

# thinking ALoud

Making Sense of Literacy



## QUESTIONS TO THINK AND TALK ABOUT

### SPOT: Realistic Fiction

*Jumping Into Genre: Realistic Fiction  
(developing wide reading)*



#### Questions to Think and Talk About After Viewing the Video:

- What are the key characteristics of Realistic Fiction?
- Describe a Realistic Fiction character that you might like to read about.
- Describe a Realistic Fiction setting that you might like to read about.
- Describe a Realistic Fiction plot that you might like to read about.
- What types of situations do characters portrayed in Realistic Fiction face?
- How do these issues impact the plots found in Realistic Fiction?
- What are common themes found in Realistic Fiction?
- How might reading Realistic Fiction help you in your daily life?



## **Ready, Set, Invent!**

“I can’t believe the Young Inventors’ National Competition is tomorrow!” Marina said. “I hope I’m ready.”

“Well, you’ve worked hard, and you have a great invention,” her dad said. “I think you’re more than ready.”

Marina scooped up her invention, the Scoreball, from its stand. She had invented it to solve the problem of keeping score during fast-moving basketball games.

The Scoreball recorded points whenever it dropped through the hoop. It stopped arguments and made playing more fun for Marina and her friends.

Marina had come in first with the Scoreball at other events, but there was a lot more at stake with the national competition. The top prize was a college scholarship.

Marina knew that it would be a battle. Another inventor named Dana Dutcher had won plenty of awards with her own invention. Tomorrow they would meet and compete, face-to-face.

Meanwhile, Dana Dutcher helped tie the shoes of her triplet brothers. Soon, her family would be piling in the van for the long drive to the Young Inventors’ National Competition.

She gave each of her little brothers a high five. “I owe you guys,” she said. “You gave me the idea for the Zipper-Zapper in the first place.”

Last winter, Dana’s teacher had told the class to think of a problem and an invention that would solve it. Every morning, Dana had watched her brothers struggling to zip their own coats. Because of them, she designed a magnetic zipper starter that made zipping easier for little hands. The Zipper-Zapper had worked.

It had racked up awards, too, but the national competition was different. The top prize was a college scholarship that Dana didn’t just want to win. She needed to win it. Dana had read about the inventor she was up against. Marina Moore and her Scoreball had her worried.

First, please read the story, “**Ready, Set, Invent.**”

Next, answer the following questions:

1. Describe the main character(s) in the story. How realistic are they?
  2. Describe the plot of the story. Do you feel this is a realistic plot? Why/why not?
  3. This story does not have much of a realistic setting. Work with a family member or friend to describe what the author could do to give this a realistic setting.
  4. Explain to a family member or friend why this story is a good example of realistic fiction.
- Finally, discuss with a family member or friend who you think won the “Young Inventors’ National Competition” Marina Moore or Dana Dutcher? Why do you think this person won?

**Realistic Fiction** is a style of writing depicting made up stories of what might happen to very real **characters**, in very real **settings**, facing very current **issues and problems**.

### **Realistic Characters**

- Must be credible, even if not real people.
- Language, dress, and mannerisms must fit with today's culture.
- Actions and reactions to situations are consistent with the responses of real people.
- Typically, ordinary people facing challenging problems.

### **Realistic Settings**

- Must be current and vivid.
- Could be actual locations or made up places.
- Every detail of each location must be accurate and believable.

### **Realistic Plots**

- Deal with realistic issues, situations, and problems.
- Range from joyful and fun to challenging and painful sides of life.
- Allow the reader to examine personal emotions, values, and beliefs.
- Allow for awareness, compassion, and sensitivity of others going through the giving situations.
- Serves as a practice for situations the reader may encounter someday
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