

### Sample Advocate Storytellers Transformation Story (2-3 min.)

I was in third grade when I got picked for a statewide poetry contest. I had no idea what I was getting into, but I was pumped.

I got on stage, did my thing ... and it was fine.

Then came Sarah Jensen.

Sarah crushed it — full mic drop moment.

The next year, I made it back. Guess who I faced? Sarah Jensen.

Guess who lost? Me. Again.

Fifth grade — my last shot. I practiced. I strategized. I begged my mom for a red A-line dress and even shaved my legs for the first time — well, halfway, because moms back then had rules.

The day came. I took a deep breath and began reciting poem lines I'd painstakingly memorized.

And then ... snickers.

Those preteen boys in the front row were laughing. At me.

I froze. My teacher mouthed, *Are you finished?*

I jumped off the stage, bolted down the aisle, locked myself in the bathroom. Dress flying, half-shaved legs and all.

A few minutes later my teacher knocked.

"Carrie, what do you want to do?"

Through tears I whispered, "Tell the judges I want another shot."

She did. They agreed.

And this time, I gave that poem everything I had.

Sarah Jensen still won.

But I took second — and I knew I had won because someone looked me in the eye and said, "You've got this."

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Years later, there was a photo on our fridge of a little girl from Haiti — Jessula Petit Blanc. Bright eyes. Braids tied with a bit of ribbon. My family sponsored her through Compassion International, partnering with what God was already doing in her life.

Letters came every year: how she loved reading, how she helped her siblings, how sponsorship kept her in school when her parents couldn't afford fees.

Then one day we got the update: Jessula had graduated — and become a teacher.

A teacher — like the one who told me, "You've got this."

That's what sponsorship is. Not charity. Partnership. It's looking at a child and saying: I see you. I believe in who God created you to be. I'm willing to be part of your story.

And in God's kindness, I disciplined Jessula to transform her life. I didn't expect it to transform me.

And in God's exponential kingdom math, I disciplined Jessula, and now she's discipling a classroom of children, year after year after year.

Right now there are kids like Jessula waiting for someone to say yes — someone to give them a chance to step into their calling.

So here's my question: Who's your Jessula?

Today you can be the person who looks a child in the eye — maybe across an ocean — and says the words every heart longs to hear: "You've got this."

Go to the table. Pick up a packet. Say yes.

Because there's a child waiting.