

TIRÉ À PART

Stories to Ponder

1

for Reading and
Understanding English

MARTHE BLANCHET

 ÉDITIONS
**MARIE
FRANCE**

Stories to Ponder

for Reading and Understanding English

1

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for **Reading and Understanding English**

Révision linguistique :
Jean-Marie Jot

Correction d'épreuves :
Doris Lizotte

Page couverture :
Louis-Philippe St-Laurent

Mise en page :
Hubert & Carrière

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Dépôt légal 2^e trimestre 2007
Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

ISBN 13 978-2-89168-917-5
Imprimé au Canada

Nous reconnaissons l'aide financière du gouvernement du Canada par l'entremise du Programme d'aide au développement de l'industrie de l'édition pour nos activités d'édition.

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STORY 4

Goodbye... Hello?...

Cathryn woke up that morning with a strange feeling of uneasiness. What was wrong? She suddenly remembered only too quickly: this was to be her first day at her new school. Images of herself laughing, crying, hugging old friends, kissing acquaintances goodbye entered her mind for a brief moment. Had it been a week since she had left Saint-Boniface? The new city she now lived in was so big, so cold... She felt alone.

She had lived through so many changes before, but adapting to a new place always seemed so difficult, so frightening. How would her new school be? Who were her teachers? Would she make new friends... at all? Her father had shown her the building she was supposed to go to this morning: all schools looked alike to her! She mentally pictured the grey-brick school: this is where her new life would begin... all over again... Oh but she loved studying, reading and doing homework (well, maybe not that much). She was considered as being “a desirable element in any class.” That is what Mrs. Baker had told her parents before Cathryn bid her final farewell to her old classmates.

“Cathryn! Hurry up! You’ll be late...” Her mother’s voice brought her back to reality. This was it. In no time at all, she was dressed, had breakfast and was ready to leave. She kept concentrating on her every movement to keep her thoughts from focusing on the day which laid ahead. It was so close now. “Mom, tell Dad not to hurry. I prefer walking to school.” Everything considered, the exercise would help ease her mind. Before she knew it, she was off. The air was crisp, the road pleasant. At the end of the next street, she could see the school. In no time at all she was on the school grounds trying to locate the students’ entrance. “Hey, are you the new girl on my street?” Cathryn turned around to see a short girl with freckles. “I guess so. I moved in last week.” “Hi, my name is Helen! Welcome to the neighborhood!” Cathryn smiled. All of a sudden, she knew she would like it here.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Goodbye... Hello?...

1. How is Cathryn when she wakes up?

2. Why is Cathryn feeling the way she is?

3. Where does Cathryn live now?

4. Where did she live before?

5. When did she move?

6. What were her feelings when she left Saint-Boniface?

7. How do we know she was both nervous and insecure when she said goodbye to her friends in Saint-Boniface?

8. Who is Mrs. Baker?

9. Why has her father shown Cathryn her new school?

10. What does her new school look like?

11. What was going through Cathryn's mind when she thought, "This (*her new school*) is where her new life would begin... all over again."

12. Why is it difficult adapting to a new place?

13. What is her opinion about schools?

14. What kind of student is she?

15. What is her dad supposed to do that morning?

16. What does Cathryn do to forget about school?

17. Why does she make the effort to concentrate on her every movement while dressing?

18. Why is she worrying about school?

19. How far would you say her new school is? How does the text say so?

20. Why does she decide to walk to school?

21. How is the weather that day?

22. Who is Helen?

23. Why does Helen talk to Cathryn?

24. How do we know Cathryn is happy about her new life in the end? What made her change her mind? Why?

SPECIMEN

FINISHING THE STORY

Write an ending to the story *Goodbye...Hello?...* using each of the three following topics. Write them out on a sheet of paper. Edit your conclusions and share them with your classmates.

- 1) Cathryn's father tells the family they will be living there one year at the most: he has been transferred to another city.
- 2) Helen becomes Cathryn's best friend. Cathryn learns that Helen too has often moved to different places.
- 3) Cathryn is still a bit nostalgic about Saint-Boniface. One day, she gets a surprise visit from an old friend. They relive the past and talk about the present.

INFORMAL CLASS DISCUSSION

Have you ever had to change schools after, or even worse yet, during a school year?

AND/OR

Have you ever had to move to another city, province or country and experience going to school in completely new and unfamiliar surroundings?

Talk about the pros and cons of your personal experience with the class, or learn about and comment on the experience of other classmates.

NOTE: If nobody in your class, including yourself, has ever experienced such a major uprooting, imagine the consequences (good or bad) it could have on your life.