

Step Up to the Plate

Comprehension

Reading Aloud

Fluency: The passage should be read in approximately 1 minute 30 seconds.

(Independent Reading Level: 95%; self corrections: 1:2)

CRACK! "There it goes over the fence!" Dad yelled as the baseball soared over his head. "It's a goner! Yes! Another home run! This is your season, Jeremy!" Jeremy ran over to his dad. "Why can't I hit like that in a real game?" he asked. "This is my last year in Coach's Pitch. Everybody hits home runs but me. Butch plays for the Angels and always hits lots of home runs. How can I hit home runs, Dad?"

"What does Coach say when he pitches?" Dad asked.

"Keep your eye on the ball," Jeremy answered.

"I think that's what we need to practice," Dad said. "Eyeballs and Concentration."

"Eyeballs? Concentration? What does that mean? Is it like magic?" Jeremy asked.

"It's not magic, but keeping your eye on the ball and thinking about what you're doing are keys to hitting the ball. That's called concentration. Don't let your eyes or your brain wander," Dad said. "Do you see the ball in my hand?" he asked.

"Yes, that's easy," Jeremy answered.

"Right. It's easy when it's in my hand, but watch what happens when I pitch," Dad said.

"All I see is your empty hand, Dad," Jeremy said.

"That's because you watched my hand, not the ball," Dad said.



Questions (Read the words that tell you.)

1. What does "It's a goner!" mean?
2. What is a coach?
3. What does Dad mean when he says "Eyeballs"?
4. What does "concentration" mean?

Notes of Reading:

Self-corrections; errors; reading on/back; cues used to read difficult words; fluency

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Reading Silently

The base coach waved José past third and on home. The score was tied, 4 to 4. Tracie tagged second just ahead of the ball.

“Batter up,” the ump called.

The outfielders yelled, “Hey! Batter, batter, batter!”

Nervously the batter kicked dirt on the plate.

“Phil,” Coach called. “Forget them. See this ball? Keep your eyes on it.”

Phil watched the ball speed toward him. He jumped back from the plate.

Butch caught the ball and hurled it back to Coach. “Are you scared of a little ball?” he asked.

“Ball one,” the ump called.

Phil watched the second pitch, determined to show Butch he wasn’t afraid.

He slugged the ball over the shortstop. Startled, he dropped the bat and ran.

Tracie streaked past third and home. The Braves pulled ahead one point.

Braves 5, Angels 4.

Jeremy stood safe on second and Phil on first. Heather dragged the bat to the batter’s box. She laid it on her shoulder and nodded at Coach.

“Bat off the shoulder, Heather,” Coach said. “Ready?”

Keep your eye on the ball.”

She lifted the bat and chewed on a wad of gum.

She watched four balls whiz by.

“Hey, batter, what are you waiting for?” Butch pestered.



Questions (Read the words that tell you.)

1. What does “the score was tied” mean?
2. Who is the “ump”? What is the whole word?
3. What is the “plate”?
4. Which team does Phil play for?
5. What does “streaked” mean?
6. What does “Butch pestered” mean?

Independent Reading Level: • 8/10 correct answers (Reading Aloud and Reading Silently);
• 95% accuracy rate (Reading Aloud)

Step Up to the Plate

Word Study

Read the words aloud.

blazing dressed gulped catcher's huddle

Show me a word with this sound in it.

(say the sound—short *i*, /wh/, /ou/ as in *cloud*; /z/; short *u*)

dugout ump whacked mitt whiz

Show me the word in the text that you hear. (Say the words but not in sequence.)

chatter concentration confidently fidgetted erupted

What word would you put in the blank spaces? (Any word to fit the context.)

Jeremy rubbed _____ from his _____.

Jeremy gulped down _____ and _____.

Coach whistled through his teeth to _____ the team.

17/20: Independent Word Study Reading Level
25/30: Independent Reading Level: Combined totals