

## Exemplar 1:

On a typical warm Sunday afternoon last summer, I went walking downtown where all the shops in my town cluster together on Main Street. My mother had asked me to run some errands. When she asked me to run them, I murmured to myself, “Why is she always telling me what to do? Why won’t she let me spend even a little time doing what I like?” I dragged my feet as I walked along. Suddenly, I got an idea, “Why don’t I go shopping for myself first?” What a bad idea it was! Wait till you hear what happened to me that day.

I called my friend and invited her to join me. She asked me to meet her at the shoe store. I turned left instead of right toward the shops my mom had wanted me to run the errands at. Then I saw the name of the store, “Styles”, on a bright neon red sign hanging over the glass display window with so many amazing shoes lined up in rows, from top to bottom. I entered the shoe store quickly, and saw many fashionable pairs of shoes. My heart fluttered as I saw there were wedges with bright orange and black stripes, flats with purple and white diamonds and kitten heels with pointy, sparkled toe tips. Among all, there was this one pair of shoes that drew me over, like a magnet. It was a slip-on brown shoe with golden stripes. I could not take my eyes off the shoes. It felt as if time stood still. I had never seen such amazing shoes in all my life. I stared at every detail in amazement.

“How much are these?” I inquired when the salesperson smiled at me, probably seeing the joy written across my face.

“They are on sale. This is one of our last pairs. They have been flying off the shelf like hot cakes.”

My friends at school would probably think I'm crazy. "Oh, well," I thought as I bought them. I never do mind too much about what people think of me. These shoes made me feel giddy and that is what matters! I walked out of the store wearing a pair of sharp-looking trendy shoes.

As I skipped back home, my stomach grumbled. I was passing by the town bakery and noticed a delicious chocolate cake decorated with white icing dots and a white thin satin ribbon. The next thing I knew, I was eating chocolate cake -- but I hate chocolate?! “Oh, well. I will just have this one slice.”

My craving for chocolate did not stop with that slice of cake. In fact, it got stronger. Now I was sitting at the bakery with a plate full of chocolate treats in front of me. My stomach grumbled again. This time, it was telling me to stop eating. But I had no control over my body. My hands just kept shoving chocolate pastries and chocolate candy inside my mouth. I was going to explode if this did not stop very soon. A button popped off my pants and my feet started to swell. All of a sudden, the shoes flew off my feet landing on the other side of the bakery. That instant, my hands froze in place. My chocolate craving disappeared.

I quickly grabbed my bag, pulled my old shoes out of the box and walked out of the bakery ignoring the pair of brown slip-ons laying in the corner of the bakery. Till this day, I wonder if those shoes had some magical control over me. I guess, I will never find out.

## Exemplar 2:

I love sports: soccer, tennis, baseball, swimming... You name it.

Basketball, though, is my favorite. One Saturday morning, on the way to my basketball game, I noticed a pair of neon yellow sneakers sitting on the curb in the middle of the town square, next to a hot dog stand. Inside the right shoe was a rolled white sheet of paper with “Free” neatly scribbled in pencil across the page. I could not take my eyes off the shoes and decided to try them on. The worn-

out soft leather wrapped my feet securely. I made a few jumps. It felt like hundreds of invisible springs were lifting me up in the air. "Excuse me, do you know if these sneakers belong to anyone?" I hesitantly asked the hot dog seller. "I don't think so. Those shoes have been here for a couple of days now," the man replied shrugging his shoulders. "They fit you like a glove. If you like them- keep them!" And off I went, skipping straight to my practice in my new neon yellow shoes.

"Hurry up! You are late!" yelled the coach as I ran into the gym, panting heavily. I dropped my bag under the bench and immediately joined my team on the court. A few minutes into the game, I noticed that something felt very different today. I skimmed across the court effortlessly, as if a pair of wings on my back was propelling me ahead. I kept dunking and scoring. "Someone is on fire today!" hollered the coach, smiling from ear to ear. Why does the basket feel so much lower than usual? I thought. And then it clicked- the shoes! In my hurry, I never changed into my regular basketball shoes before joining the game. These newfound shoes were turning me into a skilled, fast and aggressive player. That day, we won 30 to 14.

We won again the next game, and the next game, and the next... Until one day, during a penalty shot, my left toe poked through the thin leather of my neon sneaker. My heart sank. All the joy drained from my body. There was nothing to do but to take off these magical shoes and put on a pair of my regular ones on. But guess what! I kept scoring even without the yellow shoes on. And then and there, I realized that the true magic of the yellow shoes was no magic at all! They helped me find my confidence and believe in myself.

### **Exemplar 3:**

One cold, crisp January morning, I went to shovel the snow but there was a package on my doorstep. I carefully picked up the package and observed it. I went inside and slowly snipped the tape and opened it. There waiting to be put on were faded blue and red checkered sneakers with cement at the bottom. I didn't mind, though. I checked the size quickly, eager to put them on. Size 4, perfect! I slipped them on and strutted like a peacock. I heard the faint rumble of the bus' wheels. I grabbed my zebra-print bag with a pink zipper and darted out the door.

I got on the bus, grabbed my seat, and went to school. I put my stuff into my locker and sat down at my desk. It looked as if there were only 10 kids in the class. I finished my morning work quickly. Then, we had an exam. I passed it in and the teacher handed it back to me. I let out a satisfied sigh. I smiled at my A+. I sat down but, the shoes made jerk forwards and get up. The shoes made me walk out the door, in the hall, past the office through the lobby, and out onto campus. "Uh, oh," I said. Worry filled my mind. My heart pounded. What am I going to do? Then it hit me. Stronger than any realization I've had before. "These shoes are m-ma-magic!" I stuttered. Realizing that the shoes stopped dead in it's tracks, I sighed with relief. A little too soon. The sneakers made me jerk towards and dashed down Burncoat Street... Down, down , down!

How much worse can this day get? I slammed into a tall mass with a loud crash! I hit the cement and moaned. Ow! A slender girl helped me to my feet. Later on I found out her name was Teagan. I told Teagan everything. Seeing the pity in her eyes, I reassured her that everything was alright. I tried getting them off. No use! I noticed the cement at the bottom of my shoe. Cement! Teagan saw the cement, too. I asked Teagan to get some wet cement. She ran to her house and in 10 minutes she came back with a large and heavy bucket of cement. I stepped into the wet cement and it slowly hardened. Teagan yanked me out and I put the cove onto the bucket and rolled it into a river. "I

never want to see those shoes again,” I said with relief. Sometimes we get gifts that should never be opened.

#### **Exemplar 4:**

As I looked at the pile of worn out shoes that did not even fit me anymore all sitting in a row along the wall in the mudroom section of my home, it struck me. I needed shoes. That is a fact. So, I set out walking mid-morning as rush hour traffic had slowed down. I walked along main street to a cheap secondhand shop with a billboard in bright orange that said, “Shoes on Sale Today”. I was obviously not looking for some expensive Air Jordans because after all, it is a secondhand store and the store would not sell those. I was looking for some shoes that could last a few weeks, so I could buy myself a nice pair of shoes later. What I found at that store is for me to tell and for you to find out.

As soon as I walked in, I saw some shoes that were blue and red high-topped shoes, and I immediately bought them. They cost \$30. They would have cost more if they were in better conditions.

As I walked out the store and as I turned left to go home, my shoes forced me to go right. “Okay,” I thought as I walked. “I’ll just take the long way.”

So I took the long way. Or at least I tried. The shoes made me start to run, which made other pedestrians on the sidewalk a little bit mad. I tried to turn onto Maple Avenue, where my house is, but my shoes just kept forcing me to walk straight.

I ran straight out of town into the next town and into the next. I had to think of a way to stop my shoes. And then, I would have to get them off. I had been running for about 2 hours now as it was 6:00 pm.

I came up with a brilliant yet painful plan. I figured out that if the shoes were not touching the ground, they could not “tell” me where to go.

So I leapt into the air, and I started to follow my plan. I shifted to the left in mid-air, and I hit a lamp post. When I fell, I made sure that my feet did not touch the ground. They did not. I stuck my hands up, ripped off the shoes, and threw them as far as I could.

Even though I had to walk home with no shoes in the dark for a very long time, there was an upside. I found a \$20 bill! That could go toward buying a new pair of shoes.

When I did finally get home after my long walk, I told my mom, “Mom, you will never believe what just happened.” And she did not. Sometimes strange events happen.