



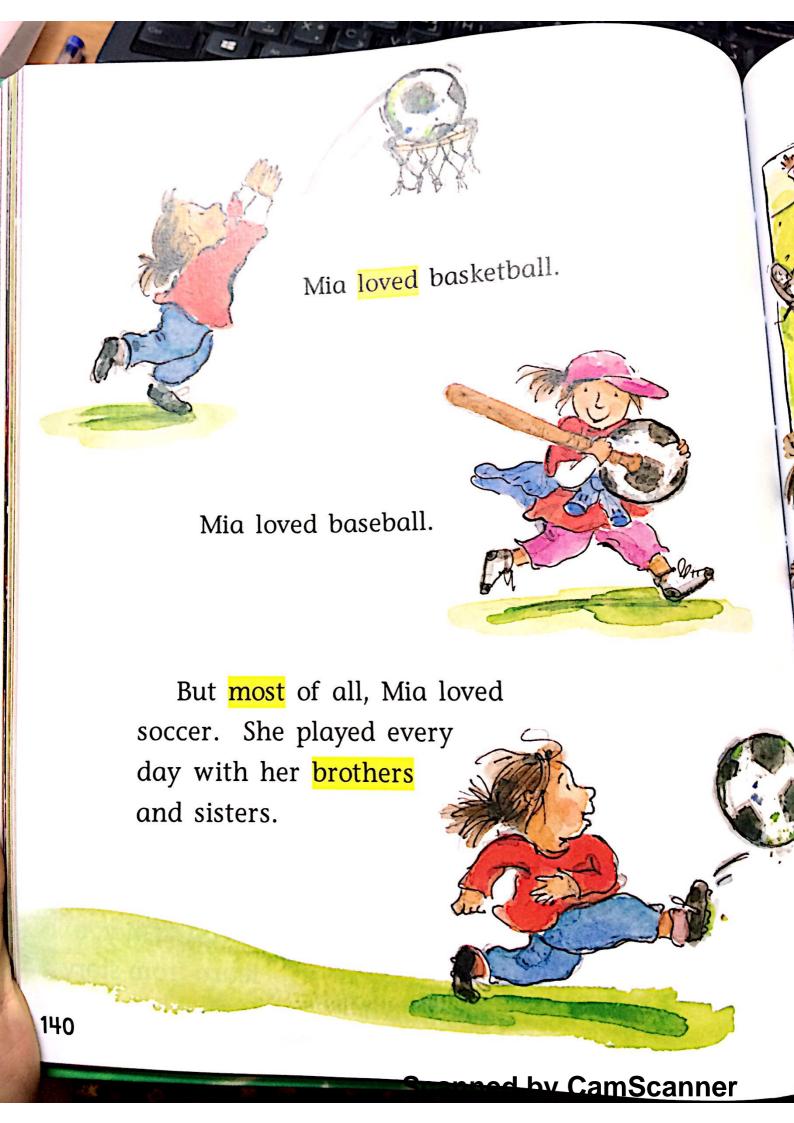


illustrated by Carol Thompson



Essential Question

What can you learn from story characters?





Tap, tap, tap. Her toes kept the ball right where she wanted it. Then, smack! She'd kick the ball straight into the net. Goal!

Everyone on her team would cheer.

But sometimes it didn't work that way. One day, no matter how hard she tried, Mia couldn't score a goal.



The ball sailed to the left of the net.



Or to the right.



Or her sister Lovdy, the goalie, saved the ball with her hands.

No goal.

No cheering.

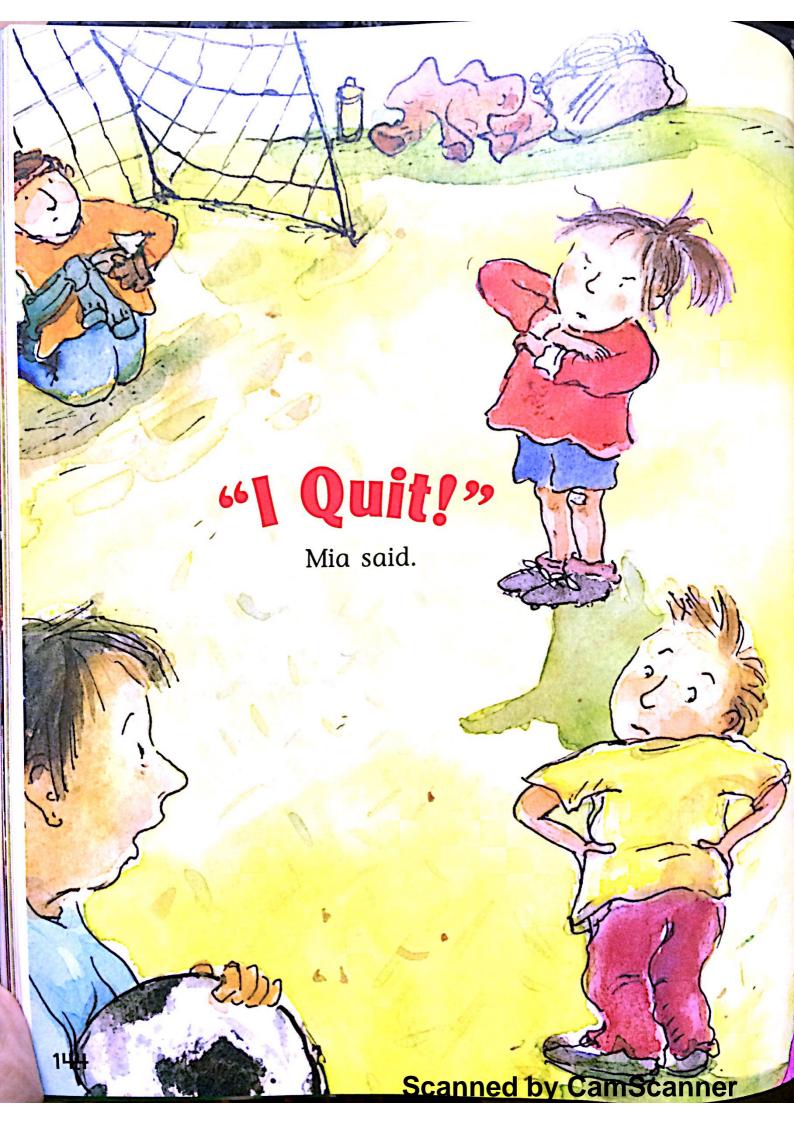
"Too bad, Mia," her brother Garrett said. "Better luck next time!"

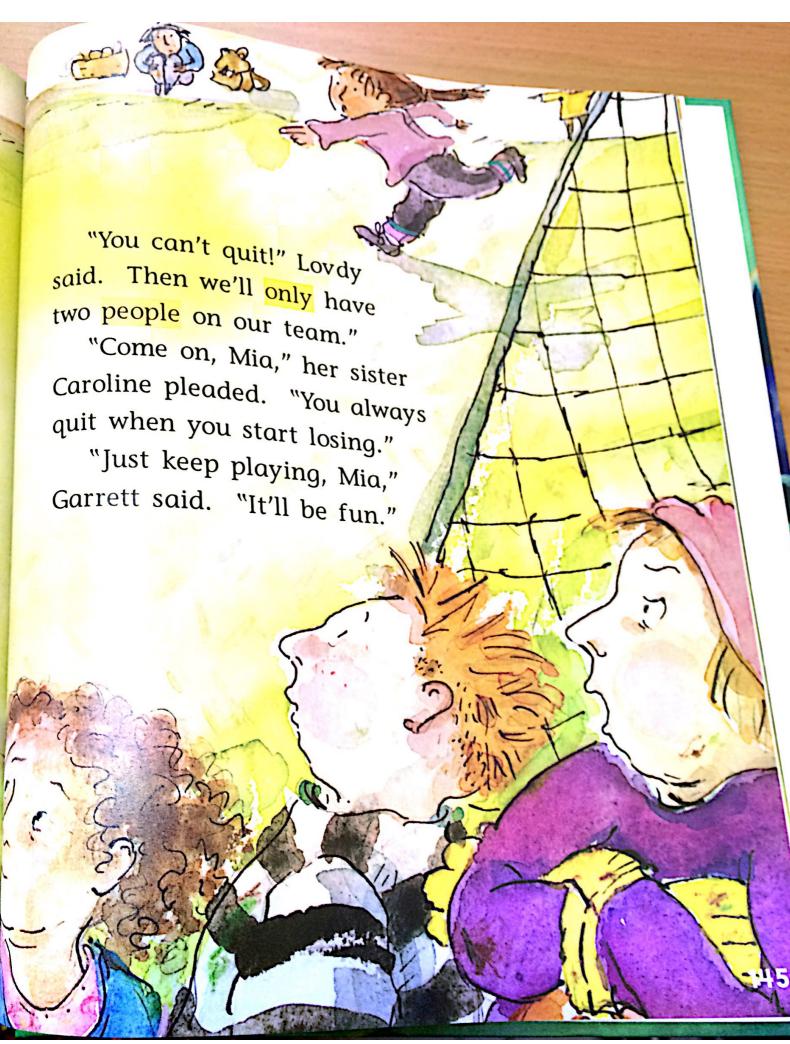




But Mia didn't want better luck next time. She wanted better luck now.







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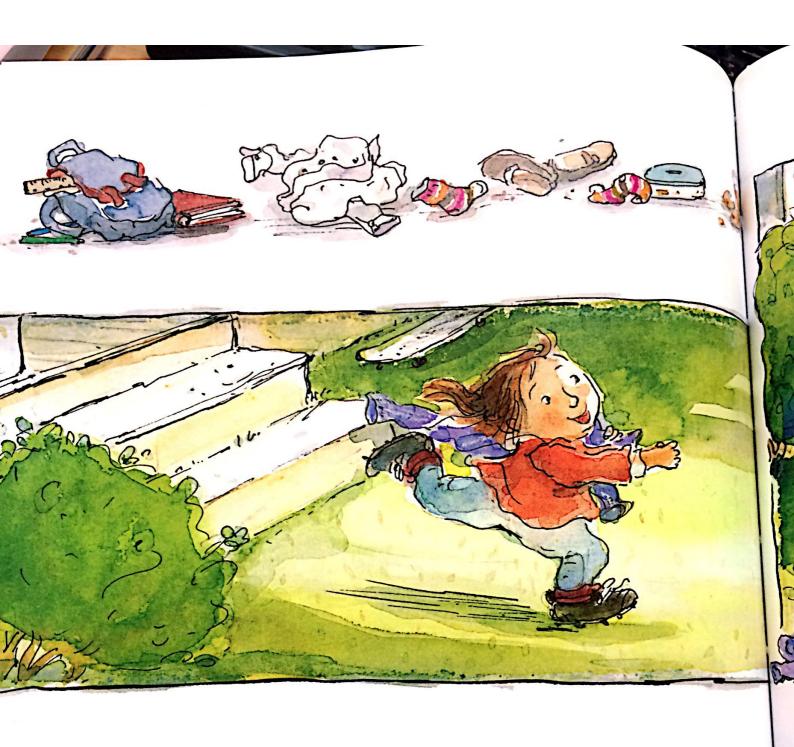


But losing wasn't fun. Mia stomped back to the house.





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The next day, Mia ran outside, ready to play soccer. When she got there, the game had already started.

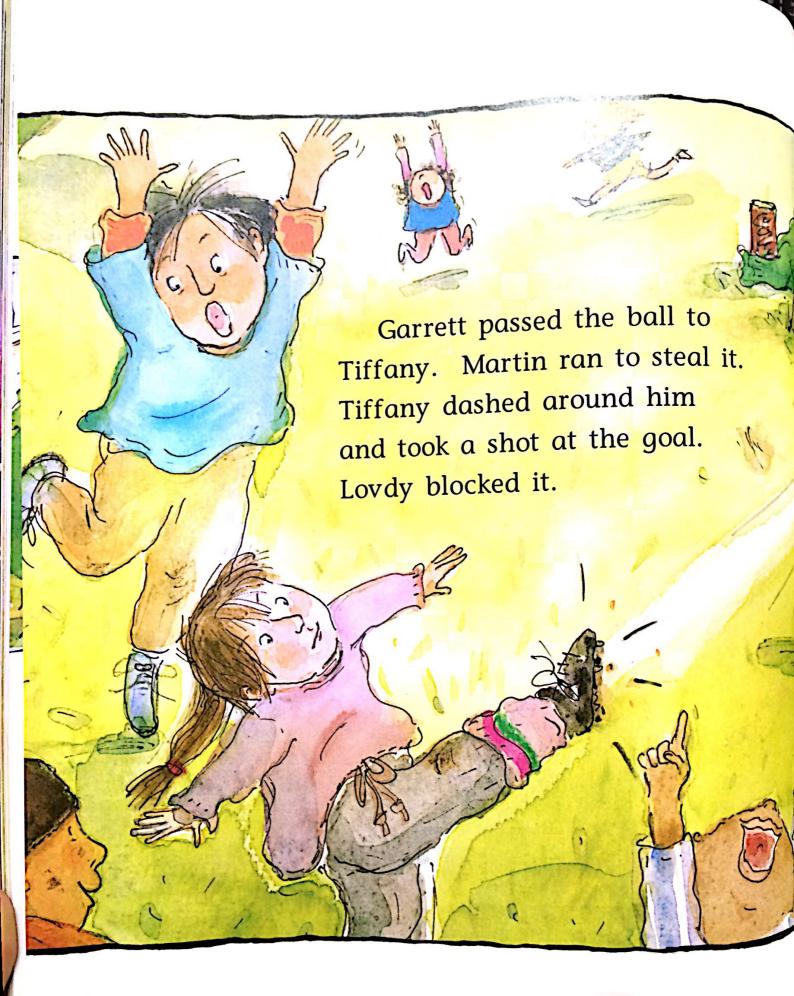
"Hey!" she yelled. "Why didn't you wait for me?"



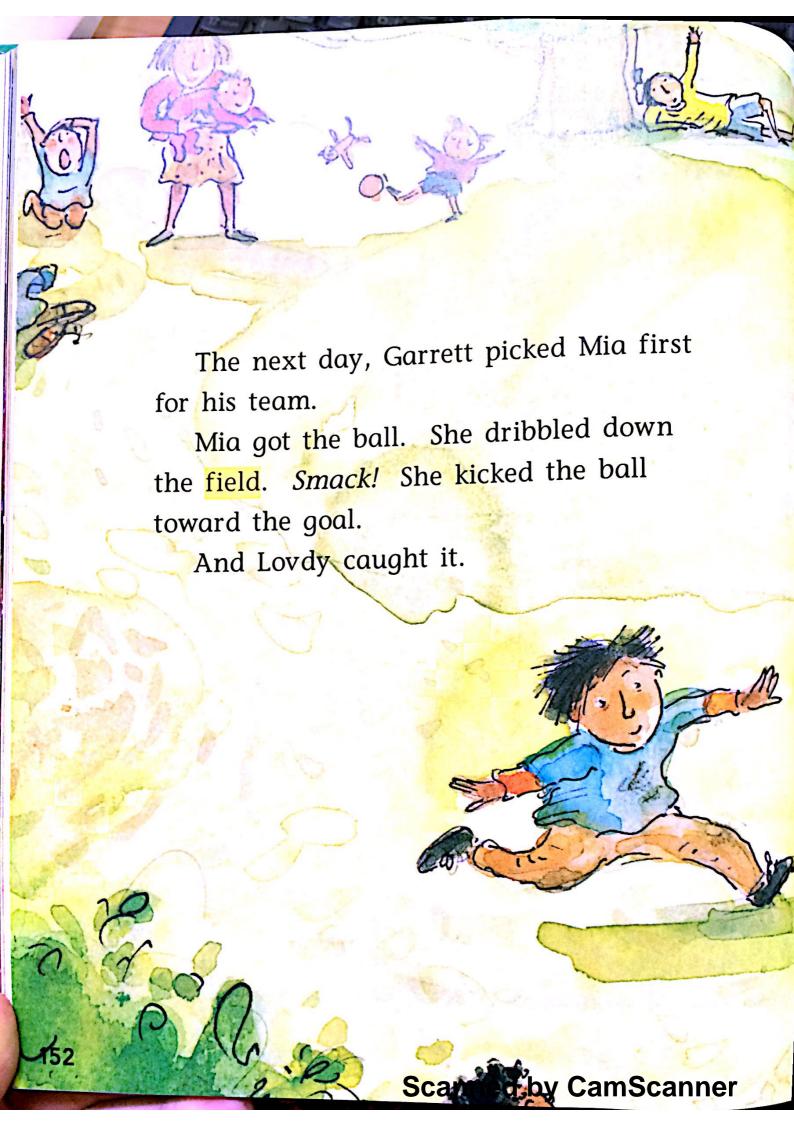
Garrett stopped playing.

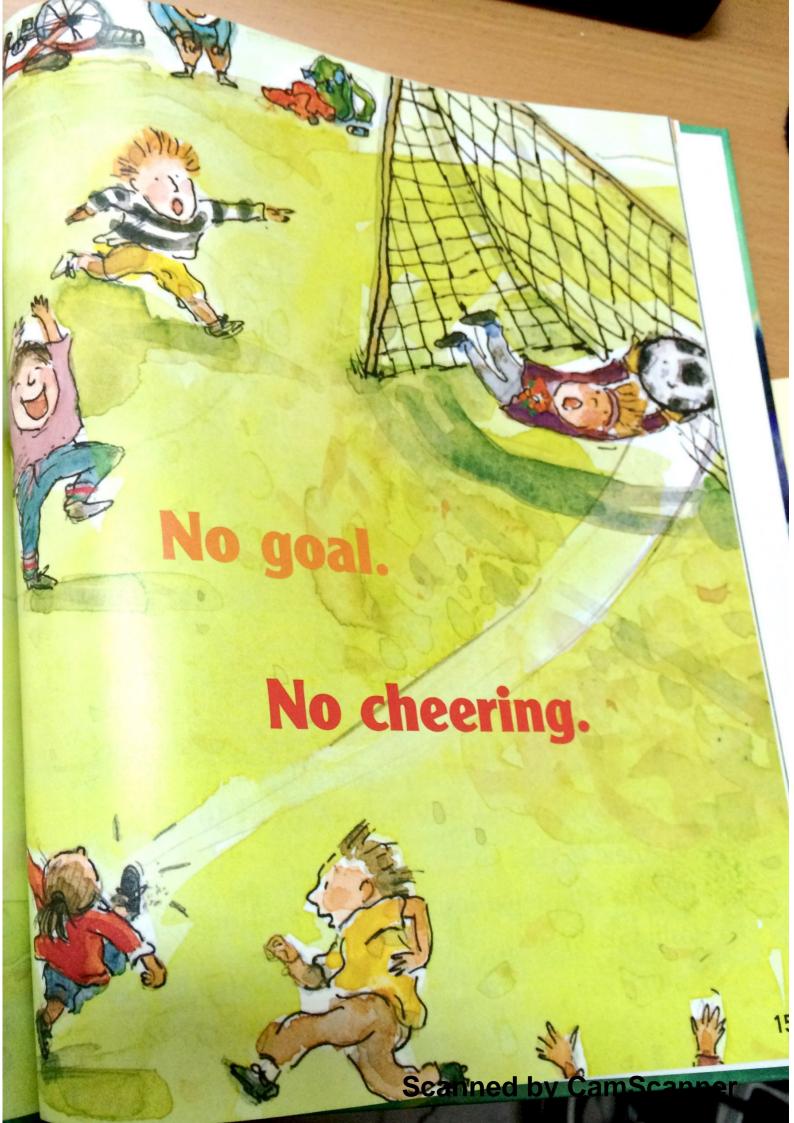
"Sorry, Mia," he said. "But quitters can't play on my team."

"Yeah," said Lovdy. "If you can't learn to lose, you can't play."











"Too bad, Mia," Garrett said. "Better luck next time."

Mia felt tears in her eyes.

"She's going to quit," whispered Lovdy.
"I knew it."

Mia still hated losing. But she didn't hate losing as much as she loved soccer.

"Ready to play?" asked Garrett.

Garrett grinned at her. He passed her

Mia ran down the field. Tap, tap, tap with her toes. The ball stayed right with her, like a friend. She got ready to kick it into the goal.

