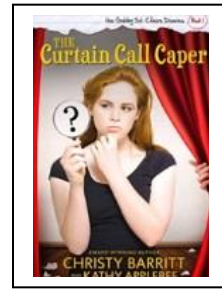


Based on Curtain Call Caper by Christy Barritt and Kathy Applebee

## CHAPTER 1, exercise 3

Read the passage about Gabby St. Claire and answer the questions.



Becca whispered the rest in her normal tone. “She misplaced the audition scripts so Madame Cherise is doing singing auditions until—”

“Gabby St. Claire?” Madame Cherise’s warbling voice interrupted.

Her annoyed tone rocketed me from my seat. “Here!”

I sprang to attention, scattering my books, pencils and notebooks everywhere. I heard titters of laughter and knew instantly it was coming from the Diva and her Devotees.

### *Klutz Queen!*

With a zillion people watching, including some high schoolers who weren’t supposed to be here anyway, I briefly wished I was back in detention instead of trying to pick up my strewn belongings in the dark.

“Go! I’ll get this stuff,” Becca murmured.

I mumbled a thank you before marching up on stage and taking the paper Madame Cherise waved in my direction. I glanced at the song and breathed a sigh of relief. “The Farmer and the Cowman.” I knew it. I could sing it.

When the audition announcement was posted, I had raced home and broken out my mother’s show tune cassettes so I could listen to and sing along with the songs from *Oklahoma*. We were probably the only people in the world to still have a cassette tape player, but mom nostalgically held on to it so she could reminisce about the good old days.

The stage lights were so bright that I couldn’t see anything. I started perspiring about two seconds after I started singing.

I glanced up at the lights. Big mistake. They shone like the summer sun at the nearby oceanfront. When I looked back at the paper, spots danced over the words and music, making both impossible to read. Not that I could read music anyway. Focusing on what I’d practiced, I forged ahead, grateful I’d taken the time to prepare.

I only flubbed a couple of times.

“Merci, Gabby,” trilled Madame Cherise. She said both of the words with a singsong, rhyming inflection that reminded me for a moment of a character who might have been on the old kids’ show Barney and Friends.

Still temporarily half-blind, I shuffled toward the voice, unsure of how close to the edge of the stage I was, and considering which would be worse: the humiliation of falling off the stage or the hurt.

I overcompensated and stumbled into the main curtain instead. I clutched it to keep from falling. Big mistake.

A humongous crash sounded behind me.

Sharp little missiles flew into my legs. In my haste to curtail the catastrophe, I slammed into a hidden chair behind me and flipped over it.

When I stopped moving, I realized I was on my butt, staring at the overhead stage lights, and surrounded by broken glass.

This wasn't good. It wasn't good at all.

The humiliation, I decided. The humiliation was definitely worse than the hurt.

#### RECALL

1. Who picked up Gabby's pencils and books?

#### WHY?

2. Why was Gabby temporarily blinded?
3. Was Gabby prepared to sing the song she was handed?

#### INFER

4. What hit Gabby's legs?

#### FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE Identify the type of figurative language

5. With a zillion people watching
6. They shone like the summer sun at the nearby oceanfront
7. spots danced over the words and music
8. curtail the catastrophe

#### DECIDE

9. Which would be worse: the humiliation of falling off the stage or the physical pain? Explain your answer.