

Advanced Short Stories – “A Birthday Surprise”

Directions: First read the basic version of the story below. Next, read the advanced version of the same story. Then, try to answer the questions about the story.

Basic Version



Ella loves music. Her favorite kind of music is rock and roll. She is always listening to music on her radio, and her computer is always playing music in her room. Her birthday is coming up in a few weeks and she really wants to see a concert to celebrate it. She has been thinking about it to herself every day. Ezra, her boyfriend, has decided to surprise her with tickets for her birthday.

“Ella, I am going to pick you up at eight tomorrow night,” said Ezra. “Great, I will be ready. What are we doing?” asked Ella. “We are going to your favorite restaurant and then I have a surprise for you,” said Ezra. “Great,” thought Ella, “The surprise is probably a piece of jewelry or something useless like that.”

The following day, Ezra arrived at eight to take Ella to diner. They ate at her favorite restaurant and as they were paying the bill Ezra gave her an envelope. “Go on, open it,” said Ezra. “Okay, thank you so much,” replied Ella. She opened the envelope and found two front row tickets to her favorite concert. “Oh wow! Ezra, what a wonderful surprise!” she cried out.

They left the restaurant and went to the concert. Ella was so excited. They both had a great time at the concert. The band played all of her favorite songs. Ella and Ezra decided that it was the best birthday celebration she had ever had.

Advanced Version

Ella loves music. Her favorite kind of music is rock and roll. She is *constantly* listening to music on her radio, and her computer is always playing music in her room. Her birthday is coming up in a few weeks and she really wants to see a concert to celebrate it. She has been *dreaming* about it *daily*. Ezra, her boyfriend, has decided to surprise her with tickets for her birthday.

“Ella, I am going to pick you up at eight tomorrow night,” said Ezra. “Great, I will be ready. What are we doing?” asked Ella. “We are going to your favorite restaurant and then I have a surprise for you,” said Ezra. “Great,” thought Ella, “The surprise is probably a piece of jewelry or something useless like that.”

The following day, Ezra arrived at eight to take Ella to diner. They ate at her favorite restaurant and as they were paying the bill Ezra gave her an envelope. “Go on, open it,” said Ezra. “Okay, thank you so much,” replied Ella. She opened the envelope and found two front row tickets to her favorite concert. “Oh wow! Ezra, what a wonderful surprise!” she *exclaimed*.

They left the restaurant and went to the concert. Ella was so excited. They both had a great time at the concert. The band played all of her favorite songs. Ella and Ezra decided that it was the best birthday celebration she had ever had.

Questions:

1. What is Ella always doing?
2. What does Ella want to do to celebrate her birthday?
3. What does Ezra surprise Ella with for her birthday?

Vocabulary:

To find word definitions: First, find the word in the advanced version of the story. Then, compare this part of the advanced version of the story to the same part of the basic version of the story. This will give you a general definition of the word.

1. What does “*constantly*” mean? (*paragraph 1, sentence 3*)
2. What does “*dreams*” mean? (*paragraph 1, sentence 4*)
3. What does “*daily*” mean? (*paragraph 1, sentence 5*)
4. What does “*exclaimed*” mean? (*paragraph 4, sentence 6*)