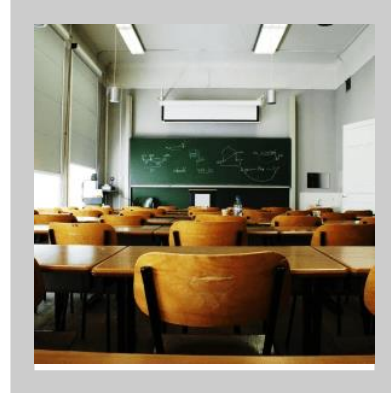


Name _____

Date _____

The Best Seat

Caroline Robbins knew that the first day of school was very, very important. Why? Because that was the day when you chose where you would sit for the entire year. Caroline realized that in some classes this choice would be made for her. The teacher would place students in alphabetical order, meaning she would have to sit in front of Zach Rodgers yet again. Zach had a huge crush on Caroline, and would distract her from her work by passing notes and cracking jokes to impress her. In general, being a Robbins was pretty good, but having to sit in front of Zach was definitely a drawback.



In her other classes, though, Caroline would be sure to choose just the right seat. Caroline liked to think of herself as one of the cool kids, but she also did well in school and liked learning. So, Caroline wanted to sit close to the cool kids, but not too close, or she would be more interested in talking than paying attention. She also knew that it was good to be friends with the smart kids, because they could help Caroline with her schoolwork. However, she didn't want to sit too close to the smart kids. Unfortunately, at Caroline's school, the smart kids and the cool kids were not the same kids.

Caroline had all of this in mind as she walked through the school's front door on the first day. She knew where her first class was, but she didn't want to be the first one there. If you were the first one there, you didn't have any control at all! Other people got to choose how close they sat to you, not the other way around. This simply would not do. So, she took her time walking down the hall, taking a minute to talk to her friend Alma, whom she hadn't seen for the entire summer.

At last she walked through the door of her first class, and there it was, the perfect seat! Two seats away from Jasmine, the smartest girl in her entire grade, and just in front of Marc, who was very cool and totally cute. Caroline quickly imagined all of the cool things that she could do to the back of her hair to make Marc fall in love with her. After all, he would be staring at it for nine whole months! There was a new guy to the left, which could be a risk, but how bad could a new guy be? So Caroline started toward the seat, being careful not to rush, when Marc's best friend Jason sat down in *her* chair! Sure, there were other seats, but no other perfect ones. Saddened but not discouraged, Caroline sat down in the second-best seat and immediately started planning for lunchtime, when she was determined to get the best seat in the cafeteria.