

## When the Clock Stopped

Hello, everyone. My number is \_\_\_\_\_. Today I'm going to read you a story. It's called "When the Clock Stopped."

In the center of Greenfield Elementary School stood an old clock tower. The clock was famous— not because it was beautiful, but because it rarely worked properly. Sometimes it stopped for minutes, sometimes for hours, and sometimes, it stopped completely.

Most students ignored it, except for Emma.

Emma was a sixth grader who believed that small details mattered. While others rushed through their days, she liked to slow down and observe. She noticed things people often overlooked— quiet corners, tiny changes, and the weak ticking sound when the clock almost worked.

As the County English Speech Contest approached, the school was buzzing with excitement. Students practiced day and night, and teachers hurried from room to room. Emma was chosen as a contestant.

At first, she was over the moon. But soon, nervousness got the better of her. No matter how hard she practiced, fear followed her everywhere.

"What if I forget my words?"

"What if I fail?"

Her teacher smiled and said, "Take it one step at a time. Just do your

best.” Emma nodded, though doubt still filled her heart.

The night before the contest, Emma stayed late at school to practice alone. The hallways were silent. As she passed the clock tower, she paused. The clock had stopped again. The hands were frozen at 8:47.

Emma frowned. Tomorrow’s schedule depended on that clock. Without it, the contest could turn into chaos. Without thinking twice, Emma decided to take matters into her own hands. She climbed the narrow stairs, her heart beating like a drum. At the top, she found the clock machine covered in dust.

“It’s now or never,” she whispered. She remembered helping her grandfather fix old watches. Slowly and carefully, she cleaned the gears and adjusted them.

Tick. Tock. The clock came back to life.

The next morning, the contest began right on time. Everything went smoothly—until it was Emma’s turn. Standing behind the curtain, Emma’s hands trembled. Doubt filled her mind.

“I’m not ready,” she thought. “I don’t belong here.” Then she looked outside and saw the clock tower. The hands were moving steadily.

Tick. Tock. She remembered the skill it took to fix the clock.

“If I could do that,” she thought, “I can do this too.” Emma stepped onto the stage. Her voice shook at first, but soon she found her rhythm. She

spoke clearly and confidently, sharing her message from the bottom of her heart. She talked about time— not just minutes and hours, but moments. Moments when we hesitate, and moments when we take action. The audience listened in silence.

When Emma finished, the applause filled the hall. Emma won second place.

Some students felt sorry for her, but she didn't mind in the slightest. She had learned something more important than winning. Later, her teacher said, "If you hadn't fixed the clock, the contest would have been a mess." Emma smiled.

Sometimes, success isn't about trophies. Sometimes, it's about doing the right thing when it truly matters. As Emma walked past the clock tower, she looked up. The clock kept ticking. And so did she.

Thank you for listening. Have a nice day.