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Into the FUTURE

Talk About It

What kinds of new technology do you know about? What inventions would you like to see in the future?

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Who Says Robots Can't Think?

by Jane Schnelling

Vocabulary

robot
defective
meteor
rotated
staggered
reversed
dangling
tokens

Analogies

Analogies compare two pairs of words. Sometimes analogies use *synonyms*, words that have similar meanings. For example *broken* is to *defective* as *tidy* is to *neat*.

Dad and I are watching the Olympic Games in our media room. The giant screen drops down to cover one wall. I jiggle the lever and my seat turns around, to face the screen. We give our **robot**, Sylvia, our orders for popcorn and fresh lemonade. She is only a machine but she looks like a human and helps with the housework.

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We are having popcorn for dinner tonight because our oven is **defective**. It is broken and keeps on repeating that it doesn't remember how to cook. Dad thinks the huge **meteor** passing by Earth is messing with its radio waves.

"I did see a shooting star yesterday," I said. "Maybe that's why I had trouble getting Sylvia started this morning. She **rotated** around and around, **staggered** when she tried to take a step, and almost fell backwards. She finally started moving towards me, but then suddenly **reversed**, and went backwards. I thought she was going to crash into a wall. Luckily, she grabbed hold of the wind chimes we have **dangling** down from the ceiling, and got her balance."

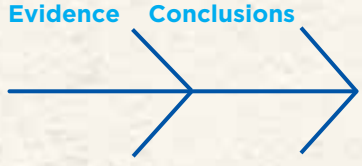
At last, Sylvia arrives with our popcorn and drinks. I look at the screen and see the Olympic torch burning brightly. Sylvia sees it too. Dad gives her **tokens** from an old board game as a tip. Sylvia thanks him for the pieces and starts to leave the room. Then she reverses direction and comes back to where we are sitting. I hear humming and then some clicking sounds. The sounds mean that she is searching her memory chips for information. "During the Olympics, I should get medals, not tokens," she says.

Dad and I just stare at each other. Sylvia doesn't seem to know that robots aren't supposed to think. Then we burst out laughing and award Sylvia a gold medal.

Reread for Comprehension

Make Inferences and Analyze Draw Conclusions

Making inferences about what happens in a story will help you draw conclusions about characters and events and come to a new understanding of the story. Use your Conclusions Diagram as you reread the selection to help you to make inferences and draw conclusions.



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