

# The Perfect Sandcastle

A.P. Raj



Renee was making sandcastles on the beach with her friends, Divya and Morris. It was fun to shape the wet sand with their hands, like dough. It was sunny outside but not too bright. The ocean waves lapping at Renee's feet felt nice.

As they played, Renee noticed something: none of their sandcastles looked like castles. Renee's sandcastles looked like upside-down ice cream cones. Divya's castles looked like wooden blocks, with little dents where she had shaped the blocks with her fingers. And Morris made castles that looked like a lot of snowmen huddled together.

“Divya, Morris,” Renee said. “None of our castles look like castles!”

Divya and Morris laughed.

“You’re right, Renee!” Morris said. “But so what? This is fun!”

“But wouldn’t it be more fun if we could make a sandcastle that actually looked like a castle?” Renee said.

Divya said, “I know how we could do it! My dad is an architect. Before the builders make a building, my dad draws it first.”

Morris said, “That gives me an idea.” He got up and kicked everybody’s castles into the ocean.

“Hey, what are you doing?” Renee said, laughing.

“Don’t worry,” Morris said. “I’ll be right back!” He ran down the beach until he found a stick, then came back and held it out. “Who wants to draw our castle?”

Renee and Divya smiled and looked at each other.

“Divya, you’ve seen your dad do this— you should draw it!” Renee said.

“But it was your idea, Renee!” Divya said. “You draw it!”

“O.K.,” Renee said, and took the stick from Morris. She drew a square in the sand.

“That’s the main part of the castle.” She added a small rectangle at the bottom.

“And that’s the bridge that leads in, across the moat.”

“I can make those!” Divya said.

Renee drew four circles at the corners of the big square. “And these can be the towers around the castle.”

“Those are called turrets,” Morris said. “I can make those!”

So Divya made a big cube of sand for the main part of the castle, and a small rectangle for the bridge, and Morris made four turrets to go around the castle. It took a couple of minutes. Then they all sat back and looked at what they had made.

“It looks a lot more like a castle than before,” Renee said, “But it still doesn’t look quite right.” She looked at the smooth surfaces of the castle, the bridge and the turrets, and tapped her chin with the stick. Then she drew a small door on the front of the castle, and crisscrossed lines to make it look like it was made of bricks. “This looks pretty good!” Divya said.

“Yeah!” Morris said. “We made a pretty nice castle.”

“Good work, everyone!” Renee said. Then she got up and kicked the castle into the ocean.

“Renee, what are you doing?” Divya said.

“This is fun!” Renee said. “But why stop there? I bet we can make an even better one!”

They all agreed with her. The sun was still shining, and there was a nice breeze coming off of the ocean. Renee held out the stick.

“Who wants to draw the next one?” she asked.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are Renee, Divya, and Morris making on the beach?

- A** mud pies
- B** deep holes
- C** sandcastles

2. One problem in this passage is that the sandcastles Renee and her friends make do not look like castles. How do they solve this problem?

- A** They build a new sandcastle, first drawing it in the sand.
- B** They ask Divya's dad to help them build a new sandcastle because he is an architect.
- C** They all build sandcastles that look like upside-down ice cream cones.

3. The sandcastle built after making a drawing looks more like a real castle than the sandcastles built before making a drawing.

What can be concluded from this information?

- A** Making a drawing before building a sandcastle results in a sandcastle that looks like a wooden block.
- B** Making a drawing before building a sandcastle results in a sandcastle that looks like a big snowman.
- C** Making a drawing before building a sandcastle results in a sandcastle that looks more like a real castle.

4. Why does Morris kick down everyone's sandcastles?

- A** He is mad because their sandcastles are bigger than his.
- B** He has an idea for making a new sandcastle.
- C** He is tired of making sandcastles and wants to do something else.

5. What is a theme of the story?

- A People do a better job at something when they work alone than when they work in a group.
- B If people are unhappy, they should keep doing what they are doing.
- C Doing something in a new way can make a big difference.

6. Read these sentences: "Renee's sandcastles looked like upside-down ice cream cones. Divya's castles looked like wooden blocks, with little dents where she had shaped the blocks with her fingers. And Morris made castles that looked like a lot of snowmen huddled together.

'Divya, Morris,' Renee said. **'None of our castles look like castles!'**"

What does Renee mean when she says, **"None of our castles look like castles!"**

- A Renee means that none of their sandcastles look like real castles.
- B Renee means that they will never be able to build a castle with towers.
- C Renee means that Divya is better at making sandcastles than Morris is.

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Renee, Divya, and Morris build a sandcastle that looks more like a real castle \_\_\_\_\_ making a drawing in the sand.

- A after
- B before
- C because

**8.** What does Renee use to make a drawing of the sandcastle that she builds with Divya and Morris?

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**9.** Describe the drawing that Renee makes with the stick.

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**10.** How does making a drawing help Renee, Divya, and Morris build a sandcastle that looks more like a real castle? Support your answer with evidence from the story.

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## Teacher Guide &amp; Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 520

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8. What does Renee use to make a drawing of the sandcastle that she builds with Divya and Morris?

**Suggested answer:** A stick.

9. Describe the drawing that Renee makes with the stick.

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary but should all correspond to the story. Renee draws a square for the main part of the castle, a small rectangle for the bridge, and four circles at the square's corners for towers.

10. How does making a drawing help Renee, Divya, and Morris build a sandcastle that looks more like a real castle? Support your answer with evidence from the story.

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary, as long as they are supported by the story. Making a drawing allows Renee, Divya, and Morris to think about the castle as a combination of separate parts. By focusing on building these separate parts, rather than the whole thing at once, they are able to build a sandcastle that looks more like a real castle.