

Cinderella Stories
(*Problem Solving Devices*)

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Problem Solving Devices

Single Handed: (non-magical) using one's inner resources (music, clever storytelling, perseverance, etc.) character has (or learns) special skill,

Single Handed: (magical) magic song, dance, magic artifact, changing form

Helped by Individual: Someone with a special ability, wise-person, someone with information,

Helped by Many: group of heroes, a group-each with a special skill, creatures who were showed kindness by MC earlier,

Magical Helper: Wizard, Magician, Witch, Fairy,

Spirit Helper: Ghost, Deity, Nature Spirit*,

Performs a Task: stealing from some powerful being, contest for a prize, quest, race between opposites,

Reciprocation: MC does a kindness not expecting anything in return, but gets help as a result.

Unexpected Treasure: MC receives something that appears to be of little value until closer inspection reveals that it is very special.

*When gaining help from a powerful being, think of how the MC earns the help of the Magical Being or Spirit? For example, what may the MC have done to make the Spirit of the Forest want to help her?

Discuss various categories of problem solving devices students to show the wide variety of possibilities in their writing. There is no need for characters to use weapons or violence to solve problems.

Main Character and Bad Family

Where

Encounter

Where

Whom does MC meet

How does MC help

What character trait does MC show

What reward does MC receive

Special Contest-Event

Where

What is the event

Who is hosting it

When does it take place

Who else will compete

What prize is at stake

What will be the greatest obstaxle or challenge

Happy home for MC at the end

Where

1: Introduction

We introduce the characters and explain why the MC lives with the Bad Family. It helps to give descriptions that show contrast between the MC and the others so that we engage the sympathy of the readers right away.

You might remind the students to not confuse "pretty" with "good." Sometimes we want to describe the "Bad" characters as ugly outside to reflect their ugliness from inside. In fact, sometimes the character might be more interesting if they look pretty but act mean and ugly. Likewise, it is not the Main Characters' looks that make us relate to them, it is how others treat them and how the MC responds to it.

End this page when we are satisfied that the reader has a clear picture of the place and the characters where the MC lives.

2: Everyday Life

This paragraph may start, "Day after day,..." or "Day in and day out," or "Each day, _____ had to" or "Not a day went by that _____ wasn't forced to"

The idea is that this is still part of the introduction to the story. The characters are not doing anything specific yet. We haven't gotten to the day that opens the story yet.

This is an opportunity to give specific examples of the things that make the MC's life so miserable. End this page when we have a picture of the MC's life.

3: Announcement

Now we have reached the day the story really begins, the day of the problem. This paragraph begins with the all-important phrase, "One day..." I like to stress the importance of this simple phrase. When you hear the storyteller say, "One day," you know something is getting ready to happen.

This is the day that they find out about a special event that will give the MC a chance at a new life. It helps to try to be original here. Maybe they can brainstorm and list different ways the characters might hear about the event.

At this point, we want to make sure our viewpoint is focused. We only really know what the MC knows because that is our Viewpoint Character. So we can begin to create a picture of what the MC was doing. Then we describe how the MC found out about the event and the prize. Don't use dialogue on this page only description of the MC's actions. Show how the MC feels by telling what the MC is thinking.

End this page with the MC's show of hope and excitement about the event.

4: Reaction - Denied

This page starts with the MC asking permission to go to the event. The Bad Family will react by giving the MC something to do that will make it difficult or impossible for the MC to finish and get to the event in time. Or the Bad family may just try to discourage the MC so badly that the MC will think there is no hope of winning in the event.

You may use dialogue on this page but it must be focused on the conversation about the event. Try to give a clear sense of how things are said. Brainstorm a list of alternatives to "said" that help to express

the emotions of the Bad Family. (Scowled, roared, laughed, chuckled, snickered, yelled, shouted, sneered, jeered, guffawed, snorted, grumbled,)

5: Preparation

Describe the Bad family getting ready for the event and the things they make the MC do to help them get ready. You don't need dialogue here but at the end; you might have one of the Bad family members say something as they leave, just to make the MC feel bad.

End this page with the Bad family leaving and reminding the MC of the tasks they demanded.

6: Home Alone

This page begins with the MC finally alone and thinking about the event. The MC realizes that there is a chance to go to the event even though there might be a problem, like finishing whatever tasks the Bad family left, or finding the right equipment, or getting to the event on time. Choose the first problem solving device. It is best to keep this fairly simple since you're still going to need another device later. The MC should try to solve the problem singlehandedly or maybe be helped by someone nearby. Don't send the MC on any long journey yet or into any elaborate scheme.

This page should end with the Main Character starting out for the event full of hope and apprehension. The only page that really needs dialogue is page 4: Reaction - Denied, where the MC asks permission to go to the event and is denied.

7: Complications

Here the Main Character is just beginning to try to go to the Special Event, but does not get very far. Something happens to make this first Problem Solving Device fail. In the original folktale for example, Cinderella made herself a beautiful dress out of scraps from her sisters' dresses, but they saw the dress and tore it up. The previous page ended with the Main Character full of hope. In this page, describe what happens to dash those hopes.

This is an important transition in the story and you should take advantage of its possibilities. This is time for the Main Character to travel into that transitional location that is on the way to the event. Here the Main character will have an encounter that will set up the rest of the story. Even though something happens to spoil the Main Character's chances of getting to the event, this encounter is an opportunity to show what kind of person the Main Character is. By showing Kindness, Forthrightness, Respect for Elders, Perseverance, Cleverness, or whatever important trait you want to illustrate here, the Main Character will earn the help that makes eventual success possible.

This page ends with the Main Character in doubt of what will happen next. The encounter has just concluded with the Main Character having done a kindness or solved a problem but the Main Character is left with a problem of how to get to the Special Event since the first Problem Solving Device didn't work.

8: New Hope

The Main Character receives information or help as a result of the encounter. This allows the Main Character to get to the Special Event after all. It may be that this person gives the Main Character something that will allow success where it would not have been possible before. For example, in the

Myth of Atalanta, Hippomenes was given the 3 Golden Apples by Aphrodite. Otherwise, he would never have been able to beat Atalanta in a race. In The Wizard of Oz, Dorothy found out that the Wizard was a fake, but when she defeated the witch, the Wizard gave her the information she needed.

9: Arrival

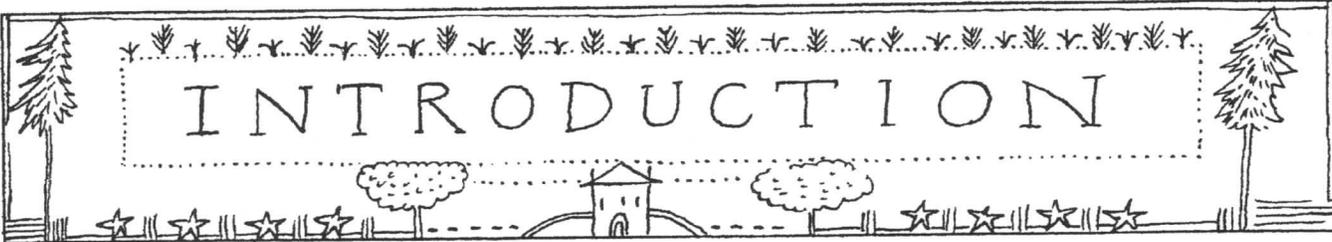
This page is full of description. We see the Main Character arrive at the Special Event. There are many reactions to the Main Character. Some may be impressed. Others may think the Main Character is foolish for even trying. If the Special Event is a race or contest of some sort, the place is full of anticipation and excitement. Taking time to describe it will engage the reader's imagination and build excitement to see the Main Character succeed. Describe the place. Describe the other competitors. Describe the onlookers and those who would judge the contest.

10: Success

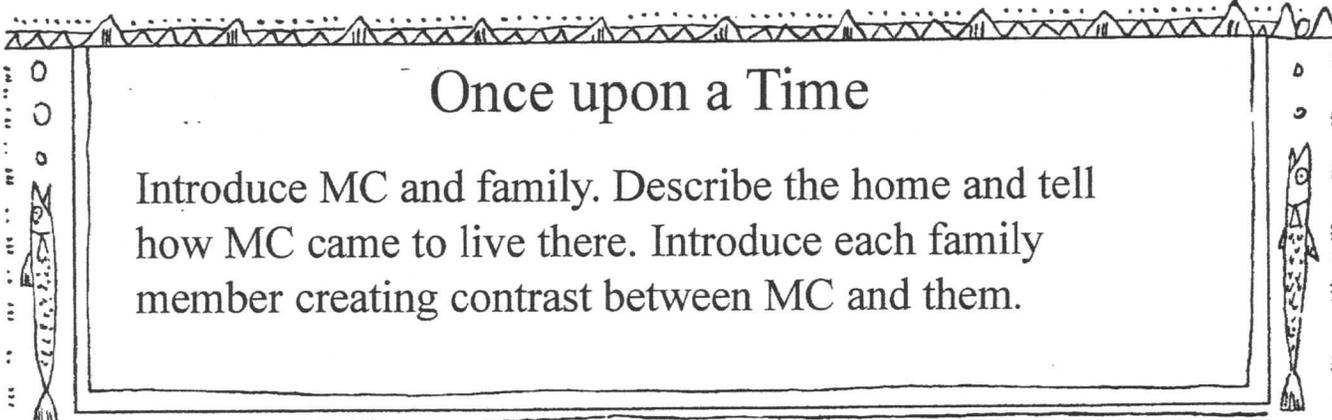
At last it is the Main Character's chance to perform. If the Special Event is a race or contest of some sort, give a blow by blow description of the Main Character winning the event. If it is a task the Main Character must perform then show how it is done. The point is to make the Main Character successful after this long journey. End this page with the Main Character receiving the prize.

11: Reflection

The story began with a description of the Main Character's terrible life. It should end with the new life which is a wonderful as the earlier life was miserable.



INTRODUCTION



Once upon a Time

Introduce MC and family. Describe the home and tell how MC came to live there. Introduce each family member creating contrast between MC and them.



A large rectangular area with horizontal lines for writing, framed by a decorative border of various animals and objects.



Everyday Life

I hate my life!

Describe MC's everyday life. What is MC forced to do and of what is MC deprived? Describe how MC takes it all. Give a sense that MC is unhappy and deserves much better.

A large writing area with a decorative border. The border features various illustrations: a donkey, a king, a woman, a horse, a bird, a ship, a treasure chest, and a map. The writing area consists of several horizontal lines for text.



Announcement!

If only I could go!

Describe the Special event and how MC finds out about it. Tell how this gives hope that the MC may have a better life. Indicate what is needed to be successful (special clothing or equipment, attributes or skills).

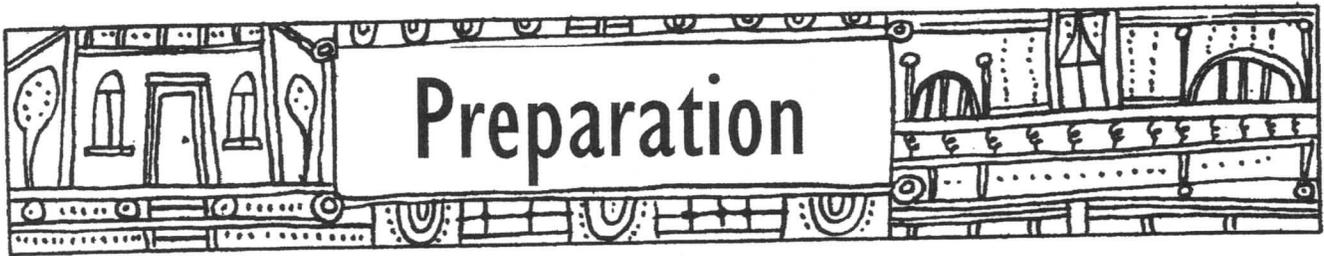
A large rectangular area for writing, bounded by a decorative border. The border features various illustrations: a dragon on the left, a dinosaur on the right, a tiger at the bottom left, a snake at the bottom right, and a stylized face at the bottom center. The writing area itself is filled with ten horizontal lines. At the top of the writing area, there is a row of small, stylized symbols and patterns. The border is decorated with various motifs including stars, zig-zags, and floral-like patterns.

Reaction - Denied!

It will be wonderful - but not for you!

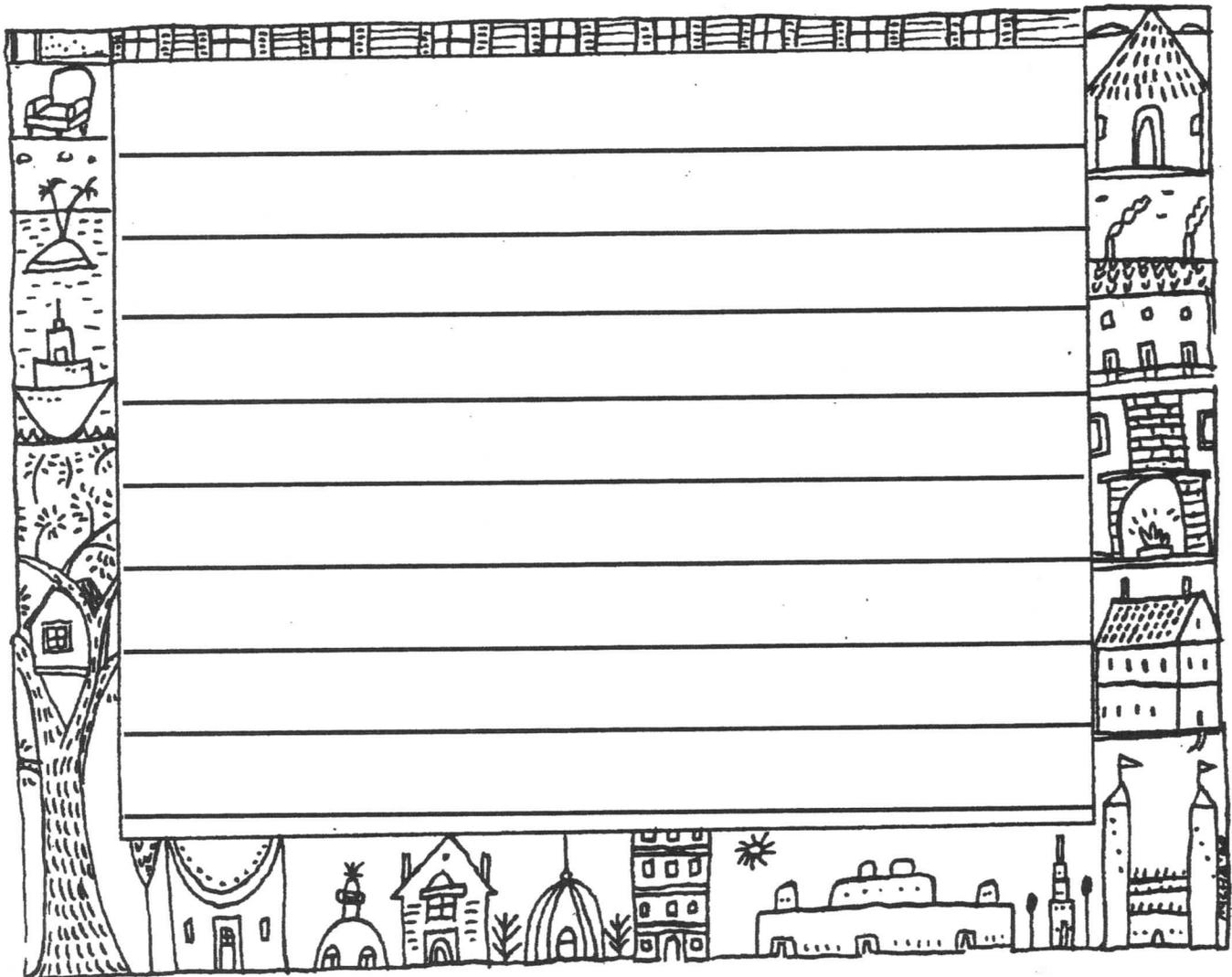
Describe the conversation between MC and family denying MC the chance to go. What excuse if any do they use? Does the family intend to go? Describe how they talk about the event.

A large writing area with ten horizontal lines, framed by a decorative border. The border contains various illustrations: a train, a boot, a snowflake, mountains, a crown, a carriage, a hot air balloon, a truck, a skateboard, a bicycle, a wagon, a house, and a horse.



Now help us get ready!

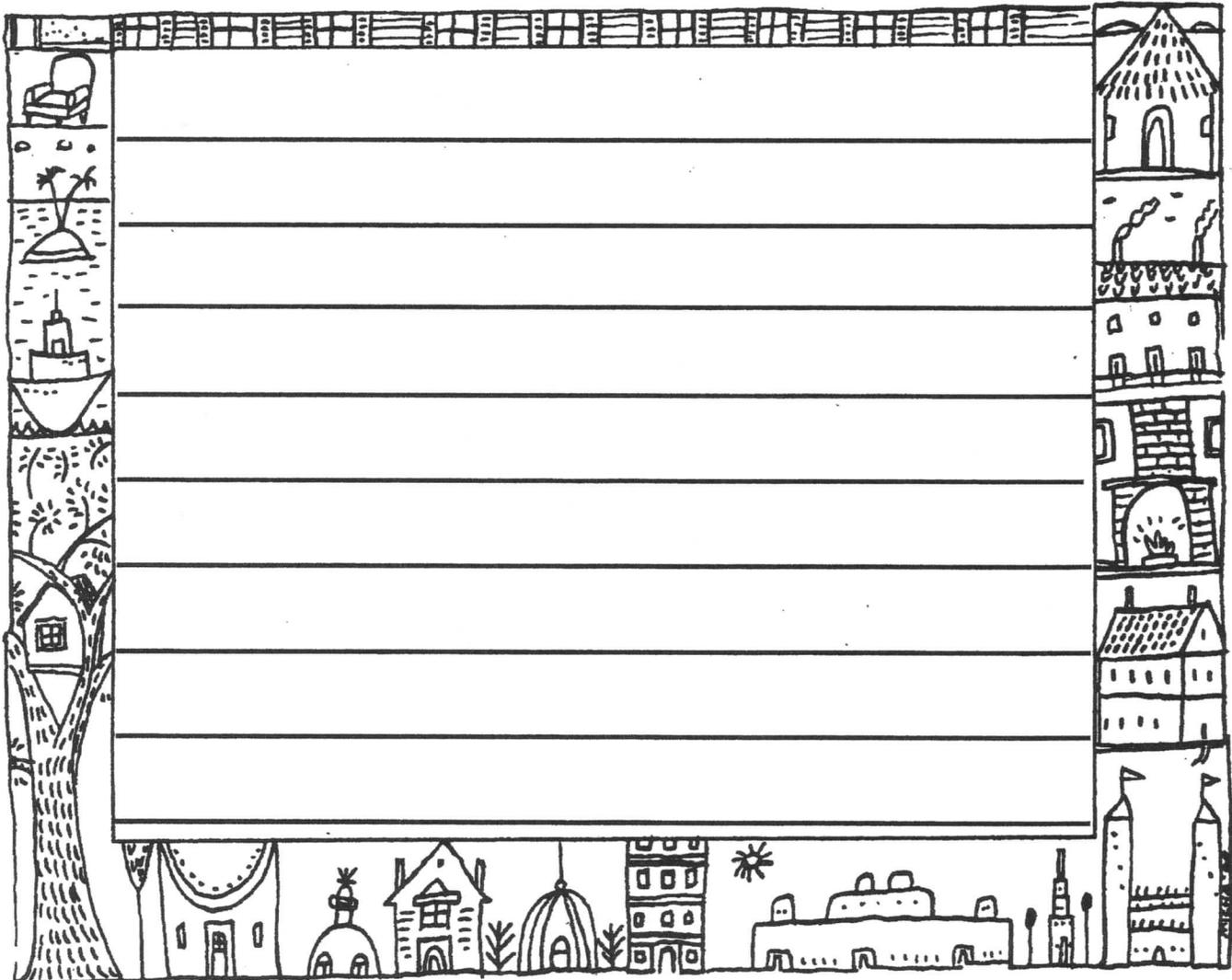
Describe the family preparing for the event. How do they treat the MC? What last minute things do they do to keep MC from going?





Now what! - Well, maybe I can go!

Describe the MC's feelings when left all alone. What happens to make MC realize that there is a chance? (1st Problem solving device)



Complications

Oh no! Just my luck!

The 1st problem solving device failed. Tell what happened.
Tell what the MC did to make the new device possible.

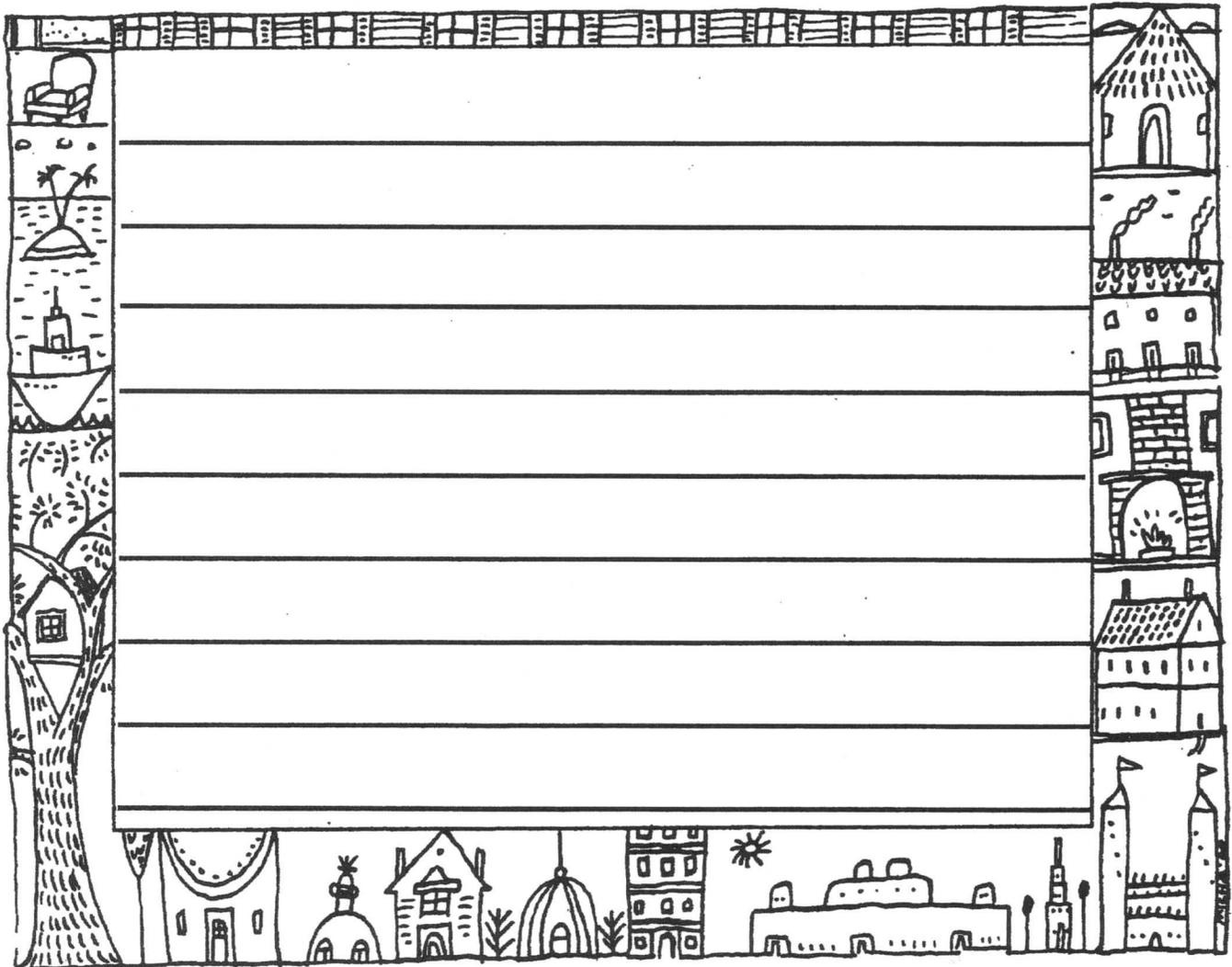
The writing area consists of ten horizontal lines for text. The border is decorated with various mechanical and transportation icons:

- Top left: A steam train.
- Top right: A hot air balloon.
- Left side (top to bottom): A boot, a sun, mountains, a crown, and a carriage.
- Right side (top to bottom): A hot air balloon, a truck, and a skateboard.
- Bottom row (left to right): A tricycle, a wagon, a bicycle, a house on wheels, and a dragon.



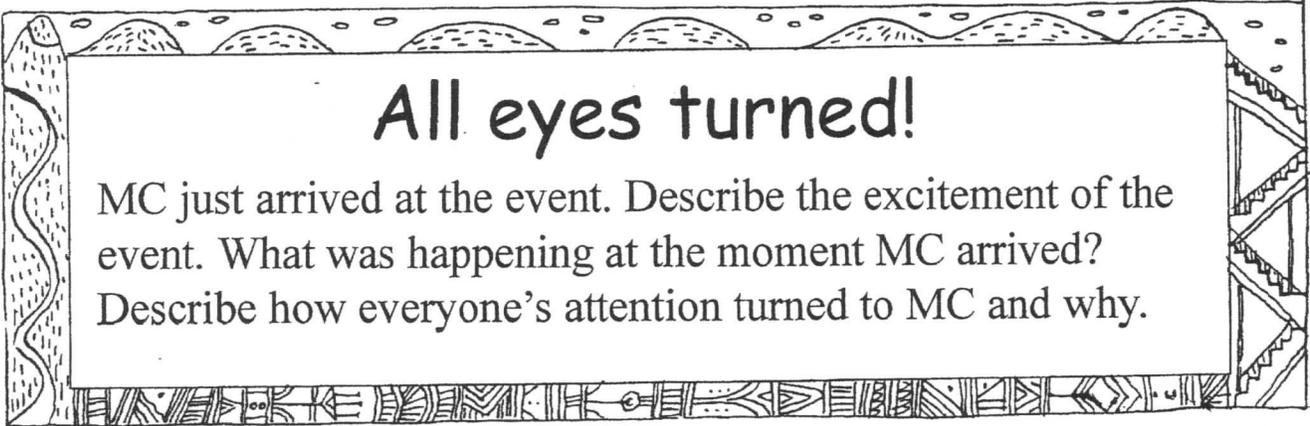
I'm going to make it after all!

Finally something happens that helps the MC get to the event. How does MC finally get there with all the necessary equipment, etc.?



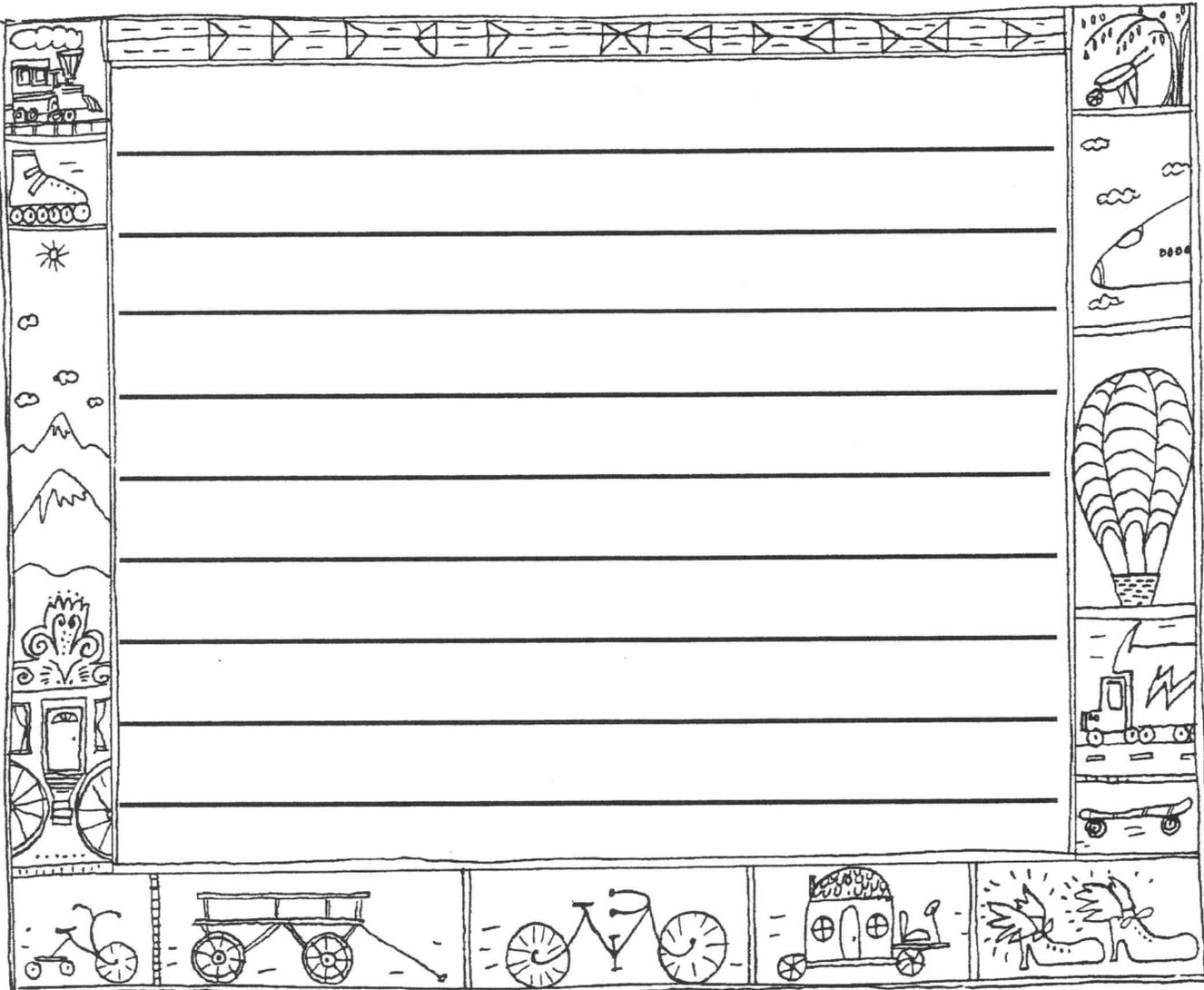


Arrival



All eyes turned!

MC just arrived at the event. Describe the excitement of the event. What was happening at the moment MC arrived?
Describe how everyone's attention turned to MC and why.





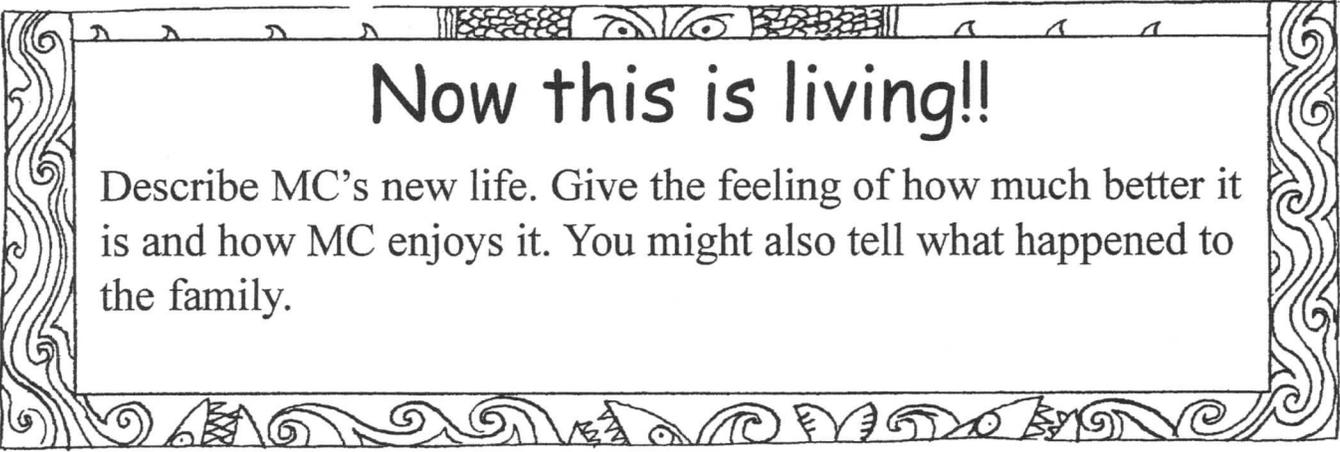
And the prize goes to..!

It's MC's turn to participate. Describe the MC being successful in the event. Describe everyone's reaction to what the MC does.

A large writing area consisting of ten horizontal lines for text. The area is framed by decorative borders. The top border is a repeating geometric pattern. The left border features vertical panels with illustrations of a chair, a sailboat, a lighthouse, and a tree. The right border features vertical panels with illustrations of a house, a factory, a multi-story building, and a house with a chimney. The bottom border is a horizontal strip with various architectural drawings, including a dome, a house, and a modern building.



Reflection



Now this is living!!

Describe MC's new life. Give the feeling of how much better it is and how MC enjoys it. You might also tell what happened to the family.

