

The Quarterback

CCSSR1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

José was a quarterback at his old school. The team had won 8 of its 10 last games. He knew how to play very well. He had to transfer to a new school this year because his family had moved to the other side of the city.

When he got to school the first day, he went to see the football coach. He said, "I want to be quarterback."

"You're late," the coach replied. "We had tryouts last spring. We already have a quarterback. We even have a backup. So you can come to practice, but we don't have a place for you on the team."

José was discouraged. He told his stepfather that he wanted to go back to his old school. But his stepfather said that they could not move back there because his new job was on this side of the city. "Your mother's family is near here, too, and we need to go to help them sometimes now that your grandmother is sick."

José had not made any friends, and he sat alone in his room. He would text his old friends at his old school, and they would text back with news. But that just made him more unhappy.

Then he went to the first practice. The coach said, "José, help with the warm-up. Let's see what you can do."

José played with the team, practicing, just throwing passes at first. Then the coach put him into some plays. Meanwhile, José was watching Mason, the quarterback. "He's not that good," he said. "I could do better." But he knew he was wrong. Mason could throw the ball farther, faster, and more accurately.

Then Mason turned to him. "Let's give José a chance." So José did take the quarterback role for one play. As they played, he realized that it wasn't the quarterback who made the play work. It was the whole team. The team took the ball he passed and made a touchdown. All he had done was make the first pass.

After the practice, he went to the coach. He told him that he would be proud to be able to help the team. He said that he did not expect to be on the team but wanted to be with them. "I just love football," he said. "I didn't realize until today that I just want to be part of the game."

The coach asked him to be part of their practices from then on. "Next year, José, we will have a position for you."

By the end of the season, José had many friends. One of his best friends was Mason.

What is a lesson people can learn from this story?

Underline the parts of the story that show that is the lesson you can learn.