

A Tough Day for Thomas
By Shannon Rigney Keane

Thomas often lost things. Sometimes, he lost his toys. Sometimes, he lost books. Sometimes, he lost things that you might think would be difficult to lose. One night at dinner, he tried to take a bite of mashed potatoes but he had lost his fork!

**1A. Close Reading/Monitoring for sense:
What have you learned about Thomas so far?**

Losing things did not bother Thomas. His parents shook their heads at him. “Good thing your shoes are tied on to your feet,” they told him, “or you would never make it to school!” But he just laughed and said, “I’m sure I’ll find it sooner or later.”

And he would play with a different toy, or read a different book – or eat with his fingers! – until he found the thing he had lost. Often, he found the lost thing in a very unusual place. A plastic dinosaur in the freezer, his favorite book under the bathroom sink, his fork in the dog’s bowl.

**1 B. Close Reading/Monitoring for sense:
What more have you learned about Thomas?**

One morning, Thomas woke up and turned over in his bed so he could look out the window. To his surprise, he saw a big yellow truck in front of the house next door, his best friend Robby's house. There were men carrying boxes... Thomas jumped out of bed and ran to the kitchen in his pajamas.

His parents were sitting at the table drinking hot coffee out of mugs. He asked them what was going on, and why there was a truck outside of his best friend Robby's house.

2. Prediction:

What do you think will happen in the rest of the story? What makes you think this?

His parents looked at each other, then they looked at him. His mother said, "Robby's family has to move to a different town. He came over this morning to say goodbye. I told him you would come over as soon as you got up. Go put your clothes on so you can see Robby before he goes."

Thomas had a funny feeling in his stomach as he put on his clothes. The funny feeling got worse when he saw Robby's empty house, and gave Robby a hug, and watched Robby's dad drive the family away in their red car. Thomas watched them drive away behind the yellow moving truck until they turned a corner and he could not see them anymore. Then he went back to his own house, with the funny feeling in his stomach.

For a long time, Thomas sat on the steps in front of his house. He could hear his family moving around inside his house. He saw other kids playing. He knew some of them, and they waved at him. He waved back. He thought of Robby. His mom sat next to him on the steps. For a few minutes, they did not say anything.

3. Envisionment:

Picture what is happening right now. Describe it using as many details as you can.

Then, his mom said, “I know it’s sad when someone we like goes away, but you have other friends.”

Thomas said, “But I don’t have any other Robby’s. Robby has been my best friend for a long time.”

“Yes,” his mom said, “things that are important, like friends, take time. It will take time to make a new best friend. But you will.”

Thomas thought about other things he had lost, and how he always found them sooner or later in unusual places, like the freezer, or under the bathroom sink, or in the dog’s bowl. Losing a friend was different. He did not have another friend to play with that would be just the same.

4. Interpretation

What can you learn from Thomas’ experience?