

Lesson 1
READ THIS STORY #1, Basic

Fourth of July

In the United States, we have a big party every Fourth of July to celebrate the birth of our nation. Michael always goes to the party, but he's too busy to enjoy it.

Michael is a pyrotechnic specialist. It's his job to orchestrate the dazzling fireworks displays in the sky. His work is dangerous and requires precision.

The explosions of fireworks have to be synchronized to the rhythm of patriotic music. Occasionally, his cylinders turn out to be duds, and sometimes rockets fizzle out before reaching their destination. Michael has to be prepared for that possibility so that the thousands of spectators sitting in the bleachers will not be disappointed in the performance.

Michael doesn't do this alone. Early in the day, he supervises a team of men who arrange the fireworks in the proper sequence. Then the fire marshal visits the scene to approve their plans and to make sure safety measures are in place to protect the public from accidents.

Michael is exhausted by the time the celebration is over, but he always becomes euphoric when he hears the cheers of the crowd.