

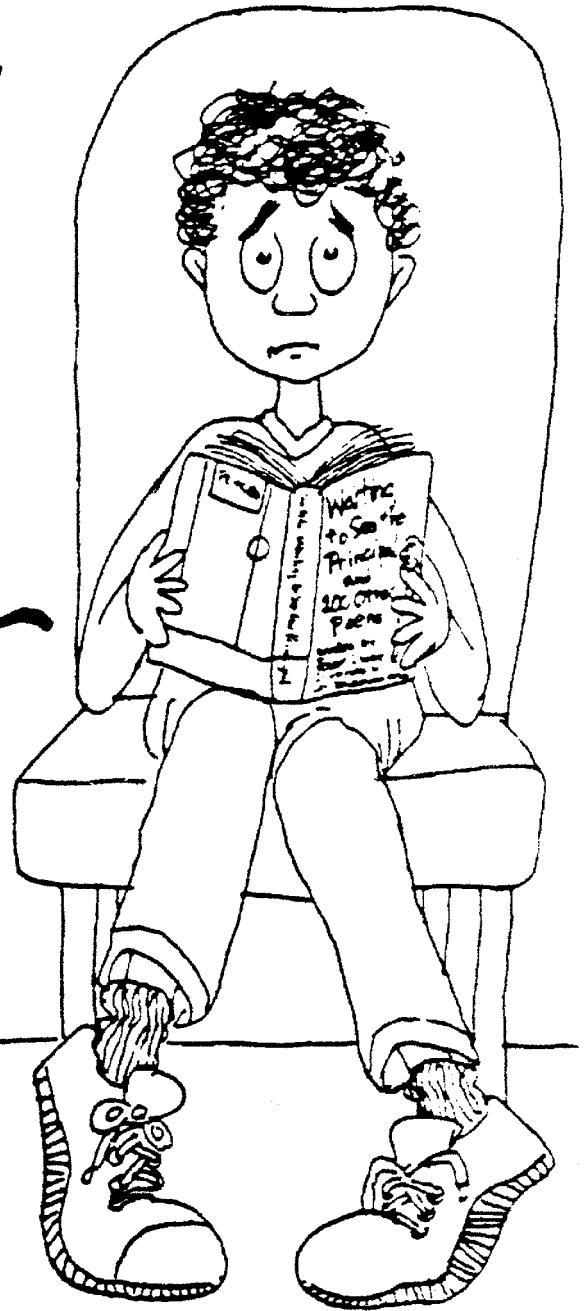
A collection of nearly 60 poems and illustrations that are slightly irreverent and charming. Students will laugh out loud in grades K-7. The poems are about school, home, sports, and wild things.

Waiting to See the Principal and Other Poems

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Waiting to See the Principal and Other Poems



Written by
Joe Sottile
Illustrated by
Lori Aman

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Contents

1.....School

2.....Home

3.....Sports

4.....Wild Thing

5...Student & Teacher

6.....Odds & Ends

Introduction

The title of this book was almost: *Waiting for the Principal While My Cat Is Sick at the Vet's Office, and Other Poems*. I had heard that if you put "cat" in your title, it makes the book more interesting. Research shows there are many cat-book-buyers roaming mall bookstores. And there are what I would call two cat poems in the book. But I decided that it was just *too silly* to have such a long title. Consequently, I came up with a shorter one. That's the kind of stuff kids like to ask you at Question & Answer sessions, "Did you have any other titles in mind for your new book?" I like being interviewed by students and reporters.

I have been interviewed five times for various publications and the interviewer has never asked me about my illustrator, Lori DeLeonardis-Aman. That oversight always annoys me. So I stress how important Lori was in creating this book. I want readers to realize that she deserves at least half the credit for its creation. And most authors can't choose their illustrators. The publishers usually do that. I am just lucky!

Lori is a very modest artist and teacher. Whenever I thank Lori for her delightful illustrations, she simply says, "Well, Joe, without your poems there would be no book."

"Well, Lori, without your creative pictures there would be 50% less magic on the following pages."

Now I feel better that I have set the record straight.

Speaking of being upfront and straight, this introduction comes with a few warnings, Gentle Reader:

WARNING ONE: Poets and illustrators never feel "done" with all of their poems. They even tinker with some of them after publication. Poets like to add words, delete words, and change words. Illustrators like to change illustrations—making them darker or lighter, bolder or softer, bigger or smaller.

WARNING TWO: Some of these poems and illustrations first appeared in *Picture Poetry on Parade!* Now they may be bolder and more dramatic. Perhaps a few poems were snuck in here from the previous book as "bonus" poems, if you never read *Picture Poetry on Parade!* because they wanted to join a new parade. Whether it's the first or second time they march by, you will enjoy them. They are my "classic" poems that I read to schools.

WARNING THREE: Some of these poems and pictures will make you giggle or laugh out loud. So don't drink chocolate milk, while reading them or else milk might fly up your nose and spray these nice white pages. Please: no snorting milk here. It would be a sticky shame if that happened. We hope some of these pages stick to your tongue and your mind, not your hands.

WAITING TO SEE THE PRINCIPAL

The teacher sent me to the office,

Ms. Bee is a Brontosaurus.

All I did was:

Put a tack on her chair,

While the principal was there,

Got some glue in Jill's hair,

Yelled, "Ms. Bee isn't fair!"

And, "I wish your weren't here."

Why did I get sent to the office?

All I did was:

Stick chalk in the erasers,

While I sat in the corner.

Oh, I did call her "Ms. Bumblebee."

Could have called her something worse,

Could of even cursed.

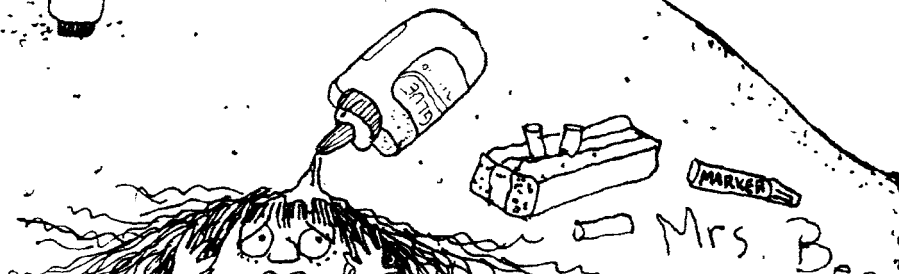
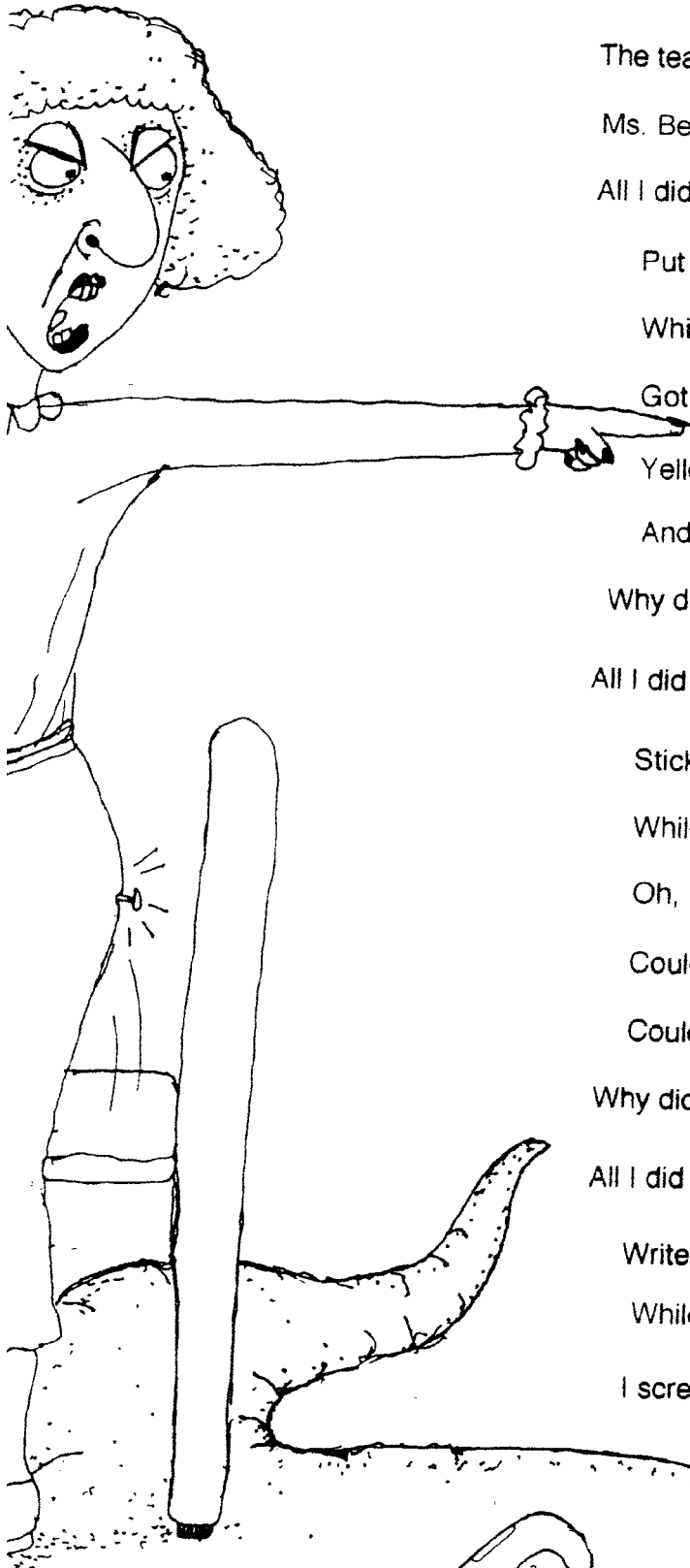
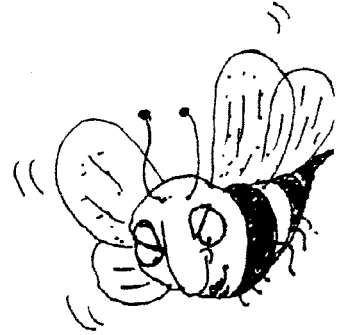
Why did I get sent there?

All I did was:

Write on the wall,

While Ms. Bee stood in the hall.

I screamed at my friend Paul.



Could of even
cursed.

Why did I get sent
here?

All I did was:

Write on the wall,

While Ms. Bee
stood in the hall.

I screamed at my
friend Paul.

And I made a little
girl fall.

Oh, did she bawl
and bawl.

Why did I get sent to
the office?

All I did was:

Fool around
a little.

This isn't
very fair.

Don't dare say,
"I don't care.

Or I'll pull out
all of your hair.

You're right—
I DON'T CARE!"



All I want to know is:

"Why do you care?"

And Mr. Carmen
spoke,

"I care because
you're important,
worthwhile, and
a member of my
school family."

"Tell me more,"
I begged.

"We're like one big
family here.

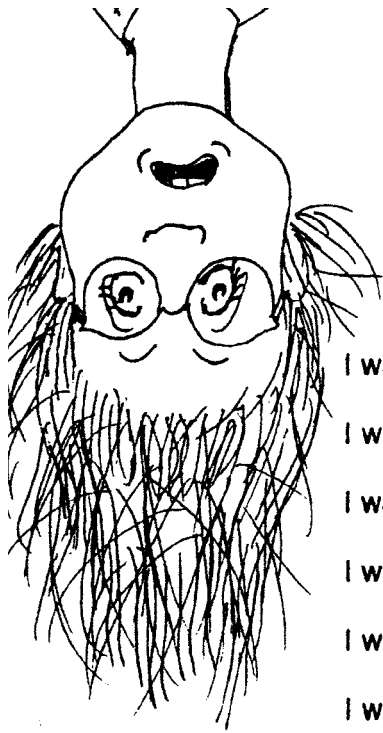
We care about each
other."

And then Mr. Carmen
looked into
my heart and said,

*"Gary, God doesn't make
junk."*

All I did was:

*become a better student
from that day on.*



ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

I was worried that Mom would forget to kiss me good-bye.

I was worried the school bus would pass my stop.

I was worried I'd get into a fight at the bus stop.

I was worried I had toothpaste on my cheek.

I was worried I'd never find my classroom.

I was worried my lunch money was on the kitchen table.

I was worried that I'd be late and marked "tardy."

I was worried I wouldn't know anybody.

I was worried all the bathrooms would be locked.

I was worried my teacher wouldn't like me.

I was worried all my school friends moved away.

I was worried nobody would like me.

I was worried nobody would like my new glasses.

I was worried I wouldn't know any answers.

I was worried I'd have to take a test.

I was worried the lunchroom would run out of food.

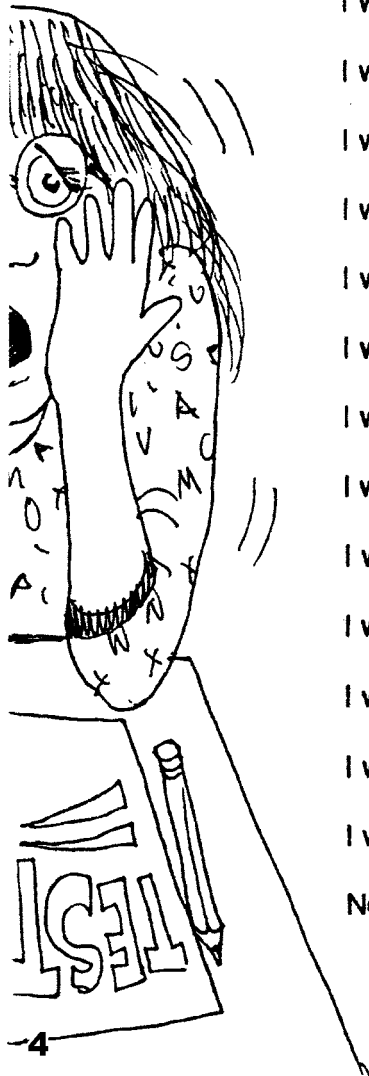
I was worried I'd trip on my shoelaces and fall flat on the floor.

I was worried I'd get into trouble on the playground.

I was worried I'd go home on the wrong bus.

I was worried my sitter wasn't home.

None of my worries came true.



SCHOOL PARTIES



Birthday Party Rules

1. No Running
2. Indoor Voices
3. Clean Up Floor
Desks
Sink
Board
Yourselves
and Teacher!

Why do teachers hate parties?

They act as if parties aren't cool.

They'd rather not have the birthday cakes,
happy handshakes, the extra calories,
the melted ice cream, and root beer floats.

Parties are fun. Parties are cool.

Parties give kids a chance to chill out.

Why don't teachers like kids running here,
there, and everywhere?

Weren't teachers kids once?

Parties are fun. Parties are cool.

Parties give kids a chance to pig out.

Parties are sloppy, messy, and fun.

Why do teachers hate parties?

Didn't they like to have fun once?



ASK THE ONE WHO REALLY KNOWS
ABOUT WHAT GOES ON IN OUR
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

I had to do this report
on the most important
person in our school.

But first I had to find
out who the most
important person was.

So I asked everyone
I could find:

“Who is the most important person in school?”

Here is what they said:

The principal said, “I am, because I keep the school running smoothly.”

The custodian said, “I am, because I keep the school neat and clean.”

The lunch lady said, “I am, because I feed the future.”

The nurse said, “I am, because I take care of the healthy and the sick.”

The gym teacher said, “I am, because I teach lifetime skills.”

The art teacher said, “I am, because I teach kids to create works of art.”

The music teacher said, “I am, because I teach children to love music.”

The librarian said, “I am, because I teach children to cherish literature.

The classroom teacher said, “I am, because I make everyone smarter.”

And then I asked the secretary, Mrs. Young, who knows everything
and everybody, and she said, “YOU ARE!”



You keep us all in business!

Children First

Secretaries are Great!
A+ Secretary

Telephone DIRECTORY

IF you want things done... Ask a busy person

Dear Parents, Your letter



World's Best Secretary

P.T.O.
SUPPLIES
COMMITTEE CLASS LISTS
SUBSTITUTES - Teachers
LUNCH MONIES
BUDGETS

BUS SCHEDULE

241	
239	
264	
310	
316	
321	

MORNING Announcements
1. Pledge of Allegiance of the Month
Gym classes

Week of Lunche

OUTGOING MAIL

Welcome to OUR SCHOOL

NOT MR. NICE GUY

I told Pete, "It's mine."

He said, "It's mine."

I replied, "It's mine."

He barked, "It's mine!"

I yelled, "It's mine!"

He screamed, "It's mine!"

I pushed him down
on his big fat behind.

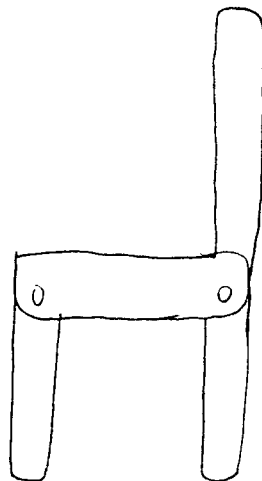
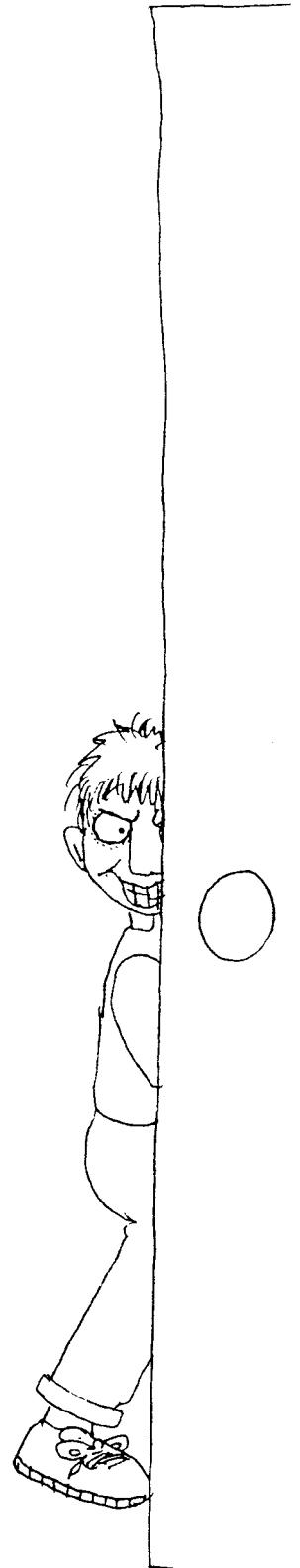
"Listen fellow," I bellowed,

"Move your feet, lose your seat!"

"Go to the office," teacher said,

"You need an attitude adjustment."

I said softly to myself, "Fast mouth,
out the classroom door I go."



Good!!

On the top of my paper the teacher wrote "Good!"
in red marker.

I wonder what was so "Good!"

About my paper.

Was my heading "Good!" ?

Did I follow directors "Good!" ?

Was my story "Good!" ?

Were my characters "Good!" ?

Was my setting "Good!" ?

Was the conflict "Good!" ?

Was my thinking "Good!" ?

Was my handwriting "Good!" ?

I wonder what was so "Good!"

About my paper.

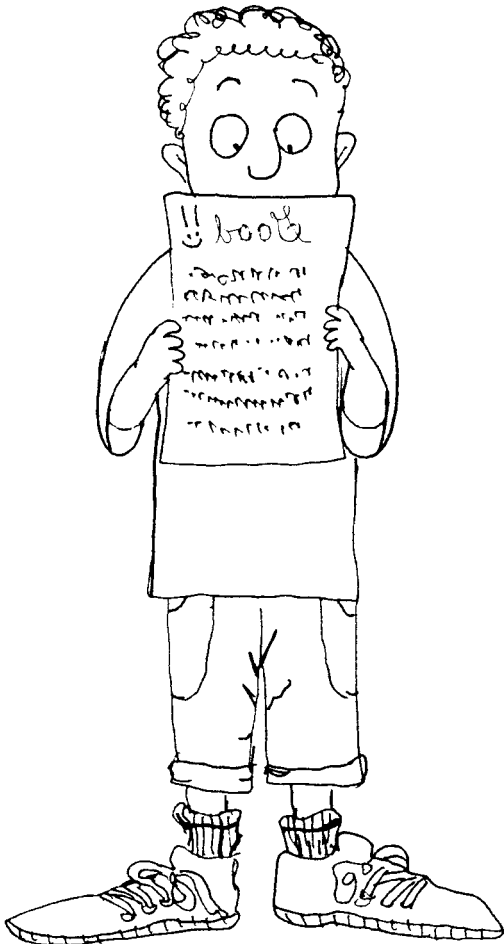
I should ask about my "Good!"

Paper.

I will ask about my "Good!"

Paper.

After all, she's a good teacher.



WHERE'S YOUR HOMEWORK?

"Where's your homework?"

My teacher will ask.

If it isn't done,

she will give me a lengthy task

that will cover the blackboard

a bizzilion and one times,

I will plaster the board with:

*Joey will not commit outrageous crimes
such as forgetting to do his homework.*

I could say that I have a mental defect

or my crazy dog, Rosco, ate it.

But, Mrs. O' Toole with her intellect
will never buy it.

I could tell the whole truth

and nothing but the truth,

but why start today with the darn truth?

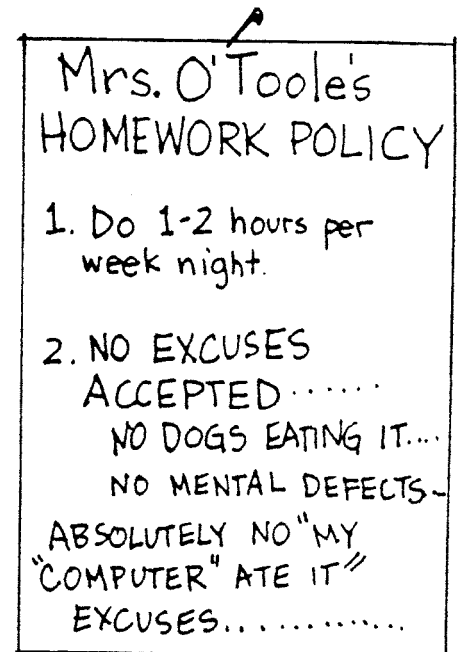
I wish my computer could write my task

Better yet, I'll say a new untruth:

"Dear Mrs. O'Toole, *my computer ate it.*

And that's the gosh darn truth."

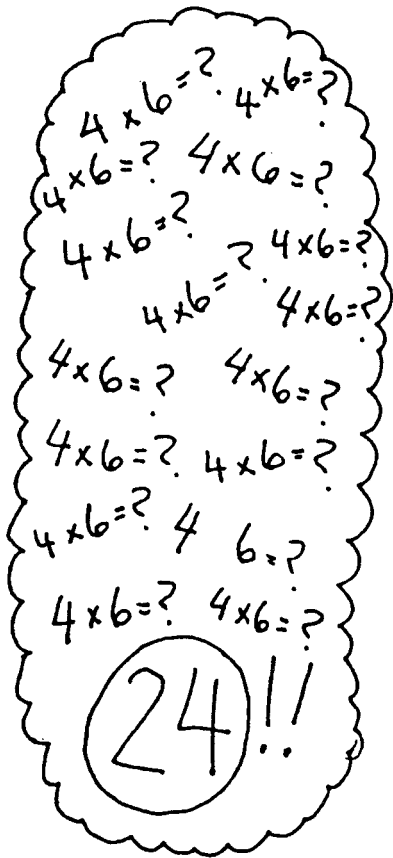
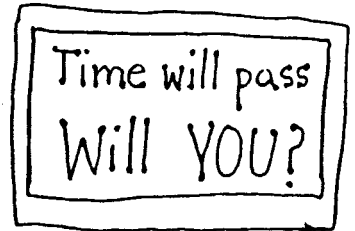
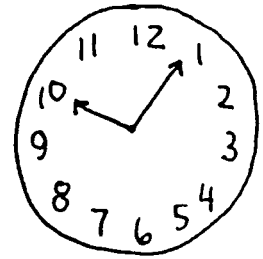
Do you think she'll buy it? Do you? Do you?



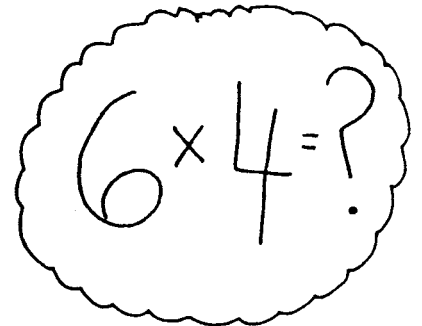
Joey will not commit outrageous crimes such as forgetting to do his homework.
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MULTIPLICATION MADNESS



- I won't multiply 4 x 6.
- I can't multiply 4 x 6.
- I wish that I could multiply 4 x 6.
- I don't know how to multiply 4 x 6.
- What is it to multiply 4 x 6?
- I might multiply 4 x 6.
- I think that I can multiply 4 x 6.
- I can multiply 4 x 6.
- I will multiply 4 x 6.
- Four times six equals 24!
- I'm sure! I'm sure!
- But what's 6 x 4?



HARDLY ANY ROOM

There's hardly any room in the lunchroom to run about,

hardly any room to shout or pout,

hardly any room to scout about,

hardly any room to shoot peas about,

hardly any room to wear a sling,

hardly any room to sing,

hardly any room to lose your money,

hardly any room to find your money,

hardly any room to play quarterback,

hardly any room to bring your tray back,

hardly any room for hand held video games,

hardly any room to remember names,

hardly any room to eat lunch,

hardly any room for a punch

...**but** these things happen every day.



SO, YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT PROBLEMS?



So, you think you've got problems?

What if you were a giraffe with a stick neck?

What if you had the backbone of a camel?

What if you had the eyesight of a bat?

What if you had the skin of a snake?

What if you had the odor of a skunk?

What if you had the vocabulary of a parrot?

What if you were the size of a gnat?

What if you had the speed of a turtle?

What if you had the gait of a crayfish?

What if you had the blubber of a whale?

What if you had as many legs as a centipede?

What if you had the eyes of a green frog?

What if you were a spider without a web?

What if you had the heart of a mosquito?

What if you had the courage of a weasel?

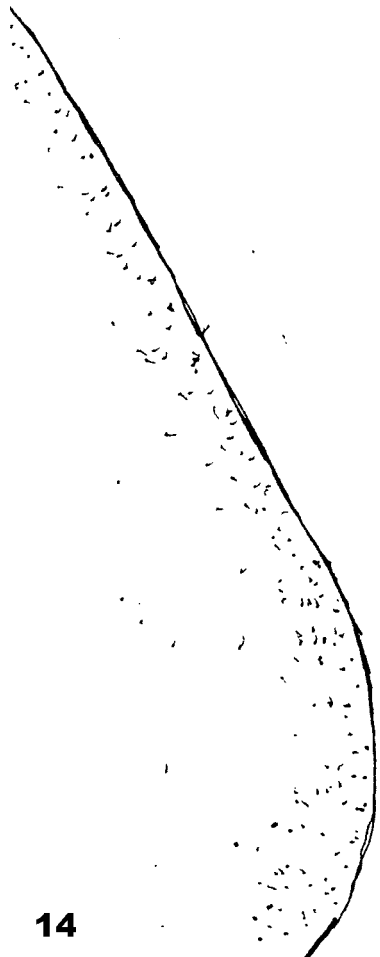
What if you had the independence of a parasite?

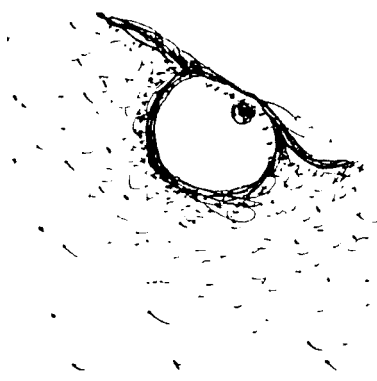
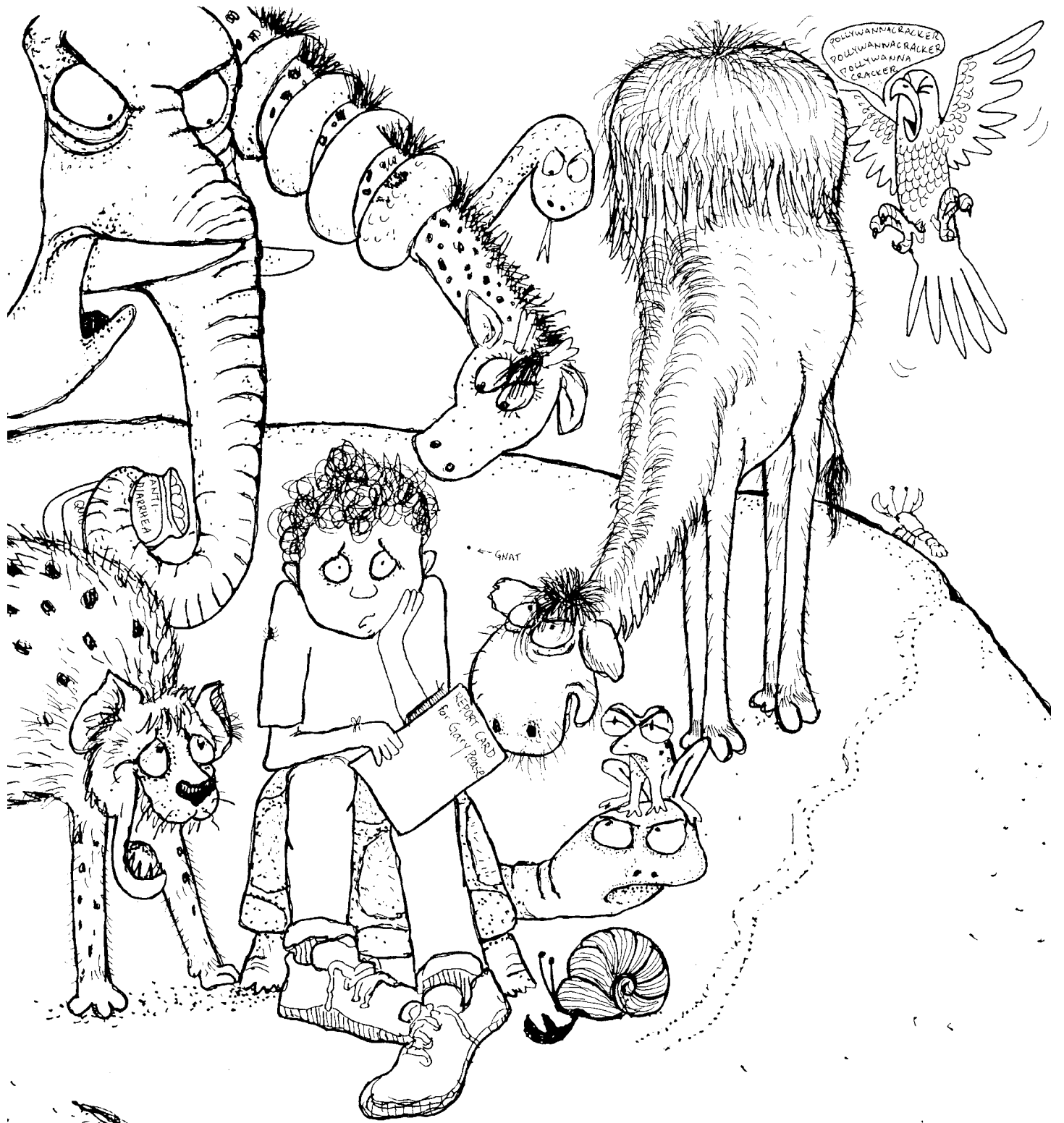
What if you had the laugh of a hyena?

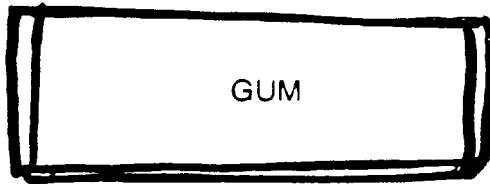
What if you had the personality of a hermit crab?

What if you were a large elephant with diarrhea?

Any way you look at it, you'd be in deep trouble?







Gum is fun, fun,

I'd like to chew some gum.

I'd like to chew a ton of gum.

I'd like to chew, chew, chew, gum, gum, gum.

But teacher says I look like a cow, cow, cow.

I'd like to be a cow out in the wide open pasture

Chewing, chewing, chewing on my cud.

Wouldn't that be fun

To munch and munch?

But teacher says, "Wait 'til lunch."

I'd love to munch and munch,

Before lunch or after lunch.

Got some gum?

I'm all out.

Got some? Got some?

gum, Gum, GUM!

I'll be your **BEST FRIEND!**



WHEN YOU RAISE YOUR HAND

My teacher says, "When you raise your hand,

It shows that you're a brave person."

But I feel like a cowardly little person.

He says with great conviction and diction,

"It shows that you're thinking."

I wish that I was home sleeping.

"It shows you're alive and well."

I feel like I'm dead at the bottom of the sea.

"It shows that you're really trying."

I feel like crying and crying.

"It shows that you probably got the right answer."

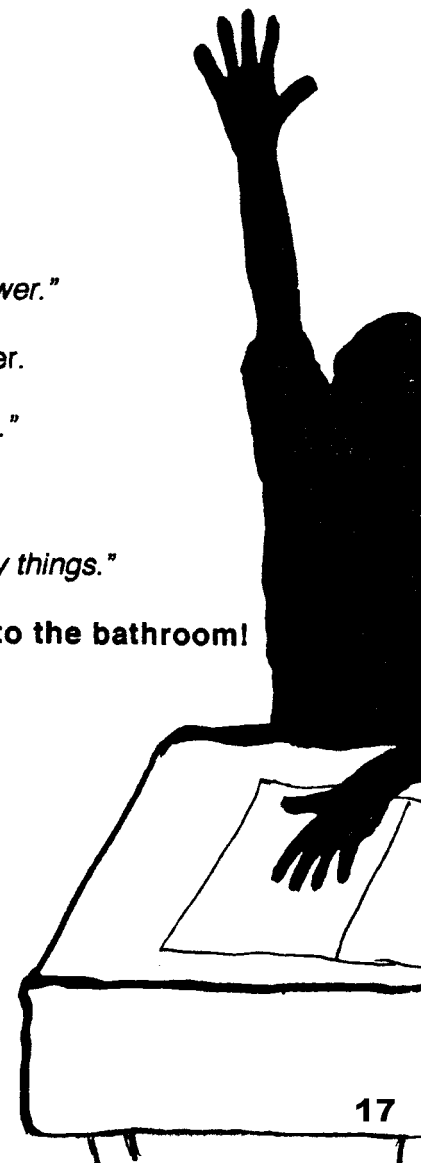
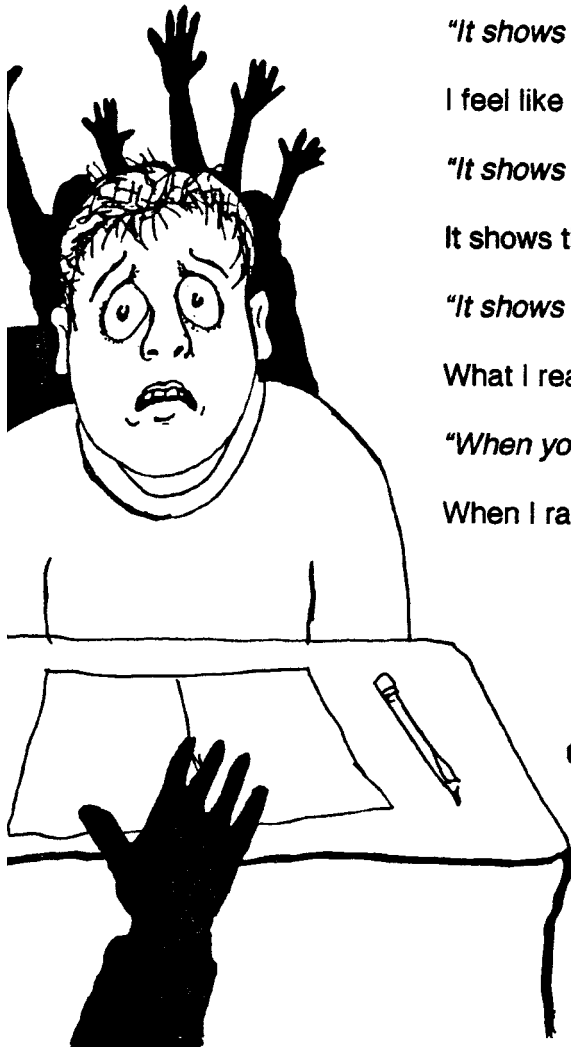
It shows that I probably got the wrong answer.

"It shows that you care about your education."

What I really care about is my next vacation.

"When you raise your hand it shows so many things."

When I raise my hand it shows I have to go to the bathroom!



COOKIE CONFLICT

I love to teach girls and boys at my school,
but lately my mind has been wandering.

When I am teaching about astronomy,
I am thinking about Half Moon cookies.

When I am in the middle of Social Studies,
I am thinking about Eskimo cookies.

When I am encouraging kids to think,
I am thinking about Lemon Dream cookies.

When I gaze out the school window,
I am thinking about Rainbow cookies.

When I take my class to our big gymnasium,
I am thinking about Olympic Gold Medal cookies.

When we walk down to the lunchroom,
I am thinking about Refrigerator cookies.

When I do an art project with the class,
I am thinking about Sand Art cookies.

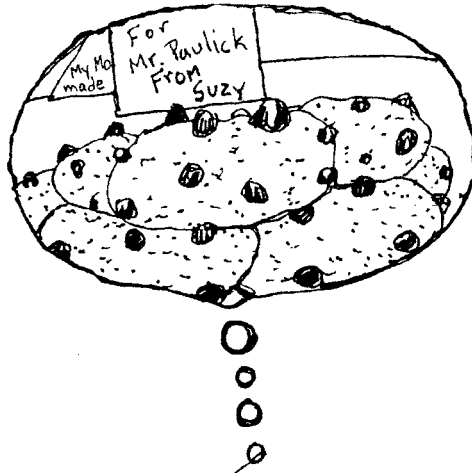
When we clean up from messy projects,
I am thinking about Kitchen Sink cookies.

When we get ready for the winter holidays,
I am thinking about Christmas candied cookies.

When the children leave for home,
I am thinking about Ninety Night cookies

I am turning into a hungry purplish monster!
I am becoming MR. COOKIE MONSTER!

Library
 Computer
 Art
 Music
 Physical Education
 Health
 Science
 Math
 Reading
 Social Studies
 Language



CHINESE FORTUNE WHEELS

It's easy to play Chinese fortunes,
Just pluck a piece of paper
from your notebook
when teacher isn't lookin'
fold it into quarters, then half it
to form a triangle, half it again,
and write on it whatever you wish.

Now you got a Chinese Fortune
Ready to pop up for your friends.

Sally's fortune wheel says:

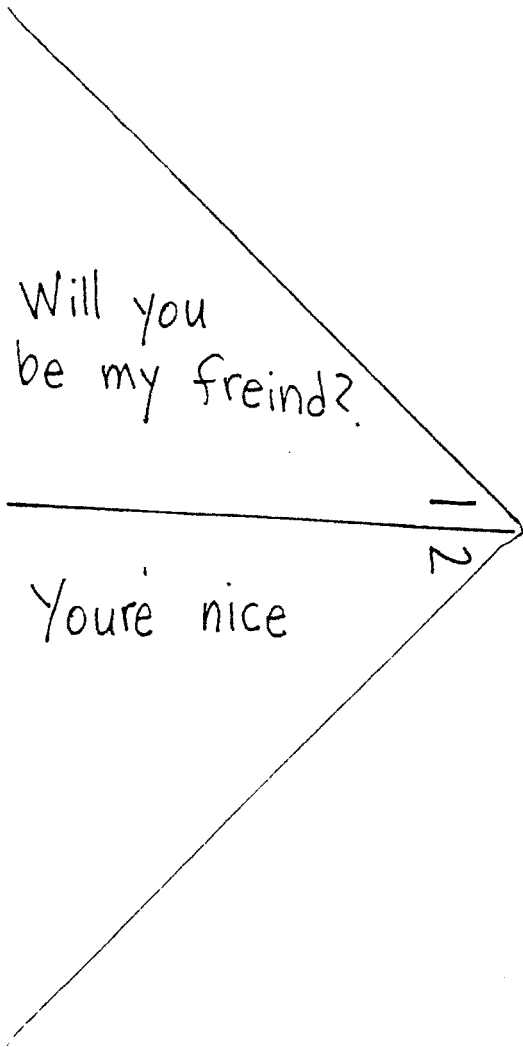
- 1--Will you be my friend?
- 2--You're nice.
- 3--You're cool!
- 4--You're handsome or pretty.

Jeff's fortune wheel says:

- 1--Dork
- 2--Dweeb
- 3--Nerd
- 4--Geek

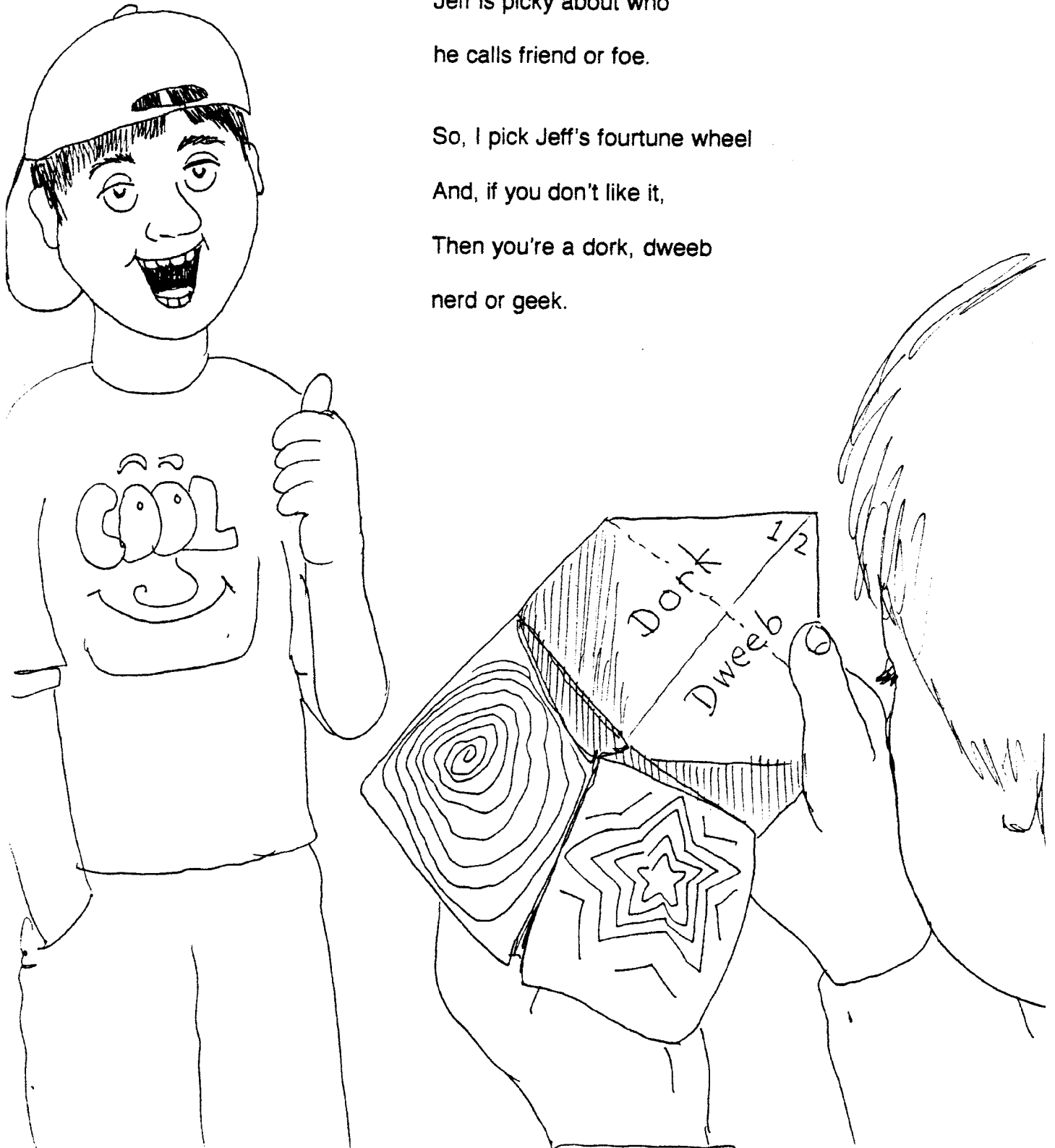
Which wheel do you like better?

I vote for Jeff's.



Jeff is my main man,
Jeff's a friend to the end,
Jeff is picky about who
he calls friend or foe.

So, I pick Jeff's fourtune wheel
And, if you don't like it,
Then you're a dork, dweeb
nerd or geek.



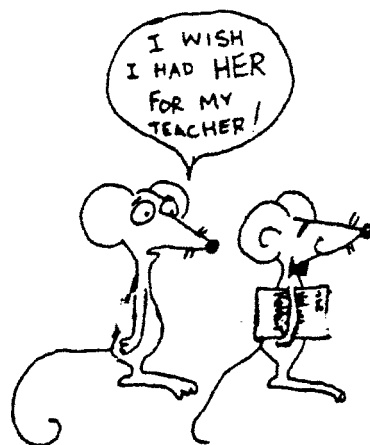
I CAN'T WRITE TODAY BECAUSE

I can't write today because my paper is wrinkled.
I can't write today because I left my homework home.
I can't write today because I don't have any lunch money.
I can't write today because my pinky needs a band-aid.
I can't write today because I don't have my lucky pencil.
I can't write today because I don't know the date.
I can't write today because it's raining cats and dogs outside.
I can't write today because I forgot to brush my teeth.
I can't write today because my dog barfed on the kitchen floor.
I can't write today because my brand new T-shirt has a hole in it.
I can't write today because my underpants are too tight.
I can't write today because my mind is broke.
I can't write today because broke is my mind.
Can't write today!



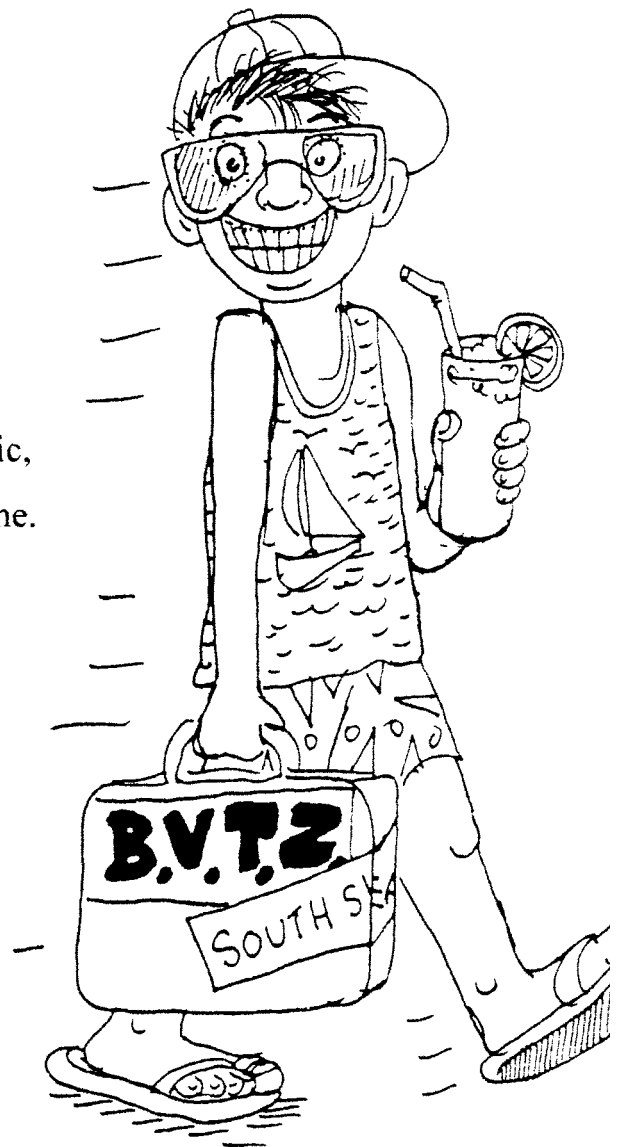
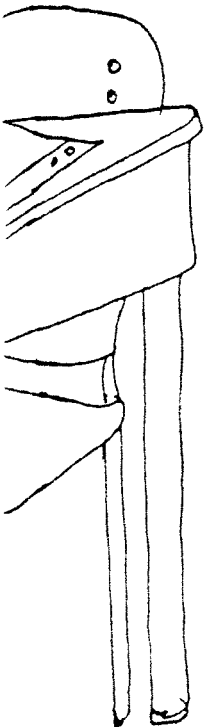
MISS SPEAKWELL SPEAKS

Dear Rad, it is true
what's in your heart
counts the most.
But speaking is an art
that you can learn.
Speaking correctly
will open doors for you.
Speaking incorrectly
will turn people off.
They will judge you hard
like the cover of a dull book
that they will never open or read.
So, Rad, it's your choice:
Do you want a friend
to heed your voice?
Then you better mend
your sloppy ways:
Use proper English
all of your days.



BATHROOM VACATION

My teacher, Mr. Osbad, is so bad
that I sometimes leave the classroom
to go to the bathroom,
when I don't even have to go,
not a tinkle, not a dinkle, not a drop.
I call this "bathroom vacation."
He sometimes calls my mom,
when I have been caught
sailing the South Seas of my mind
on a bathroom vacation.
I tried to explain to Mr. Osbad
that there are five time zones:
Pacific, Mountain, Central, Atlantic,
And Bathroom Vacation Time Zone.
But Mr. Osbad isn't buying it.
Now I have to tell Mom and Dad
about the newest time zone,
where I spend most of my day.
Do you think they will understand
about B.V.T.Z. or is this the end
of my special time zone?



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