

Derby Dilemma



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Table of Contents

Chapter One:

A Soapbox Car Built for Two. 4

Chapter Two:

A Good Start 10

Chapter Three:

Adding the Wheels 16

Chapter Four:

Spills and Thrills 22

Chapter Five:

Derby Day 28

About Us 32

Chapter One



A Soapbox Car Built for Two

Ava and Josh could hardly contain their excitement. They were finally old enough to enter the soapbox derby. The competition was one week away, and there was so much work to be done!

Josh met Ava at the library. They planned to do some research for the best design. The librarian, Miss Camila, helped them. She told them about books and websites that could help.

“Look,” said Ava. “We could buy the materials in a kit online. I think that’s what the other kids will do.”



“But those kits are so expensive,” Josh complained. “I only have \$10.”

Ava had an idea. “What about my skateboard?” she asked.

“It’s not a skateboard race,” said Josh.

“No, silly,” she said. “We could make a car out of materials we already have. This book says we only need a few things. We need something to steer with, wheels, a brake, and seats.”



“My parents still have my little sister’s stroller,” said Josh. “She grew out of it, so we could use that.”

“That’s a great idea!” said Ava.

Josh raced home to get the stroller. When he got to Ava’s, she was taking the wheels off her skateboard with a screwdriver.

“The book says to use bigger wheels on the back than the front,” said Ava. “We can use the stroller wheels for the back.”





“I think we can use the stroller seat, too,” said Josh.

Ava’s mom came outside. “What are you two up to?” she asked.

“We’re finding parts to make a soapbox car,” replied Ava.

“The race is next Saturday,” said Josh.

“That sounds like fun,” said Ava’s mom. “There is a trash cleanup in town today. You might find parts for your car there. And you could help with the cleanup, too.”

“Great idea!” said Josh.

They packed up the skateboard and stroller parts. Ava’s mom helped them put the materials in her car. Everyone piled into the car, and they headed to the cleanup.

Derby Dilemma

Ava and Josh are finally old enough to be in their town's soapbox race. They decide to make their car out of old parts. All they need is a little help from their friends—and a little creative thinking.

Reading Levels

Guided Reading: O

DRA Level: 30

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