

Name _____

Middle Tension Builder Answer Key

Many answers are correct. A strong middle should:

- Introduce a **real obstacle**, such as the car breaking, the wind blades getting stuck, or Arlo losing a piece.
- Show Arlo trying one or more solutions.
- Make the situation feel tense but still believable for the story.
- Lead naturally toward the successful ending.

Teacher's Guide

- Explain that the **middle** is where stories become exciting because characters face challenges.
- Encourage students to think about what could go wrong that would still make sense in the story.
- Offer sentence starters such as **Suddenly...**, **Arlo realized...**, or **He tried to fix...**
- Differentiation ideas:
 - Provide a list of possible obstacles for students who need help brainstorming.
 - Challenge advanced students to include more than one layer of conflict.
- Engagement ideas:
 - Have students act out the obstacle they wrote before sharing their writing.
- Extension ideas:
 - Ask students to create their own beginning and end for a partner, who will then write a conflict-filled middle.