



Yoni Learns to Ride

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities

Yoni Learns to Ride

Yoni has a brand-new bike. It is blue, with a silver bell and a basket on the front. He's wanted a bike for as long as he can remember.

There is just one problem. He doesn't know how to ride it.

On Sunday morning, Totty holds the seat while Yoni pushes the pedals. The bike wobbles left. It wobbles right. The handlebars twist, and the front wheel turns, and Yoni tumbles over onto the grass.

"Ow," he says. His knee has a green stain.

"You're okay," says Totty. "Try again."

He tries again. This time he goes two feet, then crashes into the garbage cans. Clang! The lid rolls down the driveway like a runaway wheel.

"I can't do it," says Yoni. "Everyone else can ride. I'm the only one who can't."

Totty crouches beside him. "Yoni, I want to teach you a little word. It's very small. It has three letters."

"What word?"

"Yet."

Yoni sniffs. "Yet?"

"Instead of saying 'I can't ride,' say 'I can't ride yet.' It's the same sentence, but with a little door at the end. It means you're still learning."

Yoni thinks about that. "I can't ride yet," he says slowly. The words feel different in his mouth. Less like a locked door, and more like an open one.

"Good. Now, what do you think went wrong that time?"

Yoni pictures it. "I looked down at my feet. And then the bike went where I was looking."

"Very smart. Where should you look?"

"Straight ahead. At the end of the driveway."

"Let's try that."

On the next try, Yoni keeps his eyes up, on the big oak tree at the end of the block. The bike wobbles, but it stays in a line. Totty runs beside him, holding the seat. Then, without saying a word, Totty lets go.

Yoni doesn't notice at first. He pedals and pedals. The wind blows on his face. The tree gets closer.

Then he glances back. Totty is standing way behind him, with his hands in the air, grinning.

"I'm doing it!" Yoni yells. And just as he says it, the bike tips, and he lands in the soft grass.

"That was SO close!" he says, laughing. He isn't even mad.

"That was the best one yet," says Totty.

Yoni picks a leaf out of his hair. His heart is thumping, but it is a good thump, the kind you get on a roller coaster. He wheels the bike back to the top of the driveway all by himself, turns it around, and climbs on again.

They practice for three Sundays. Yoni falls on the second Sunday, and the third. He gets a bandage on his elbow and a scab on his knee. But each time he gets up, he keeps going a little farther.

On the fourth Sunday, Yoni pedals all the way down the driveway, around the corner, and back. He rings his silver bell, ding, ding, ding, so loudly that a neighbor comes out to see.

"Look at you!" says Mrs. Rubin. "When did you learn that?"

"Today," says Yoni. "Well, not today. It took four Sundays and a lot of falls."

"That's the best way," says Mrs. Rubin.

That afternoon, Yoni's friend Dovid comes over. He is holding his scooter, looking at the bike.

"I wish I could ride a bike," says Dovid. "But I'm bad at it."

"Bad at it yet," says Yoni. "That's the secret. Do you want me to show you?"

He wheels his bike over, holds the seat, and says, "Look straight ahead. Not at your feet."



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. What color is Yoni's bike?

2. What little word does Totty teach Yoni?

3. Where should Yoni look when riding?

4. How many Sundays does it take?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. The bike has a silver bell and a basket. Fact / Guess
2. Yoni quits after the first fall. Fact / Guess
3. Yoni crashes into the garbage cans. Fact / Guess
4. Yoni teaches Dovid the same trick. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. What is something you can't do yet?

2. What helps Yoni keep going after he falls?

3. How could you help a friend who says 'I can't'?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: BIKE, YET, BELL, PEDAL, WOBBLE, TRY

V	A	O	U	W	S	K	K	T	W	N
N	Y	G	B	I	G	U	M	R	N	U
R	E	B	D	C	E	L	S	Y	S	Y
B	B	B	I	K	E	L	N	G	E	P
L	U	C	S	K	D	E	N	B	L	E
N	Y	O	T	C	B	B	L	D	B	D
W	H	C	E	W	I	L	U	W	B	A
Y	N	L	R	P	U	M	Y	B	O	L
B	E	T	A	Y	R	D	U	Y	W	P
B	T	F	U	E	B	Y	A	N	B	J
N	F	C	J	T	F	D	C	U	B	A



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. KEBI = _____

2. ELBL = _____

3. DIRYVEAW = _____

4. GAAERBG = _____

5. AOK = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"I can't do it yet."

"I'll try again."

"Look straight ahead."

Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Not Yet Chart

#	Something I can't do yet	What I tried	What I'll try next
Goal 1			
Goal 2			
Goal 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw Yoni on his blue bike with the silver bell, riding past the oak tree.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin green border, intended for drawing Yoni on his blue bike riding past the oak tree.



Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. Blue
2. Yet
3. Straight ahead
4. Four

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: BIKE, BELL, DRIVEWAY, GARBAGE, OAK

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.