

# As Luck Would Have It

by ReadWorks



Becky had everything Sarah wanted: a pool in her backyard, popularity, and new clothes. Worse, it seemed (at least to Sarah) that Becky had the Midas touch. Everything she touched turned to gold. She won the class lottery and with it \$50! She guessed how many jelly beans were in the jar in the yearly guess-how-many contest and won all 768 of them. She won every race she entered, every art competition, and every award the school offered. She had all the luck in the world.

Sarah was an only child. She wore hand-me-downs from her older cousin Clementine. She didn't have many friends. Her best friend Kiara was really the best in a lot of ways: kind, generous, and loyal. Just the kind of person you would want for a best friend. But Sarah most certainly did not have good luck. She never won anything. On the days she carried an umbrella, it never rained; on the days she forgot her umbrella, dark rain clouds seemed to follow her around.

One rainy day in April, though, Sarah and Becky swapped luck. That's how Sarah thought of it, anyway. It wasn't expected, and it certainly wasn't planned. But after weeks of wishing for it, Sarah woke up and things felt different. She felt lucky.

She rolled out of bed and noticed a small package on her desk. She opened it: it was a brand new dress, the same one she had been eyeing for weeks. "Mom!" she called. "Did you get me this dress?"

"It's from your grandmother," her mother called back. "Early birthday gift!"

Sarah shrugged. Her birthday wasn't until August.

"And I made your favorite! Chocolate chip pancakes!" her mother shouted.

"Pancakes on a Wednesday?" This truly was a different kind of day.

And it didn't stop there. On the school bus, Carlos, the most popular boy in school, saved her a seat. Then Mrs. Nelson picked her—yes, her!—to take care of the class rabbit over the weekend. The cafeteria lady gave her two extra cookies and said with a wink, "Your lucky day!"

But the best part of the day was art class. Mr. Rodriguez, her art teacher, walked around the room slowly. Sarah hadn't spent much time on her project. But it was still pretty, still unique. Mr. Rodriguez walked past Becky's art project and didn't even pause. Becky looked devastated. Her hair was still wet from that morning's rain. She had forgotten to bring an umbrella.

"Well, class!" Mr. Rodriguez said. "I think our winner for this month is Sarah! Excellent work, Sarah—this shows a lot of progress!"

Sarah smiled proudly. "Guess you have some competition," she whispered to Becky.

Sarah was on top of the world. She didn't feel like a normal fourth grader at all. Today, she felt like a better-than-average fourth grader, possibly the best fourth grader who had ever existed. She wondered what was next.

Becky, she noticed, had spent most of the day sulking. "Let someone else have a shot at being lucky for once," Sarah thought to herself. Then she noticed that Becky was crying. Small tears dripped down onto her t-shirt.

"What's wrong?" Sarah asked.

"I just spent a lot of time on that project," Becky said between hiccupped sobs.

Sarah was beginning to feel awful. After all, she hadn't spent much time on her project at all.

Then she felt Kiara tap her on the shoulder. "You know, Sarah," Kiara started. She looked angry and hurt at the same time. "You haven't been very nice today. You've been acting like...like you're the best person in the world." She shook her head. "This just isn't like you at all."

Now Sarah felt even worse. It was one thing to have the class pet dislike you, but another thing entirely to disappoint your best friend. "I'm sorry, Kiara," she said. "It's just been a weird day."

She walked over to Becky and gave her a hug. "Don't worry," she whispered, "your luck will change soon enough." Luck, Sarah was beginning to think, was overrated.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What does Becky have at the beginning of the story?

- A. all the beauty in the world
- B. all the gold in the world
- C. all the talent in the world
- D. all the luck in the world

2. What characteristic describes Sarah at the beginning of the story?

- A. jealous
- B. lucky
- C. popular
- D. grateful

3. Read the following evidence based on the story:

(1) Sarah feels like Becky has everything she wants, from popularity to new clothes to luck. (2) When Sarah's artwork is praised by the art teacher, she whispers to Becky, "Guess you have some competition." (3) When Sarah notices that Becky has been sulking all day, she thinks to herself, "Let someone else have a shot at being lucky for once."

Based on this evidence, what can you conclude about Sarah's relationship with Becky?

- A. Sarah wishes Becky would notice her, because Becky is so popular.
- B. Sarah thinks Becky is very talented and deserves to be lucky.
- C. Sarah dislikes Becky's personality and thinks Becky is not a nice person.
- D. Sarah feels competitive with Becky and is jealous of her success.

4. Why was Becky upset when her artwork was not praised by the art teacher?

- A. because she had put a lot of effort into it
- B. because she had lost her luck
- C. because she thought her art was better than Sarah's
- D. because she thought her art showed a lot of progress

5. What is a theme of this story?

- A. It is better to be a lucky person than to be an unlucky person.
- B. Having a lot of good luck makes you feel great, no matter what.
- C. Being a nice person is more important than being lucky.
- D. It is important to try and win at everything you do.

6. Read this selection from the first two paragraphs of the passage:

"Becky had everything Sarah wanted: a pool in her backyard, popularity, and new clothes. Worse, it seemed (at least to Sarah) that Becky had the Midas touch. Everything she touched turned to gold. She won the class lottery and with it \$50! She guessed how many jelly beans were in the jar in the yearly guess-how-many contest and won all 768 of them. She won every race she entered, every art competition, and every award the school offered. She had all the luck in the world.

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What is the author doing by starting the passage with these two paragraphs?

- A. The author is making it clear that Becky and Sarah have a lot in common in order to show the reader why they are friends.
- B. The author is contrasting Becky and Sarah's levels of luck to set up the action in the story.
- C. The author is praising Becky and insulting Sarah to make the reader like Becky more.
- D. The author is comparing Becky and Sarah's personalities to explain why Becky is luckier than Sarah.

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Sarah had always been unlucky \_\_\_\_\_ the day she swapped luck with Becky, who seemed like she had all the luck in the world.

- A. although
- B. so
- C. until
- D. because

8. Why did Sarah feel awful when she realized Becky was crying? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer.

9. What did Kiara say to Sarah towards the end of her lucky day? Explain how Kiara's comments make Sarah feel by using evidence from the text to support your answer.

10. At the end of the passage, Sarah starts to think that luck is overrated. What does she begin to realize is more important than luck? Suggest at least two qualities she may now consider more important than luck. Support your answer with evidence from the text.