**The Students of Stemville, Washington**

**Presenter’s Key. (Give participants Page 2 version only.)**

Once upon a time in a land far away, a group of happy, intelligent children started kindergarten in Stemville, Washington. The sun was shining that late summer day as the eager new students rode their bicycles, boarded a yellow school bus, or skipped beside their proud but tearful parents on the way to class. The children, hung their bright-colored backpacks in a cubby, found the desk displaying their nametags, and nervously took their seats. All of the children excitedly awaited the adventures of education that lay ahead of them.

But soon, life started to get complicated for some students. One boy, Danny, found it hard to understand all the things the teacher was talking about. Danny didn’t have some advantages that most of the other children had. Although Danny’s parents worked hard, they didn’t have much money or education, so they weren’t able to travel or provide enriching experiences for their children. They didn’t understand the importance of reading to their kids and didn’t have any books in the house.

In November, another student, Juanita, was withdrawn from school because her family was going to Mexico for the winter. Her father was a migrant worker whose seasonal job had ended. The family returned to their home in Mexico to visit relatives while Dad worked in the avocado harvest. When Juanita returned in February, she found it harder to understand the lessons.

As time went on, many students in the class were doing well, but Jasmine found it hard to keep up. She spoke only Spanish at home and found it difficult to pay attention when the teacher explained things in English. Jasmine was a shy girl and didn’t have any Spanish-speaking friends who could help her understand the lessons.

When the children entered fourth grade, Alex found his classes to be substantially harder. The books had a lot more words and those words were more technical. There were less pictures and the work was more academic. He had to read more expository text and found the content more demanding.

By seventh grade, many of the kids said school was boring or frustrating. Some of the students felt so discouraged they just wanted to give up.

Key:

Starting in paragraph 2 (Danny), e = x

Starting in paragraph 3 (Juanita), a = z

Starting in paragraph 4 (Jasmine), s = j

Starting in paragraph 5 (Alex), t = q

Starting in paragraph 6 (Many), o = v

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But soon, life started to get complicated for some students. Onx boy, Danny, found it hard to undxrstand all thx things thx txacher was talking about. Danny didn’t havx some advantagxs that most of thx othxr childrxn had. Although Danny’s parxnts workxd hard, thxy didn’t havx much monxy or xducation, so thxy wxrxn’t ablx to travxl or providx xnriching xxpxrixncxs for thxir childrxn. Thxy didn’t undxrstand the importancx of rxading to thxir kids and didn’t havx any books in thx housx.

In Novxmbxr, znothxr studxnt, Juznitz, wzs withdrzwn from school bxczusx hxr fzmily wzs going to Mxxico for thx wintxr. Hxr fzthxr wzs z migrznt workxr whosx sxzsonzl job hzd xndxd. Thx fzmily rxturnxd to thxir homx in Mxxico to visit rxlativxs whilx Dzd workxd in thx zvoczdo hzrvxst. Whxn Juznitz rxturnxd in Fxbruzry, shx found it hzrdxr to undxrstznd thx lxssons.

Zj timx wxnt on, mzny jtudxntj in thx clzjj wxrx doing wxll, but Jzjminx found it hzrd to kxxp up. Jhx jpokx only Jpznijh zt homx znd found it difficult to pzy zttxntion whxn thx txzchxr xxplzinxd thingj in Xnglijh. Jzjminx wzj z jhy girl znd didn’t hzvx zny Jpznijh-jpxzking frixndj who could hxlp hxr undxrjtznd thx lxjjonj.

Whxn qhx childrxn xnqxrxd fourqh grzdx, Zlxx found hij clzjjxj qo bx jubjqznqizlly hzrdxr. Qhx bookj hzd z loq morx wordj znd qhojx wordj wxrx morx qxchniczl. Qhxrx wxrx lxjj picqurxj znd qhx work wzj morx zczdxmic. Hx hzd qo rxzd morx xxpojiqory qxxq znd found qhz conqxnq morx dxmznding.

By jxvxnqh grzdx, mzny vf qhx kidj jzid jchvvl wzj bvring vr frujqrzqing. Jvmx vf qhx jqudxnqj fxlq jv dijcvurzgxd qhxy jujq wznqxd qv givx up.