

4

The Surprise Dinner Guest



In the small town of Maplewood, there was a family who loved surprises. The Smiths had a tradition where every Friday night, they would have a special dinner and invite someone over. It could be anyone: a new friend, a distant relative, or sometimes, a person they barely knew. But one Friday, they were in for the biggest surprise of all.

The day started like any other. Mom was in the kitchen, as she baked her famous apple pie. Dad was outside, hanging up twinkling lights that made their backyard look like amazing. Emma and Max, the two Smith kids, were setting the table.

As the sun began to set, painting the sky in shades of orange and pink, there was a knock at the door. "I'll get it!" shouted Max, racing his sister to the front door. They swung it open, expecting to see Mr. Wilson, their elderly neighbor who loved Mom's pie. But instead, there stood a tall figure with a wide-brimmed hat and a coat that reached down to their boots. "Good evening," said the figure in a deep, friendly voice. "I hope I'm not too early. I'm the surprise guest for tonight." Mom and Dad came to the door, looking just as puzzled as Max and Emma. "But we didn't invite anyone special tonight," said Dad, scratching his head. The guest chuckled, a warm sound that reminded Emma of hot chocolate on a cold day. "Well, I heard about your dinners all the way from the next town over. They say the Smiths' dinner is the best place to be on a Friday night." The family exchanged surprised glances, then burst into laughter. "Well, come on in!" said Mom. "Anyone who travels that far for our dinner is certainly welcome."

The guest removed their hat, and to everyone's shock, it was Grandma Smith! She had flown in all the way from her home across the country to surprise them. The family hugged and laughed, welcoming her to the magical backyard dinner.

That night, they ate under the stars, sharing stories and making memories. It was a dinner they would talk about for years to come, the night when the surprise guest turned out to be the most special guest of all.

1. Read the passage and underline any word or sentence you struggled with.
2. Answer the questions on the following page.

4

The Surprise Dinner Guest

Answer according to the reading passage:

1. **What is the name of the town where the Smith family lives:**
 - a. Tanglewood
 - b. Maplewood
 - c. Smith Falls

2. **What tradition does the Smith family have every Friday night?**
 - a. mom makes apple pie
 - b. put sparkly lights in the backyard
 - c. special dinner and invite someone over

3. **What did the surprise guest wear?**
 - a. wide brimmed hat and a coat that reached down to the floor
 - b. a ball cap and a jacket
 - c. a sun hat and a sweater

4. **How did the surprise guest get to the Smith's house?**
 - a. drove
 - b. flew across the country
 - c. walked

5. **Who was the surprise guest?**
 - a. Grandpa Smith
 - b. Grandma Smith
 - c. Mrs. Smith

4

The Surprise Dinner Guest

Open Response Questions

Open Response Questions for Thinking Skills:

1. Inferring
2. Making Connections
3. Summarizing
4. Visualizing

1. Why do you think the Smith family has the Friday night tradition?
 2. What does the surprise visit tell you about the type of relationship the Smith family has?
 3. Re-write this story using first, next, then, finally.
 4. Describe what Grandma Smith might look like using lots of details.
- Describe how you think the family felt about their surprise guest.
 - How did the author create a sense of mystery?
 - Why do you think sharing stories an important part of this family's traditions?
 - Who would you invite as your mystery guest and why?
 - Could this story be fiction or non fiction? Why?