Being a Mother for the First Time
Revised selection – original text by Sagal Abdi, Minneapolis
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Pre-reading

Questions:

• What words come to mind when you read the title?

Definitions:

• Introduction – the act of making something known for the first time
• Precious – greatly loved
• Responsibility – the fact of requiring important duties and the ability to be trusted
• Activity – something that is done
• Develop – to grow
• Discipline – to teach; to give guidance and correction

Reading

Being a mother for the first time could be the best time of your life and the worst time of your life, both at the same time. That’s how Trinh describes her introduction to motherhood.

When Trinh got pregnant, her body started to change. By the time she was three months pregnant, she didn’t like the smell or taste of any foods. So, she had to force herself to eat. When she was eight and nine months pregnant, it was hard for her to sleep and walk. However, the doctor told her, “You need to walk more and get more sleep so that you will stay healthy.”

Trinh uses the words “very difficult” to describe her labor, but the words “precious gift” to describe her daughter. Trinh was in labor for more than nine hours. Yet, with a smile on her face, she says, “It was a great feeling to see my baby come into this world.”

Trinh knew that having a child was a big responsibility. She wanted to be the best mom she could be, so she joined a class called “Parents and Partners.” At the class, Trinh learned how to care for her baby. She learned what was best to feed her baby, what activities would help her baby develop, and how to discipline a child. The class was very valuable.

Becoming a mother for the first time can be both the best of times and the worst of times. Trinh believes that some of the most precious gifts can appear after what seems like the worst of times.
Understanding

1. Why was being a mother for the first time both the best time and worst time of Trinh’s life? 
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

2. What does the word **difficult** mean? 
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

3. When did Trinh have trouble sleeping? 
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

4. How long was she in labor? 
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

5. What class did she join? Why? 
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

6. List at least two things she learned in the class. 
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
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Writing

**Choice A:** Retell the story in your own words.

**Choice B:** Write about a time in your life that you would describe as both one of “the best times of your life and the worst times of your life.”

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Being a Mother for the First Time – Level 4.0