

CUTTING GRASS

Hal Ames



Juan did not know what to do. He was confused. It was clear to Manuel and him that he had made a big mistake. He just stood looking down at the lawnmower. He realized that it was broken beyond repair.

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One week before, Juan and Manuel had made plans to go from house to house to ask if they could cut their grass.

Manuel and Juan talked about their plans to make some money. The school had planned a trip to the capital city and they would need extra money for their meals. They wrote down everything in a notebook. They found out they would need to cut thirty lawns to earn enough money for the school trip. If they got ten customers, and they cut each lawn three times, they would have enough money.

The boys got excited. They had found a way to make money for the school trip.

Manuel had a computer at his house. The boys made flyers to pass out to all the houses on their street. After they counted the houses on their street, they printed thirty flyers. Manuel saved the file on his computer so they could print more later.

They used red and blue ink, and added a picture of a lawnmower. They put a red border around the edge of the paper. How could anyone resist?

The flyers said:

<p>Two Boys Mowing Service Juan Hernandez and Manuel Santiago We will mow your lawn for you 317-555-2345</p>	A small illustration of a lawnmower, similar to the one at the top of the page, positioned in the right-hand cell of the flyer layout.
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They took a flyer to each house. They put them into the mailboxes. It took about two hours for them to pass out all the flyers.

After they passed out the flyers, they met at Manuel's house. They waited for the phone to ring. Nothing happened. They were disappointed that no one called for their grass cutting business.

The next day, Juan and Manuel printed more flyers. They folded them, and then they went to more houses on the other streets. It took longer this time because they had to go farther away.

When they arrived back at Manuel's house, they asked his mother if there had been any phone calls for them. The answer was no.

The boys spent the night at Manuel's house. They stayed close to the phone, just in case someone called. No one called.

The next morning the boys thought and thought about how they could get business. They came up with a new plan. They would go door to door and knock on each of them. They would tell the homeowners about what a wonderful job they would do for them.

It was Saturday so they knew most of the people would be home.

They started at the house next to Manuel's. Mr. Juarez was in his yard. He was already cutting his grass. The boys asked him if they could cut his grass. He said he was happy to cut his own grass, but if he had a problem, he would call them.

This happened house after house. Everyone was doing his or her own yard.

They knocked on every door they came to.

Later, on another street, an old woman answered the door.

She said, "Hello. What can I do for you boys?"

They told her about the flyer. They asked her if they could cut her grass for her.

To their surprise, she said yes! She would let them cut her grass, and if they did a good job, she would let them cut her grass every week. The boys had their first customer.

The nice old woman said she had a lawnmower in her garage. They were welcome to use it. The boys ran to the garage. Inside they found a beautiful red lawnmower. Next

to it was a can of gasoline. They filled the gas tank. Since Juan had watched his father start their lawnmower, he knew how to do it. This one was just like it.

Juan pulled on the rope. Nothing happened. He pulled it again. Still nothing. Manuel checked the gasoline. This time when Juan pulled the cord the engine started. The boys got excited.

They looked at each other. Who was going to start cutting the grass? Juan said he would. He had helped his father cut their grass before. He pushed the lawnmower out of the garage.

He started in the front. He made straight lines. He went back and forth across the yard. It looked beautiful. Manuel cleaned the cut grass and made piles, which he then put into a bag.

Suddenly, the lawnmower made a loud noise and then stopped. The boys looked at each other.

“What now?” they thought aloud.

When they looked to see what had happened, they found a piece of metal in the ground. When the lawnmower ran over it, it stopped. Now the lawnmower was not going to work. They would have to pay for it. They did not have any money. They got scared.

Just then, the old woman came out of her house. She asked, “What happened?”

The boys showed her the problem. They showed her the metal in the ground.

“Oh my,” she said. “I had new windows put on my house. The installers asked me if they could put a sign in my yard. When they took the sign away, they must have left this here. I’m going to call them and ask them to replace my lawnmower!”

Before she went inside her house, she turned and said, “You boys have done a great job. I’ll tell all my neighbors to hire you. When I get a new lawnmower come back and finish the job, OK?”

The boys said, “Yes”, and then ran home. They were happy to know they had done nothing wrong and they would not have to buy a new lawnmower.

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

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|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. confused _____ | a. edge, decoration |
| 2. obvious _____ | b. place to keep a car |
| 3. lawnmower _____ | c. workers |
| 4. flyer _____ | d. apparent, clear |
| 5. border _____ | e. puzzled, baffled |
| 6. business _____ | f. leaflet, advertisement |
| 7. knock _____ | g. used to cut grass |
| 8. garage _____ | h. company, partnership |
| 9. gasoline _____ | i. to hit with the knuckles |
| 10. installers _____ | j. fuel |

TRUE / FALSE

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|---|-------|
| 1. The boy's names were Frank and Bob. | T / F |
| 2. The boys handed out flyers at the store. | T / F |
| 3. The boys wanted to earn money for a school trip. | T / F |
| 4. Juan's father loaned them his lawnmower. | T / F |
| 5. The boys went to the library to print the flyers. | T / F |
| 6. The flyers had the boys' names on them. | T / F |
| 7. The old woman yelled at the boys. | T / F |
| 8. There was a can of gasoline next to the lawnmower. | T / F |
| 9. The lawnmower broke when it hit a sprinkler. | T / F |
| 10. The boys were happy when the lawnmower broke. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What kind of business did the boys want to start? _____
 - a) landscaping
 - b) painting
 - c) cutting grass
 - d) delivering groceries

2. What did they create on their computer to advertise their business? _____
 - a) bulletins
 - b) flyers
 - c) notebooks
 - d) newspapers

3. Who hired the boys to mow her lawn? _____
 - a) an old lady
 - b) the next door neighbor
 - c) Juan's father
 - d) the old man

4. Why did the boys need to earn money? _____
 - a) to buy a new bicycle
 - b) to go to a nice restaurant
 - c) to give their parents a nice gift
 - d) to go on a school trip

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. What were the names of the two boys?

2. What did the boys print?

3. What were the colors the boys used on the flyers?

4. What was the phone number people were to call?

5. Who owned the computer?

6. Who was their first customer?

7. What broke the lawnmower?

8. Who pushed the lawnmower first?

9. What did the old woman say before she went back into her house?

10. Who put the metal pole in the ground?
