

The Account She Closes Herself

Facilitator note: The skill is closing an unrepaired account yourself - when an apology you are owed never comes, the repair cannot wait on the other person's courage: name the loss exactly and once, set the boundary cleanly and without lectures, and adjust the relationship to its real size. Keep the frame off revenge and off sainthood: Surah is careless and embarrassed, not cruel (the shrug is cover), the friendship genuinely continues at its real size, and Hencha's boundary is "the new true shape of things," not a punishment. Do not let this become "never forgive" (the account IS closed - she stops rehearsing and stops pre-paying; the pull finds "nothing to grab") or "forgiveness means lending again" (the boundary stands; closed account and kept boundary live together fine). Students are not asked to disclose real grievances; Activity 7 is a fictional case.

Teacher answer key

1. The brush - real, finite, fourteen dollars. The shrug - "the expensive line," a verdict about what kind of thing matters to her, from the person who begged to borrow the set. The apology - relief purchased with Surah's discomfort, a currency Surah has shown she lacks. The deciding question: what does the collecting cost YOU - some debts you collect, and some you close.
2. She has become "a connoisseur of apologies that do not exist" while Surah is fine - three weeks of her head given to a conversation that is not scheduled. "Re-killing" means the brush died once, but every nightly rehearsal repeats the loss at full size, so the waiting costs more than the damage did.
3. b, c, d, a, e. The shrug (b) creates the debt; the audit (c) prices it honestly and finds the deciding question; the naming (d) makes one true entry, then stops; the boundary (a) is the closed account's living shape - no lecture, and it holds; and the pull finding nothing to grab (e) is the proof the account is closed, not suppressed.
4. (a) 3 weeks = 21 days x 20 minutes = 420 minutes = 7 hours; at 9 dollars an hour that is 63 dollars - more than four times the 14-dollar brush. (b) Missed costs: the rehearsals crowd out painting time, or they leak resentment into a friendship she wants to keep - both point toward closing, since collecting cannot recover any of it. Steps shown.
5. The speech would invite litigation - prices, excuses, whose fault - and litigation keeps the account open. The clean sentence is "just the new true shape of things": it prosecutes no one, offers nothing to argue with, and pairs the boundary with sincere help (the nine-dollar set), so there is nothing for Surah to fight and nothing she has to admit.
6. The drawing should show: the canvas roll with twelve stitched pockets; the round that holds a point, the page-wide flat, the smallest one; and three brushes with paint dried hard "up in the metal part." Strong captions quote "Keep them dry when you clean them" or "some debts you collect, and some you close." Any honest rendering counts.

7. Sample: Naming - "Osher says once: 'The glove mattered, and the "wears out anyway" mattered more - I'm saying it once, and then I'm done.'" Boundary - "When the cousin asks for the bat next, he says, 'I don't lend the good ones anymore,' and recommends a store, kindly." Sign - "When the cousin brags about his summer season, Osher feels the pull start and then simply not - the account is closed." All three parts, with names; wording may vary. (Case name Osher is fictional.)

8. BRUSH row 1 columns 1-5; PAINT row 2 columns 1-5; ACCOUNT row 3 columns 1-7; SHRUG row 4 columns 1-5; BORROW row 5 columns 1-6; REPAIR row 6 columns 1-6; BOUNDARY row 7 columns 1-8; CLOSED row 8 columns 1-6. What Hencha does to the account herself is CLOSED; the line that cost more than the object is the SHRUG.