

Teaming Up to Help

xylophone—a musical instrument with wooden bars of different lengths that are struck to give different notes.

1 Kim took her flute and books from her locker and started toward the door. It had been a long, busy day. As she passed the gym, she noticed her friends reading a poster.

2 “Come on over, Kim!” called Lou. Shari, Juan, and Lou were reading about an activity on Saturday. “We are cleaning up the area around Perry Park,” Lou said. “There’ll be food and prizes. How about joining our team, Kim?”

3 “Well, um-maybe. I mean no,” Kim answered. “Umm, I, ah, don’t think I can. I have my flute lesson on Saturday.”

4 Shari looked puzzled. “It’s to help the ‘Keep Our City Clean project,” she said. “The team that fills the most trash bags will win movie tickets.”

5 “I’ll see you guys later.” Kim quickly headed down the hall and out the door. She did not enjoy yard work and the thought of cleaning a park was not pleasant.

6 Saturday found Lou, Juan, and Shari without a fourth team member but they were still determined to win those tickets. When they arrived at the park, Lou gave large garbage bags to each one. Before long, fifteen students were stuffing leaves, fallen branches and paper in the bags.

7 As Kim walked home from her flute lesson, she heard the faint sounds of laughter coming from the park. Kim hesitated, feeling selfish for not joining her friends. They were so cheerful!

8 When she arrived home, Kim decided to practice her flute but it was difficult to concentrate on her music. Her thoughts wandered as she compared the positive attitude of her friends with her own. She gently placed her flute in its case.

9 Her friends smiled at each other when they observed Kim coming to the park. “Over here!” called Shari. Kim joined them and listened as they discussed who would win the prize.

10 By noon, the park was clean and a picnic was prepared. The teens were glad to rest. Lou took out his marimba, an African-style xylophone, and a drum. Juan joined in with his guitar. Kim listened for a moment, and then disappeared as quickly and quietly as she had arrived. Suddenly the sweet sound of flute music filled the air. Kim paused and they all joined in.

11 When the food was ready, the hungry teens ate like there was no tomorrow! The winners of the movie tickets would soon be announced. Kim wasn’t thinking about the prize. She had her reward. Being part of a team and the warm feeling inside for a job well done was all the prize she needed.