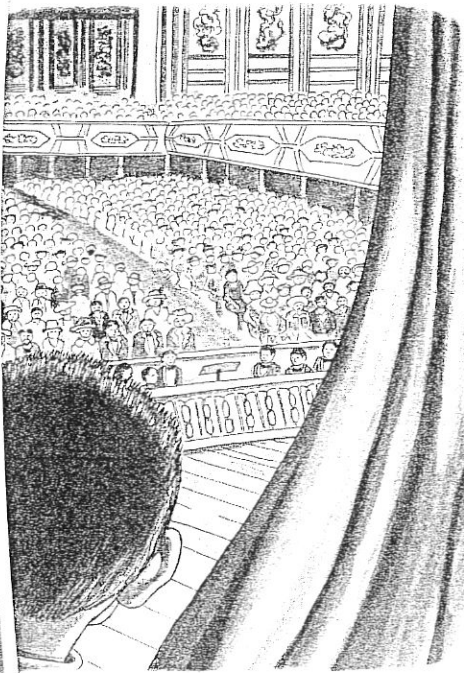


## Jimmy's Solo

I'm standing backstage like I always do, in the fanciest theater I've ever seen. It was just built last year, in 1894, and it is grand! I look out at the marble balconies and the brass rails and the painted ceilings, and my mouth feels so dry I can't swallow.

I'm Jimmy Rose, and I'm a dancer. The Dancing Roses have been performing since before I was a baby. First, it was just Mom and Dad. Then, Brendan, Annie, and Mary came along. Finally, I was born. Now we're the Six Dancing Roses. Dad says we're the finest family dance act in vaudeville. And since vaudeville is the most popular kind of entertainment there is, that's saying something!



A vaudeville show has several acts. Why, just on tonight's bill, there's a strong man who carries six people all stacked up on his shoulders. There's a lady who sings opera, and a pair of comics, and a man and his wife who have a dog act. I could watch those dogs do their tricks all night long!

That won't happen tonight. We're going on next, and all I can think about are the steps of my routine. Dad just gave me this solo last night. He said, "You know, Jimmy, I think you're ready for the big time! Let's celebrate being in this fancy theater." I've been practicing every spare minute since then, and I'm glad Dad has faith in me! But my palms are sweating so badly, I have to wipe my hands.

Suddenly I hear the master of ceremonies announcing us, and we are dancing our way onto the stage. The lights seem brighter than usual, and I wonder if someone put some lead in my shoes—you know, as a joke—because my feet feel so heavy. I must be keeping up though, because when I don't, Dad gives me a certain look. He's not giving me that look tonight.

I hear the cue for my solo and dance out to the front of the stage. Suddenly, I forget everything except the way the music feels. I wish it would go on forever! Dad is smiling broadly, and the audience starts to cheer. And the best part is, I get to do it again tomorrow!

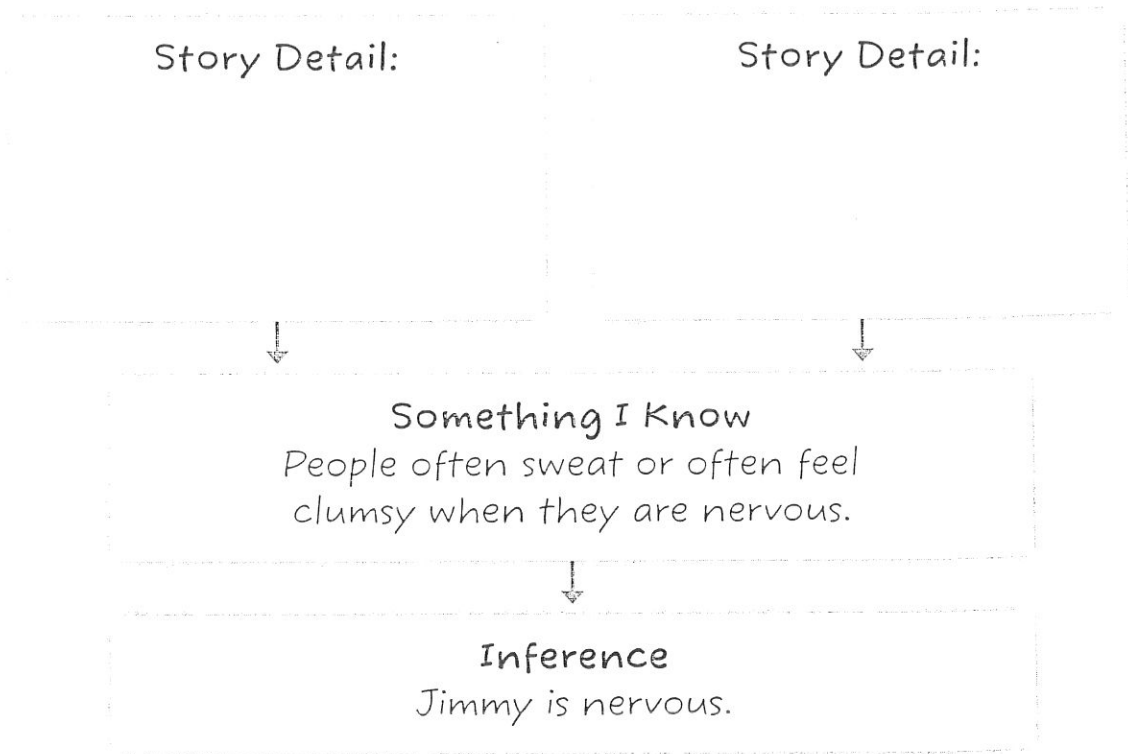
**How do you think Jimmy feels about his solo?**

## Multiple-Choice Questions

- 1 Based on the story, you can infer that Jimmy is
- (A) sad and confused.
  - (B) happy but angry.
  - (C) tired and annoyed.
  - (D) nervous but eager.
- 2 Which of the choices does *not* describe Jimmy's reaction to the fancy theater?
- (A) impressed
  - (B) admiring
  - (C) bored
  - (D) excited
- 3 What can you infer about how Dad feels about Jimmy?
- (A) uncertain
  - (B) disappointed
  - (C) frustrated
  - (D) proud
- 4 In the fifth paragraph, why does Jimmy feel as though someone has put lead in his shoes?
- (A) He is dancing with more energy than usual.
  - (B) He is coming down with a cold and fever.
  - (C) He feels awkward and off the beat.
  - (D) He feels gloomy and sorrowful.
- 5 In the last paragraph, when Jimmy says he forgets everything except the way the music feels, he means
- (A) he can't remember his dance steps.
  - (B) he makes up new dance steps.
  - (C) he focuses only on his dance and nothing else.
  - (D) he knows Dad wants him to keep the beat.

# Short-Response Questions

6 Complete the diagram with two details that support the inference.



7 How do you think Jimmy feels about the other vaudeville acts?

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8 Which of the acts do you think is Jimmy's favorite, and why?

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9 What can you infer about Jimmy's feelings toward his father?

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10 Make an inference about how Jimmy feels about being a dancer. Write one detail from the story to support your answer.

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# Writing Connection: Prepositional Phrases

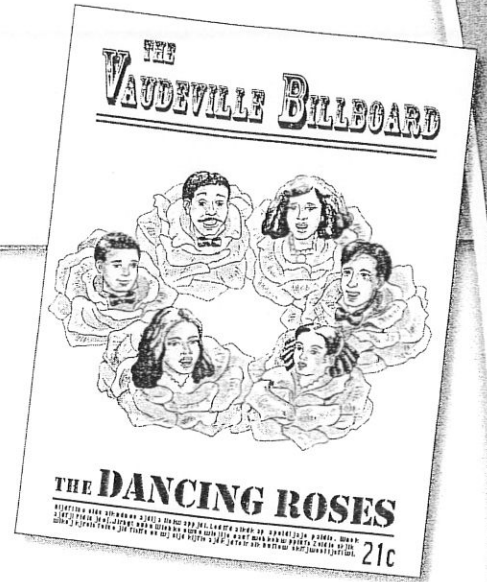
**Prepositions** link nouns, pronouns, or groups of words in a sentence. They show when, where, or how two things are connected. Some examples include **before, after, during, to, into, as, from, by, on, off, over, under, against, through, of, beside, and because of**.

The noun or pronoun that follows a preposition is called its **object**. A **prepositional phrase** is made up of a preposition plus its object. In these examples, the preposition is underlined once. The object is underlined twice.

**The dancer leaped high into the air.**

**The dogs jumped through the hoop.**

**The audience clapped loudly for the dancers.**



1. Circle the prepositional phrases in the following sentences.

The acrobats stood on the Strong Man's shoulders.

They jumped off his back as the audience cheered.

Their applause echoed through the theater.

Because of his strength, the Strong Man barely noticed the strain.

He waved to the crowd.

2. Complete the sentence by choosing the correct preposition.

Our act starts \_\_\_\_\_ the dog act. **after, because of**

We waited patiently \_\_\_\_\_ their encore. **against, during**

I could not hear anything \_\_\_\_\_ the cheers. **over, under**

\_\_\_\_\_ their popularity, they were a hard act to follow! **Because of, Beside**

3. Write two sentences about dancing or performing, using at least one prepositional phrase in each sentence.

a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_