

## A Very Special Father: Father's Day Lesson

1a) What are some of the characters that parents tell their children about in the USA?  
In your country?

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1b) What do you know about the tooth fairy? Do parents tell their children about the tooth fairy in your country?

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2) You are going to listen to a story from a radio show, "This American Life". Listen and answer this question:

Who does Rebecca think the tooth fairy is?

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**3) Listen again and decide whether the statements are true or false:**

Example: Rebecca thought her own Father was the tooth fairy? False

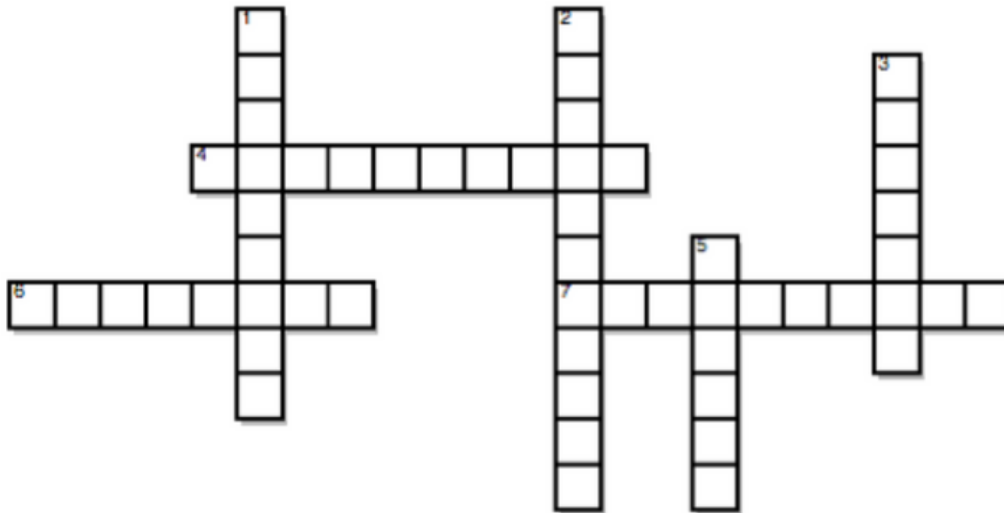
- a) Rebecca's mom thought that Ronnie Loberfeld was the tooth fairy.
- b) Rebecca's mom played along with Rebecca's conclusion.
- c) Ronnie Loberfeld worked at the Stop & Shop.
- d) Ronnie Loberfeld drove a Volvo.
- e) Rebecca acted very excited when she was around Ronnie Loberfeld.
- f) The child psychologist, Alison Gopnik, thinks that Rebecca's conclusion is logical.

**Transcript**

<b>A Very Special Father</b>	
<b>Part 1</b>	<p><u>Presenter:</u> Rebecca remembers exactly when she learned the astonishing truth. She was in second grade and ran into her best friend, Rachel, at school one day.</p> <p><u>Rebecca:</u> And she pulled me aside and said, you know, last night I lost a tooth. I woke up while the tooth fairy was putting the money under my pillow. And guess who the tooth fairy was? I said, oh my god, who was it? I have to know. And she said, my dad. My dad is the tooth fairy. And I remember running home after school and telling my mom. Mom, I know who the tooth fairy is. And declaring it as if I had grown up, that I knew who the tooth fairy was. And she said, oh, well, who is the tooth fairy? And I turned to her and I said, Rachel's dad is the tooth fairy. Ronnie Loberfeld is the tooth fairy. And she said, I can't believe you know. It's totally secret, you can't let anyone else know. But you're right, Ronnie is the tooth fairy. And he works really hard. And, you know, it's a secret. So you can't let anyone else know. He is the tooth fairy but you can't let anyone else know. And from that day on, Ronnie Loberfeld was the tooth fairy. And all of my notes under my pillow were signed "Love, Ronnie Loberfeld."</p>

<b>A Very Special Father</b>	
<b>Part 2</b>	<p><u>Presenter:</u> Now, in his day job what did Ronnie Loberfeld do?</p> <p><u>Rebecca:</u> I think he did something in finance. He was either an accountant or a stockbroker. He worked next to a Stop &amp; Shop in Massachusetts, in Newton. Had dark hair, wore a suit. And I definitely had images of his driving his Volvo around the Boston area and delivering the tooth fairy treats. I remember wondering what it was like for Rachel to know that her dad was the tooth fairy. And definitely being a little envious that her dad had this special job and this special power and that he had this whole other interesting life. Where my dad just came home from work and that was it.</p> <p><u>Presenter:</u> So when you would actually run into Ronnie Loberfeld, what was it like for you? How would you act?</p> <p><u>Rebecca:</u> I tried to act cool. It's like if you're starstruck but you don't want them to know that you're starstruck.</p> <p><u>Presenter:</u> Just like meeting a celebrity.</p> <p><u>Rebecca:</u> Exactly. You downplay it, you try not to mention it, but you definitely check them out twice and look at them when they walk away. Like, oh my god, you're the tooth fairy.</p> <p><u>Presenter:</u> But you knew enough to play it cool.</p> <p><u>Rebecca:</u> I knew enough to play it cool. I said hey, how you doing, what's for dinner, how am I getting home tonight? Are my parents going to pick me up, have they called?</p> <p><u>Presenter:</u> You did play it cool.</p>
<b>Part 3</b>	<p><u>Presenter:</u> One interesting question in all this, why did both girls come to what seems like the least likely conclusion from the evidence in front of them-- of a parent swapping money for a tooth under a pillow? Well, Alison Gopnick studies how children think, and she says of course it's logical for a seven-year-old to conclude that her own father might be the tooth fairy.</p> <p><u>Alison Gopnik:</u> Children understand that their parents, for instance, are powerful in all sorts of ways that make them very different from children. Now, from a child's point of view, knowing where those powers begin and end is pretty tricky. I mean, think about all the things that your parents can do that you can't do. And think about the fact that there isn't any obvious explanation about why your father can use a Visa card, for instance, which is something that you can't do. The power to be a tooth fairy isn't all that much more impressive. Chicago Public Radio and Public Radio International, Ira Glass, This American Life – Episode 188, “Kid Logic” <a href="http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/188/transcript">http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/188/transcript</a> accessed 17 Mar 2023</p>

4) Vocabulary scavenger hunt! Read the transcript and find words to complete the puzzle.



Clues:

Across →

4) A verb phrase which means "act in a calm way even when you really feel excited" (3 words) (part 2)

6) A verb which means "exchanging one thing for something else" (part 3)

7) An adjective from the text which means "interested in and excited by famous people" (part 2)

Down ↓

1) A verb in the first part of the story which means "saying something in a serious way to make it sound very important" (part 1)

2) An adjective which means "very surprising" (part 1)

3) An adjective which means "the way you feel when you want something that another person has. Another word for jealous" (part 2)

5) An adjective which means something is "difficult" (part 3)

5) Speaking - discuss these questions with a partner.

- a) What stories do you know that parents tell their children that are not true?
- b) Do you think it is ok to tell these stories to children? Why or why not?
- c) What stories did your parents tell you when you were younger that you found out were not true? How did you feel when you found out?