

Reflections

Gavin couldn't wait to get to Gran's. He would have two whole weeks on her farm, with her horses to ride and her creek to explore and her yummy cherry pies to eat. It sounded like heaven.

Sure enough, when he got there, Gran was in the kitchen rolling out pie dough. "I have a little something for you," she said. She nodded towards a flat package on the table, wrapped in tissue paper and tied with a piece of brown twine.

"What's this for?" asked Gavin.

"Oh, it's from your Papa," said Gran. "He left it for you. He wanted you to have it the summer you turned 14."

Gavin had never met his grandfather, affectionately known as Papa. He had died before Gavin was even born. From the stories Gran told, he was a man of few words but a heart of gold. Gavin wondered what Papa had left him. Tearing through the twine, he was surprised to see what it was. There, nestled in the paper, was a handheld mirror.

"Oh, wow," said Gavin. "Thanks." He tried to sound genuine, but he was afraid his voice might give him away. He'd been hoping for something cool. What was he going to do with a stupid mirror?

"Why don't you take it outside," said Gran.

Outside? What would he do with a mirror outside? Gavin wondered if Gran was getting mixed up. But she seemed the same as always, happily laying the dough in the bottom of the pie plate and scooping the cherries on top.

The screen door banged behind him as he took the mirror out to the yard. He looked at his face in the shiny surface. Same as ever. Big ears, brown eyes, curly black hair. He walked around the farm shining his mirror on random stuff. He figured he might as well go see the horses. He shoved the mirror in his pocket. It wouldn't be any use to him in the barn.

"Hi there," Gavin said to the chestnut mare, stroking her nose. "And hello to you, too," he said to the gray pony. He leaned over to pet the pony's mane, but the mare was nosing at his pocket. She was biting the handle of the mirror that was sticking out from his jeans.

"What? You want the mirror?" Gavin chuckled. He pulled it out and held it up towards the horse. "Here. Is that better?" He glanced quickly at the reflection in the mirror and then did a double take. There, in the mirror, was not an image of the chestnut mare. Instead, it was the reflection of a majestic ruby unicorn.

Gavin's eyes almost popped out of his head. He put the mirror down and then held it up again. Same image. He turned the mirror towards the pony

and he got the second shock of his life. No gray pony was starting back at him. It was a silver unicorn.

Gavin leaned forward until his face was touching the mirror's surface. His eyes must be playing tricks on him. But no, the unicorns were still there. As he leaned further still, Gavin felt his feet lifting off the hay on the barn floor. He closed his eyes as he was sucked into the mirror. And when he opened them again he was standing next to two unicorns, their horns sparkling in the sunlight.

Gavin spent the afternoon riding the unicorns. They were happy to let him up on their backs, and when they jumped it felt like they were flying. When they were tired, they let him comb their tails and pieces of gold fell out. Eventually they curled into the straw of the barn. Gavin shut the door quietly so as not to wake them. He carried his mirror and set off towards the creek, wondering what he might find there. Pirates? Sea serpents? A desert island? Only the mirror would tell. Best. Gift. Ever.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What was NOT mentioned as something Gavin was looking forward to at Gran's?
 - a. Eating cherry pie
 - b. Riding horses
 - c. Looking in a mirror
 - d. Exploring the creek

2. What color is Gavin's hair?
 - a. Brown
 - b. Chestnut
 - c. Silver
 - d. Black

3. What does it mean when it says Gavin's eyes almost popped out of his head?
 - a. He is surprised
 - b. He is upset
 - c. He has a headache
 - d. He is confused

4. What feeling was Gavin afraid that his voice would give away?
 - a. Embarrassment
 - b. Disappointment
 - c. Anger
 - d. Excitement

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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