL day! We're not gonna drift apart!

Julia: Okay, you better not be tricking me or nothing...

HIGH LEVEL 2

C

Amanda: (*Holds up her right hand*) Cross my heart! C'mon, we're gonna be late!!

(*The two girls continue walking across stage. A spotlight highlights a sign posted on a door stage right: TRYOUTS CANCELLED – SORRY FOR THE INCONVENIENCE*)

Julia: Well, it could be worse...I could be getting shoved into a basketball net by Flora and Sukey...

Amanda: (*laughs hysterically; looks at Julia who is not laughing and immediately stops*) Those big jerks. Now we're missing "Sponge Bob".

Julia: As long as...we're...together...it doesn't matter...to me...(smiles weakly)
C'mon, we can catch the rest of it.

Amanda: (*starts to play with the ball*) I was all ready! I may as well practice here while I'm around a hoop; gotta keep training right?

(*Enter Stephania stage right*)

Stephania: Oh! Excusez-moi! But ...er ... er where are zee tryouts?

Amanda: (*pushes Julia aside*) Hi!! I'm Amanda Lockwood! (*glances back*) That's Julia. You're in our gym class! But um, the tryouts are cancelled.

Stephania: Oh no! C'est terrible!...(Julia obviously glares) Il y a quelque chose qui ne va pas? er ... Somesing eez wrong?

Julia: NO – not at all (*glares*)

Stephania: (*smiles*) oh! Okay then!

Amanda: I love your gear! That is so...so cool (*whispers in her ear and they giggle*)

Julia: WELL! Isn't this so cosy? (*Gets up and grabs the basketball off the floor*) Hey! Check this out! (*Dribbles around and just changes hands*)

D

(*Both girls stare; then look at each other; they laugh in unison*)

Julia: Hey! I'm not done! (*drops ball and tries to moonwalk but falls over; again, girls laugh*)

Amanda: Julia you're such an idiot sometimes! (*turns around and talks in a low whisper to Stephania; Julia's face crumples*)

Julia: OH YA! And WHAT do you have that I don't? (*points angrily at Stephania who sits in shock*) You, you think you're just...so...so...SO COOL! But you're not! That's my friend! That's my ONLY friend I've ever had! You could take any person as a friend, but noooooo, you had to take my only friend and steal her away! Now I have no one; I'm a loner; a loser; (*bows*) THANK YOU

Amanda: Julia, what are you talking!?! She's not stealing me away! We're still friends, but I'm allowed to have other friends too...

Julia: (*sits down and crosses arms*) I thought we were BESTEST best friends, BESTEST best friends don't to that...

Amanda: Don't act like this, if you're a BESTEST best friend then you'll understand

Julia: (*sadly*) Going to the movies, eating lunch together, watching Sponge Bob after school...

Stephania: I'm...I'm so sorry...I have no idea I was interrupting sumsing so...close!

(*Amanda turns around and looks at Julia expectantly*)

Stephania: I think maybe I should just go and...

Julia: (*looks at her slowly*)...come and play at my house?

Stephania: (*grins*) OKAY! Let's go then! (*Runs off stage right*)

(*Amanda begins to follow Stephania but Julia grabs her hand*)

Amanda: What is it now?

E

Julia: uhh...(stops; pauses; grins) RACE YA HOME! (*Runs off stage right*)

Amanda: (*laughing*) Hey! Get back here cheater! (*Exits stage right*)

(*Blackout*)

Teacher's Notes

Knowledge/Understanding

- The student provides information about the characters that is somewhat appropriate. Amanda is described as “athletic and outgoing” and as someone who “makes friends easily”. These characteristics are borne out when she talks about the tryouts (i.e., “I love these things!”) and befriends the new girl. Julia is described as “less out-going” and “quite shy”. However, while her behaviour does indicate that she is not outgoing, jealousy brings out bold aggressiveness (e.g., in her angry “WELL! Isn’t this so cosy?”) rather than shyness in her. The opening lines of dialogue do, however, accurately suggest that she is less than athletic (e.g., she refers to herself as “the under dog”). Little information is provided about Stephania except that she is “the [n]ew girl” who “speaks with a French accent”, and that she is “very pretty and graceful”.

Thinking/Inquiry

- The student portrays character development with some effectiveness. Amanda and Julia are quite believable as ten-year-olds whose activities (e.g., “[g]oing to the movies, eating lunch together, [and] watching Sponge Bob after school”) seem natural and appropriate, as does Julia’s frequent assertion that they are “BESTEST best friends”. Even Julia’s turnaround and sudden acceptance of Stephania can be considered typical behaviour for someone her age. However, there is little growth on the part of the characters (e.g., Julia’s acceptance of Stephania comes more from Amanda’s influence than from any personal insight).

Communication

- The student creates dialogue that is convincing to a considerable degree. It is, for example, appropriate to the age of the characters (e.g., “Those big jerks. Now we’re missing ‘Sponge Bob.’”). The student also successfully infuses humour into the script (e.g., finding out that the tryouts are cancelled, Julia says, “Well, it could be worse . . . I could be getting shoved into a basketball net by Flora . . .”) and adds authenticity by including a number

HIGH LEVEL 2

of lines in French. At times, however, the dialogue tends to be melodramatic (e.g., “As long as . . . we’re . . . together . . . it doesn’t matter . . . to me . . .”).

- The student provides stage directions that are of considerable appropriateness. Directions for the movement of the characters effectively support the action (e.g., when Julia tries to impress the others with her basketball “skills”, directions such as “*Dribbles around and just changes hands*” move the action along and successfully convey the intended humour). However, stage directions are lacking for Stephania, who remains a one-dimensional character throughout the scene.

Application

- The student creates a working script that is somewhat effective. The setting’s simplicity and props such as the lit-up sign indicating the cancellation of the tryouts should work well. Also, the basketball is effectively incorporated into the action. However, the significance of the piece of paper Julia carries is never revealed. The tension in the script, as Julia and Amanda discuss the meaning of friendship, escalates when Stephania appears and Amanda begins befriending her. However, the climax is hard to distinguish from the escalating tension, and the resolution, in which the tension dissolves inexplicably and too quickly, is weak. Julia’s quick turnaround is perhaps typical of how ten-year-olds behave, but the script lacks a necessary dramatic element because of the resolution’s swiftness.

Comments

This work is representative of a high level-2 performance. The student demonstrates some degree of achievement of the expectations in the Knowledge/Understanding, Thinking /Inquiry, and Application categories of knowledge and skills. However, in the Communication category, the student demonstrates a considerable degree of achievement – i.e., achievement that is more representative of level 3.

Next Steps

In order to improve his or her performance, the student needs to:

- provide more information about Stephania and information about Julia that is more accurate;
- provide a more meaningful role for Stephania;
- provide more growth for characters (e.g., Julia’s character development could have included empathy with the new girl);
- eliminate melodramatic dialogue;
- review the purpose of a climax and a resolution in a dramatic work and rework the script to strengthen these elements.