

Reading 1 — Children's Day

Samantha and her friends were waiting excitedly in the classroom for their teacher. Samantha, whose seat was at the window, was on her feet peering out to look for their teacher. A while later, she spotted her teacher walking briskly to the classroom, carrying three huge plastic bags. Samantha alerted her classmates and everyone returned to their seats as they waited in anticipation for Mrs Bell.

The sound of chairs scraping against the floor was heard the moment Mrs Bell entered the classroom. Everyone stood up and greeted her in unison. They were bursting with excitement as they stared at the huge plastic bags Mrs Bell was carrying. To everyone's disappointment, Mrs Bell told everyone to take out their textbooks and she began writing on the whiteboard. Samantha tried to concentrate on the lesson but she was distracted by the huge plastic bags. Her eyes kept drifting towards them. Everyone else looked just as anxious as she was. Just then, Mrs Bell asked the class a question. There was dead silence. No one knew the answer. Mrs Bell chuckled in amusement. She knew that everyone was stumped by her question because no one was paying attention to her lesson at all.

With a grin, Mrs Bell closed her textbook and put it aside.

"Do you want to see what I have in these bags?" she asked them. Everyone sat up straight in their seats, nodding their heads vigorously. There was a murmur of excitement as Mrs Bell took out small colourfully wrapped boxes from the bags. She walked down the rows of desks, placing one box on every desk. Samantha thanked her shyly and stared eagerly at the box. She wondered what was in it. When everyone had received the box, Mrs Bell told them that they could open their Children's Day present only if they promised to complete their work after that.

"We will!" they chorused.

The ripping of paper filled the classroom as everyone tore at their presents excitedly. Gasps of excitement could be heard when they saw the colourful stationery. There was also a small transparent bag containing sweets and chocolates. The students took turns to walk up to Mrs Bell to thank her. She had another surprise for them – they could end the lesson early and go down to the canteen where she had prepared a feast for them. Samantha and her friends were thrilled to know that Mrs Bell had made Children’s Day a memorable day for them.