



A Special Gift

Stephy made her decision in the split second the ball was struck.

She launched herself to the right, stretching her limbs towards the top corner of the goal post. With a well-aimed punch, she deflected¹ the ball, sending it into the sea of screaming spectators behind her.

Stephy had saved the crucial penalty, and won her school the championship. It was the Stephy's thirtieth save of the tournament – an all-time record in the inter-school football competition.

“Stephy! Stephy!” her teammates chanted as they threw their team captain into the air in jubilation².

That afternoon, the team treated themselves to a celebratory meal at Queensway Shopping Centre. After a satisfying lunch, the girls engaged in their favourite activity: window-shopping for football merchandise.

“Look at this season’s Manchester City jersey design. It’s so cool!” Ariel, the team’s vice captain, cooed.

The girls took the jerseys off the rack to admire its design. Made from the highest grade moisture wicking³ polyester, the material felt smooth as silk under their touch. More importantly, the jersey was embroidered with the magnificent shield of the girls’ favourite football team.

Stephy picked up a jersey that had the number “1” on it. It was her number. The number of goalkeepers! Pinning it to her shoulders and inspecting herself in the mirror, Stephy imagined herself wearing the jersey and saving goals in a professional football league.

Storytelling techniques:

- Dramatic one-sentence introduction

Storytelling techniques:

- Establish setting
- Vivid description of action ('slow-motion' technique)
- Alliteration: sea of screaming spectators

Storytelling techniques:

- Description of the main character's contribution to the team (establishes reason for the gift)

Storytelling techniques:

- Use of specific dialogue tag and dialogue to show emotion

Storytelling techniques:

- Description of jersey using '5 senses' technique (touch and sight) and simile (smooth as silk)
- Using the 'show, not tell' technique (through actions and thoughts) to suggest main character's desire for the jersey

Picture referenced:

- Jersey with the number '1' on it

¹ caused something to change direction

² a feeling of great happiness and triumph

³ absorbing water (by capillary action)





“The price tag’s not so cool though,” Stephy lamented⁴. At over a hundred dollars, it was not something a student could easily afford.

After two hours of window shopping, the girls settled down at a café for drinks.

“Could you order a root beer float for me?” Ariel asked Stephy. “I need to pop into the washroom.” Stephy gave Ariel the thumbs-up sign.

As they sipped their drinks, the girls relived their victory with exaggerated retellings of their glorious moments on the field. Stephy was in the middle of mimicking a vicious tackle executed⁵ by Ariel when she realised that Ariel had not returned from the washroom.

“Why is Ariel taking so long?” Stephy wondered aloud. While the rest of the girls smiled conspiratorially⁶ at each other, Ariel reappeared with a shopping bag under her arm.

Stephy eyed Ariel suspiciously as Ariel pulled something from it. In mock ceremonial⁷ manner, Ariel unfolded a garment while humming the Manchester City team anthem. It was a Manchester City jersey, the one with the number “1” on it!

Ariel said, “Stephy, this is a gift from the team to you. Thank you for being a terrific team captain and for leading us to victory!”

Stephy made a valiant⁸ effort to hold back her tears. What made the gift special was not only that it was the goalkeeper jersey of her favourite team, but that her teammates had pooled their pocket money to buy the jersey just for her. The gift was a token of the team’s recognition and

Storytelling techniques:

- Establish that the gift is not something the main character could have gotten for herself

Storytelling techniques:

- Set the stage for the climax

Storytelling techniques:

- Vivid and realistic description of the behaviour of a group of girls

Storytelling techniques:

- Reference made to the chosen picture in the climax of the story
- Dramatic presentation of gift
- Answers the question: what is the special gift?

Picture referenced:

- Jersey with the number ‘1’ on it

Storytelling techniques:

- Answers the question: why is the gift special?
- Use of ‘show, not tell’ technique to reveal main character’s reaction at having received the gift

⁴ expressed with grief

⁵ performed; did

⁶ relating to or suggestive of a secret plan made by a group of people

⁷ relating to or used for formal events

⁸ brave





appreciation of what Stephy had done for the team. Receiving it on the day of their having won the championship only made the gift all the more special.

“Thank you, girls,” Stephy uttered in a voice choked with emotion. “This is the most special gift I have ever received. I promise to continue to work hard to lead our team to more victories in the years to come!”

Storytelling techniques:

- Main character explicitly expresses her gratitude for the special gift
- Main character expresses her resolve for the future in appreciation of the gift



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