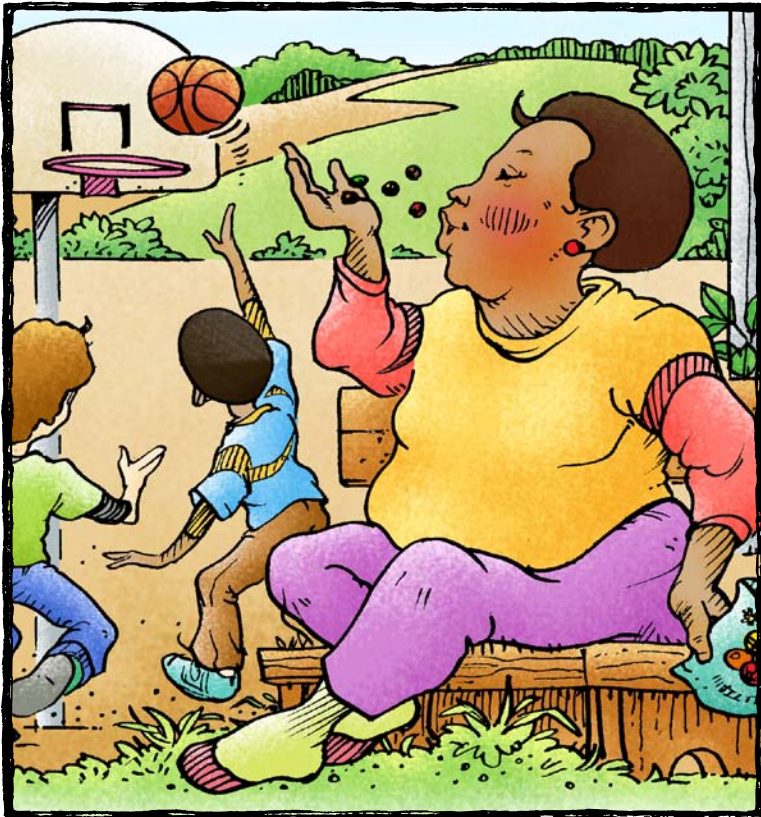


Only One Aunt Maggie

A Reading A-Z Level R Leveled Book

Word Count: 1,310



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Only One Aunt Maggie



Written by Alyse Sweeney
Illustrated by Joel Snyder

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Glossary

- advice** (*n.*) suggestions about a decision or action (p. 17)
- alternatives** (*n.*) choices or possibilities (p. 16)
- arteries** (*n.*) the blood vessels that move blood away from the heart to all parts of the body (p. 12)
- craved** (*v.*) wanted something a lot (p. 16)
- dictated** (*v.*) spoke or read for someone else to write down (p. 16)
- furrowed** (*adj.*) wrinkled (p. 12)
- lean** (*adj.*) having very little fat (p. 14)
- marathon** (*n.*) a long-distance running race about 26 miles (42 km) long (p. 18)
- pledge** (*v.*) to promise (p. 19)
- realistic** (*adj.*) like or similar to real life (p. 7)
- recent** (*adj.*) done, made, or happening not long ago (p. 6)
- spanning** (*v.*) reaching or extending across (p. 6)
- summon** (*v.*) to call someone or something to you (p. 6)
- trio** (*n.*) a group or set of three (p. 7)

Only One Aunt Maggie



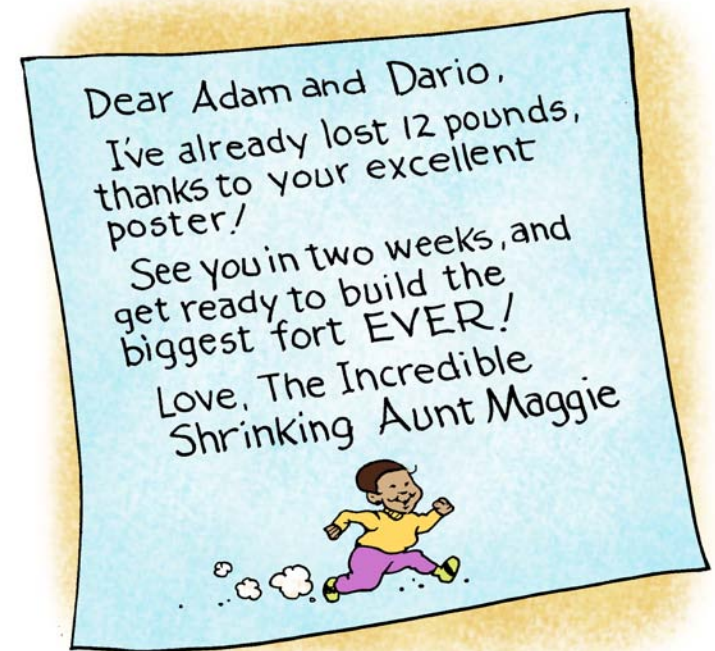
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I Have Only One Me

As she read the poster, a happy tear rolled down her cheek. “Kiddo,” she said. “Tonight I **pledge** to you and Dario that I will take this poster home with me, and I will follow it. Because after all, I only have one me, right? Besides, this healthy food list doesn’t look *that* bad. Now get to bed so you can take me to the airport in the morning. And Adam, thank you, and Dario, too.”

Three months later, Adam opened this letter from Aunt Maggie . . .



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Level R Leveled Book
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Correlation

LEVEL R	
Fountas & Pinnell	N
Reading Recovery	30
DRA	30



That night when Aunt Maggie came by Adam’s room to say goodnight, he handed her the poster. “Aunt Maggie, you are the coolest, funniest, most amazing grown-up Dario and I know. And we made you this poster because we *really* love you and don’t want anything bad to happen to your heart.”

“My heart?” Aunt Maggie repeated, looking confused.



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Aunt Maggie Is Coming!

"Guess who called today to say she is due for a visit?" Adam's mom squealed. Before Adam or his dad had time to guess, Adam's mom answered her own question. "My sister! Aunt Maggie is coming *this* weekend!"

"Whooo-hooo!" Adam chanted, waving his arms over his head.

"Well, I can see you're terribly upset over this news," Dad chuckled, serving himself salad.

Tell Her What's in Your Heart

As Adam headed back to his house with the poster, he felt excited—and nervous, too. *What if the poster makes Aunt Maggie angry? What should I say to her when I give her the poster?*

After dinner, Adam went to his mom for **advice**. "Just tell her what's in your heart, Adam," she said.



“Great idea! Let’s do it!” Adam said, heading out the door. “Is your dad home? We’ll need his help.”

Dario grabbed his hat and followed Adam. “Let’s do it!” he called to Adam’s back.

Adam, Dario, and Dario’s dad listened to the baseball game on the radio as they created the poster. Along the top of the white poster board, Dario drew funny pictures of Aunt Maggie making faces while lifting weights and power walking.

Below the illustrations, Adam wrote a list of less healthy foods in one column, such as white flour tortillas, hot dogs, and mashed potatoes. And Dario’s dad wrote the healthier **alternatives** in the other column, such as wheat tortillas, soy dogs, and baked sweet potatoes.

When they finished, Dario’s dad **dictated** to Adam a list of foods that he ate when he **craved** junk food. Along the bottom of the poster, Adam wrote, *If you crave crunchy chips, try some nuts, carrot sticks, or a rice cake. If you crave sweet chocolate, try a fruity yogurt, Jello, or dried fruit.*

That evening, the Wiles family laughed up a storm sharing Aunt Maggie stories.

“Remember last year when Aunt Maggie came into my second-grade class and helped us bake a three-foot high volcano cake—that erupted?” Adam recalled.

“Or the time she got all of us to do that ridiculous cheer at your soccer game?” added Dad.

There was one thing that the Wiles family knew for sure—Aunt Maggie was the most fun person they knew.



Summon Your Building Partner!

When Aunt Maggie arrived on Friday, she eagerly unpacked toys from her **recent** trip to Russia and her latest picture book that she wrote and illustrated. Then she cupped her hands to her mouth and announced, “It’s fort time—**summon** your building partner!”

“Yahooo!” roared Adam, running to call Dario, who lived next door.

An hour later, Aunt Maggie and the boys built a pillow, cushion, and blanket fort **spanning** two rooms. “We said we’d break last year’s fort record—and we did!” Dario proudly announced.



Let’s Do It!

“So your dad lost weight by walking the dog after dinner and eating junk food once a week instead of every day,” Adam thought aloud. “And he ate healthier ingredients in his favorite meals, right?”

“Yup,” said Dario.

“Well, if your dad can do it, so can Aunt Maggie!” Adam exclaimed. “We can tell her how he did it so she can do it, too.”

“Like make her a chart, or something?” asked Dario.



“You know, my dad lost about 25 pounds last year,” shared Dario. “His doctor told him that if he didn’t, he could get heart disease.”

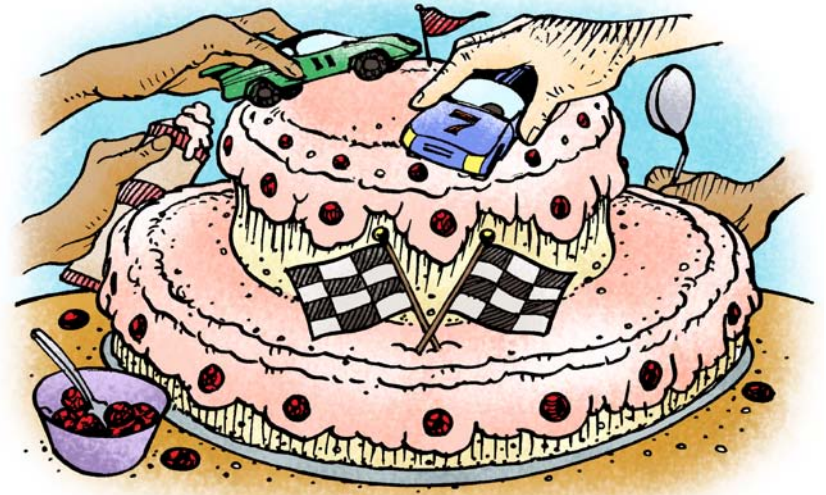
“Really?” Adam asked, leaning in. “How did he do it?”

“Well, he started walking Buddy after dinner every night. And he actually eats a lot of the same meals as before, but now my mom makes them with healthier ingredients.” Dario explained how his mom now makes cheeseburgers—one of his dad’s favorites—with wheat buns, **lean** beef, low-fat cheese, and tomato slices.

“Yeah, my mom makes brown rice now instead of white rice,” added Adam. “And she buys wheat bread instead of white bread. It’s not so bad once you get used to it.”

“Also, no more doughnuts for breakfast or chips with lunch. Now our family only eats that kind of food on Junk Food Fridays for Game Night.”

“Ooohh! Junk Food Fridays sound cool,” said Adam.



A Day of Painting and Baking

The next morning, Adam made his Saturday morning specialty—buckwheat pancakes with bananas.

After breakfast, Dario came over for a day of painting and baking. Aunt Maggie taught the boys a fancy brush stroke for making **realistic**-looking clouds.

After lunch, the **trio** baked a racetrack cake—topped with race cars from Adam’s car collection!

“Your aunt is so cool,” Dario told Adam before heading home for dinner.

Aunt Maggie's Travel Stories

After dinner at Adam's house, the family gathered to hear Aunt Maggie's travel stories. The family room was set up like a theater, with Aunt Maggie seated in a chair facing her audience. Everyone's eyes were glued to Aunt Maggie as she spoke, and everyone's hands were busy popping grapes in their mouths.

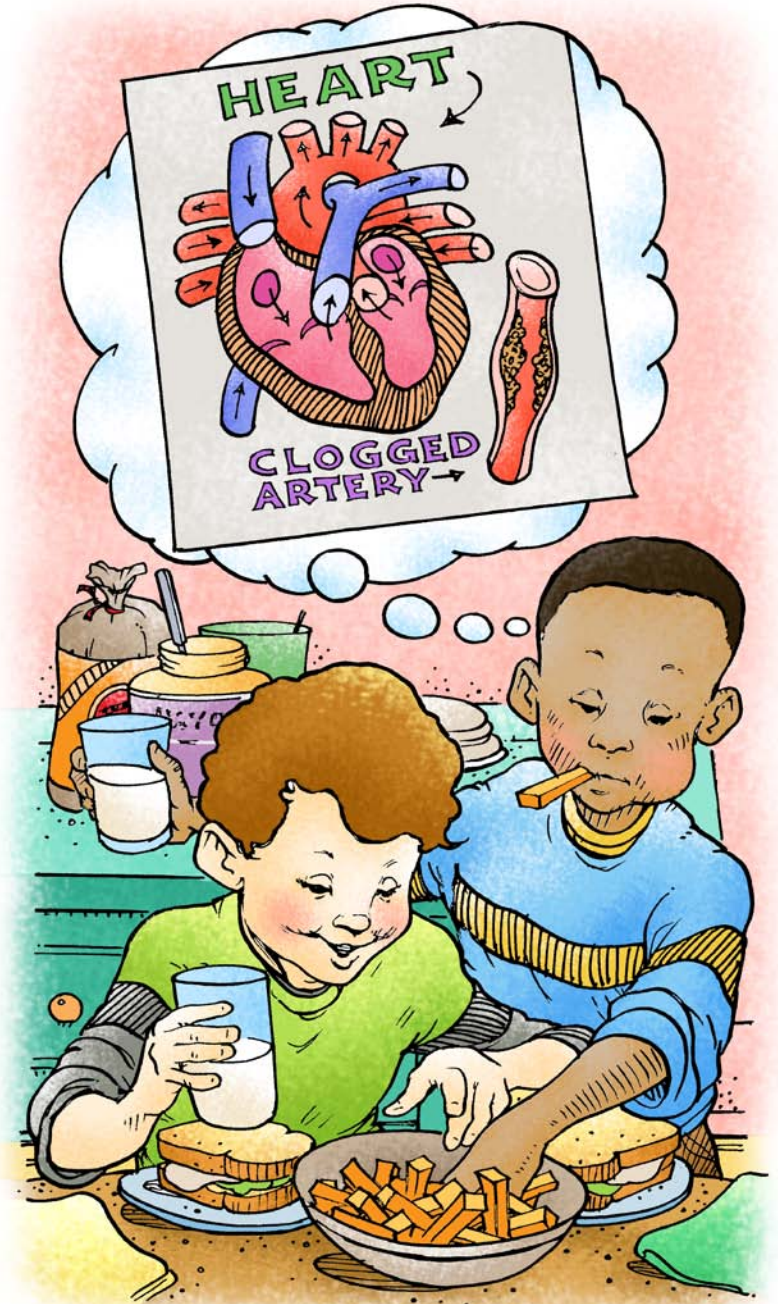
"Can I get anyone more grapes?" Adam's mom asked between stories.

"No, thank you," said Aunt Maggie. "But do you have any chips?"

"Not today," Mom replied.

"Well, you know me," said Aunt Maggie, pulling a bag of chips from her tote. "I never leave home without my two favorite foods, chocolate and chips!"

Then she told of an ice sculpture festival where she saw an ice lion as tall as the ceiling. And an ice castle as big as the house!



Adam's Thoughts Drift to Science Class

As the boys made turkey sandwiches for lunch, Dario talked about dog tricks he was learning. But Adam's thoughts kept drifting to science class. And it was Saturday!

"Remember when Ms. Scott told us that the heart is a muscle that needs exercise just like other muscles?" Adam spoke slowly. "And remember when she showed us that picture of **arteries** clogged with fat?"

"Yeah," said Dario.

"Well, I think that must be how Aunt Maggie's arteries look, which means that it's harder for blood to get to her heart, which—"

"—is not a good thing," Dario said, frowning.

Adam couldn't imagine anything bad happening to Aunt Maggie. "We've got to do something, but what? What can we do?" Adam crunched on a carrot, eyebrows **furrowed**.



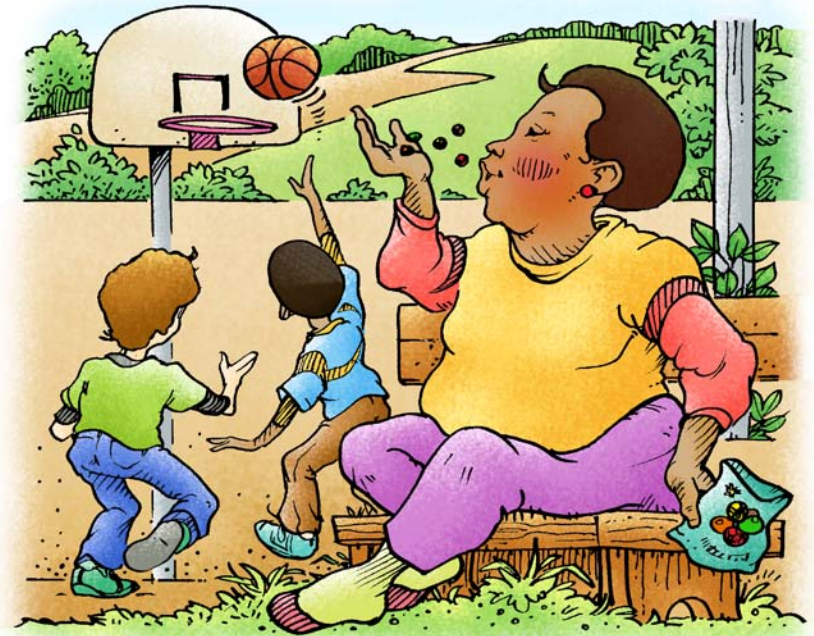
Is She Okay?

The next morning, Aunt Maggie accompanied Adam and Dario to the park six blocks away.

“Whew . . . how much longer, kiddos?” Aunt Maggie asked, wiping her damp brow.

“Just three more blocks,” answered Adam. He noticed that she was sweating a lot for a cool day and that her face was quite red.

“Your aunt looks as if she just ran a **marathon**—is she okay?” Dario whispered to Adam. Adam wasn’t so sure.



When they reached the park, Aunt Maggie sat on a bench. When she caught her breath, she took out a small handful of colored chocolates and called out, “Chocolate, anyone? I sure need a sweet treat after all that exercise!”

On the walk home, Aunt Maggie breathed even heavier and walked even slower. When the boys questioned her about being so tired, she explained, “Well, I’m overweight and out of shape. So now a ten-minute walk can really wipe me out! In fact, I’m going to lie down when we get home, kiddos.”