

IT'S HARD TO BE A VERB!



Written by

**JULIA
COOK**

Illustrated by

**CARRIE
HARTMAN**

IT'S HARD TO BE A

VERB!



published by



NATIONAL CENTER for
YOUTH ISSUES

www.ncyi.org

Names: Cook, Julia, 1964- author. | Hartman, Carrie, illustrator.

Title: It's hard to be a verb! / written by Julia Cook ; illustrated by Carrie Hartman.

Other titles: It is hard to be a verb!

Description: Chattanooga, TN : National Center for Youth Issues, [2021] |

Audience: Ages 4-8. | Audience: Grades K-1. | Summary: Louis cannot control himself when he gets the urge to move at the wrong time and place, but his mom helps by teaching him techniques to get his wiggles out, stay focused, and complete tasks.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021008608 (print) | LCCN 2021008609 (ebook) | ISBN 9781931636841 (paperback) | ISBN 9781937870850 (pdf)

Subjects: CYAC: Stories in rhyme. | Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder--Fiction. | Mothers and sons--Fiction.

Classification: LCC PZ8.3.C76797 It 2021 (print) | LCC PZ8.3.C76797 (ebook) | DDC [E]--dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021008608>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021008609>



P.O. Box 22185 • Chattanooga, TN 37422-2185
423-899-5714 • 866-318-6294 • fax 423-899-4547 • www.ncyi.org

ISBN: 9781931636841 • E-book ISBN: 9781937870850

© 2008 National Center for Youth Issues,

All rights reserved.

Written by: Julia Cook • Illustrations by: Carrie Hartman

Published by National Center for Youth Issues

Printed at RR Donnelley • Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico • April 2021

DUPLICATION AND COPYRIGHT

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, video or audio recording, or otherwise without prior written permission from the publisher, except for all worksheets and activities which may be reproduced for a specific group or class. Reproduction for an entire school or school district is prohibited.

The information in this book is designed to provide helpful information on the subjects discussed and is not intended to be used, nor should it be used, to diagnose or treat any mental health or medical condition. For diagnosis or treatment of any mental health or medical issue, consult a licensed counselor, psychologist, or physician. The publisher and author are not responsible for any specific mental or physical health needs that may require medical supervision, and are not liable for any damages or negative consequences from any treatment, action, application or preparation, to any person reading or following the information in this book. References are provided for informational purposes only and do not constitute endorsement of any websites or other sources.

*To my mom for always being there
for me. I love you!*

– Julia Cook

*To my three little verbs, Sophia,
Abigail, & Jack.*

– Carrie Hartman





My name is Louis.

People say I am a verb.

That's because I'm always doing something.

The problem is that most of the time,
I end up doing the wrong "something."

It's hard to be a verb!

My knees start **itching**.

My toes start **twitching**.

My skin gets **jumpy**.

Others get **grumpy**.





When it comes to sitting still.
It's just not my deal.
Haven't you heard?

I am a
VERB!



Last week, my mom took me to get my hair cut.
She told me I had to sit really, really still.
I did at first, and then...

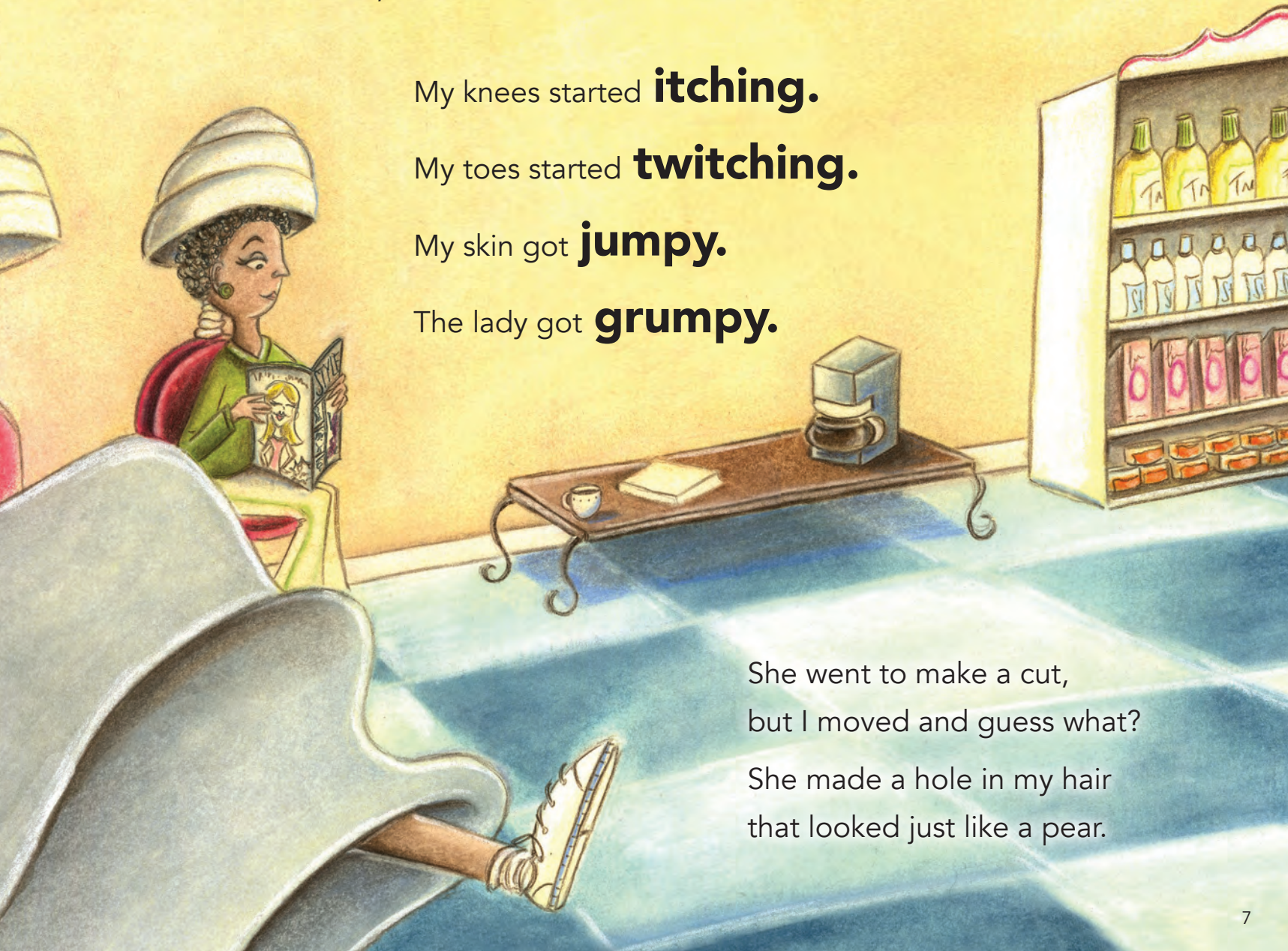
My knees started **itching**.

My toes started **twitching**.

My skin got **jumpy**.

The lady got **grumpy**.

She went to make a cut,
but I moved and guess what?
She made a hole in my hair
that looked just like a pear.







"Sit still, Louis!" my mom said.

"My sitter is still," I said.

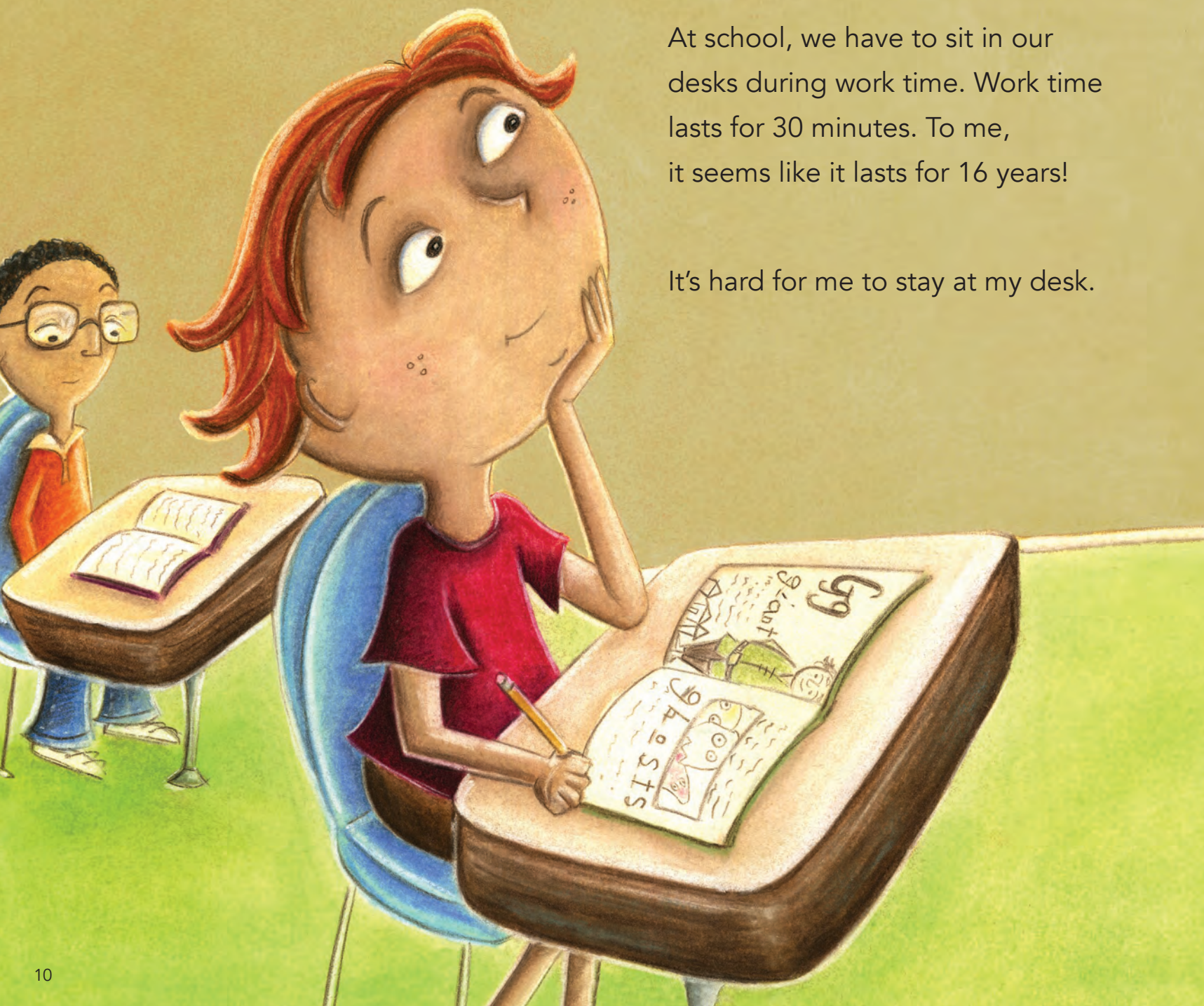
"It's my feet that are moving!"

"It's hard to be a verb!" I told my mom.

"You just have to focus," she said.

At school, we have to sit in our desks during work time. Work time lasts for 30 minutes. To me, it seems like it lasts for 16 years!

It's hard for me to stay at my desk.



The other day, I started out doing just fine and then I saw a brand new poster hanging up on the wall across the room.



My knees started **itching**.

My toes started **twitching**.

My skin got **jumpy**.

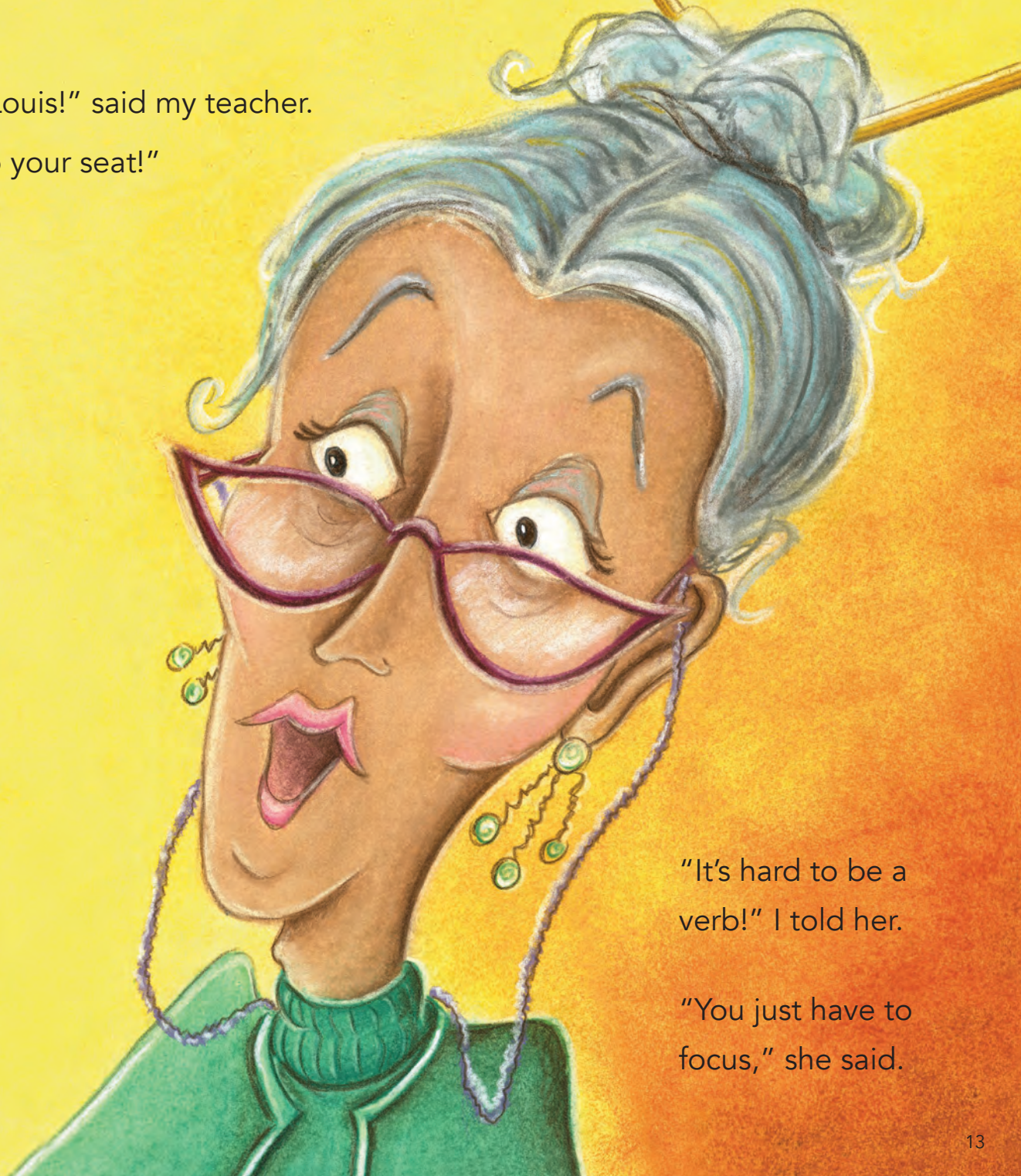
My teacher got **grumpy**.

I got out of my seat, and I tried out my feet.



"Sit down, Louis!" said my teacher.

"Go back to your seat!"



"It's hard to be a verb!" I told her.

"You just have to focus," she said.

When I have to get ready for school in the morning, it seems like it takes me forever!

Every morning, my mom has to tell me the exact same thing over and over and over again:



"Get out of bed, Louis."

"Get dressed, Louis."

"You're gonna be late for school..."





"Eat breakfast, Louis."

"Wash your face, Louis."

"You're gonna be late for school..."

"Brush your teeth, Louis."

"Comb your hair, Louis."

"You're gonna be late for school..."

"Feed the dog, Louis."

"Let him out, Louis."

"You're gonna be late for school..."



A few days ago...

I got out of bed just fine and then I got dressed...
well, almost.

While I was eating my breakfast, I saw my
brand new football sitting there on the floor.

My knees started **itching**.

My toes started **twitching**.

I picked up my ball, and...





threw it
against the wall!





My skin got **jumpy**.

My mom got **grumpy**.

Playing with the ball made no sense at all.

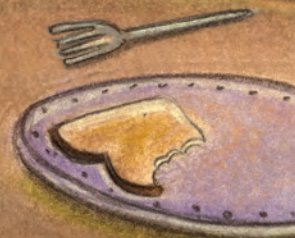
"Louis!" my mom said.
"You need to focus!"

I forgot to brush my teeth. **But I did** feed the dog.

I forgot to comb my hair. **But I did** wash my face.

I made it to school on time.

But when I came home that afternoon,
I realized something...



I forgot to let out my dog!



"LOUIS!!!!" my mom said in a not-so-nice voice, "Something has to change!"

"You have got to learn to FOCUS!"

There are two timeframes in life: 'NOW' and 'NOT NOW.'

And to you 'NOT NOW' never seems to matter!"

"OOOOOPS," I said. "I'm sorry mom. I guess I just forgot."

It's so hard to be a verb.....

My knees start **itching**.

My toes start **twitching**.

I forget a lot of stuff. My life is so rough. I make people mad, and then I feel bad.

I know it sounds strange. Oh how I wish I could change."



"You can change," said my mom. "All you have to do is learn how to focus."

"I try and I try," I said to my mom. "But I just can't do it."

"I think I know how to help you," said my mom.

"First of all, whenever you know you are going to have to sit still for a while, wiggle your wiggles before they wiggle you."

"What does that mean?"

I asked.





"Scratch your knees.

Wiggle your toes.

Stretch your skin.

Crinkle your nose."

"Shake your elbows.

Bend at the waist.

Dance in a circle,

And scrunch up your face!"

"You be in charge of all wiggles at large."

**"Wiggle them first so they
can't make you BURST!"**



Mom showed me how to wiggle my wiggles.

We even did a wiggle dance.

My dad said we both looked very, very strange.



"Next, we need to find you a
'**Focus Squishy**,'" said my mom.

"A what?" I asked.

"A Focus Squishy," she said.

"It's a soft little something
you hold in your hand.

No one else knows you have it—
they might not understand."

"You can wiggle your fingers,
while you listen and learn.
It will help you sit still until
it's your turn."





My mom got out my dad's tackle box and found a shiny, glittery, rubbery worm.

She cut the worm in half and gave me a piece. We practiced using our Focus Squishies. My dad said what we were doing was very, very strange.

"Finally," she said, "I need to make you a **Nag Board**."

"A what?" I asked.

"A Nag Board. Every morning I have to tell you what to do to get ready for school. I end up telling you over and over and over again!"

"**A Nag Board is a list** of all of those things.

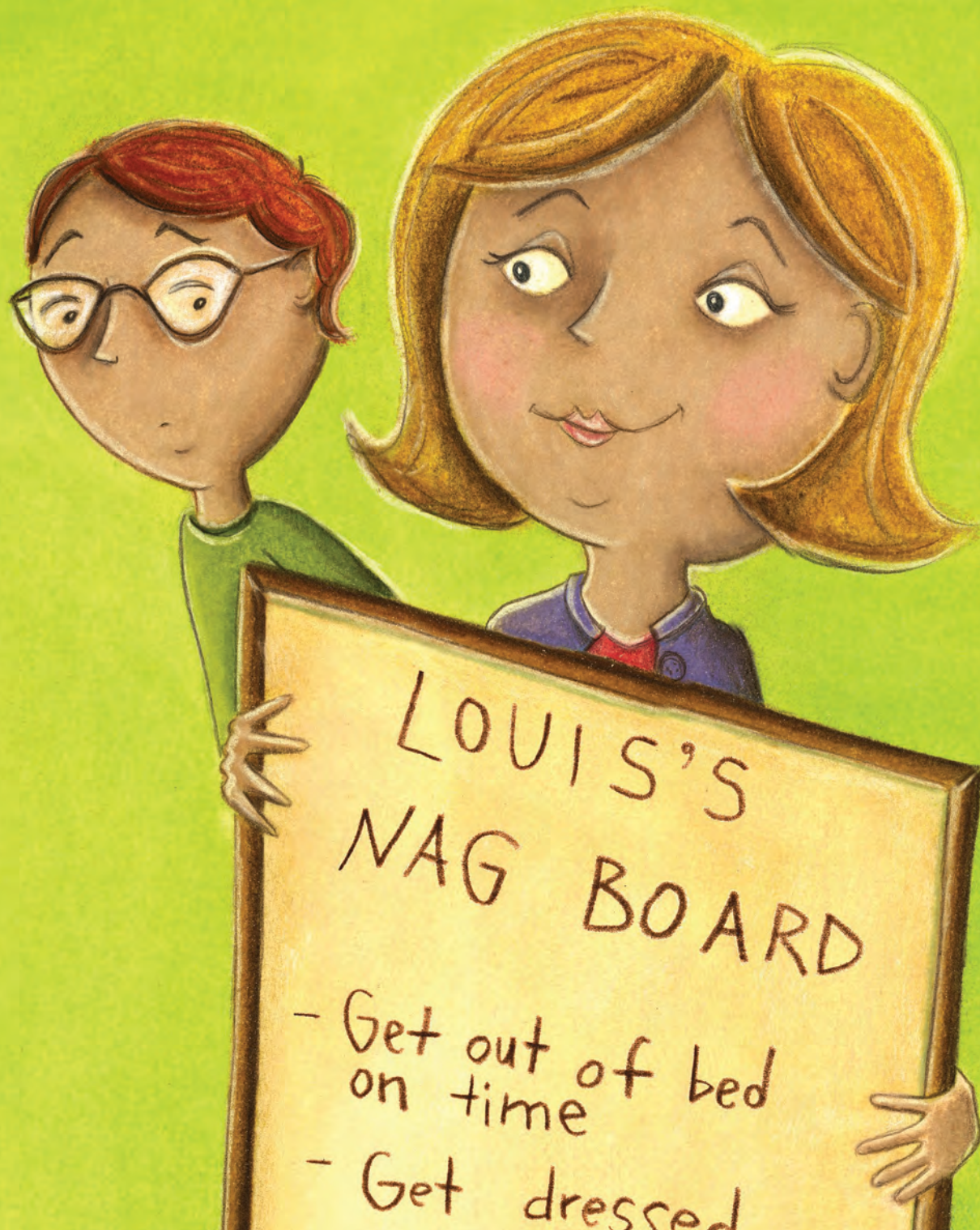
You can even check them off as you do them,
and I won't have to nag you as much.

All I will have to say to you is,
'Louis, check your list.'"

We went to the store and my mom bought
a dry erase marker board. We brought it
home and she wrote "Nag Board" at the
top, then listed everything I need to do
before school.

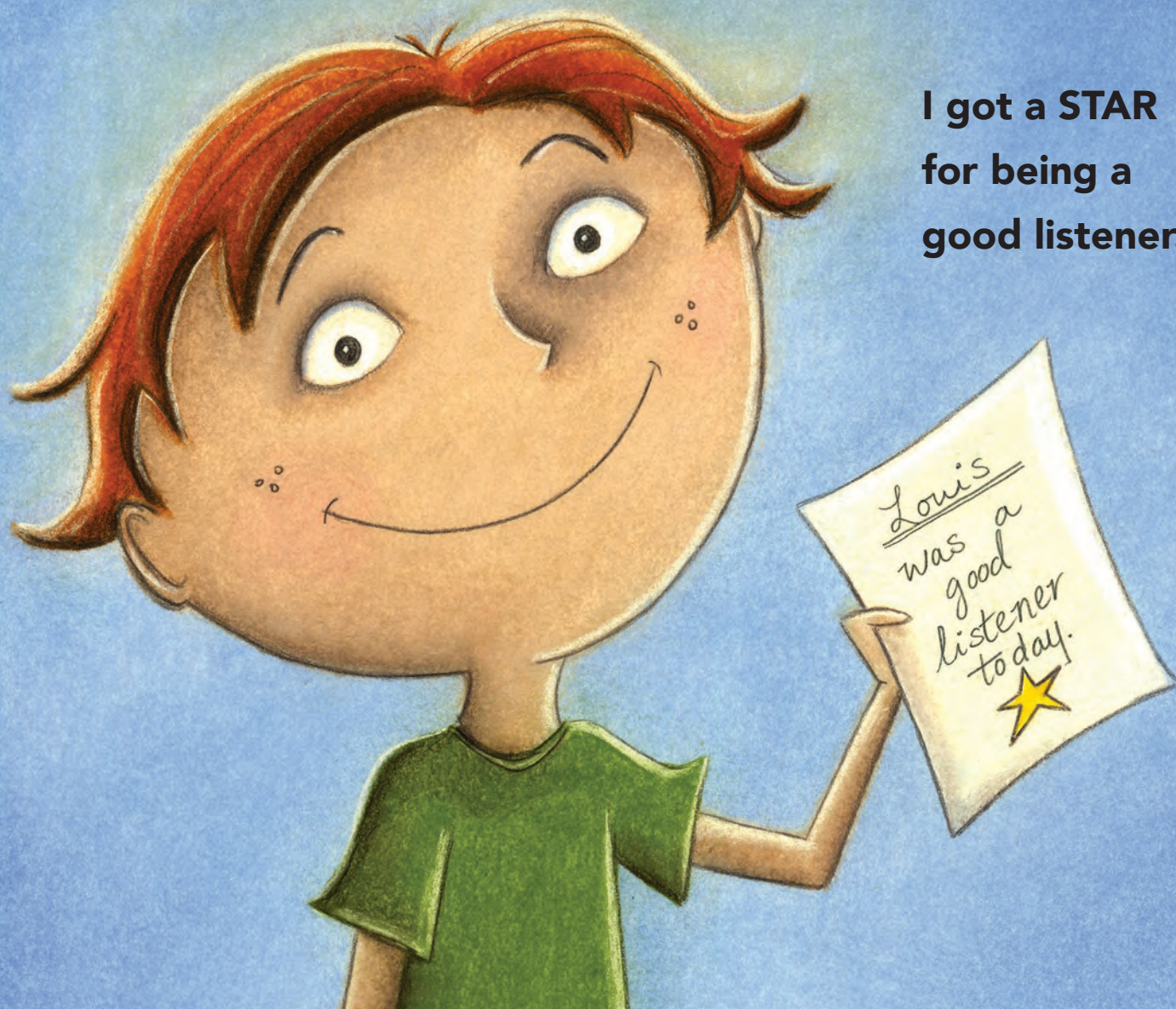
My dad read the "Nag Board."
He thought it was very, very strange.





Today, I used all of my new tricks and guess what? They really worked!
I got everything done on my Nag Board, and I was on time for school!
I wiggled my wiggles before story time and they didn't end up wiggling me.
And, I used my Focus Squishy without anyone knowing about it and...

**I got a STAR
for being a
good listener.**

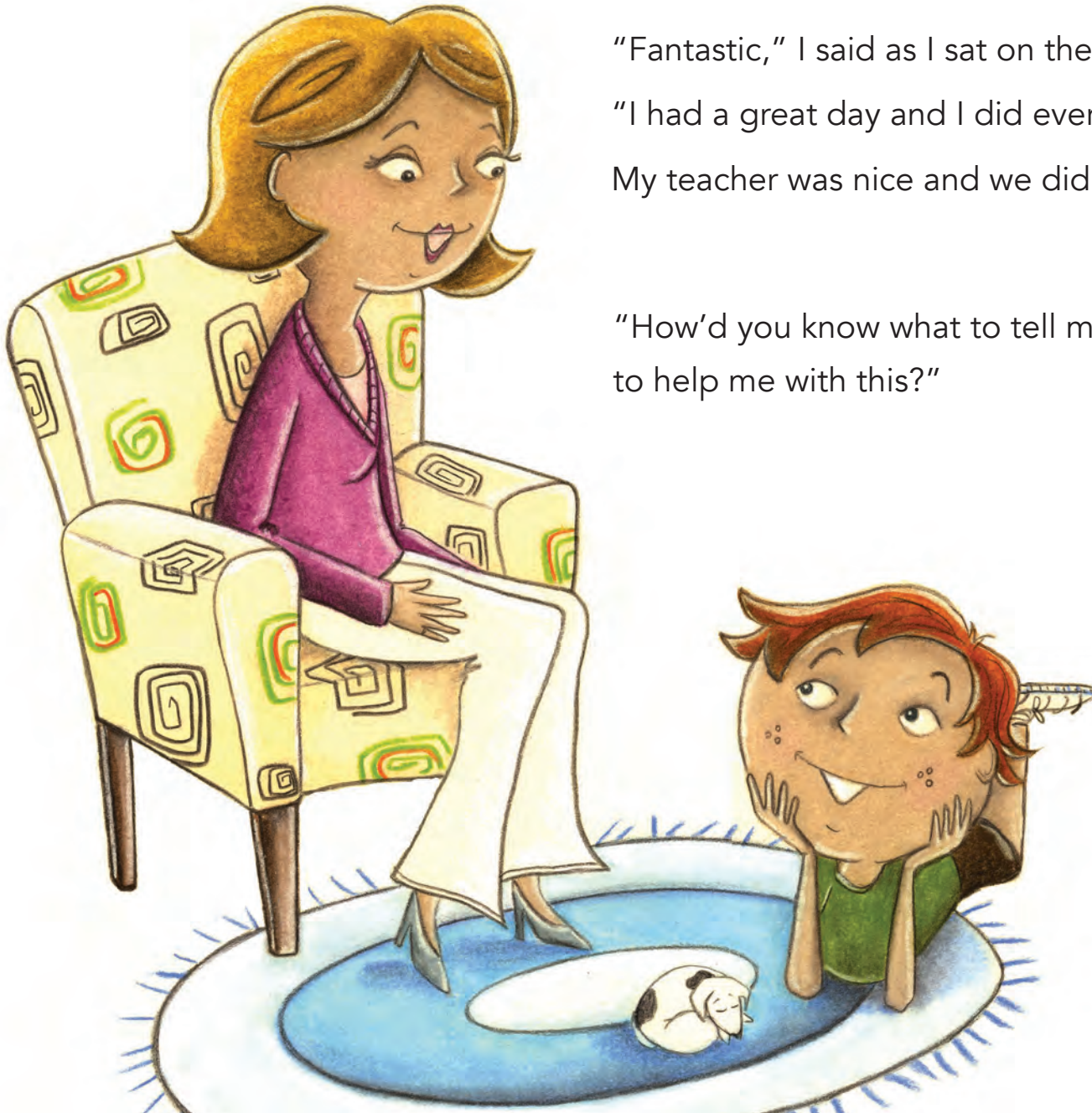


"How's my little verb?" my mom asked as I came through the door.

"Fantastic," I said as I sat on the floor.

"I had a great day and I did everything right.
My teacher was nice and we didn't fight."

"How'd you know what to tell me
to help me with this?"



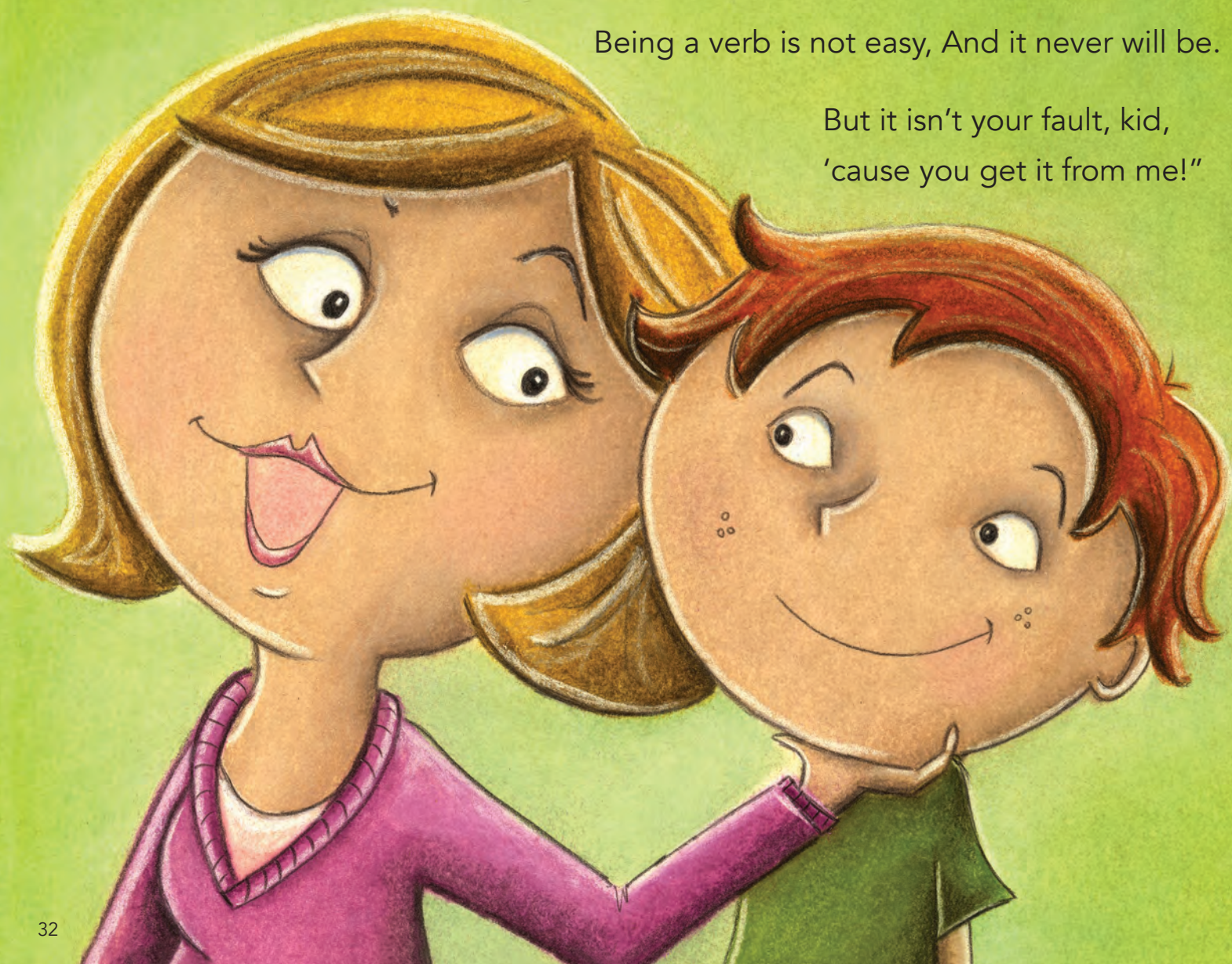
Mom smiled and hugged me and she gave me a kiss.

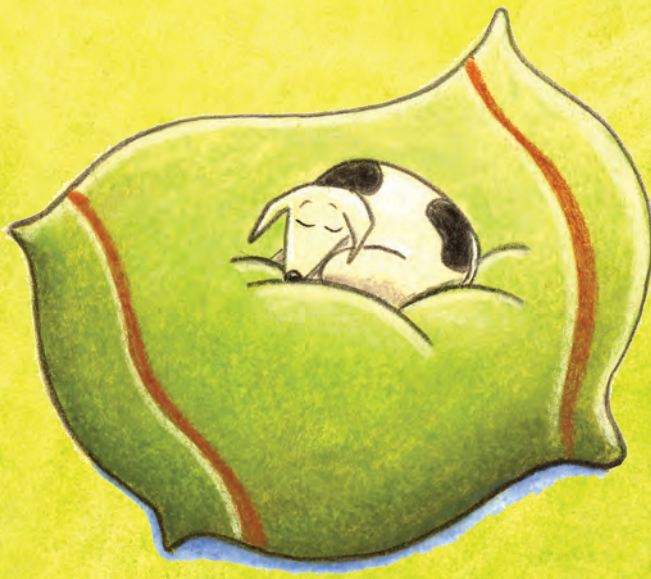
"You are a verb, Louis. That's just what you are.

Today you had focus, And it made you a star!

Being a verb is not easy, And it never will be.

But it isn't your fault, kid,
'cause you get it from me!"





I love this delightful, wonderful book – which is filled with heart and humor. This is a “must” in the homes of families who have young children with ADHD.

Sandra F. Rief, M.A.

Author, Award Winning Educator, Educational Consultant
& Trainer, former member of CHADD National Professional
Advisory Board

Being a verb is hard!

Especially for Louis, who can't seem to control himself when he gets the urge to move at the wrong time and situation. Louis' mom comes to the rescue by teaching him techniques to help keep his inner itching, twitching and jumping to be a verb in check. A positive resource for anyone dealing with ADHD or challenged by someone who has ADHD.



Julia Cook, M.S. is a national award-winning children's author, counselor, and parenting expert. She has presented in thousands of schools nationally and internationally, regularly speaks at education and counseling conferences, and has published children's books on a wide range of character and social development topics. The goal behind Cook's work is to actively involve young people in fun, memorable stories and teach them to become lifelong problem solvers. Inspiration for her books comes from working with children and carefully listening to counselors, parents, and teachers, in order to stay on top of needs in the classroom and at home. Cook has the innate ability to enter the worldview of a child through storybooks, giving children both the “what to say” and the “how to say it.”

JULIA COOK

Because Kids Don't Come With Instructions.



NATIONAL CENTER for
YOUTH ISSUES

P.O. Box 22185 • Chattanooga, TN 37422-2185
423.899.5714 • 866.318.6294 • fax: 423.899.4547 • www.ncyi.org

