

# Painting a Bus

by Kyria Abrahams



Last week, Kaitlyn's refrigerator stopped working. When Kaitlyn and her sister Lydia came home from school, they found pink water all over the floor.

"Why on earth is this water pink?" Kaitlyn asked.

"Because it's not water!" Lydia said. "It's strawberry ice cream!"

"Oh no!" Kaitlyn cried. Everything in the freezer had melted.

Kaitlyn and Lydia always had ice cream or a Popsicle for dessert. Now dessert was liquid. This was a disaster!

Quietly, Kaitlyn opened a Popsicle and dumped orange liquid into a cup. When no one was looking, she drank it.

"I won't tell on you," Lydia said. Then, she secretly drank a Popsicle, too.

A week later, the new refrigerator arrived. It was big and silver. One of the doors had a special compartment to dispense ice.

The best part about the new refrigerator wasn't the ice. It was the box it came in. The box was the size of a mansion.

Later, Kaitlyn's friends Lainey and Michael came by to see the box. Lydia was there, too.

"Let's make a house out of it," said Lainey.

"No, let's make a fort," suggested Michael.

"Wait!" said Kaitlyn. "It's *my* refrigerator box. We should make a spaceship."

"Hey! It's my box, too!" said little sister Lydia. "Just because I'm only six doesn't mean I don't get a vote!"

Everyone stared at Lydia. They waited. What would her **vote** be?

"Well, vote then!"

"I vote..." she paused. "I vote..."

"Come on, Lydia!" Everyone was getting impatient.

Lydia stared at the ceiling. She got nervous when people stared at her. Finally, she made up her mind.

"I vote...to make a bus!" she said.

When Michael and Lainey heard this, they changed their minds.

"Yeah, we want a bus too!"

Now they had three **votes** for a bus but only one vote for a spaceship. The bus had the *majority vote*.

"Fine. How should we make this bus, smarty pants?" asked Kaitlyn.

"We could cut holes in the box for windows," said Michael.

"I'm not allowed to use sharp scissors by myself," said Kaitlyn.

"We could use stickers," said Lydia.

"Where would we get enough stickers from?" Kaitlyn asked.

"I have five stickers," Lydia said.

"No way! The box is huge. We'll need hundreds!" said Kaitlyn. "Sometimes you're so... *six years old!*"

Lydia felt angry. Just because she was six didn't mean her ideas were bad!

"Wait!" Lydia said. "Let's paint the box instead."

"That's a great idea!" said Michael and Lainey.

Kaitlyn didn't want to **admit** this was a good idea.

"Fine! Everybody go get some paint," she said. Kaitlyn always wanted to get her way.

Michael came back with finger paint. Lydia came back with watercolor paint.

Lainey brought a box of acrylic craft paint. Poor Kaitlyn could only find crayons.

"What do we do now?" Lainey asked. "We've got so many different kinds of paint."

"And crayons," said Kaitlyn, depressed that she couldn't find paint.

"Which will work the best?" Michael asked.

"I think we just have to **experiment**," Lydia suggested.

Kaitlyn didn't want to **admit** her sister had a good idea.

"I don't know about that," Kaitlyn said.

"But that's the best idea," said Michael.

"Yes," Lainey agreed. "We need to try *each kind* of paint. Then we can see what works best."

"Whatever," said Kaitlyn. "She's only six."

Dad helped bring the refrigerator box into the backyard. Then he spread a large piece of plastic on the grass. This kind of plastic is called a *tarp*. Dad said it would stop them from getting paint on the grass.

"The grass is already green," he said. "We don't need to paint it purple, too."

Each friend chose a section of the box. They painted on it for the next 15

minutes.

When they finished painting, they looked at all the sections. Together, they decided which paint worked best.

Here's what they saw:

The watercolor paint was too light. The crayons were too thick. The finger paint was too messy.

"The acrylic paint worked the best," Kaitlyn said.

"Sure did!" everyone agreed.

The four friends painted the refrigerator box to look like a bus. It took them all afternoon. They painted windows and doors. They even painted some kids inside the bus.

"It's so colorful!" said Lydia.

"It's beautiful!" Kaitlyn agreed

When they finished, Lydia looked to see what her sister had painted.

On the back of the bus, Kaitlyn had painted a heart. It said: "I love you, little sister."

Lydia couldn't believe her eyes. "I love you, too!" she said.

"For a six-year-old, you're not so bad."

"All aboard the Lydia Express!" everyone said. "It was her idea to make a bus!"

They all climbed into the colorful bus. They drove wherever they felt like going. When they returned home, they had ice cream from the brand new refrigerator.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the best part about the new refrigerator?

- A. its big silver doors
- B. the box it came in
- C. the special compartment that dispenses ice

2. What is a conflict in this story?

- A. Kaitlyn wants to make a spaceship with the box. Lydia, Michael, and Lainey want to make a bus with the box.
- B. Kaitlyn wants to make a fort with the box. Lydia, Michael, and Lainey want to make a spaceship with the box.
- C. Kaitlyn wants to make a house with the box. Lydia, Michael, and Lainey want to make a fort with the box.

3. Lydia, Michael, and Lainey all vote to make a bus out of the box. Then Kaitlyn says, "Fine. How should we make this bus, smarty pants?"

What can be concluded from this information?

- A. Kaitlyn would rather eat ice cream than make something out of a box.
- B. Kaitlyn, Michael, and Lainey do not like Lydia.
- C. Kaitlyn is not happy about making a bus out of the box.

4. How does Kaitlyn probably feel about the bus at the end of the story?

- A. Kaitlyn wishes the bus were more colorful.
- B. Kaitlyn likes the bus.
- C. Kaitlyn does not like the bus.

5. What is the main idea of this story?

- A. Two sisters have popsicles when they come home from school even though the popsicles have melted.
- B. Acrylic paint is better than watercolor paint, finger paint, and crayons.
- C. A girl does not like her sister's idea at first but later decides that it was a good one.

6. Read these sentences from the story: "Lydia stared at the ceiling. She got nervous when people stared at her. Finally, **she made up her mind**.

'I vote...to make a bus!' she said."

What does the phrase "**she made up her mind**" mean?

- A. She decided on something.
  - B. She could not decide on anything.
  - C. She got mad about something.
7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Lydia wants to make a bus out of the box, \_\_\_\_\_ Kaitlyn wants to make a spaceship.

- A. but
  - B. because
  - C. so
8. What do Kaitlyn, Lydia, Michael, and Lainey make out of the box?

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**9.** What does Kaitlyn paint on the back of the bus?

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**10.** Why does Kaitlyn paint a heart on the back of the bus? Support your answer with information from the story.

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