



# Read-Aloud One Step at a Time

2



My BFF Gavin loves to run. Every year, he runs a race to raise money for our local children's hospital. But this year, Gavin broke his leg. So he asked me to run in his place.

I was happy to help him out. The only problem was I hated running.

"Don't worry," Gavin said. "I'll loan you my lucky sneakers and even put together a training plan. You'll be ready for the race in no time!"

 **Ask:** "Where do you see math in the story?"

3



In his plan, Gavin had me running short distances to start. But each week the runs got longer and longer.

"For your first run, you'll only be running three-quarters of a mile down our street. Count the street lamps on the left. When you get to the third streetlamp, you'll already be half way through your run."

4



I was nervous but I took a deep breath and began. As I ran, my feet felt funny in Gavin's sneakers. Soon they were hurting. At the third street lamp I thought ugh, *This was only halfway?* I was already breathing hard.

After the run, I was sore. Over the phone Gavin showed me some stretches, and said I'd feel better as I did more short runs.

5



After a few more practice runs down my street, Gavin thought it was time I started training on the boardwalk.

"If things get tough, focus on the lifeguard stands along your path. Take it one step at a time!"

He wished me luck and off I went.

6



I zoomed down the boardwalk but soon my legs were like jelly. By the second lifeguard stand, I wanted to give up! But then I heard Gavin's voice in my head again: *Keep going. One step at a time.*

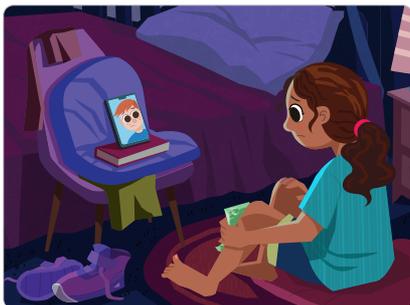
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I counted the lifeguard stands, just like Gavin said. *Just make it to the next one*, I told myself.

By the time I finished my legs were shaking.

8



That evening I pressed a pack of frozen peas to my aching shins. "I feel awful!" I said. "I can't do this, Gavin. I'm not a runner, like you." Gavin looked at me seriously through the phone. "I believe in you, Ingrid. You'll get through it," he said. "One step at a time."

**Ask:** "What do you notice? What do you wonder?"

9



It took some time but eventually I got more comfortable running on the boardwalk. But that’s when Gavin really stepped up the training.

This time, my practice run was on a bridge. It was two and a half miles long—nearly as long as the actual race itself. Was I ready for this?

Cars moved to and from the city. Gavin had told me: *Keep an eye out for the arches.* There are four of them spaced out across the length of the bridge.

10



I looked down at his lucky sneakers and took off. I felt good, until a bicyclist whizzed by me. Then I felt like a slow poke! I wanted to stop. But I remembered Gavin’s advice. I counted one arch, then two... By the time I got to the fourth, the run was over. I was tired, sweaty, and out of breath. But it felt good.

11



At home, I looked in the mirror and smiled. After weeks of hard work I was stronger, and ready to challenge myself again.

I picked up my phone to call Gavin. “How did it go?” he asked.

“I’m ready for race day,” I said.