

The Reading Race

By Signe Leatham
(Based on a true story)

Ye should do that which is honest (2 Corinthians 13:7).

April got to class just in time to see Miss Edwards hang the last car on the bulletin board.

“Good morning, April,” Miss Edwards said. “Are you ready for our next reading race?”

“Yes! I already have books picked out,” April said.

Reading races were one of April’s favorite things about third grade. In the last race, her paper frog had hopped to second place. This time she hoped her car would cross the finish line first.

That evening, April was reading when her older sister Annie sat down by her. “Want to play a game?” Annie asked.

“No, thanks,” April said. “I need to finish this chapter for the reading race.”

After a while, April took her reading record to

Annie. “Will you sign me off for 10 pages?” she asked.

“Sure,” Annie said. “That’s a good start.”

The next day, April was surprised to see that more than half the class was ahead of her in the race. As she sat down at her desk, she noticed a thin book on Craig’s desk.

“Are you reading that for the race?” she asked.

“Yep. I’m in eighth place now,” Craig said.

April sighed. “I’ll never catch up when I’m reading books with so many more words on a page,” she thought.

“Wow, 15 pages!” Annie said as she signed April’s reading record that night. “Good job, Sis.”

But April didn’t feel very good. She had only read 11 pages. The next day there were still six cars in front of April’s. But she knew that wasn’t the reason her heart felt so heavy in her chest—it was because she was four spaces farther ahead than she should be.

That night she added two extra pages to her sign-off sheet.



“Thirteen tonight,” Annie said. She smiled at April. “Aren’t you almost done with that book?”

April’s eyes filled with tears. “Well, I haven’t really read that many pages. But the other kids are reading easy books with fewer words on a page. I’m still reading more than they are.”

“So you feel OK lying about it?”

April shook her head. She knew it wasn’t right to record extra pages.

Annie smiled kindly and handed April her sheet, unsigned. “I think you know what to do,” she said.

The next morning April pulled her car off the board and moved it backward.

“April?” Miss Edwards asked.

April took a deep breath. “I’m sorry, Miss Edwards. I wasn’t truthful about how many pages I’ve read.”

“I see,” Miss Edwards said.

“I shouldn’t have cheated,” April said.

“April, you’ve given me an idea,” Miss Edwards said.

“I know some students are choosing easier books so they can read more pages. I think we’ll start the race over today, and we’ll move forward by time spent

reading instead of pages. How does that sound?”

April smiled.

“Thank you for being truthful, April,” Miss Edwards said. “You’ve helped me see that what’s important is that you are spending time reading books you enjoy, not *how much* you’re reading.”

April was glad she had told the truth. She felt even better that night when she found a note from Annie on her pillow:

Dear April,

I knew you’d do the right thing. Thanks for being such a great example!

Love, Annie ♦

“I will be honest with Heavenly Father, others, and myself.”

My Gospel Standards



Hey, Mandy, I’ll race you through the Friend.

Ready, set . . . read!