

# A Day on the Slopes

by Jaclyn Einis

No matter how many times Bobby rode the chairlift, he always got frightened when he looked down. If he stared down long enough to get that tingly feeling, he'd grip the bar in front of him, take stock of the bar between his two legs, and reassure himself that he was secure.

Conversation helped distract him. He loved meeting people from all over the country, and even the world, on the chairlift. Games helped distract him, too. "I spy in my little eye, something...orange," Bobby challenged.

"The plastic fence down there," guessed Dad.

"Nope!"

"The square with the number on that pole," Dad said, pointing to one of the big poles holding up the chairlift.

"Nope."

"The stripe on that guy's jacket in front of us."

"Nope."

"Um...the sunshine?"

"No way. The sun looks more yellow than orange right now, Dad."

"Okay, fine. I give up!" Dad said, throwing his head back in defeat.

"The writing on the band of your goggles!"

"Tricky, tricky. I'll stump you next time."

Bobby loved winning, but he was no longer focused on playing "I Spy." They were close to the top.

"Ready?" Dad asked.

"Ready," Bobby replied, removing his hands from the bar and skis from the little footrests connected to the bar between his legs.

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Dad pulled the bar up and over their heads, and they looked forward. Skis straight and poles held tightly, they pushed themselves away from the seat and down the small hill their skis touched at the top.

This was Bobby's second time skiing, and he was getting the hang of it. During his first time skiing, Dad taught him how to do the "pizza," skiing with his skis in a wedge like a slice of pizza. Bobby had advanced since then and could now do the "french fries," skiing with his skis parallel and straight like two french fries side by side. When he felt himself going too fast, he would point his skis to the side instead of down the mountain. That would help bring him to a stop.

Normally, Bobby stayed far away from the forest, while avoiding big groups of people and ice. Luckily, there was a lot of powdery Colorado snow on this mountain and definitely not as much ice as there was on the mountain he had skied in New England.

"Want to try skiing the glades?" Dad asked when they had stopped for a rest mid-trail. Dad nodded to where a path veered off the trail and into the woods. Bobby saw a few skiers follow the path into the trees. About 10 seconds later, they popped out a little ways down the trail.

Bobby felt nervous and excited. "Let's do it!" he said with a grin.

"Okay, you go, and I'll be right behind you. Don't go too fast. Keep your eyes on the trail, and try to stay focused and relaxed."

"Here we go!" Bobby hollered as he glided to the side of the trail, his skis falling in line with a path on the left that gradually curved into the woods. There were trees on either side of Bobby, and the narrow path dipped down and then up a bit, down and then up. It felt like a waterslide but better, because he was in control. There was one last bump on the path, where it exited the woods. When Bobby got to it, he had gained some speed and even got a few inches of air. He wobbled for a second, but quickly regained his balance.

"Awesome!" he thought.

They were near the bottom of the hill, and the lifts were about to close.

"Up for one more run?" Dad asked.

"No time for talking!" Bobby said, hurrying back to the chairlift.

# Amra and the Skateboard

by ReadWorks



The skateboard flew down the hill. Buzzing over the pavement, it passed by houses with manicured gardens and freshly cut grass, and whizzed past prim and proper homeowners—middle-aged mothers with beehive haircuts and stern-looking fathers with Oxford button-downs tucked into crisp khaki pants. At the bottom of the hill, it slammed into the curb and landed violently on its side.

Amra was searching for worms in her front yard. She was on her hands and knees when she heard the whizzing crack. Startled, she shot her head up and scanned the scene.

She saw the skateboard to her right, lying on the sidewalk. To her left, high up on the hill, she saw a gaggle of boys. Blinding rays of light carved out their silhouetted figures. The outlines of kneepads and helmets could be made out, as well as other skateboards, some held like canes, others like briefcases. One among the crew was sitting on his bottom, rocking back and forth in mild pain. He had wiped out.

Amra walked over to the skateboard. She took it into her hands and looked up toward the boys. One of them beckoned to her with his hand.

"Bring it up!" he called out.

The thought of interacting with them set her nerves on edge. She was only 10. They were older-high-schoolers.

Amra slowly walked the skateboard to the top. The boys stood there expressionless.

"Thanks kid," the one who wiped out said.

He walked over and took the skateboard from Amra's arms.

"Can I try?" she asked him.

The boys laughed.

"You're just a kid," Wipe Out said.

"And you're a girl," added another.

More laughter.

Amra shot an angry look. "Let me try!"

Wipe Out smirked. "Okay," he said, and handed back the skateboard.

Amra laid it on the pavement and rolled it back and forth to get the feel of the concrete. Stepping her left foot onto the front of the skateboard, she crouched and shot off, zipping down the hill and landing on a strip of grass along the sidewalk.

When she lifted the skateboard over her head in triumph, the boys were dumbfounded.

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

**Use the article "A Day on the Slopes" to answer questions 1 to 2.**

1. What does Bobby's father suggest that makes Bobby feel nervous and excited?

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2. Is Bobby brave? Support your answer with evidence from the story.

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**Use the article "Amra and the Skateboard" to answer questions 3 to 4.**

3. If a person's nerves are "set on edge," that means the person is nervous. What sets Amra's nerves on edge?

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4. Is Amra brave? Support your answer with evidence from the story.

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**Use the articles "Amra and the Skateboard" and "A Day on the Slopes" to answer questions 5 to 6.**

5. How are Bobby and Amra alike? Support your answer with evidence from both stories.

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6. Who is braver, Bobby or Amra? Support your answer with evidence from both stories.

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