

# The Comeback Kids

Read the basketball story, then answer. Some answers are right in the text. Others need a smart guess with evidence. Made-up teams only!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## READING TOOLKIT

### Literal

find it right  
in the text

### Infer

use clues +  
what you know

### Vocab

word meaning  
from context

### Evidence

point to the  
sentence that  
proves it



READ · THINK · PROVE

## READ THE STORY

### The Comeback Kids

The gym smelled like popcorn and floor wax. On the wall, a banner read **River Raptors** in teal and gold. Today the Raptors were playing the visiting **Harbor Hawks**, and every seat near the court was full.

By halftime the scoreboard glowed **14-28**. The Raptors were behind. Maya wiped her face with her jersey. "We're getting crushed," she whispered. Theo stared at his shoes. Even the cheer squad had gone quiet.

**Coach Patel** gathered the team in a huddle. "We still have a whole half," she said. "No more hero shots. Pass the ball. Trust each other. That is how we climb back." She called a **timeout** so the plan could sink in — a short stop in play so the team could talk.

In the third quarter, something shifted. Theo bounced a clean pass to Jun, who laid the ball in. Maya stole the ball at midcourt and found Ruby under the basket. The Raptors still trailed, but the gap was shrinking. Parents started clapping on every pass, not just every score.

With one minute left, the Hawks led by two. Maya caught a pass from Theo, faked right, and sank a jumper from the free-throw line. Tie game! The gym erupted. On the next Hawks possession, Jun tipped the ball away. The buzzer sounded. Final score: **30-30**.

"We didn't win," Theo said, grinning, "but we made a real **comeback**." Coach Patel nodded. "You remembered the most important play in sports: helping your teammate."

### ROOKIE

1 What is the name of the **home** team?

WORK SPACE

### ROOKIE

2 What is the name of the **visiting** team?

WORK SPACE

### STARTER

3 What was the score at **halftime**? Write it as Raptors-Hawks.

WORK SPACE

### STARTER

4 Who is the Raptors' coach?

WORK SPACE

### PRO

5 At halftime, how were Maya and Theo **feeling**? Use one clue from the story in your answer.

WORK SPACE

### PRO

6 What did Coach Patel ask the team to do differently in the second half?

WORK SPACE

### ALL-STAR

7 In this story, what does the word **timeout** mean?

WORK SPACE

### CHALLENGE ★

8 In this story, what does a **comeback** mean? Underline one sentence that helped you.

WORK SPACE

## A Think Deeper

Use the story. Write in complete thoughts when you can.

- 1 In which half of the game did the Raptors make their comeback?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Who scored the basket that **tied** the game?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Name **one** reason the Raptors were able to catch up. Use a detail from the story.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Would you call the ending a success? Why or why not? Use one detail from the story.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## B Word Match

Write the best word from the bank next to each meaning.

**Word bank:** assist · comeback · halftime · timeout

- |                                                    |                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1 a short stop in play so a team can talk<br>_____ | 2 the break in the middle of a game<br>_____ |
| 3 a pass that leads to a score<br>_____            | 4 catching up after being behind<br>_____    |

## C Story Sequence

Write the letters in the order the events happened, from first to last.

- A Maya sinks the jumper that ties the game  
\_\_\_\_\_
- B The Hawks lead 28–14 at halftime  
\_\_\_\_\_
- C Coach Patel calls a timeout  
\_\_\_\_\_
- D The final buzzer sounds at 30–30  
\_\_\_\_\_
- E The Raptors start passing more in the third quarter  
\_\_\_\_\_

Write the letters in the order the events happened:

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

### BONUS · YOUR TURN

Write **three sentences** about a time you (or a team you know) made a comeback — in sports, school, or a game with friends. Underline one feeling word.

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

# Answer Key (for teachers & parents)

Answers for **The Comeback Kids**, with sample wording where answers may vary. Print pages 1 and 2 for students, and keep this page for checking.

## Page 1 Problems

1. River Raptors
2. Harbor Hawks
3. 14–28 (Raptors behind)
4. Coach Patel
5. Discouraged / upset (“crushed,” quiet cheer squad)
6. Pass more / trust teammates (no hero shots)
7. A short stop in play to talk
8. Catching up after being behind (14–28 → 30–30)

## Quick score

|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| Page 1 problems    | _____ / 8  |
| A · Think Deeper   | _____ / 4  |
| B · Word Match     | _____ / 4  |
| C · Story Sequence | _____ / 5  |
| <b>Total</b>       | _____ / 21 |

## A · Think Deeper

1. Second half / third quarter
2. Maya (jumper from the free-throw line)
3. Passing / teamwork / Coach’s plan (accept text-based answers)
4. Answers vary (must use a story detail)

## Skills practiced

Literal comprehension
Inference
Context vocabulary
  
Sequencing
Text evidence

**Teaching tip:** Ask students to highlight the sentence that proves each answer. For inference questions, require a phrase from the text plus their own words.

## B · Word Match

1. timeout
2. halftime
3. assist
4. comeback

## C · Story Sequence

1. B → C → E → A → D (half → timeout → pass more → tie → buzzer)

## Bonus · Your Turn

**Answers will vary.** Check for three sentences and one underlined feeling word.