

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

20 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.

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

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

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

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

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Level 4.0

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. _____

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."
