

The Wonkadoodle

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

"I want a Wonkadoodle!" Jimmy screamed for the twelfth time. This time he really wanted his dad's attention.

His father glanced back at him impatiently. There were things to do, and he wasn't sure why he'd allowed himself to be talked into this detour. This was why he avoided toy stores. They just seemed like opportunities for his son to act like a brat. "You want a whatzawhizzle?"

"A Wonkadoodle." Jimmy corrected with a growl of irritation.

"What's that?" Father favored him with a look of incomprehension.

Jimmy pointed to a toy robot alien looking thing. Father frowned, clearly unimpressed by the toy. "That looks silly."

"It lights up, talks, sings, dances, and learns!"

"I wish you would learn not to be interested in such goofiness." Father lamented.

"Dad. It's a Wonkadoodle. It's amazing. Look at it and try to imagine how many hours I can play with it, teaching it."

"I imagine about an hour and a half before you're bored with it. Besides, that's what dogs are for. Teach Rex a new trick instead of wasting \$42 on this piece of rubber and plastic."

"Everyone has one, and I need one desperately."

Father shrugged. "You need to fix your thinking. I never had one, and I'm fine. In fact, when I was little, kids played with sticks and balls and rolled old tires down the street."

Jimmy stared aghast at his father. Sticks and balls? What sort of Stone Age punishment was that? How awful. "You guys didn't even have handheld video games and smart phones?"

"We had rotary phones on the wall and a computer with a screen as big as a TV set. We survived somehow, and I came out of childhood unscathed, and a bit healthier than you. You're looking a bit pudgy these days. Maybe you need more exercise and less toys."

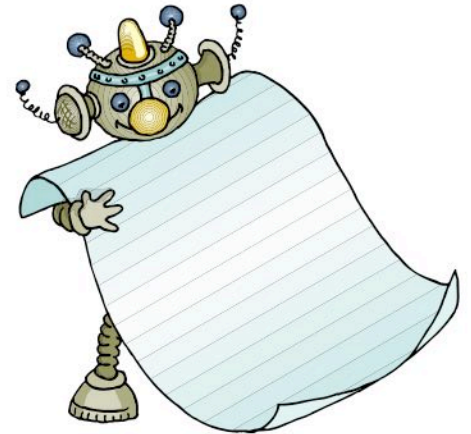
Jimmy was about to go full meltdown. Somehow, the conversation had turned from the Wonkadoodle toy to the golden days of father's childhood to him getting chubby. "DAD!"

"No way. We're done, and we're certainly not buying that piece of junk."

It was over; the dream was crushed. Jimmy deflated.

"Wait for your birthday." Father mumbled as he dragged his son from the aisle.

Jimmy grinned. Maybe there was still a chance, and maybe by then, a newer version would be out. Magazines had been talking about Wonkadoodle Alpha. Would he be the first person he knew to own one?



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What does Jimmy want?
 - A. A Whachawizzit
 - B. A Wonkadoodle
 - C. A Wackywidget
 - D. A Wondergadget

2. How does father feel about the Wonkadoodle?
 - A. He thinks it's cool.
 - B. He wants one for himself.
 - C. He is unimpressed.
 - D. He thinks it's scary.

3. Which of these is NOT one of father's arguments against getting the toy?
 - A. Jimmy is getting pudgy and doesn't need toys.
 - B. Jimmy could play with the dog instead.
 - C. He didn't have one growing up, so Jimmy doesn't need one either.
 - D. Jimmy already has one at home.

4. Is Jimmy going to get the Wonkadoodle today?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Maybe
 - D. He has to ask mom first.

5. Why is Jimmy okay with waiting for his birthday to get one?
 - A. There might be a new version out then.
 - B. He can get one for a better price.
 - C. He can get the new color.
 - D. He can get two for one with a coupon.

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