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The Story in Brief

Judd Vandorf lives on a ranch in Wells Valley. He dreams of becoming a firefighter someday, not a rancher like his father. Judd is looking forward to his summer vacation and to spending more time at the fire station. But one thing stands in his way of having a good summer—Riley Preston. Riley, a city boy, is sent to stay on his grandparents' ranch each summer.

This summer, Riley arrives in Wells Valley with a motorcycle. He spends his days riding the hills, stirring up dust, and scaring the animals. Judd tries to be tolerant, but he quickly becomes annoyed with Riley and his noisy motorcycle.

On a visit to the fire station with Judd, Riley is told to put a spark arrester on his motorcycle. When he doesn't, the threat of a forest fire increases.

One Sunday, Judd feels sorry for Riley and becomes worried that Riley has run away. On his way to check on Riley, he discovers a fire in the mountains. Judd instantly calls 911. After making sure his

own family's ranch is out of danger, Judd heads for the Prestons' ranch. Realizing Riley is nowhere around, he quickly starts working on a firebreak to save the ranch. Soon the firefighters have the fire under control, and everyone is grateful to Judd for his quick thinking.

The fire investigators suspect that a couple of out-of-town campers started the fire. But after studying the burn pattern, the experts find pieces of carbon at the starting point of the fire. The carbon probably came from a motorcycle without a spark arrester. This leads the investigators straight to Riley.

When confronted, Riley admits to accidentally starting the fire, and he's ready to face the charges. Throughout the ordeal, his grandparents stand by him, and Riley finally feels like he belongs somewhere.

Judd's father realizes Judd will make a great firefighter someday. But until then, Judd will have to help out on the ranch and "put up" with Riley.



Name _____

FIREWATCH

Chapter 1

Using Short Vowels

Read the words in the word box. Each word contains a short vowel sound. Say the words to yourself and listen for the short vowel sounds. Then read each sentence. Choose a word from the word box to complete each sentence. Write your answer on the blank line.

| | | |
|-----------|---------------------|--------------|
| bandanna | relatives | disgusted |
| unlatched | engine | hotshots |
| thoughts | imagine | grandparents |
| minute | trickled | |

Example: Very little water trickled in the creek.

1. Riley came to stay with his _____ every summer.
2. Many city kids had _____ who lived in the valley.
3. Judd _____ the gate and swung it open.
4. Judd spent every spare _____ at the fire station.
5. Many firefighters were called _____.
6. His father's voice interrupted Judd's _____.
7. Judd couldn't _____ being stuck on a ranch.
8. Judd pulled a _____ from his pocket.
9. Judd heard a motorcycle _____ in the distance.
10. Judd's father was _____ when he heard the motorcycle.



Name _____

FIREWATCH

Chapter 1

Using Long Vowels

Read the words in the word box. Each word contains a long vowel sound. Say the words to yourself and listen for the long vowel sounds. Then read each sentence. Choose a word from the word box to complete each sentence. Write your answer on the blank line.

| | | |
|--------|---------|--------|
| today | behind | Jeep |
| whine | waiting | breeze |
| Riley | creek | weight |
| heroes | reins | |

Example: Judd's mother drove down the road in the Jeep.

1. Judd's father was _____ for Judd to help him mend fences.
2. _____ lived with his grandparents during the summer.
3. "Riley arrives _____," Judd told his father.
4. The horse shifted her _____ and almost stepped on Judd's foot.
5. Judd held the _____ lightly as he rode down the road.
6. Mountains could be seen _____ the ranch house.
7. Judd noticed that the _____ was almost dry.
8. Firefighters were _____ because they saved lives and forests.
9. A slight _____ fluttered the leaves in a nearby tree.
10. The _____ of the motorcycle's engine broke the silence.