

Story 7

Alex is absolute poetry in motion on his skateboard. Like greased lightning, he defies gravity and flips in midair. When his feet leave his board, the board magically reconnects like a well-trained yo-yo.

Alex was a natural-born skater from the beginning. He acquired his first skateboard on his sixth birthday. Almost instantly, he turned that board into a magic carpet. His dad bent over backward to help Alex find good places to develop and practice and learn new tricks. Soon Alex was catching air with the best of the skaters practically twice his age.

It wasn't all a piece of cake for Alex, though. He broke his arm once and had several leg and ankle injuries. Nevertheless, Alex never threw in the towel. He challenged himself to do even trickier moves. "You're a glutton for punishment," his mom said, but Alex knew she was proud of him. His parents insisted that he wear protective gear whenever he skated, and that made sense to him. He wasn't about to risk losing his favorite hobby.

Alex aced the city contest last week. If he sticks to his guns, he'll be the state champion this year.

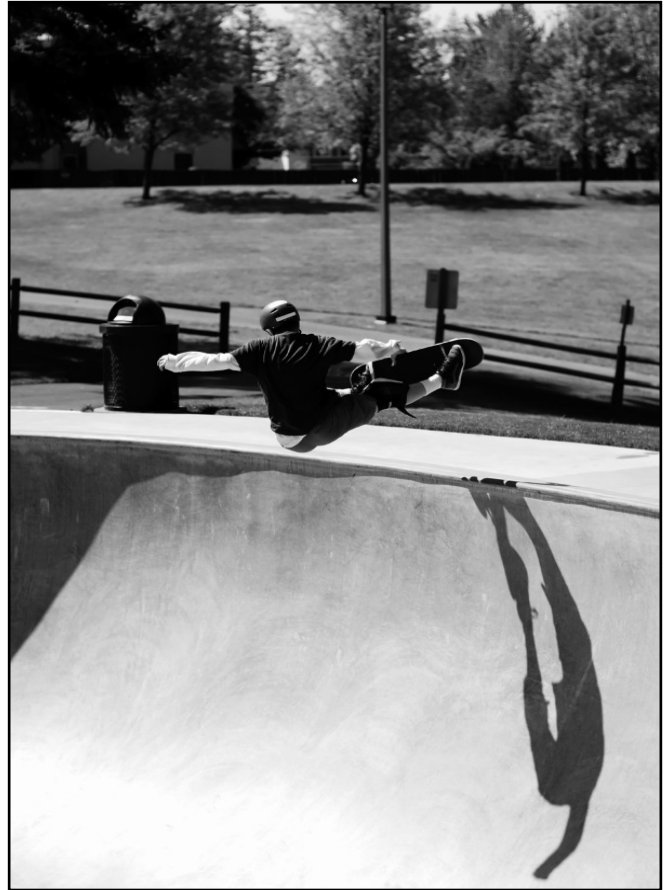


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Main Idea and Details

1. What is the main idea of this story?
 - a. Alex wants to learn to ride his skateboard.
 - b. Alex likes to skateboard.
 - c. Alex is an expert skateboard rider.
2. What kind of injuries has Alex had from skateboarding?
 - a. leg, knee, and arm injuries
 - b. leg, ankle, and arm injuries
 - c. head, leg, and arm injuries
3. How does Alex try to prevent getting injured on his skateboard?
 - a. He wears equipment to protect his body.
 - b. He only skates when a trainer can guard him.
 - c. both *a* and *b*

Vocabulary and Semantics

4. What does it mean to **defy gravity**?
 - a. to get angry at gravity
 - b. to ignore gravity
 - c. to overcome gravity
5. What is a **magic carpet**?
 - a. a special rug that helps to train skateboarders
 - b. an imaginary rug that flies through the air
 - c. a rug that never needs cleaning and can skate
6. **Alex aced the city contest last week.** What does that mean?
 - a. He skipped the contest.
 - b. He signed up for the contest.
 - c. He performed extremely well in the contest.

Figurative Language

7. Which expression doesn't mean the same thing as **bend over backward**?
 - a. go the extra mile
 - b. bend the rules
 - c. do everything possible

8. What does it mean to be **poetry in motion**?
 - a. to be emotionally moving
 - b. to be beautifully graceful
 - c. both *a* and *b*

9. Which statement about Alex is not true?
 - a. He was determined to skate even better.
 - b. He was reckless about skateboarding.
 - c. He had good body coordination.

10. Why did Alex want to stick to his guns?
 - a. to be a better shooter
 - b. to win the state championship for shooting
 - c. so no one would take his guns from him
 - d. none of the above

Asking Questions

Ask a question about skateboard safety.

Writing and Discussion Prompt

Describe the skills or accomplishments of an athlete you admire. Explain why this person has impressed you.