

Tania Gets Spectacles



By

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Miss Gupta was conducting the creative thinking class. She wrote down a list of characters on the blackboard.



Miss Gupta then divided the fifteen children into three groups of five each and asked them to make up a story that included all the characters listed on the board.

The kids were seated in their groups copying down the list. Tania and the four others in her group, were at the back of the class. Tania went up to the board to copy down the list.

Miss Gupta asked, "Tania, what are you doing here?"

Tania looked puzzled. "I am copying the list," she replied pointing towards the board.

"But why are you here, and not back there with the rest of your group?" Miss Gupta gestured towards the back of the classroom, where the rest of the children in Tania's group were sitting.

"I can't see the list properly from there. So I came up front."

Miss Gupta looked concerned. She remembered that Tania always sat on the first bench. She said, "Okay Tania. Finish copying the list and then return to your group."



"Yes Miss Gupta" said Tania, cheerfully.

The class was thrilling. Tania's group was the first to finish their story. They told the rest of the class a fun and fantastic tale. The five kids played the role of the five characters by doing the voices for them. Tania chose to be the cat because she loved cats.

Everyone in class was shaking with laughter when Vivek playing the dragon, was desperately trying to sound scary and failing. Tanisha, playing the haughty princess, was heartlessly telling off the poor stuttering dragon for not being sufficiently scary. She scoffed, "My pussy cat can be a lot scarier," and Tania obligingly let out a ferocious meow.



The story was a great success. By the time they finished, it was time for the next class. "The rest of you can present your story tomorrow," Miss Gupta told them after looking at her watch. Before leaving, she handed Tania a note in an envelope and told her to give it to her parents.

That evening, just before dinner, Tania remembered the note and she gave it to Mama. Mama opened it curiously and read:

Tania is struggling to read the blackboard from the back of the class. She usually sits on the first bench so I did not notice this before. Today she was seated at the back with the rest of her group for an assignment. She said she could not read the board from there. It may be a good idea to get her eyes examined.

Miss Gupta

Mama said "Tania, are you having trouble reading the blackboard?"

"Only from the back of the class, Mama. Miss Gupta's handwriting on the board is too small to see from the back."

"Can Tanisha read her writing from the back?"

Tania thought for a moment and said, "Yes, she can."

Mama showed the note to Papa. Papa read it and said, "Tania we need to

get your eyes checked. Mama and I will take you to the eye doctor." Mama made an appointment with the eye doctor for Saturday evening.

On Saturday morning, Tania was looking glum. At the breakfast table, she asked, "Mama, why cant I see properly? What is wrong with my eye?"

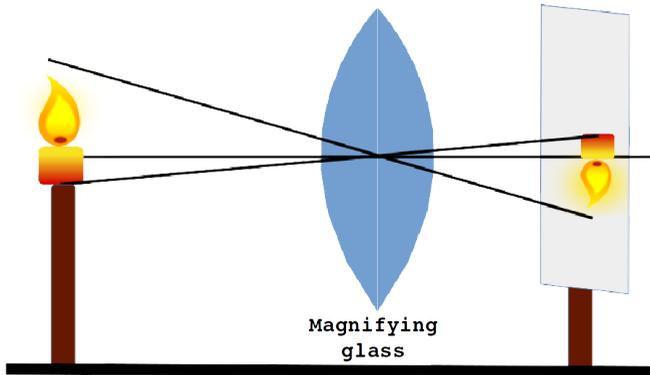
"We will have to let the doctor tell us, but it is most likely that you have myopia."

"What's myopia?" Tanai asked, frowning.

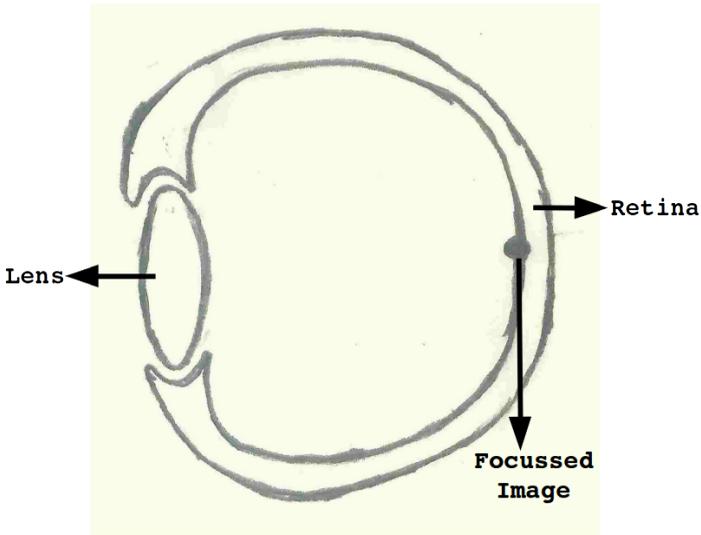
"I'll show you an experiment to explain myopia," Mama promised.

After putting away the breakfast dishes and clearing up the dining table to make space for the experiment, Mama took out a magnifying glass, a candle and a cardboard square. She covered the cardboard square with smooth white paper to make a screen. She put the candle on the candle stand and lit

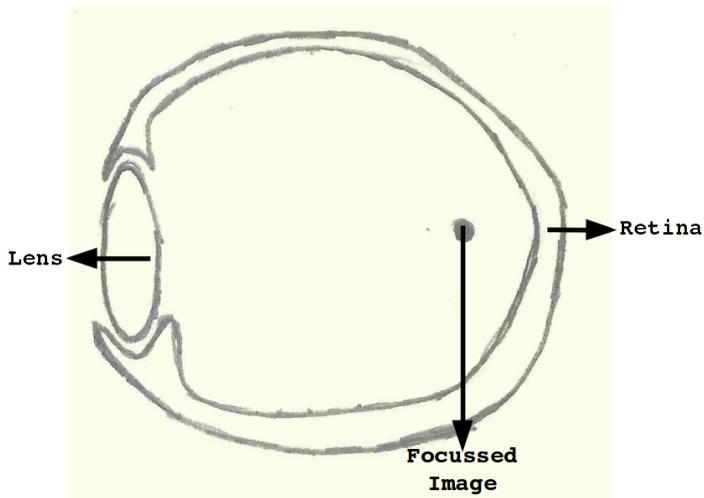
it. Mama told Tania to hold the magnifying glass at some distance from the candle.



Mama put the screen on the other side of the magnifying glass, close to it. Then, Mama slowly moved the screen away from the magnifying glass. A blurry image of a candle appeared on the screen. Mama continued to slowly move the screen away and the image of the candle became sharper and sharper. Suddenly, a very clear sharp image of the candle could be seen on the screen.



Mama then explained "Tania, there is a lens in your eye just like this magnifying glass. There is also a screen called the retina. Ideally, the lens is supposed to produce a sharp focused image like this on the retina. But sometimes, your eyeball is too long and so the retina is pushed back. Then the focused image is formed a little before the retina"



"Look here now and tell me what happens when I push this screen back some more."

"The image becomes blurry Mama."



"Correct. This is also what happens with myopia. Since the retina is further back than it should be, the image on the retina is blurry image like the one on this screen, and you can't see clearly."

"But Mama, this image is upside down. Is the image produced on the retina upside down too?" Tania was confused.

"Yes it is upside down. But, from experience, the brain knows that the image is upside down, and it makes

adjustments so we see things the right side up."

"Oh wow! the brain can do that? That is amazing!! How can myopia be fixed, Mama?"



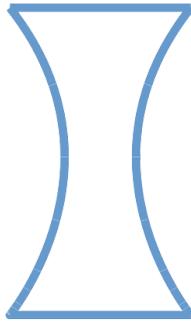
"The doctor will give you spectacles. The spectacles have lenses like this magnifying glass."



Mama told Tania to feel the magnifying glass. She asked "Can you feel that the glass bulging out on both sides?"

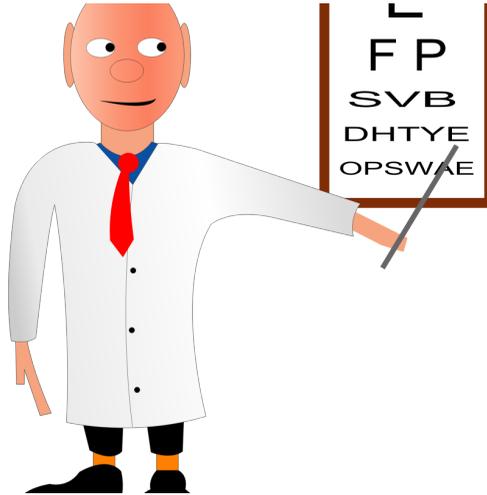
"Yes Mama."

The lenses in the spectacles will curve inwards instead of bulging out. Wearing such spectacles will shift the focused image back on your retina. Then you can see clearly again."



In the evening Tania, Mama and Papa went to see the eye doctor.

Dr. Sharma asked Tania to sit on a chair at one end of the room. At the other end of the room there was a board with rows of letters of decreasing size. Dr. Sharma asked Tania to read the letters.



Tania easily read the first few rows but had difficulty with the last two. Dr. Sharma asked Tania to wear something that looked like eyeglass frames. But they were empty.

Dr. Sharma inserted lenses into the empty frames. He asked Tania to read the letters. He repeated this over and over again with different lenses, till he had a pair of lenses with which Tania could see every single letter clearly.

This process enabled the doctor to figure out the exact specifications

of the lenses Tania needed, and he wrote her a prescription.

Mama and Papa took Tania to an optician's shop to pick out a frame for her spectacles. Tania tried out various frames. Mama and Papa helped her select one that was sturdy and comfortable, so Tania could play freely without worrying about breaking her spectacles.



Papa said, "In the past the lenses were made of glass, which is why spectacles are also called glasses. But now they make them with a special kind of plastic which does not easily break."

A couple of days later Tania's spectacles arrived. Tania was excited. But, after a few minutes the weight of the spectacles on her nose

was uncomfortable. Since Tania was not used to them yet, the spectacles made her eyes water a little. Tania also thought the spectacles made her look ugly. Poor Tania was feeling really depressed.



Mama said, "You will soon get used to the spectacles and feel better. Look, I wear them all the time. Do you think they make me ugly?"

"No Mama. They look nice on you. It is just me. They make me look ugly." Tania clarified.

"Honey, you feel that way now, because you are not used to seeing

yourself with spectacles. I promise you won't think you look ugly in a couple of days. I think they make you look sophisticated."

"You are just saying that to make me feel better," said Tania and went out to play with her friends.

Karishma and Sonali were disconcerted by Tania's appearance. Karishma started laughing and said, "Tania, you look so weird and funny. Your eyes are huge. Haha."

Sonali joined in the laughter and said, "Look, it's four eyes."

Tania, already depressed, found it difficult to hold back her tears.



Tanisha's older sister Trisha was walking by, and heard all of this. She felt sorry for Tania. She too had to wear spectacles from an early age and had been teased for it. But she had grown into a gorgeous self confident young girl, and no one teased her any more. She decided to help Tania.

Trisha called out, "Hey Tania. Where did you pick up your awesome new eyewear from? You look great."

Surprised Tania replied "My parents got it for me from Emet Optics."

"Nice. I'll check them out when I have to buy a new pair of glasses."

Karishma and Sonali were quite taken aback. If Trisha thought Tania looked good, then it must be so. Trisha was the coolest and prettiest girl they knew. They stopped laughing immediately and changed the subject.

Tania felt much prettier. She held her head high and smiled. Her eyes sparkled, and her cheeks crinkled. No one could think she looked ugly now, could they?

