**Year 6 Model Text: Short story**

**The Blackboard**

Harley slammed his door, leant his back against it and slid down to the floor.

It was ridiculous! Nobody else had such a strict mother. Nobody else had such stupid limits imposed upon them. He knew for definite that Colby’s mum let him go on his tablet all night long. And Radley’s mum’s boyfriend always let him play on his 18 certificate games. So why did he have to have these unfair limits on his screen time?

Heavy rain rattled against his window. Even though it was early afternoon, the light was fading dramatically. A long, slow rumble announced the approach of the heart of the storm. At least it made a change from Mum angrily banging furniture around, the way she often did after an argument.

Crash! A bright burst of lightning was followed almost instantly by a deafening crack of thunder. Harley jumped up and poked his head out of his door. Mum was just down the hall, shoving towels into the airing cupboard. “Are you alright, love?” she asked kindly.



“Yes!” he snapped aggressively and pushed past her to the bathroom. Of course he was alright. He was just checking that she was, obviously. But now he had to lock himself away in the loo for a while to prove the point. Which was annoying.

He saw it the moment he returned to his room. There, on the blackboard he hadn’t really used for years, was a message scrawled in chalk: TIDY UP YOUR ROOM. “Pathetic, Mum,” muttered Harley. Crash! Another thunderclap made him jump out of his skin. When his heart had stopped racing, he went off down the corridor again. Trying to hide his relief at spotting Mum in the living room, he grumpily asked for some juice and stomped into the kitchen.

By the time he had returned to his room, the message had changed: IT MIGHT HELP TO PASS THE TIME. That was quick, thought Harley – he’d only been gone a minute or so and he wasn’t aware of Mum having moved. Grudgingly, he decided to follow the suggestion, crawling on his stomach to make a start under his bed. After all, what else was there to do?

What a mess! Odd socks; smelly pants with embarrassing stains; ancient, half-eaten biscuits covered in dust and mould: all this time he’d been sleeping above an Aladdin’s cave of crud. Further back he found a shoe-box that was like a cemetery of faded interests and dragged it out into the open to examine it further.



TRY LOOKING ON TOP OF YOUR WARDROBE was now scrawled on the blackboard. “What the …? How did I not hear her come in?” he muttered to himself as he pulled over his chair and stood on it. There, behind an old school bag with a broken zip, he discovered a plastic crate which he carefully lifted down to the floor. Memories flooded back as he opened the lid to find his enormous collection of brightly-coloured construction sets.

After about half an hour of suspicious silence, Mum popped her head in to check that Harley was alright. She found him happily sitting on his floor surrounded by reassembled models of spacecraft and emergency vehicles.

‘Good idea; thanks Mum,’ Harley smiled.

‘I don’t know what you mean,’ she replied with an adoring smile.

‘I believe you,’ laughed Harley. ‘You never take any credit, do you?’ he called after her as she left him to it.

He carried on, working intently with his back to the blackboard. As the rain eased down to a half-hearted drizzle, new words began to appear on the blackboard: I NEVER GET ANY CREDIT! There was one last surprisingly loud rumble of thunder … then the letters faded to nothingness.

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