



WAWA

AND THE MAGICAL

Goggles

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**Human Interests Story: Swim and Survive ft. Inclusivity and Breaking Stereotypes
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Wawa and the Magical Goggles

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In Calagna-an Island there was once a child named Wawa. He often found himself alone as his peers mocked him due to his condition, known as Orthopedic Musculoskeletal Disorder. The reason why his arms and feet are distorted giving him difficulty even when walking. 'Lame! Lame!' they teased Wawa.





One day, it was time again for the children to go to school. Wawa woke up early and placed his pencil, paper, notebook, and packed lunch in his bag. Upon reaching the school, he greeted their teacher with genuine joy.



When all of his classmates had arrived, Teacher Romel began announcing that they would have a Swim and Survive Program on the upcoming Saturday. According to the Philippine Lifesaving Society, this program is a ten-day training to instruct children in proper swimming techniques and life-saving skills, such as Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation or CPR.



In Wawa's thoughts, he feared that his peers might mock him if he joined the training due to his condition. However, Wawa was still keenly interested in learning. Despite his inhibitions, he confidently raised his right hand. "Sir, I am interested to join!" Wawa declared. "Very good, Wawa. For those who also want to join the training, let me know and I will list your name," replied Teacher Romel. Because of this, Wawa felt an immense joy.

Saturday arrived, and Wawa was incredibly excited to head to the beach for the training. However, in his haste, he accidentally collided with an elderly man who had a peculiar appearance.



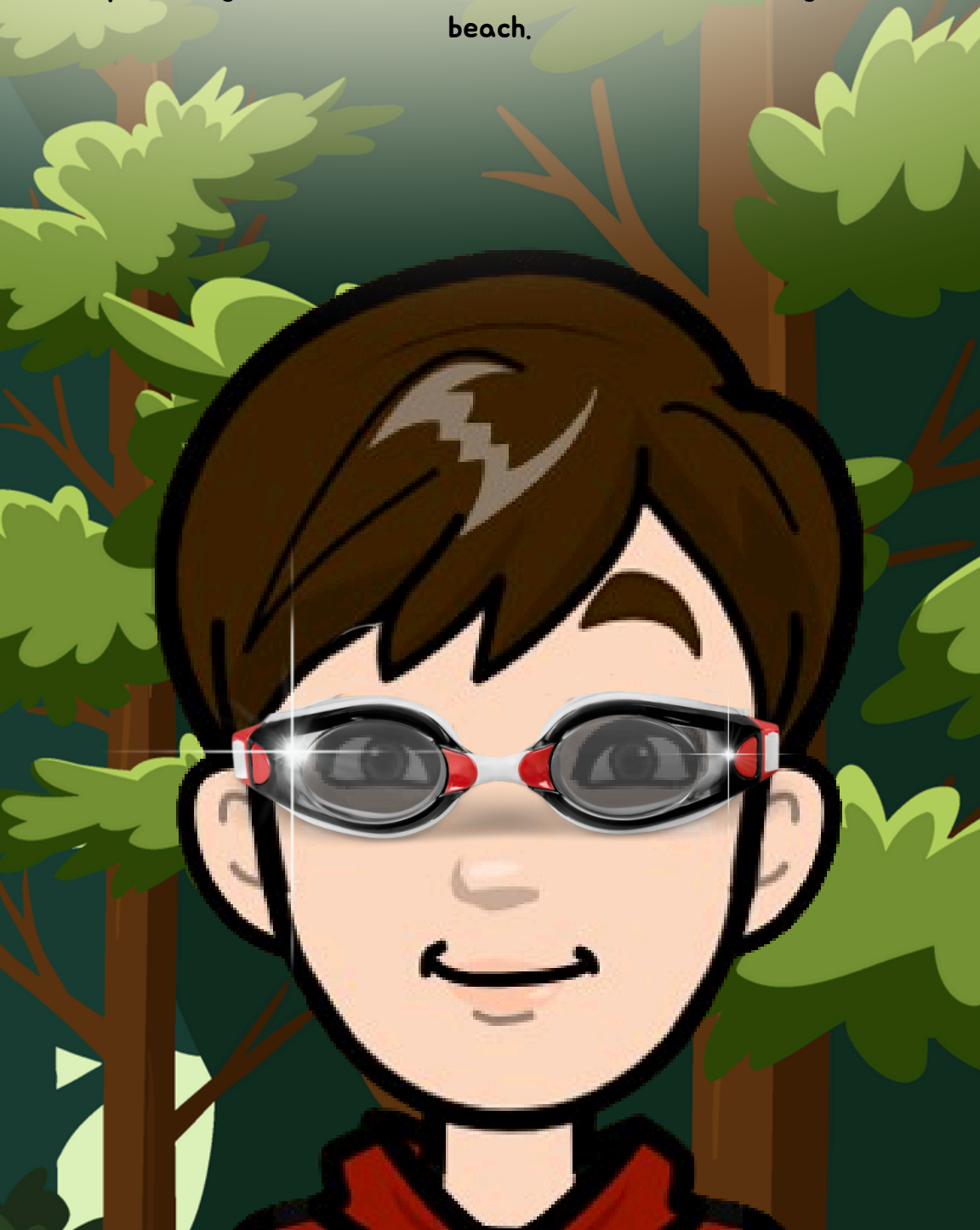
"I'm very sorry, Grandpa. I'm in a hurry because I will be joining a swimming training, and according to our teacher, through this training I can help myself and others in times of emergency," Wawa explained apologetically while assisting the old man to stand up.

'You are a very good child. Because of that, I have a gift for you,'
said the old man.

The old man smiled as he retrieved something from his pocket. It is a swimming goggles that can be used to protect the eyes when swimming. But Wawa was amazed because the item seemed to shine in the sunlight. "It's a pair of swimming goggles!" he exclaimed.



'Yes, grandchild. But this isn't just any swimming goggles. It's special just like you. So you must use it and believe in yourself" said the old man. Wawa wanted to inquire more about the goggles, but he was already running late for the training. Therefore, he simply accepted it, expressed gratitude to the old man, and headed straight to the beach.



The training had concluded, and Wawa had gained a lot of knowledge. On his way home, he suddenly heard someone shouting from the beach.
"Help! Help! Can anyone help me?"



"Oh my God, a child is about to drown!" Without a second thought, Wawa swiftly put on the goggles given to him by the old man. To his astonishment, he felt an unusual strength, and it seemed as if his condition had momentarily vanished. Without hesitation, he hurried towards the beach to rescue the struggling child. And behold! Utilizing the survival backstroke he had learned during the training, Wawa successfully saved the child.

"Thank you so much for saving my life, Manong. You're an amazing swimmer as if you have superpowers. What is your name?" asked the girl. "My name is Wawa," he replied. "Super Wawa!" the girl exclaimed with joy. The surrounding children who witnessed Wawa's heroic act also joined in the cheering, shouting "Super Wawa!"

Wawa simply smiled and told the girl to go home now.



Wawa remained astonished by what had happened. "I can't believe I was able to save that child's life," he muttered to himself. He retraced his steps to the spot where he had encountered the old man, hoping to find him and inquire about the special goggles. However, the old man was nowhere to be found. Frustrated, Wawa decided to head home, but he suddenly heard another scream.

Oh no! The child is about to drown!" Without a second thought, Wawa ran to rescue the child and shouted, "Super Wawa!"



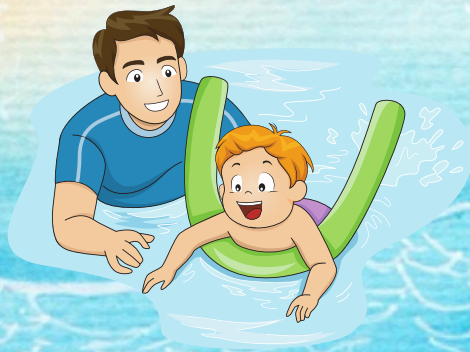
Things to Remember When in Water

#AQUACODE

(Source: Philippine Life Saving, Swim and Survive)

1 GO TOGETHER

(When swimming, it's important to have a buddy. Don't venture into deep waters alone.)



2 STAY AFLOAT AND WAVE

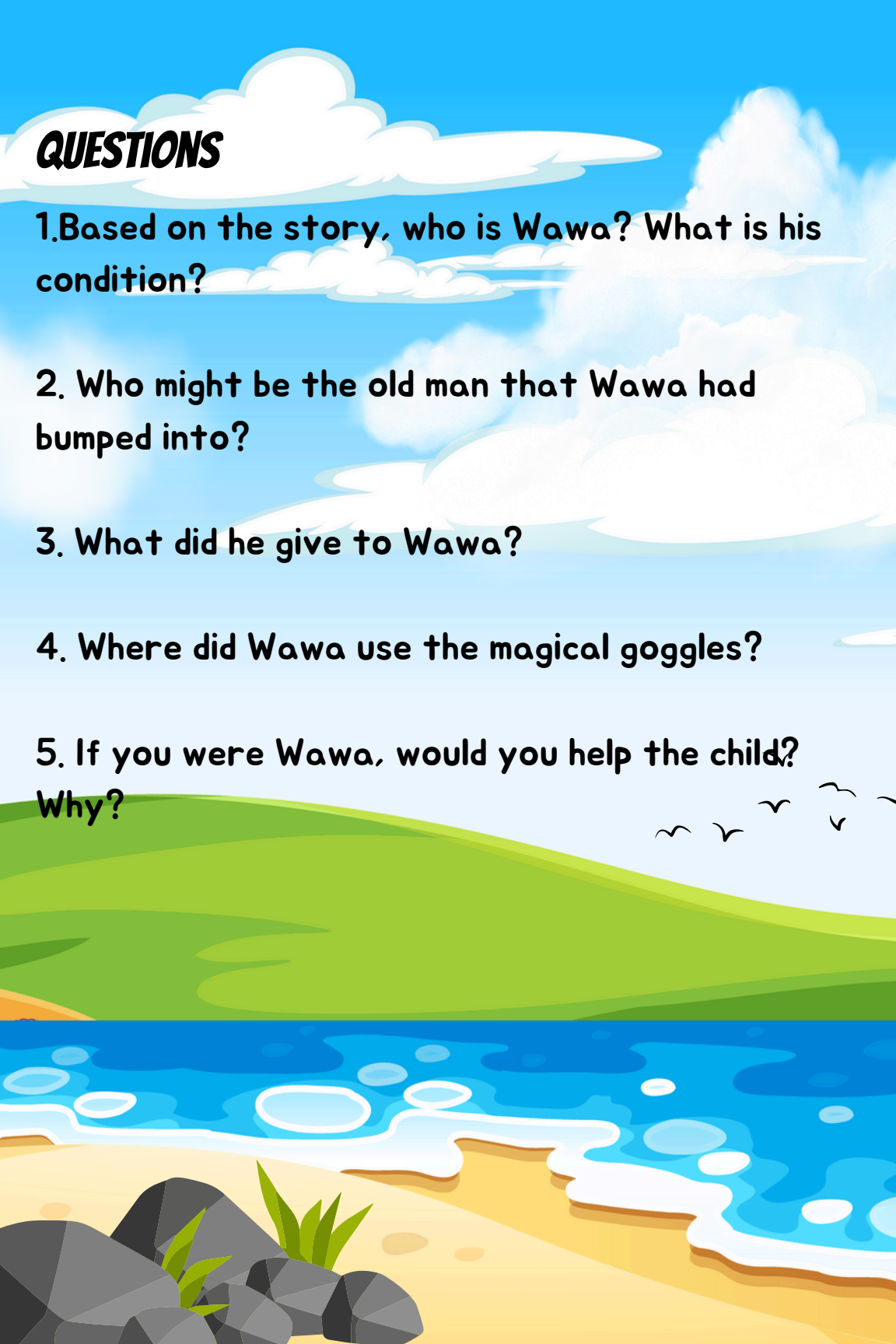
(If possible, stay afloat in the water and wave your hand or clothing to make yourself visible to responders.)



3 REACH TO RESCUE

(If you see someone in need of help in the water, look for objects that can be used to reach out to them such as ropes, long sticks, and others.)





QUESTIONS

- 1. Based on the story, who is Wawa? What is his condition?**
- 2. Who might be the old man that Wawa had bumped into?**
- 3. What did he give to Wawa?**
- 4. Where did Wawa use the magical goggles?**
- 5. If you were Wawa, would you help the child? Why?**



Salingsing Youth Organization (SaYO) is a group of volunteer and youth leaders in Calagna-an Island, in the Municipality of Carles. It is an organization whose aim is the promotion of good governance, conservation, and sustainable use of natural resources, and taking steps to mitigate the effects of rapid climate change and disasters by enhancing the knowledge and skills of the children and youth in small-island communities.

The word "Salingsing" is a Hiligaynon term for a newly sprouted plant branching out from its stems and roots which symbolizes growth, hope, and new life. It was launched in June 2019, bringing together organizations from Talingting National High School and the island community such as the Youth for Environment in Schools Organization (YES-O), Schools Hydrometeorological Information Network (SHINE), and Calagna-an Island Theatrical Artists Organization (CITAO), supported by the TEACHDRR Project of the University of the Philippines Visayas Foundation, Inc. (UPVFI) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).



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