

I Want a Phone!

by ReadWorks



"I want a phone!" said Myrna.

"I bet you do," said her dad.

"No, but, Dad. You don't understand. I really, really, really want a phone."

"And I really, really, really want a boat. It's not going to happen."

Myrna and her dad were stuck in traffic. To her, it seemed like they were always stuck in traffic. When he took her to school in the morning-traffic. When he picked her up in the afternoon-traffic. Go to the bank, the grocery, a birthday party, and what felt like ten hours of traffic was their reward.

She was bored, because traffic was boring. And when she was bored, she wanted things. Right now, she wanted a phone. She wasn't sure if her dad understood that. She would have to tell him again.

"I. Want. A. Phone."

"N. O."

"What if I was stuck in a cave?"

"What?" asked her dad, trying not to laugh.

"What if I had a kitten, and the kitten ran away, and I had to run after it. What if the kitten ran into a cave, and I ran after the kitten, and in the cave there was a bear, and the bear trapped me, and-

"And then you were stuck in the cave." Myrna nodded the way she did when she won an argument, but her dad wasn't through fighting. "Is this a momma bear? I hear they're the fiercest."

"Yes. It's a momma bear, and she's very upset, and she's going to eat me unless I have a phone to call for help."

"If it's a momma bear, then you can use her phone. Everyone knows that moms always carry phones."

Dad was laughing as he said this. Myrna didn't think it was very funny. She slammed her hand down on the glove compartment as hard as she could, which wasn't very hard. Now she was angry.

"If I had a phone, I could play games on it!"

"If I had a boat, I could eat steaks on it. That doesn't mean I'm getting one."

"No, but I mean..." Myrna spluttered. When she was very angry, she spluttered. It was embarrassing. "If I could play games, I wouldn't be so bored when we were in traffic. I wouldn't bother you!"

"I don't mind being bothered. I like talking to you."

"Then I won't say anything at all!"

Dad smiled quietly to himself. "I'm going to call Mom to let her know we'll be late." He reached into his pocket. "Oh, heck. My battery's dead."

"You know...if I had a phone, I could call Mom," said Myrna.

"Don't even."

Myrna grinned. She wasn't getting a phone, but she knew she was right, and that was almost as good.

argument

 ar · gu · ment

Definition

noun

1. an angry discussion by people who disagree.

Mr. and Mrs. Harris had an argument about money.

Advanced Definition

noun

1. a discussion in which there is disagreement along with presentation of various sides of an issue.

The class was divided in the argument over the primary cause of the war.

2. a heated discussion; verbal quarrel.

The husband and wife had had an argument and now refused to speak to each other.

3. a reason in favor of or against something.

Her argument in favor of expanding the physical education program was convincing.

4. a series of steps in reasoning.

You've presented a very clear argument in this essay, and I cannot find any flaws in your reasoning.

5. the main topic or theme, as of a written work.
-

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. The winner wins the game and the **argument**.
2. They know that "winning an **argument**" isn't always worth it.
3. Jason is my best friend, but we're having an **argument**.
4. It started with an **argument** over who got to be which piece.
5. If the issue isn't important to you, let your friend "win" the **argument**.
6. Another way would be if the countries take the **argument** to the United Nations.
7. They try to block the prosecution's **argument** and prove that the person is innocent.
8. They were warriors about to leap at each other's throats and settle the **argument** with violence.
9. While talking to your friend on the phone, you tell him about an **argument** you just had with your mother.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What does Myrna want?

- A. a car
- B. a boat
- C. a phone
- D. a kitten

2. Whom does Myrna have a conflict with in this story?

- A. her dad
- B. her mom
- C. a person driving in front of her and her dad
- D. a person driving behind her and her dad

3. The author describes Myrna as "angry." What evidence in the story supports this description?

- A. Myrna tells her dad that if she had a phone, she could call Mom.
- B. Myrna tells her dad that she wants a phone.
- C. Myrna asks her dad, "What if I was stuck in a cave?"
- D. Myrna slams her hand down on the glove compartment as hard as she can.

4. Read these sentences from the text.

She was bored, because traffic was boring. And when she was bored, she wanted things. Right now, she wanted a phone. She wasn't sure if her dad understood that. She would have to tell him again.

'I. Want. A. Phone.'

'N. O.'

'What if I was stuck in a cave?'

'What?' asked her dad, trying not to laugh.

Why might Myrna's dad be trying not to laugh?

- A. because he thinks her question is silly
- B. because he is bored by the traffic
- C. because he thinks it is funny when Myrna is bored
- D. because he thinks phones are silly

5. What is a theme of this story?

- A. Being right is almost as good as getting your way.
- B. If you do not give up, you will someday get what you want.
- C. If you use your imagination, you will never be bored.
- D. Being kind is more important than being right.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

No, but I mean...' Myrna spluttered. When she was very angry, she spluttered. It was embarrassing.

Based on these sentences, what does the word "spluttered" probably mean?

- A. had trouble speaking clearly
- B. fell asleep
- C. started to smile
- D. slowly counted to twenty

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

Myrna slams her hand down on the glove compartment _____ her dad laughs.

- A. before
- B. after
- C. then
- D. so

8. Near the end of the story, Myrna's dad wants to call her mom, but his phone's battery is dead. What does Myrna point out that she could do if she had a phone?

9. Explain how Myrna feels about not getting a phone at the end of the story. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

10. Throughout the story, Myrna and her dad argue about her getting a phone. Explain whether or not the argument is resolved by the end of the story. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

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Myrna points out that she could call her mom if she herself had a phone.

9. Explain how Myrna feels about not getting a phone at the end of the story. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Answers may vary, as long as they are supported by the text. For example, students may respond that Myrna feels less upset, or even fine, about not getting a phone at the end of the story. She grins -- for her, the feeling of being right is almost as good as having a phone.

10. Throughout the story, Myrna and her dad argue about her getting a phone. Explain whether or not the argument is resolved by the end of the story. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Answers may vary, as long as they are supported by the text. For example, students may respond that the argument is not resolved because Myrna does not get a phone even though she may still want one. Alternatively, students may respond that the argument is resolved because Myrna is so pleased about being right that her interest in getting a phone seems to have faded.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is a meaning of the word **argument**?

- A. a relation between people
- B. greatest amount allowed
- C. a contentious speech act

2. What is another meaning of the word **argument**?

- A. apartment consisting of a series of connected rooms
- B. a manual accompanying a technical device
- C. a discussion in which reasons are advanced for and against some proposition

Please use each answer choice only once. Choose the one word that best completes the sentence.

3. It started with an _____ over who got to be which character.

- A. argument
- B. argue
- C. argued
- D. arguments
- E. counterargument
- F. argues
- G. arguing

4. They _____ all morning about how to tend the crops.

- A. argument
- B. argue
- C. argued
- D. arguments
- E. counterargument
- F. argues
- G. arguing

5. Obviously he does not regard either his misdoings or my _____ as serious.
- A. argument
 - B. argue
 - C. argued
 - D. arguments
 - E. counterargument
 - F. argues
 - G. arguing
6. As soon as the sun brought forth a new day, the brothers began to _____.
- A. argument
 - B. argue
 - C. argued
 - D. arguments
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 - F. argues
 - G. arguing
7. Her brothers were still _____ next door, but they seemed miles away.
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 - B. argue
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 - G. arguing

8. For once, no one _____ with you.

- A. argument
- B. argue
- C. argued
- D. arguments
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- F. argues
- G. arguing

9. But your _____ has some merit.

- A. argument
- B. argue
- C. argued
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10. Please write your own sentence using the word **argument**.

11. What would you like to remember about the meaning of the word **argument** so that you can use it when you write or speak?

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