

Faking Sick

Story By: Andrew Frinkle



Mary really didn't want to go to school on Monday. She hadn't studied all weekend, because she'd been at her cousin's house. So, rather than fail the test, she decided she'd fake being sick, study a little bit, watch some TV, catch up her sleep, and then go on Tuesday.

When mom tried to wake her Monday morning, she groaned, rolled over, and coughed a couple times. "I feel sick." She whined. Mom checked her head, and declared her fine. "No fever. Sorry." "My throat is sore."

Mom checked her throat, feeling for lumps and swollen glands. "You still seem fine. Get ready for school. Breakfast is in ten minutes."

Mary dragged herself from bed, staggered a bit to add to the show, and made for the bathroom. While she was in there, she ran hot water over a towel and pressed it on her face. Then she ran in place a few steps to get sweaty. A bit of water up the nose helped to fake the snot that might go with a cold.

With a few more coughs, she joined the family for breakfast. Dad regarded her with alarm. "What's wrong with you?"

"She's not sick." Mom declared, still somehow seeing through it all as she served pancakes. Dad wasn't so sure. He checked her forehead. "She does feel warm." Mary nodded and shot dad her best pleading, heartbreaking look, along with a cough.

"I would too, if I had put a hot towel on my face." Mom winked at Mary. Dad frowned at his toast and at Mary. "Is there a test today?" "GAHH!" Mary shouted, giving up on the charade. "How does everyone know?" "It's better to face the music now." Dad insisted.

Mary decided to try a different tactic, because she knew how important grades were. "What if I could pass a makeup tomorrow, but would fail today?"

Dad looked torn, because the argument made sense. "How about I take you to school, and we study all the way there. I'll get you there barely in time for the bell, and you can beat it fair and square."

Mary sighed. "Fine." It was clearly a final offer, and she'd take it. At least she wouldn't have to ride the bus, and her father was actually pretty good at helping her study.

"Have a good day at school, dear." Mom added sweetly as they finally made their way out the door.

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What does Mary pretend to be when she wakes up?
A. sad B. sick C. confused D. angry
2. What does mom think about Mary's illness at first?
A. She believes it. B. She doesn't care.
C. She doesn't believe Mary is sick. D. She calls the doctor for a second opinion.
3. What does Mary NOT do to look sick?
A. put a hot cloth on her face B. fake some coughing
C. run in place to get sweaty D. eat something gross
4. What does Dad think about Mary's illness at first?
A. He seems like he might believe her. B. He doesn't care.
C. He doesn't believe it for a moment. D. He calls a nurse for a second opinion.
5. Why does Mary finally get agree to go to school?
A. Dad will ground her otherwise.
B. Mom will spank her if she stays home.
C. Dad offers to drive her to school and help her study.
D. Mary will lose her allowance if she stays home.

