

Story 1 – Pierre the Trackstar

Pierre changed into his track clothes and laced up his shoes. He left the locker room to meet the rest of the kids outside on the field. It was the first day of track tryouts. The coach walked up and greeted the athletes.

“I see you are all interested in being on Town Creek Middle School’s track team,” the coach stated. “Let’s see if you have what it takes.”

The boys began to complete the tryout drills. The coach wanted to see who could run the farthest, who could run the fastest, and who could run the longest. Pierre liked to run and he knew he was talented, but he didn’t know how well the other boys ran. Would he be good enough to make the team?

Each time it was Pierre’s turn to run, he began shaking and it was hard to breathe. He was so nervous! The coach realized Pierre was panicking and pulled him aside. He put his hand on his shoulder and spoke calmly to Pierre.

“Pierre, I’ve seen your running skills. You have no reason to be nervous! Take a deep breath and join this group. You’ve got this! I know you can do it,” he said.

Taking a deep breath, Pierre lined up with the other boys. As soon as the whistle blew, he took off running. His arms and legs moved faster than they ever had before. He controlled his breathing and stayed focused on the finish line. Sweat dripped down his forehead as he used every muscle in his body to win the race. Pierre knew he had won first place.

Inside, Pierre was grinning from ear to ear. He laughed at himself as he remembered how he felt earlier. He had successfully turned his first day jitters into the fuel that helped him win the race and make the team.

Story 2 – Francesca the Swimmer

Francesca was the best swimmer on the team. She swam the fastest. She swam long distances. She was chosen as the captain for this season. All the other girls wanted to be like Francesca.

The biggest race of the season was this Friday. The whole school was excited. The team would race against Leeward Middle, the school's rival team. Every year the schools compete against each other. The winner gets a special trophy.

Francesca was always nervous in the days before the big race. She had a hard time eating. She couldn't sleep. It was hard to focus in class. All she could think about was how she would beat the other team.

On Wednesday, Francesca realized that she really wasn't feeling right. This was more than just being nervous and excited. She visited the school nurse who took her temperature and checked her throat. The nurse called Francesca's mom and sent her home from school early.

"She needs to make sure to drink plenty of fluids and get lots of rest, or she may come down with a cold!" Francesca overheard the nurse telling her mom.

Francesca was devastated. She was so upset that she came down with a cold right before her big race. The trophy meant so much for her school. What if she could not compete? Would her team stand a chance?

The next morning, Francesca woke up feeling better. Her mom kept her home from school so she could rest.

On Friday after school, Francesca and her teammates raced at the swim meet. Her team won in every event at the meet. Francesca even set a school record. All of Francesca's rest from being sick had paid off to help her achieve and lead her team to victory.