**AOW: Week of Oct. 3 Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**A little robot named MEDi is a big help at a Florida children's hospital**

   By Sun Sentinel, adapted by Newsela staff 08.08.16

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — MEDi is a robot who distracts and comforts children while they are in the hospital. He helps with their fears of all the things that frighten them like prickly needles, endless hallways and mysterious medical equipment.

**Songs, Stories, Deep Breathing Tips**

The little blue and white robot works at Broward Health Children’s Hospital in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He has just the right touch when it comes to keeping children calm. MEDi's name is short for Medicine and Engineering Design Intelligence, and he looks like a toy. The robot is just 2 feet tall and weighs only 15 pounds, but is a big hit with kids.

Dr. Patricia Rowe-King runs the children's program at the hospital. She says that MEDi takes on many roles with the kids such as companion and pain coach. He is also a teacher, and tells them what to expect when they are having blood drawn or a cast removed.

Broward Health is one of only eight hospitals in the country that use MEDi to help young patients. The robot speaks English and Spanish, and has comforted cancer patients from 2 to 14 years old. He is programmed just for the children's hospital, and gives tips on how to manage pain and fear using deep breathing. He can also help with blood tests, changing bandages and shots. Most of all, MEDi is a friend to the hospital’s youngest patients.

**Making Hospitals Less Scary**

Tommy Boegler is 4 years old and was diagnosed with kidney cancer in February. He has become fast friends with MEDi in the past few weeks. When Tommy needs his blood drawn, MEDi is right there with him, telling him what is coming next and distracting him just before the needle prick. For example, to get Tommy’s attention, MEDi asked for help getting something out of his eye, then said, “You’ll never guess what color my blood is. The same color as my toes.” MEDi can also sing, dance, tell a story, or play a game.

Kasey Castro works with Tommy when he is at the hospital. Castro says that hospitals can be scary for kids, but MEDi helps to distract and educate them. Castro says, "He can make it more fun and less threatening for them.”

**#5 (see questions on back) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

During a hospital trip this week, Tommy’s mom, Beth-Ann Boegler, asked if he thought his robot friend would remember him. Tommy was sure he would, and he was right. MEDi has software that helps him recognize faces, and is programmed to greet each child by name. When MEDi came into the room, Tommy’s face lit up. After the robot said hello to Tommy, he gave the boy a high-five and then danced, playing his own lively tune with Tommy dancing along with him.

The past few months have not been easy for Tommy. Tommy's mom says he spent 100 days in the hospital. He has had two surgeries, seven radiation treatments and 23 chemotherapy treatments, with two more to go.

**Doctors Appreciate MEDi**

Tommy does not think that the hospital is as scary now, thanks to his robot friend. “MEDi took the fear of being here away,” his mom says. “There were a lot of dark days for a while. We didn’t think he’d ever get out of the hospital." She says that Tommy is doing well.

Dr. Hector Rodriguez-Cortes, Tommy’s physician, says that when the robot helps the patient, he is helping the hospital's workers too. He makes it easier for them to do their jobs. Cortes says, “This thing that looks like a toy puts the patient in a more calm state so the nurses can move ahead with the procedure.”

MEDi seems to be a hit with doctors as well. Rodriguez-Cortes says, “I’ve danced with him, but it looks like the robot was doing a better job than me.”

**Reading Questions:**

1. **Which detail BEST supports the article's central idea?**
	1. MEDi's name is short for Medicine and Engineering Design Intelligence, and he looks like a toy.
	2. He is also a teacher, and tells them what to expect when they are having blood drawn or a cast removed.
	3. Tommy Boegler is 4 years old and was diagnosed with kidney cancer in February.
	4. He has had two surgeries, seven radiation treatments and 23 chemotherapy treatments, with two more to go.
2. **Which sentence BEST summarizes the section "Doctors Appreciate MEDi"?**
	1. Doctors respect MEDi even though he looks like a toy.
	2. Doctors admire MEDi because he is a better dancer than they are.
	3. Doctors value MEDi because he makes it easier for them to do their jobs.
	4. Doctors are grateful for MEDi because he is a calm hospital worker.
3. **Read the sentence from the first paragraph of the article. *He helps with their fears of all the things that frighten them like prickly needles, endless hallways and mysterious medical equipment.* In the sentence, what does the word "mysterious" connote?**
	1. something that is secretive
	2. something that is controversial
	3. something that is hidden from view
	4. something that is difficult to understand
4. **Read the text selection below from the section "Doctors Appreciate MEDi." *“MEDi took the fear of being here away,” his mom says. “There were a lot of dark days for a while. We didn’t think he’d ever get out of the hospital."* Based on the text selection, what does the phrase "a lot of dark days" mean in the second sentence?**
	1. a lot of days when Tommy and his mom never saw the sun outside
	2. a lot of days when Tommy and his mom had to sit in the hospital room without any lights
	3. a lot of days when Tommy and his mom felt very sad
	4. a lot of days when Tommy and his mom had no understanding of why Tommy was in the hospital
5. **Go to the text where it says, “Question #5”. What would be a good subheading for this section? Why?**