Jamal's Recital Diary



Read the story. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

Monday, May 4: Ms. Okafor says the spring piano recital is in two weeks, and I have to play "Morning Song" from memory in front of the whole audience! My hands get sweaty just thinking about it.

Wednesday, May 6: I practiced today, but I keep messing up the same part, the fast notes near the end. Grandma says I should practice that part slowly, five times in a row, before I play the whole song.

Monday, May 11: Grandma's trick is working, because I can play the fast part without stopping now. I played the whole song for my little sister, Amani, who clapped and then asked if she could have a turn.

Saturday, May 16: When I sat down at the big piano for the recital today, my mind went blank for a second, so I looked down at my hands and started to play. Everything went fine until the fast part, when I hit a wrong note. I wanted to stop and run off the stage, but instead I remembered what Ms. Okafor always says: "Keep going, and nobody will notice." I kept playing to the end, and everybody clapped. Afterward, a man told me my song was his favorite of the day, and he never even noticed the wrong note!

Sunday, May 17: Today I asked Ms. Okafor for a new song, which is longer and harder than "Morning Song." I am still a little nervous, but now I know what to do.

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1. **What was Jamal worried about in his first diary entry?**

2. **At the recital, Jamal writes that his "mind went blank for a second." What does this mean, and which words help you tell?**

3. **What did Jamal do when he hit a wrong note, and why?**

4. **How did Jamal change from his first diary entry to his last? Use details from the diary.**

Answer key

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1. What was Jamal worried about in his first diary entry?
   Playing "Morning Song" from memory in front of the whole audience at the piano recital.

2. At the recital, Jamal writes that his "mind went blank for a second." What does this mean, and which words help you tell?
   For a moment he could not think of anything or remember the song. The clue is that he had to look at his hands before he could start to play.

3. What did Jamal do when he hit a wrong note, and why?
   He kept playing to the end, because he remembered Ms. Okafor's advice: "Keep going, and nobody will notice."

4. How did Jamal change from his first diary entry to his last? Use details from the diary.
   Sample answer: at first he was so nervous his hands got sweaty. By the end he asked for a longer, harder song, because he had learned to practice the hard part slowly and to keep going after a mistake.