Have you ever solved a difficult problem? Write a personal narrative for your teacher telling all about what happened when you solved a difficult problem. Be sure to use details that tell what you saw, heard, and felt.

Every summer, my family and I visit my grandparents in the country. This is heaven for my dog, Fifi, who loves to run and bark. Fifi is a Welsh corgi and a very hyperactive dog. When we get to the door of my grandparents’ house, she runs inside, up and down the stairs, around the kitchen, and in between all the chairs. She doesn’t stop barking for a minute. I try to get Fifi to calm down, but my grandparents just laugh. Pets are welcome in their big farmhouse.

On these visits I usually race around outdoors with Fifi, so she can burn off some energy. There’s plenty of space in my grandparents’ back yard, and Fifi loves to bound from one end of it to the other. She barks at birds in the apple tree and tries to chase the squirrels, but usually the squirrels are smart enough to avoid her. Fifi loves it in the country.

During our visit last July, Fifi was a special challenge. That’s because it rained for a whole week. At first I convinced my parents to let Fifi run outdoors in the rain, but when she came back in, she was wet and smelly. Of course, she rubbed against everyone and got the carpet damp with her wet fur. This did not make the adults happy. “Dry her off with a towel!” insisted my mother. My father shot me a stern look from behind his newspaper.

Then I tried to think of ways to keep Fifi occupied indoors, but it wasn’t easy. I rolled a ball across the kitchen floor for her to chase, but she got too excited and knocked over one of my grandmother’s geranium plants. This made a mess, and my father again gave me a sharp look. My mother said, “Try to restrain yourself, Kevin. You and Fifi are getting too worked up. She’s your dog. You need to keep her under control.”

“Oh, it’s nothing,” said my grandmother. “I have lots of other plants. That dog is naturally rambunctious. She can’t help herself.”

Next, I tried to hypnotize Fifi. I dangled my belt with the shiny gold buckle in front of her face. Back and forth, back and forth I dangled it, hoping that Fifi would be lulled into a quiet trance. Instead, she wagged her tail and...
barked furiously. My mother called from the other room, saying to hush up because she was trying to hear something on TV.

I felt hopeless. When would the rain stop? When could my dog get some exercise outdoors so she would behave indoors?

Then I remembered that one of Fifi’s favorite toys was out in the car. I put on my raincoat and got her two-knot rope. This special toy is more than a game—it is a type of dental floss for the dog’s teeth. I figured that a good game of tug-of-war would work off some of Fifi’s restless energy and provide some dental care, without destroying any plants.

Sure enough, when I returned with the toy, Fifi’s eyes lit up. She crouched eagerly as I waggled the toy in front of her, and then she pounced. Fifi grasped the knotted end in her teeth and struggled to pull the toy away from me. We did this a few times. My idea seemed to be working! Fifi was having fun. Maybe her teeth were also getting clean.

Then something went wrong. Fifi yelped and stopped pulling. The string had become jammed between two of her teeth!

“Okay, girl, okay,” I said softly, trying to calm her. I gently opened her mouth and tried to loosen the string. She pulled away. It must have hurt.

“Mom, Dad,” I called. They were in the kitchen, drinking coffee with my grandparents. “Come help.”

It took a team effort to solve this problem. Mom stroked Fifi, Dad held her jaw open, and eventually I was able to tug the string out of her teeth. Poor Fifi! Her gums were bleeding a little. It seemed as though she couldn’t understand how a game had hurt her. She sat down quietly in a corner of the room with a confused look on her face.

“Why, Kevin, you’re a regular veterinarian,” said my grandfather, who was watching from the kitchen door. “You know how to handle that dog well. It’s a special ability to work with animals like that.”

This made me feel a little better. I was worried that I had somehow hurt Fifi! However, soon she was her cheerful self again. Fortunately, on the last day of our visit the sun came out. Fifi was able to tear around in the back yard again, barking to her heart’s content.