

## Spelling Test Nightmare

Written by Kelly Hashway

Darren's feet nervously shook as he waited for his graded spelling test. He studied all week, but still the words were so difficult for him to remember.

"Great job, Michael," Mrs. Marsden said, placing Michael's test on his desk.

"Yay! I got a hundred!" Michael cheered.

"Me too," Jeffrey said, giving Michael a high five.

"That's three hundreds in a row for me," Madison said with a huge smile.

Darren's foot shook even harder. Mrs. Marsden approached his desk with his test in hand. The look on her face said it all. He hadn't done well. She lay the paper face down on Darren's desk.

Michael, Jeffrey, and Madison were still cheering as Darren lifted one small corner of his paper. His heart pounded in his chest. He lifted it a little higher, seeing the red marks on the first two incorrect spellings.

"What are you waiting for?" Michael asked, yanking Darren's paper from his desk. Michael studied the test. "Whoa, you got over half the answers wrong!" Michael held Darren's paper up. "Check this out. Darren got most of them wrong!" Michael laughed, and Jeffrey and Madison joined in.

Darren slumped down in his desk chair, his face beet red and his palms sweaty.



### Things to Discuss:

1. How do you think Darren felt when Michael grabbed the spelling test and showed it to the other kids?
2. When Michael grabbed his paper, do you think Darren should have said something or ignored Michael?
3. If you were Mrs. Marsden, what would you say to Michael?
4. Do you think Jeffrey or Madison did anything wrong? Why or why not?
5. Michael has a responsibility to offer a sincere apology to Darren. What, exactly, should he say?

# Spelling Test Nightmare

In the story, "Spelling Test Nightmare," Michael takes Darren's spelling test and shows other kids in the class that Darren got a failing grade. What could have Darren done in this situation?

Cut out the cards below. Sort them into two groups - Good Ways for Darren to Deal With the Situation and Bad Ways for Darren to Deal with the Situation.



<p><b>Darren yells, "Give me my paper back" and holds up his fist to Michael's face.</b></p>	<p><b>Darren tells his teacher what happened and asks for her help.</b></p>	<p><b>Darren says in a calm but stern voice, "Grades are personal. My grade is none of your business."</b></p>
<p><b>Darren says "It's no big deal. Madison failed her Science test yesterday!"</b></p>	<p><b>Darren takes Michael's spelling test and refuses to give it back until Michael apologizes.</b></p>	<p><b>Darren shoves Michael and takes his paper back.</b></p>
<p><b>Darren says, "You worry about your grades; I'll worry about mine. Now please return my paper."</b></p>	<p><b>Darren laughs with Michael and does not let Michael know that it bothers him.</b></p>	<p><b>Darren grabs his paper back and rips it up.</b></p>
<p><b>Good Ways to Deal With The Situation</b></p>		<p><b>Bad Ways to Deal With The Situation</b></p>

# Teacher's Discussion Guide

Read the story aloud and discuss.

## Things to Discuss:

1. How do you think Darren felt when Michael grabbed the spelling test and showed it to the other kids?

**Darren may have also felt disappointed in himself when he saw his grade. He probably felt mad and angry when Michael grabbed his test. Darren probably felt embarrassed when Michael told everyone he failed.**

2. When Michael grabbed his paper, do you think Darren should have said something or ignored Michael?

**Darren should probably speak up in a clam, but firm voice. He needs to let Michael know that he is bothered by the situation. If he does choose to ignore Michael, he should probably go directly to the teacher for help.**

3. If you were Jeffrey or Madison, what might you say to Michael?

**Jeffrey and Madison should probably apologize for laughing at Darren and encouraging Michael's behavior.**

**They could also stand up for Darren. They could say, "Michael, give the test back." Or they could say, "We don't care about Darren's grade."**

4. If you were Mrs. Marsden, what would you say to Michael?

**Mrs. Marsden should insist that Michael immediately give the paper back. She should make Michael apologize to Darren. She may also enforce a consequence for Michael's behavior.**

**Mrs. Marsden might also speak to Darren. She could say, "I know you did your best." Or she might say, "Your grades are none of their business." She might reassure Darren that she does not approve of Michael's behavior and that she will deal with it in an appropriate way.**

5. Do you think Jeffrey or Madison did anything wrong? Why or why not?

**Jeffrey and Madison should not have been laughing at Darren's grade. They were reinforcing Michael's bullying behavior.**

6. Michael has a responsibility to offer a sincere apology to Darren. What, exactly, should he say?

**He might say he's sorry, acknowledge Darren's feelings, and promise never to mention other people's grades.**

# ANSWER KEY

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Darren says in a calm but stern voice, "Grades are personal. My grade is none of your business."	Darren says "It's no big deal. Madison failed her Science test yesterday!"
Darren says, "You worry about your grades; I'll worry about mine. Now please return my paper."	Darren shoves Michael and takes his paper back.
	Darren laughs with Michael and does not let Michael know that it bothers him.
	Darren grabs his paper back and rips it up.
	Darren takes Michael's spelling test and refuses to give it back until Michael apologizes.