

An Unexpected Test

By Kelly Hunsaker

(Based on a true story)

Dare to do right! Dare to be true! (Children's Songbook, 158).

It was only the first day of school, and already the whole fifth grade was talking about the dance that would be held after school later in the year.

Morgan took another bite of her peanut butter and honey sandwich as she listened to her best friend, Leisel, chatter away.

"Did you hear that Bryson already asked Kayla to go to the dance with him?" Leisel asked, placing her tray on the table next to Morgan's lunch bag. "I heard that Caden is going to ask you."

Morgan braced herself for Caden's question.

"Really?" Morgan asked, surprised. She remembered being taught not to date until she was 16. Would this count as a date? It sort of sounded like it from the way everyone was talking.

The more she thought about it, the more Morgan's stomach began to feel uncomfortable. She knew something wasn't quite right.

"I don't think I'm going to go to the dance," she said.

"Why? I think it will be fun," Leisel said. When Morgan





didn't say anything, Leisel shrugged and kept talking. "Besides, you've been friends with Caden forever. What if you hurt his feelings and he doesn't want to be your friend anymore?"

Morgan quietly swallowed her last bite of her sandwich.

"There's Kayla," Leisel said, interrupting Morgan's thoughts and pointing to the field. "Let's go play soccer with her."

Before she could answer, Morgan heard someone call her name. She turned around. Caden was running toward her!

"Hi, Morgan. I want to ask you something," Caden said. He took a deep breath. Morgan braced herself. She knew what was coming next.

"Will you go to the dance with me?"

Morgan's stomach did a flip-flop. She glanced over her shoulder. Her friends were watching her and whispering and giggling. If she said no to Caden, would they think she was weird? Would Caden be sad?

For a moment, Morgan thought about saying yes. She could probably find a way to go if she really wanted to. But the uncomfortable feeling came back.

Now it was her turn to take a deep breath.

"I'm going to wait until I'm older to date."

Caden's eyebrows shot upward. "It doesn't have to be a real date," he said. "We can just go as friends."

Morgan slowly shook her head. She could tell by the way

she felt that it was not the right choice.

"The dance is too much like a date," Morgan said. "I'm sorry."

Caden looked at his feet. His voice was quiet as he turned to leave. "All right. I guess I understand."

Morgan didn't want Caden to be sad. She quickly started talking again before he had the chance to walk away.

"Caden, I want to be friends with you. We can still do fun things together."

Caden looked up. "Really?"

"Sure! Like right now. Why don't we play some soccer?" Morgan asked, flashing him a grin. "C'mon, they're waiting!"

As she and Caden ran toward the game, Morgan felt the knot in her stomach disappear. She knew she had made the right choice.

Morgan couldn't wait to tell her family that there had been a test on the very first day of school—and that she had passed it with flying colors. ♦

"Begin to prepare for a temple marriage. Proper dating is a part of that preparation. . . . Do not date until you are sixteen years old."³

President Thomas S. Monson

