



1 It all started when Astrid gave me half her ginger beer-making plant. She also gave me a set of instructions.

I found a clean plastic bottle and added the ginger each week. After five weeks I had a big bottle full of murky liquid.

2 "Mmm." Mum took a deep sniff. "Sure you've got enough ginger in it?"

My Dad sniffed it next.

"Doesn't smell sweet enough," he said.

"Dad," I said, "one spoonful of sugar a week to feed the yeast. And I've put it in already."

Dad shrugged.

"Oh stop it, you two," I said. "I'm following the instructions to the letter. Leave MY ginger beer alone."

3 Finally the big bottling day arrived. Five, big glass bottles, all scrubbed out, stood on the back porch. The mixture looked a good rich dark-brown. I checked the instruction sheet again.

It read: "Pour equal amounts into each bottle." Done. "Fill up the bottles with water, seal well and wait for two weeks before drinking."

I screwed the last cap on and put the bottles up on the shelf at the back of the porch.

4 I almost forgot about those five, big bottles of ginger beer. That was, until last Friday night...

Dad was reading the paper.

"More crime every day," he grumbled.

Bang!

Dad snapped the newspaper away from his face. "What was that?" he asked, frowning.

5 "It came from out the back," said my mother uneasily. "It sounded like a shot to me."

Bang! This shot was followed by the unmistakable sound of breaking glass.

"Everyone on the floor," yelled Dad. "They're trying to break in!"

Suddenly it hit me. I knew what those

shots were.

6 "Dad," I said urgently. "Remember the ginger beer?"

Dad's face swung back to look at me.

"Where did you put the bottles?" he asked.

Bang!

In the pause that followed, we could hear another round of tinkling glass.

"The back porch, wasn't it?" he asked.

I nodded. Scrambling to our feet, we all caught a sickly-sweet whiff in the air. As if it had been raining ginger beer.

7 Well, that's just about what the back porch looked like. Three of the five bottles had exploded. The window, the gumboots, the pots of paint and the basket of clean washing were all drenched. Ginger beer was even dripping from the ceiling. And glass! The place was twinkling as if it was Christmas.

8 "Two more bottles to go," said Dad. "Keep your heads down," he ordered. "Could go off any time, and that glass makes them like bombs."

"But why are the bottles exploding?" I asked from the floor. "I followed the instructions. No one messed with my ginger beer plant, did they?"

"Well," said Mum slowly. "I did add a little more ginger every few days."

"A little more?" said Dad. "I added two spoons of sugar every day, just to make sure it was strong enough."

9 "Every day?" I shouted. "You ruined my ginger beer!" I was almost in tears.

"Sorry, Blossom," said Dad. "We were only trying to help. We can try again."

I thought of the dripping back porch, and I smelt the full force of triple-strength ginger beer.

"No way," I said. "It's easier to buy it from Astrid."



## Questions

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|--|--|
| 1 Who gave her the ginger beer plant?<br>a Mum<br>b Dad<br>c Astrid                                  | 4 Who messed up the ginger beer?<br>a Mum<br>b Dad<br>c both Mum and Dad   |
| 2 How many bottles was she going to make?<br>a three<br>b four<br>c five                             | 5 Who said to "fill up the bottles with water"?<br>a Astrid<br>b Mum<br>c Dad  |
| 3 Why did it say to add sugar?<br>a to make it sweet<br>b to feed the yeast<br>c to make it go brown | 6 Why did Dad say "they're trying to break in"?<br>a He thought the bottles were breaking the window.<br>b The newspaper made him think that criminals were breaking in.<br>c He was making a joke to stop everyone from being scared. |

## Vocabulary

Match the words from the text to the clues.

The brackets show the text sections ( ).

bombs murky drenched  
newspaper unmistakable

- 7 Dark and gloomy (1)  
8 An item that reports news (4)  
9 Something that is clear and obvious (5)  
10 These can explode (8)  
11 To be very wet (7)

## Grammar

Find a **common noun** (person, place or thing) in these sentences from the text.

- 12 Please sit on the floor!  
13 Where are the bottles?  
14 It's easier to buy it from my friend.  
15 He was reading the paper

## Back To The Text...

- 16 In which part of the library would you find this text?  
a fiction  
b non-fiction
- 17 The illustration on the front of the card shows  
a her making the ginger beer.  
b her checking the damage.

- 18 Prediction: What is likely to happen in the future?  
a They won't add extra sugar next time.  
b They will buy ginger beer when they need it.

## Sequencing

Look back through the card to find what happened first. Choose **a** or **b**.

- 19 a Dad said, "It didn't smell sweet enough."  
b Mum asked, "Is there enough ginger in it?"
- 20 a Dad was reading the paper.  
b They heard the sound of breaking glass.
- 21 a Dad asked, "Where did you put the bottles?"  
b Dad yelled, "Everyone on the floor."

## Think About This

- 22 What could the pictures in the title be trying to suggest?  
a an earthquake  
b a bottle about to burst  
c a bottle containing Alphabet Soup
- 23 Which of the following 'old sayings' best describes this text?  
a Don't Spill the Beans.  
b Many Hands Make Light Work.  
c Too Many Cooks Spoil the Broth.

## Challenge Option

Writing: Write about a time when you tried to help someone else.

