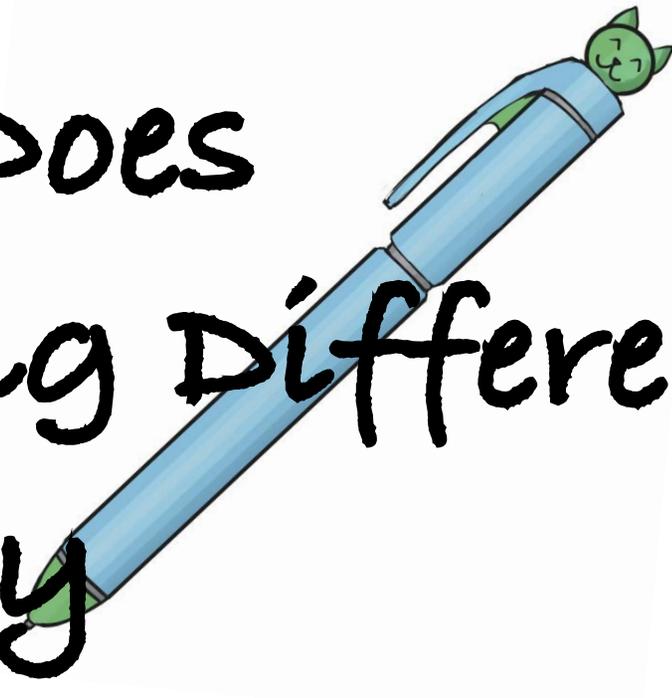


DAWSON DOES
ONE THING DIFFERENT
EVERY DAY



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DAWSON was a nine year old girl.

Dawson knew she was in a rut. A rut is a long, deep path in the ground that makes you go a certain way, like a tunnel without a top. A rut is also when you do the same thing over and over and over again without thinking about it. Dawson was in the second kind of rut.

Dawson decided the best and likely easiest way to get out of the rut was to do one thing different every day. Just one thing. No matter how small.

Today, she went to the refrigerator and, instead of getting an orange, she got an apple. She really loved oranges, since you could peel them instead of slice them. Plus she didn't really like the taste of apples. But her Mom said these were great apples. They were Honeycrisps. She turned up her nose at them yesterday, but today was a new day and she had to do one thing differently, so she took an apple, washed it (which was another thing you didn't need to do with oranges), sliced it and then took a bite. It was great! Crunchy and a little tart, which means a little sour but in a good way, and she could taste the honey. It really was honey *and* crisp. Yum!

This was a good start to her day. And a great start to her plan to do one thing different every day.



The next day she was walking to the park with her Dad and little sister.

She realized that she looked at the ground when she walked. She decided that her one thing different today was to look at the sky.

There were clouds, of course. Some looked like giant pillows and some looked like stuffed animals. One looked like a brick since its edges were sharp and squared off. She wondered if this made it harder for that cloud to stay in the sky?

Then she tripped and fell on her knees.

It hurt, but she didn't cry.

Her Dad helped her back to her feet and checked to make sure her knees weren't bleeding. They were skinned and red, but not bleeding.

Her Dad then said, "Watch where you're going, OK?"

Dawson nodded. She decided that was enough looking up at the sky for one day.



The next day was a school day.

At lunch, Dawson always sat with the same two friends, Ella and Brock. She decided today that her one different thing would be to sit with someone else. Someone she didn't know very well. This was very brave of her and it made her a little scared. It also made Ella and Brock a little sad. But she explained that she was doing one thing different every day and this was the one thing today.

Brock asked, "Can you do this one thing different tomorrow? We haven't seen you since Friday."

Dawson shook her head. "Once I decide what the one thing different is, there are no backsies. And this is what I decided for today."

She sat down next to Jilly. Jilly was not a friend and was very shy, only talking in class when the teacher called on her. And her voice was so soft it was hard to hear what she was saying.

"Hi Jilly, can I sit here next to you?" Dawson asked. "I am doing one thing different every day and this is the one thing I am doing today."

Jilly very softly said, "That would be nice."

Dawson opened her lunchbox and saw that her Mom, or was it Dad?, she never knew who packed her lunch, had put an orange in there. She was disappointed that it was not a Honeycrisp apple.

It turned out that Jilly knew a lot about apples. Her favorites were Gala apples. Her second favorites were Granny Smiths. This name made Dawson laugh.

Jilly didn't like Red Delicious apples at all. She explained that they looked great, like perfect 'A is for Apple' apples, but tasted like sand and mud mixed together. Jilly said, a little less softly than she normally spoke, "They have chewy skins, which I spit out, and are sad and brown inside."

This made Dawson laugh again. She had never heard a fruit being called "sad and brown inside."

After lunch, on the way back to class, Dawson said to Jilly, "Tomorrow I have to sit with my friends again, but you should join us. I'll ask my Mom, or my Dad, to pack me two Honeycrisp apples. One for you and one for me."

The rest of the day Dawson felt happy. As she should, since she made a new friend. And the best thing about making a new friend is that the other person makes a new friend, too.

The fourth day was also a school day.

While Dawson and the three other children, Ella, Brock and Jilly, were eating the Honeycrisp apples that Dawson's Dad had washed, sliced and put into her lunchbox, she said aloud, "I have to do something different today, but I don't know what it is."

Ella asked, "What have you done so far?"

This was a good question. Dawson answered, "I ate an apple instead of an orange. And that turned out well. I looked at the sky instead of the ground and I tripped and fell..."

Ella added correctly, "That didn't turn out so well."

Dawson continued, "And yesterday, I had lunch with Jilly."

Jilly smiled and said, "Which turned out very well." All the children, all with Honeycrisp apple slices in their hands and mouths, agreed.

Brock held up the apple slice. He said, "This is new, I mean different. You've never brought apples to school before. And this is enough for all of us."

This made Dawson happy, since she had done something different without even trying. This was proof she had gotten out of her rut.

That evening Dawson opened her desk drawer and pulled out a diary that her Aunt Ruth had given to her.

It was still in the plastic wrap since Dawson had never used it.

She found a pen and put the pen and the diary on her bedside table.

“Tomorrow,” Dawson declared to her teddy bear, “I will get up early and start my diary. That will be different!” Then she fell asleep.

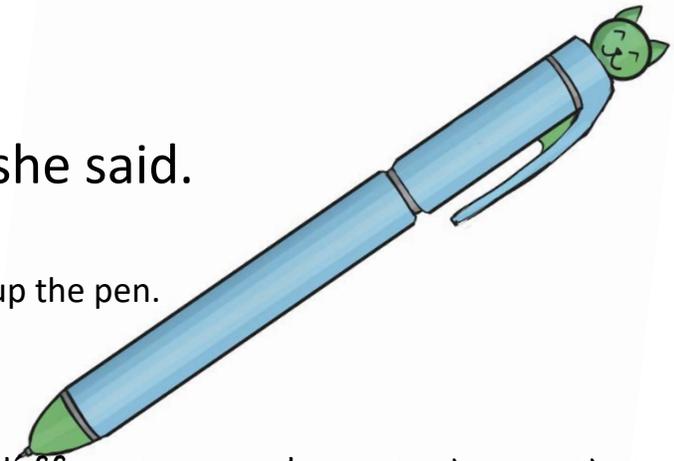
In the morning Dawson did as she said.

She woke up a little early, took the plastic off the diary and picked up the pen.

She started writing:

Today is the fifth day that I am doing one thing different every day. I'm happy that today's different thing is already done. I started this diary!

I wonder what I will do different tomorrow? Or the next day? Or the day after that?



Dear diary, I will tell you what I have done different so far. Get ready! It's a great story. There are Honeycrisp apples *yum!*, skinned knees *ouch!* and a new friend *Jilly!* Plus lots of apple slices. *Also yum!*

She put the diary down on the table and was about to start getting ready for school when she noticed that she forgot to name her diary.

Calling it "Dawson's Diary" wasn't enough. This diary needed a better name.

She had it!

She wrote on the cover, in her most careful writing:

Dawson's Do One Thing Different Every Day Diary.

The End.

What one thing will *you* do different tomorrow?

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