

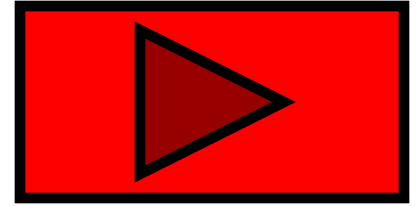
What is the woman holding in her right hand?

What is she holding in her left hand?

What do you think this story is about?



# The Coin



It was December 25. Marie Orr, a 13-year-old Australian girl, was happy. It was Christmas, and Marie's mother was making a special cake for dessert. Her mother put four small coins into the cake; then she baked it. The four coins were for good luck.

After dinner Marie and her family ate the cake. They found three coins in the cake and put them on the table. Where was the fourth coin? It was missing, but Marie's mother didn't notice.

After Christmas Marie got sick. She coughed, and she couldn't speak. After six weeks she felt better, but she still couldn't speak. Marie's parents took her to the hospital.

Doctors at the hospital looked at Marie. They took an x-ray of her throat. Marie's

parents asked the doctors, "Why can't Marie speak?" The doctors said, "We don't know. Maybe she will speak again. Maybe she won't. We're sorry, but we can't help her."

For 12 years Marie didn't speak. She grew up, she got a job, and she got married. But she never spoke.

One day, when Marie was 25 years old, she got a sore throat at work. She began to cough. She coughed up something small and black. What was it? Marie didn't know. She took it to the hospital. A doctor at the hospital said, "This is a coin!"

The doctor told Marie, "I think you can speak again." Marie went to a special doctor, and soon she was talking.

What a story Marie can tell!

## VOCABULARY

Complete the sentences with the words below.

coins    throat    notice    missing    coughed

1. At Christmas many Australians put money in their cakes. Marie's mother put four small           *coins*           in her cake.
2. There were only three coins on the table. Where was the fourth coin? It wasn't there. It was \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Marie's mother saw three coins on the table. One coin was missing, but she didn't pay attention. She didn't \_\_\_\_\_ that the coin was missing.
4. Marie got sick. She \_\_\_\_\_, and she couldn't speak.
5. Why couldn't Marie speak? The doctors didn't know, so they took an x-ray of her \_\_\_\_\_.

# COMPREHENSION

## UNDERSTANDING THE MAIN IDEA

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. Marie didn't speak because
  - a. a coin was in her throat.
  - b. she didn't want to.
  - c. a doctor said, "We can't help her."
2. Now Marie can
  - a. work again.
  - b. bake cakes.
  - c. speak again.

## REMEMBERING DETAILS

One word in each sentence is not correct. Find the word and cross it out. Write the correct word.

1. Marie Orr, a 13-year-old ~~French~~ *Australian* girl, was happy.
2. Her mother was making a special pie for dessert.
3. Marie's mother put four small spoons into the cake for good luck.
4. After breakfast Marie and her family ate the cake.
5. They found three coins in the cake and put them on the floor.
6. The sixth coin was missing, but Marie's mother didn't notice.
7. For 12 days, Marie didn't speak.
8. When she was 25 years old, Marie coughed up the cake, and she could speak again.

## UNDERSTANDING A SUMMARY

Imagine this: You want to tell the story "The Coin" to a friend. You want to tell the story quickly, in only four sentences. Which four sentences tell the story best? Check (✓) your answer.

1.  Many Australians put coins in their Christmas cakes for good luck. Marie's mother put four small coins in her cake; then she baked it. After dinner Marie and her family ate the cake. They found three coins in the cake and put them on the table.
2.  When she was 13 years old, Marie ate a piece of cake with a coin in it. The coin stayed in Marie's throat, but she didn't know it. She didn't speak for 12 years. When she was 25 years old, she coughed up the coin, and she could speak again.

# DISCUSSION

In Australia many people put coins in their Christmas cakes; it is a good luck custom.

Think about these questions. Talk about good luck customs with your classmates.

- What are some good luck customs in your family or from your native country?
- Do good luck customs really bring good luck?
- Do you have a story about a good luck custom?

*For example: Many people believe that a rabbit's foot will bring them good luck. People also believe that a four leaf clover can also bring you good luck.*

# WRITING

Answer the questions.

1. Marie liked Christmas very much. It was her favorite holiday. What is your favorite holiday?

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2. Christmas is in December. When is your favorite holiday?

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3. Red and green are the colors for Christmas in the United States. Does your favorite holiday have special colors? What are they?

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4. Marie's mother made a cake for dessert. Do you eat anything special on your favorite holiday? What do you eat?

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5. Marie's mother put coins in the cake. That was special; she did that only at Christmas. What special things do you do on your favorite holiday?

Take turns reading the sentences you wrote to a partner. Tell your partner a little more about your favorite holiday.