



A Winter Adventure

Christmas resource

Extended Code Unit 34 /er/ (more spellings)

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‘Finally, it’s winter break!’ yelled Shirl as she returned home and hurled herself in the front door. Term had finished and Shirl was ready to enjoy the winter holidays.

‘She’s a whirlwind of energy, that girl,’ laughed Mum as Shirl twirled around the living room.



‘First things first, I’d better do my homework so that the remainder of the break is reserved for fun!’ Shirl said to herself as she opened her planner. She worked hard and finished it that first afternoon.

‘Dinner time!’ yelled Mum, just as Shirl closed her school journal.



The next day, Shirl was up early. She ran next door to see Rich, her neighbour. They loved to play together along with Rich's German Shepherd, Pearl. Her name matched perfectly with her silvery white fur and shiny collar.



They walked over to the other side of the town centre to Winter Wonderland, a big fair with a market and rollercoasters. The rides were great, though it quickly got chilly.

‘I hope it snows this winter. The cold is not as much fun otherwise,’ said Shirl, shivering.

‘In some parts of the world it’s summer. My cousins in Perth are enjoying hot weather right now!’ explained Rich. Shirl wondered whether she would prefer a hot December instead.



Early the next day, Mum burst into Shirl's room. 'There's a surprise for you! Open the curtains,' she urged. Shirl unfurled the blinds and saw heaps of snow covering the turf outside.

'This is going to be the best winter ever!' she cried. Snow was her favourite weather.

'The whirling winter wind brings bitter, biting weather,' sang Shirl. 'That's certainly a tongue twister!'



Rich and Pearl turned up as Shirl pulled on her waterproofs, windbreaker, hat and gloves. 'Time for a winter adventure!' chatted Rich, as Pearl lurked in the doorway, keen to play.

First, they walked to the river. They'd heard that it was completely frozen over.



‘Wow, it must have been ever so cold last night! I’ve never seen the river like this,’ said Shirl as they turned the corner and saw the frozen river.

‘Let’s skate over it!’ replied Rich.

‘We’d better not. Mum says standing on ice can be really dangerous,’ said Shirl. Just as she finished, she saw Pearl tip toe over to the edge of the frozen water.

‘No, Pearl!’ cried Shirl, but Pearl hadn’t heard and stepped onto the ice. The German Shepherd slid all the way to the centre of the river and looked over at the kids with an expression of horror.



As Pearl stood shaking and slipping on the ice, small cracks began to form around her feet. 'If the ice breaks around her, she could drown!' yelled Shirl. 'Pearl!' cried Rich as tears burned his cheeks. Thoughts whirled through Shirl's head, as she considered the best solution.

There was no way that Pearl could manage to hurl herself back to land. She was sliding too much to get a good purchase on the ice with her paws.



‘Aha, perhaps this will work!’ said Shirl, with a determined face. ‘Help me grab that long branch over there.’ The two of them hurried to lift the branch together. Then, they held it over the ice and pushed it firmly towards Pearl. ‘Pearl! Grab on with your teeth and we can pull you over here,’ shouted Rich.

Pearl bit the end of the branch and Shirl and Rich pulled and pulled until the dog was safely back on the river bank.



‘Good girl,’ said Rich, giving Pearl a well-earned scratch on the neck. ‘Great team work, everyone! You’re both so clever.’

‘That could have turned out much worse than it did,’ sighed Shirl. ‘Have you learnt your lesson, Pearl? Never walk on frozen rivers!’ Pearl wagged her tail.

‘Okay, now it’s time to really enjoy the snow after that dangerous adventure. Let’s go and build a snowman and then take turns sledging down the hill. Mum said we can have hot chocolate at home later,’ said Shirl.

‘Sounds like a perfect winter’s afternoon,’ nodded Rich, as the three of them wandered away from the river.