

Contents

Term 4 (Weeks 1–5)

Story 1

Greg's goal of gratitude 2



Story 2

Flying dreams 13



Story 3

We are the cat's pyjamas 23



Greg's goal of gratitude

Pre-reading questions

1. Look at the title of the story. What do you think it means to have a goal?
2. Gratitude is a feeling that makes us feel good. What are some other feelings that make us feel good?
3. What are some feelings that make us feel bad?

Tali was doing a show-and-tell about her trip to the Kruger National Park.

“I saw the famous Big Five animals in real life!” she told the class with glee.

She had photos of all five animals: the enormous elephant, the majestic lion, the bold rhino, the clever leopard and the angry buffalo. “Wow! Incredible!” The children were thrilled.



But Greg wasn't excited, nor was he thrilled. Feelings in him began to build. Of unpleasant unhappiness and bitter envy. And in his heart of hearts, he cried, “Why not me?”

“Can you believe she saw a real leopard?” Jedrick asked at break time. “They are my favourite animals! How awesome is that?”

“It’s not awesome; it’s awful,” grumbled Greg. “Tali’s such a show-off.”

“It was show-and-tell, Greg,” said Kudzai.

Greg rolled his eyes. “It made us feel rotten that we didn’t go to the Kruger National Park for the holidays.”

“No, Greg,” said Kudzai. “It made us feel great that Tali could go to such a wonderful place.”



Think about how you spend your school holidays. What special things do you do when you are on holiday?

In the final game of the school soccer tournament, the Red team had five points and the Green team had four. There were only three minutes left.



“Go, Red team!” half the crowd shouted.

“You’ve got this, Green team!” shouted the other half.

The Green team skilfully kicked the ball from player to player. Jedrick kicked to Greg.

Greg gave it a forceful kick. This sent the ball flying across the field and straight past the goalkeeper.

“GOAL!” screamed the crowd.

Now the score was 5-all. There was only one minute left in the game.

Thato from the Green team kicked the ball into the air and headed it into goal.

“Wow, what a goal!” cried the coach, before he blew the final whistle.

The Green team were the champions! Thato got an award for scoring the best goal. The Red team shook hands with the Green team.



But Greg wasn't excited, nor was he thrilled.

Feelings in him began to build.

Of unpleasant unhappiness and bitter envy.

And in his heart of hearts, he cried, “Why not me?”



If you were on the Green team, what would you say to Greg at the end of the match?



It was Adnan's birthday party. Adnan opened his presents.

Oh! He got many wonderful gifts.

He opened the gift from his grandpa. "The Technic Monster Truck! This is fantastic!" he yelled.



But Greg wasn't excited, nor was he thrilled.

Feelings in him began to build.

Of unpleasant unhappiness and bitter envy.

And in his heart of hearts, he cried, "Why not me?"



Pretend that you are at Adnan's party. How would you feel when Adnan opened his presents?

On the way home, Mom looked at Greg.
“What’s the matter?” she asked him.

Greg looked down and asked, “Why don’t I have awesome holidays to see the Big Five? Why can’t I play soccer as well as Thato? Why didn’t you get me the Technic Monster Truck for my birthday? And why do I sometimes feel these ugly feelings about others?” He burst into tears.



Mom stopped the car near a park.
“Let’s take a walk,” she said gently.



“What ugly feelings were you talking about?” his mom asked, as they sat down on a park bench.

“When something good happens to my friends, I feel unhappy,” said Greg.

“Shouldn’t I be happy for them, Mom?”

“You should be happy for them, Greg,” said Mom, “but we all get those ugly feelings sometimes.”

She bent down and plucked a white flower from a nearby flowerbed. “How many petals does this flower have?” she asked.

Greg counted out loud: “1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 petals.”



“Now pluck each petal out one by one, and for every petal you pluck out, tell me something about yourself that makes you happy.”

“Let me help you start. Where did you go last weekend?”

“The trampoline park!” he answered. “That was fun, and now I can somersault on the large trampoline!”

“Great! Now pluck out another petal,” said Mom.

Mom continued, “You didn’t get a prize for soccer, but what made you happy?”

“I got to play my favourite sport,” Greg answered.

“Exactly. Now pluck out another petal,” said Mom. “You didn’t get the Monster Truck, but what can you be happy about?”



“Adnan’s coming for a play date. He promised he would bring the truck for us to play with.” Greg thought of more things.

“When I am sad or feel lonely, Jedrick and Kudzai always make me smile again.”

Greg smiled. “I wish I could remember all these things when the feelings of envy creep into my head.”

She said, “Well, make it a goal to be happy when good things happen to people. Don’t compare your life with anyone else’s life. Goals aren’t only about physical things, like getting a bicycle. Your goal can be about becoming a better person. You can be kind and friendly.”

“Okay,” said Greg. “Then my goal is to be happy with what I have. I want to be happy when good things happen to people and I want to stop comparing myself to others.”

“Wonderful!” replied Mom.

“But how will I know when I have reached my goal?” asked Greg.

“When you are able to replace those ugly feelings with gratitude,” answered Mom.



Back at home, Mom gave Greg a blank book. She had written ‘Greg’s Book of Gratitude and Goals’ on the cover.

“Writing in this book will help you focus on the important things,” she said.

Greg wrote in the book every day. He started noticing a difference in his feelings. He was happier. As he achieved his goals, he became more confident.

Greg had achieved the goal of gratitude!

Greg learnt an important lesson that day
To not allow envy to get in the way
To be content and grateful – that was his goal
For those are the things that would enrich his soul.

Post-reading questions

1. What is envy?
2. How does Greg’s mom help him to stop being envious of other people?
3. What is an important lesson that we can learn from Greg’s story?