

## **MULTIPLICATION MAKES ME SICK!**

Jacob loved third grade. Some kids didn't like school, but Jacob always had a great time in Ms. Smith's room. First, they had reading. Jacob really liked that class. They read great stories out of their reading books. Some of the stories were actually plays, and the students all took turns acting out the story. They worked in their workbooks. That was fun, too. Jacob liked social studies and art and music and even recess. There was only one problem with school, but it was a big one. They had to MULTIPLY!

Jacob did not want to spend time every single day studying the multiplication facts. There were so many! It seemed like the whole math class was spent just repeating them over and over. Then he got home, and his parents wanted him to practice the multiplication facts all over again. No matter how hard he tried, Jacob was sure he would never remember them all. This was NO fun for Jacob! He used to like math class. He liked to add and subtract. Multiplication made him feel stupid, because he couldn't say all the facts as fast as the other students. It was too hard!

"Multiplication makes me sick!" Jacob told his mother. He wasn't kidding. His stomach hurt every time he thought about those stupid facts. His mother just laughed. "You'll learn it eventually," she said. Jacob was sure she was wrong.

One morning Ms. Smith came into the classroom. She was holding a tape recorder and a microphone. She told Jacob he was in charge of an important project. They were going to be reciting the multiplication facts, and Jacob's job was to record them. Jacob loved this! It was just like being a TV reporter, holding that microphone. He held the microphone out so the whole class could be heard. He could hear some of the kids making mistakes. For the first time, Jacob understood that multiplication was not only hard for him. He wasn't stupid at all!

Ms. Smith said they would be recording the next day, too. Jacob went home and practiced reciting all the facts. Now that he knew that other kids were having trouble, he didn't feel so hopeless. Maybe he really could learn the facts. It would be like memorizing the lines for a play in reading class. Maybe multiplication was going to be fun after all!

**ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:**

1. What grade was Jacob in?
  - a. first
  - b. second
  - c. third
  - d. kindergarten
  
2. Why did Jacob hate multiplication?
  - a. It was too hard.
  - b. It was too easy.
  - c. It was too short.
  - d. It was too long.
  
3. Why did Jacob like recording the multiplication facts?
  - a. He liked hearing the other students' voices.
  - b. He felt like a TV reporter holding the microphone.
  - c. He liked standing in the front of the room.
  - d. He didn't like it.
  
4. Why did Jacob feel stupid?
  - a. He didn't like school.
  - b. Math class was too hard.
  - c. He couldn't remember the multiplication facts.
  - d. His teacher told him to use a microphone in class.
  
5. Jacob's feelings changed in the story. How did his feelings change?

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Reading Comprehension

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

Answers to MULTIPLICATION MAKES ME SICK!

1. c
2. a
3. b
4. c
5. answers will vary, but should generally state that Jacob had felt stupid and negative about multiplication, but after he understood that he was not the only one having trouble he felt much better and ready to try again.