

"The Marble Champ"

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In literature, Characters face Challenges and learn to Survive. In the short story "The Marble Champ" by Gary Soto, Lupe learns to overcome her difficulties by working hard and believing in herself.

Lupe overcomes her difficulties through hard work. Soon after Lupe decided to become skilled at marbles, She came home from school and decided to waste no time before playing marbles. But this wasn't just play, this was serious work. Lupe had never been good at sports. So this time she was determined to become good at marbles. She picked five marbles that she thought were her best. Lupe didn't practice on any old table; she smoothed her bedspread to make it into a good surface for her marbles. She really thought about what to do to get good at this sport. She shot softly at first to get her aim accurate. The marbles rolled and clicked against one another. Lupe was

disappointed, but didn't give up. She decided her thumb was weak and decided to strengthen it. Lupe worked to get her thumb strong by spending three hours flicking at marbles. She worked to get her wrists strong by doing twenty pushups on her fingertips, and she worked to get her thumb even stronger by squeezing an eraser one hundred times. Gary Soto uses a lot of repetition to emphasize that Lupe worked hard to become good. For example he wrote, "She tried again and again," and "Practice, practice, practice. Squeeze, Squeeze, Squeeze."

Lupe overcame her difficulties, not only by hard work, but also because she believed in herself.

She practiced and practiced and practiced. She squeezed and squeezed and squeezed. She believed that this would work.

Lupe became pretty good. Marbles became her goal--not anything academic. She beat her brother, who

played marbles. And, she beat a neighbor friend who, not only played marbles, was a champ. She believed in herself to play against them and she might win. The friend said, "She can beat the other girls for sure, I think." This didn't stop Lupe. It didn't even make her nervous! She kept going and still believed in herself. Lupe believed in herself to try and win the academic awards. Lupe believed in herself to work and try to become good. Lupe believed in herself to go to the games and try to win. In the beginning, Gary Soto writes, "Lupe Medrano, a shy girl who spoke in whispers..." It is important to notice that Gary Soto is writing about a character who is complicated. He

Writes that she is shy,
but she sits and looks
at all of her awards.

Then, as the story goes
on, Lupe changes to a girl
who believes in herself.

In the beginning, Lupe
was shy. Then, in the
end, she shook hands with
people who watched her,
even a dog! At first,
her thumb was "weaker
than the neck of a
newborn chicken." Then,
after she exercised it,
it was swollen ~~with~~
because of the muscle.

Her thumb was so strong,
that when she shot, she
shattered a marble. Gary
Soto writes to make
us think that Lupe is
determined to become good
at marbles.