The Day I Didn’t Study

By: Abigail C.
I forgot to study for my huge math test today! This test is half my grade. Hanging up my backpack, I drag myself over to my seat. Then I realize something. I still have time before my test to study! Quickly grabbing my notes, I look for my favorite pink pencil from my desk. Not finding it, I rush to the “extra pencil” bin in my classroom and grasp the first one I see. If only I had dashed to school getting here earlier, I would have had plenty of time to study. As I examine my notes, the teacher steps into the classroom.

“Okay kids, I hoped you’ve studied for the math test!” she beams and hands the tests to us. I slump down into my chair gloomily. “Ready, kids? Pick up your pencils and start.”

I sigh, pick up the pencil, and stare at the first question. I quietly work out the problem.

23, 

I guess silently.

Wrong!” I hear something in my brain say. “Wrong! It’s obviously 24. You forgot to add that extra one.” I glance around the classroom wondering if anyone else heard that.

Who said that? I ask in my head. 

“It’s me, look down.” I glance downward at the pencil in my hand.

Are you the pencil?

“Of course. Who else?”

Stunned, I drop the pencil to the ground.

Mrs. Gowen frowns, staring at me.

“Oww!” squeaks the pencil.

Swallowing hard, I reach down, grab my pencil, and start to work again.

Why are you talking? I think in my brain. Do you know all of the answers to this test? Can you help me?

“One question at a time. I don’t know why I talk, it’s just natural. I do in fact know all the answers to this test. And yes, I can help you,” says the pencil. I feel relieved. I might actually get a good grade on this test.

Okay, umm, #7 is… I wait for an answer from my magic pencil.

“That’s simple. 103,” My pencil brags.

I write 103 on my paper. How cool I would be if I had this pencil sooner, I think. I would be a straight A student. I sit back in my seat. What if I were the most intelligent kid in my class? I would be so popular and everyone would look up to me. I would...

Mrs. Gowen clears her throat and glares at me. “Aren’t you supposed to be working? We don’t daydream in school, do we?” she states. I nod my head faintly. I look down at my paper and start to work again.
What’s #9? I think to the pencil.

“4”

I circle a 4 on my sheet. We go on like this for a while. The pencil is so helpful that I promised to give him a new eraser to replace his stubby one. I come to an open response. I doubt that the pencil will know this one. It looks hard. But it did say it knew everything, so I have a little hope.

_Do you happen to know the open response?_ I ask.

“Of course. Why wouldn’t I? When I say something, write it on the sheet. If Sally had 34 apples, and if…” the pencil speaks as I scribble everything down.

_“Then the answer is 762 because 34 +…”_ My hand is really tired, but I keep going. I see kids around me giving their tests to the teacher. I must finish quickly.

_“And that is how I found my answer,”_ the pencil finishes off. I breathe deeply. I will get an A. I have succeeded. I pick up my paper and...

_“Wait!”_ screams the pencil.

_What? Aren’t I done?_ I ask impatiently.

_“You must put your name on the paper, Elaine.”_

_My name is Emma, not Elaine._

_“What… you’re not Elaine? Isn’t this Mrs. Smith’s 4th grade class?”_

_No… I’m Emma from Mrs. Gowen’s class in 5th grade!_

_“Ohh… umm…”_

Suddenly, Mrs. Gowen claps her hands. “Okay kids, time to turn in your test. Remember, this is half your grade,” she says.

_You mean to say that you... you... I freeze._

_“Emma sweetie, I need your test,”_ Mrs. Gowen holds out her hand for my assessment.

_“Umm, good luck...El...I mean, Emma. Hope you... do... well,”_ my pencil says trying to sound confident.

Gulping, I force myself up to the front of the classroom and hand in my test. That’s the last time I’m trusting a talking pencil.

Mrs. Gowen smiles, “Class, I would like to remind you about our reading test coming up in two weeks. Remember to study.”

Oh, trust me, I will!