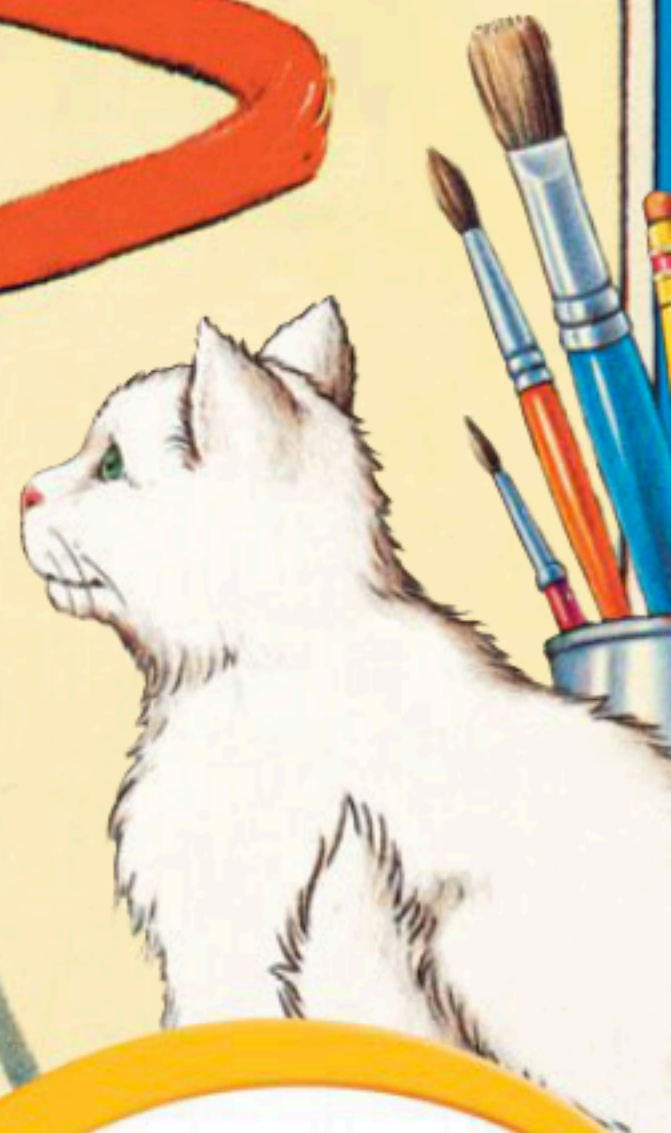
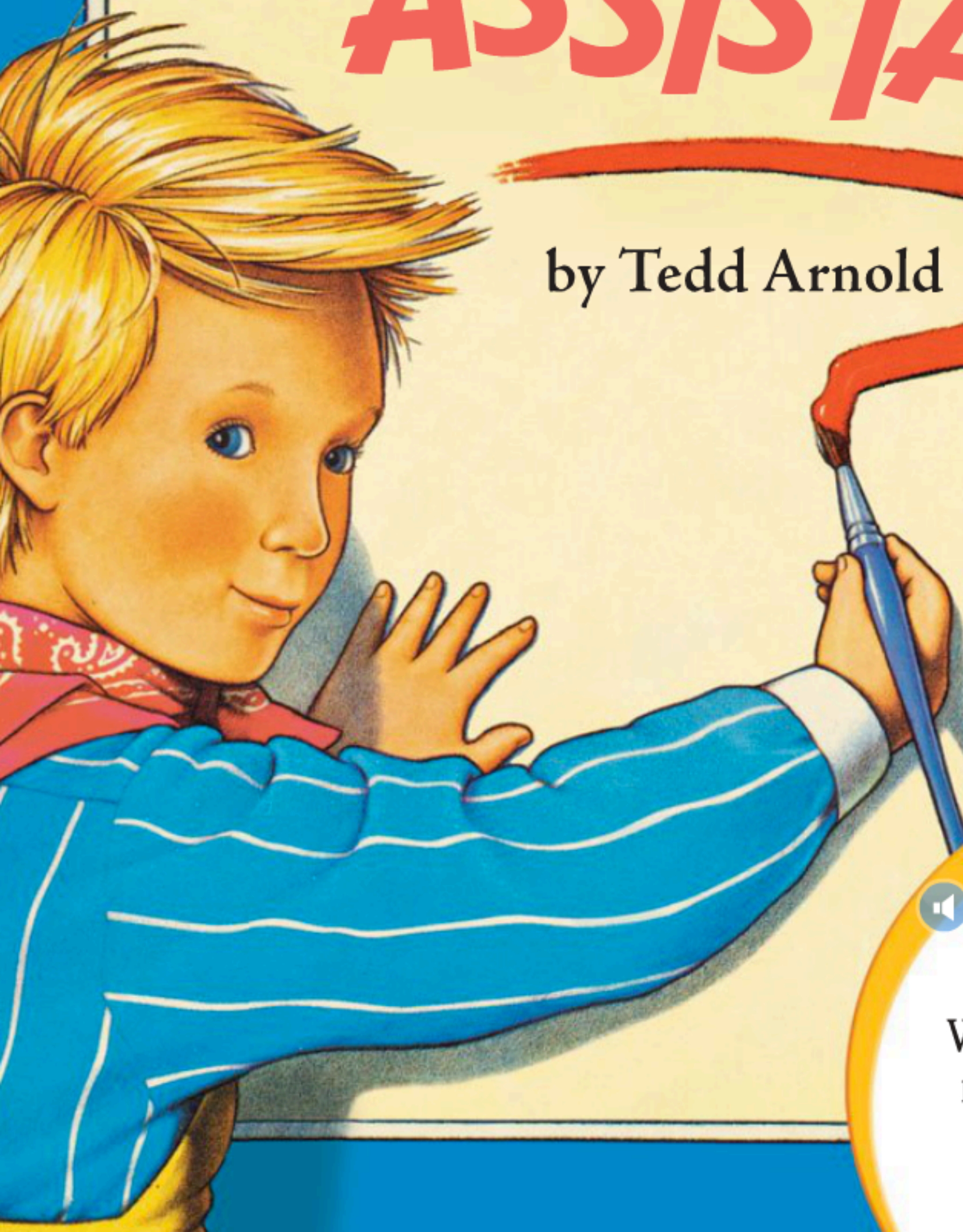




THE SIGNMAKER'S ASSISTANT

by Tedd Arnold



Essential Question

What can you learn
from signs in your
community?




Everyone in town **agreed**. The old signmaker did the finest work for miles around. Under his brush ordinary letters became beautiful words—words of **wisdom**, words of warning, or words that simply said which door to use.




When he painted STOP, people stopped because the sign looked so important. When he painted PLEASE KEEP OFF THE GRASS, they kept off because the sign was **polite** and sensible. When he painted GOOD FOOD, they just naturally became hungry.

People thanked the signmaker and paid him well. But the kind old man never **failed** to say, "I couldn't have done it without Norman's help."

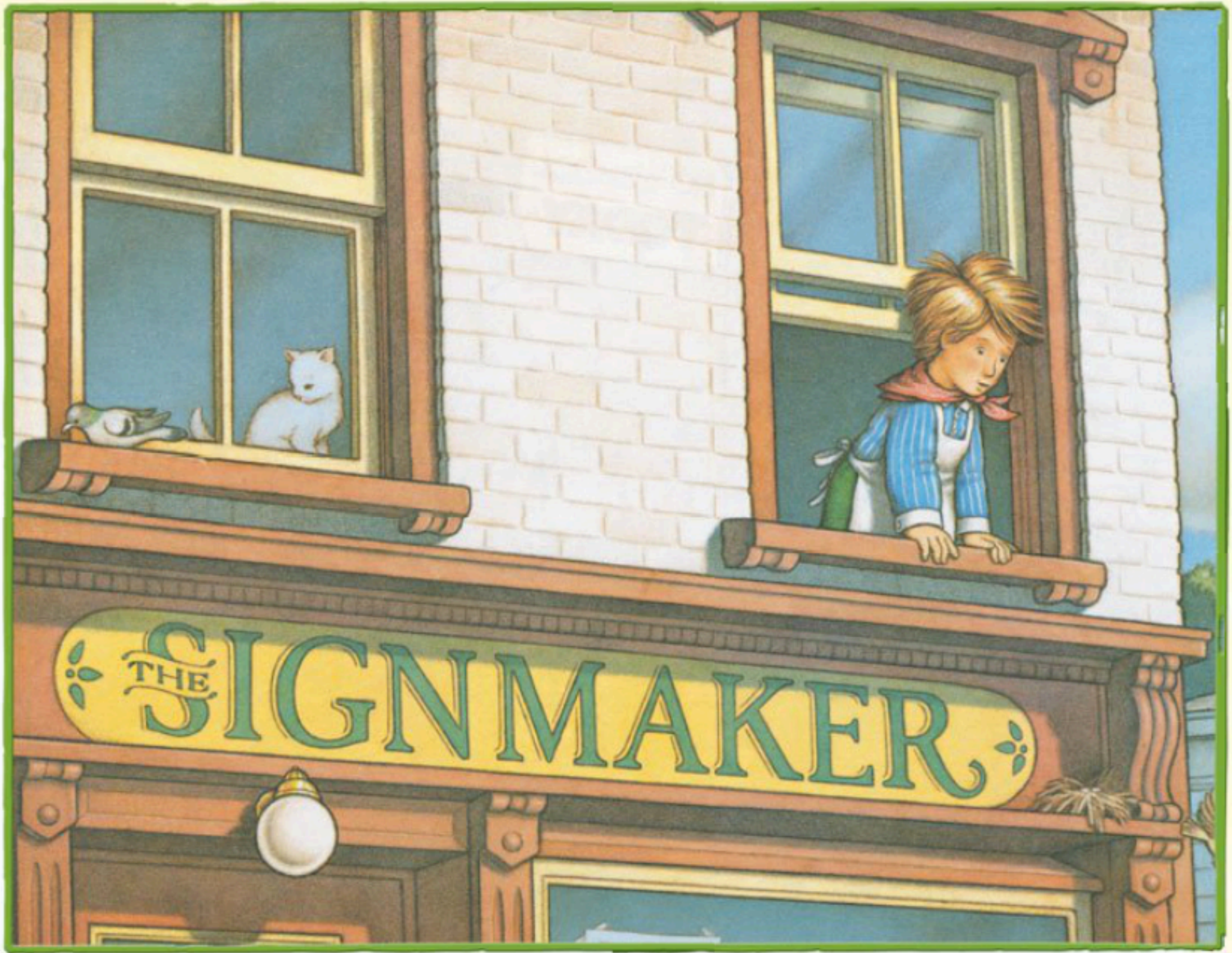


-  Norman was the signmaker's **assistant**. Each day after school he cut wood, mixed colors, and painted simple signs.



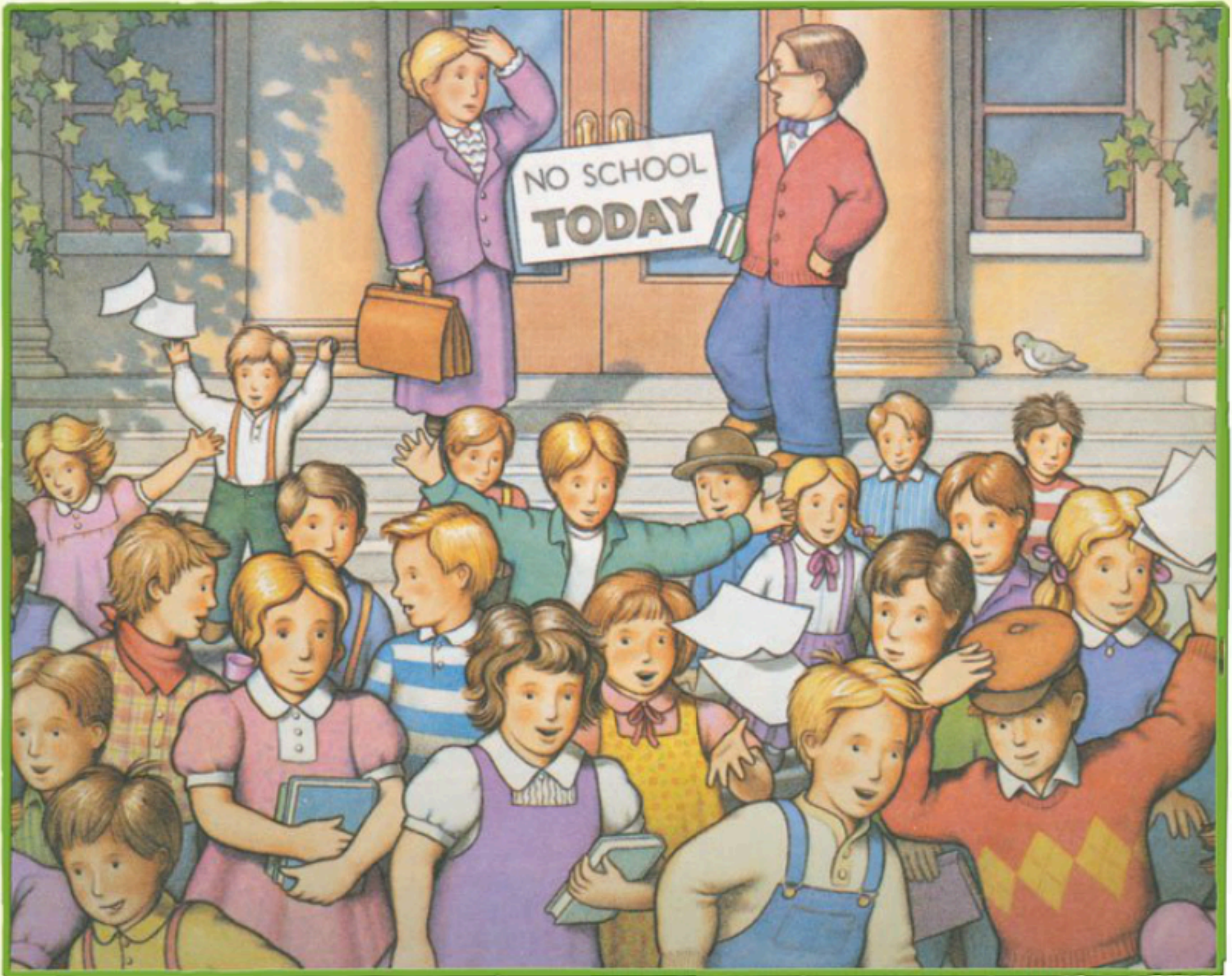
-  “Soon I will have a shop of my own,” said Norman.
“Perhaps,” answered the signmaker, “but not before you clean these brushes.”

One day after his work was done, Norman stood at a window over the sign shop and watched people. They stopped at the STOP sign. They entered at the ENTER sign. They ate under the GOOD FOOD sign.



“They do whatever the signs say!” said Norman to himself. “I wonder . . .” He crept into the shop while the signmaker napped. With brush and board he painted a sign of his own.





Early the next morning he put up the sign, then ran back to his window to watch.

“No school?” muttered the principal. “How could I forget such a thing?”



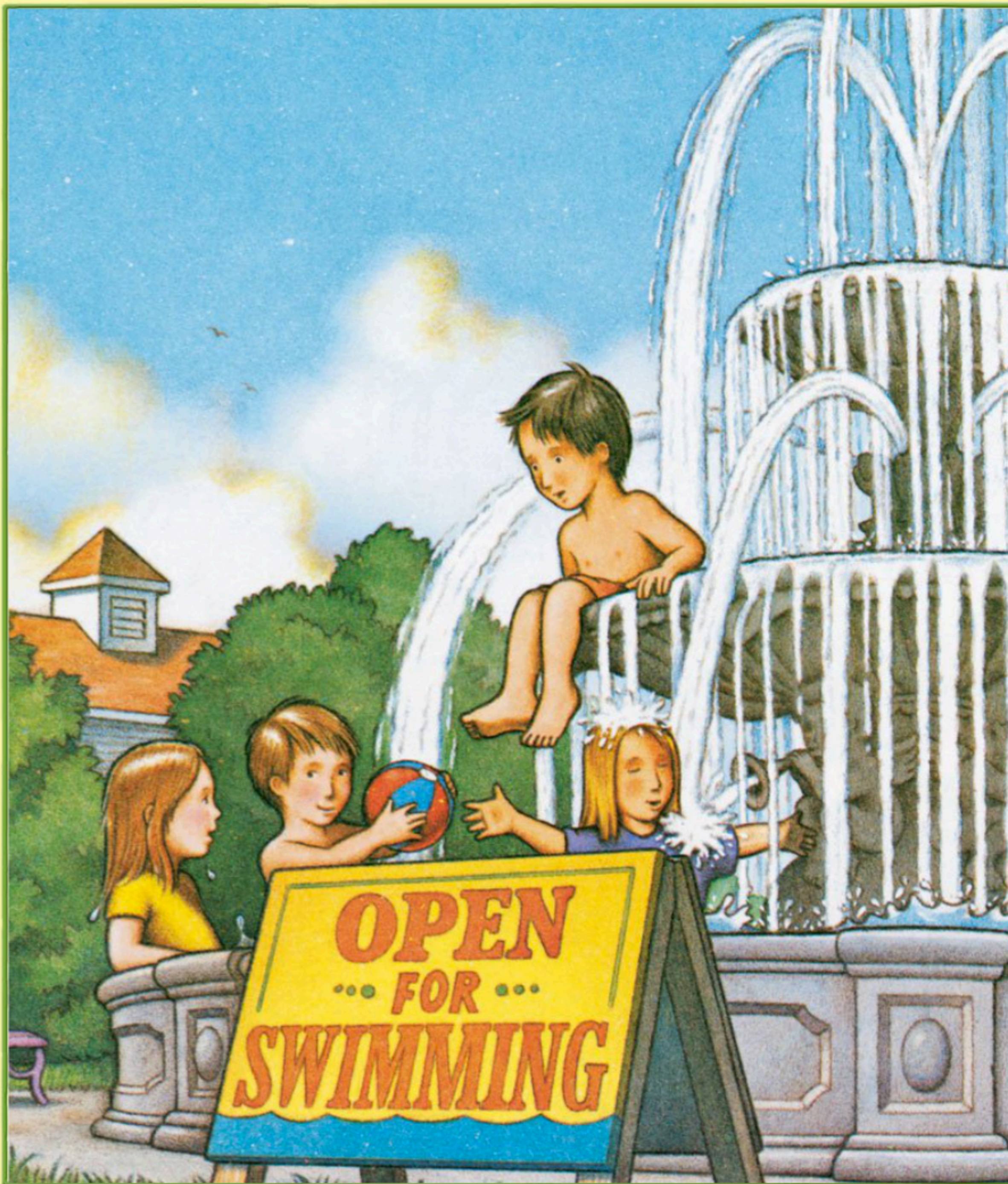


“No one informed me,” said the teacher.

“Hooray!” cheered the children, and everyone went home.

“This is great!” cried Norman. He looked around town for another idea. “Oh,” he said at last, “there is something I have always wanted to do.”





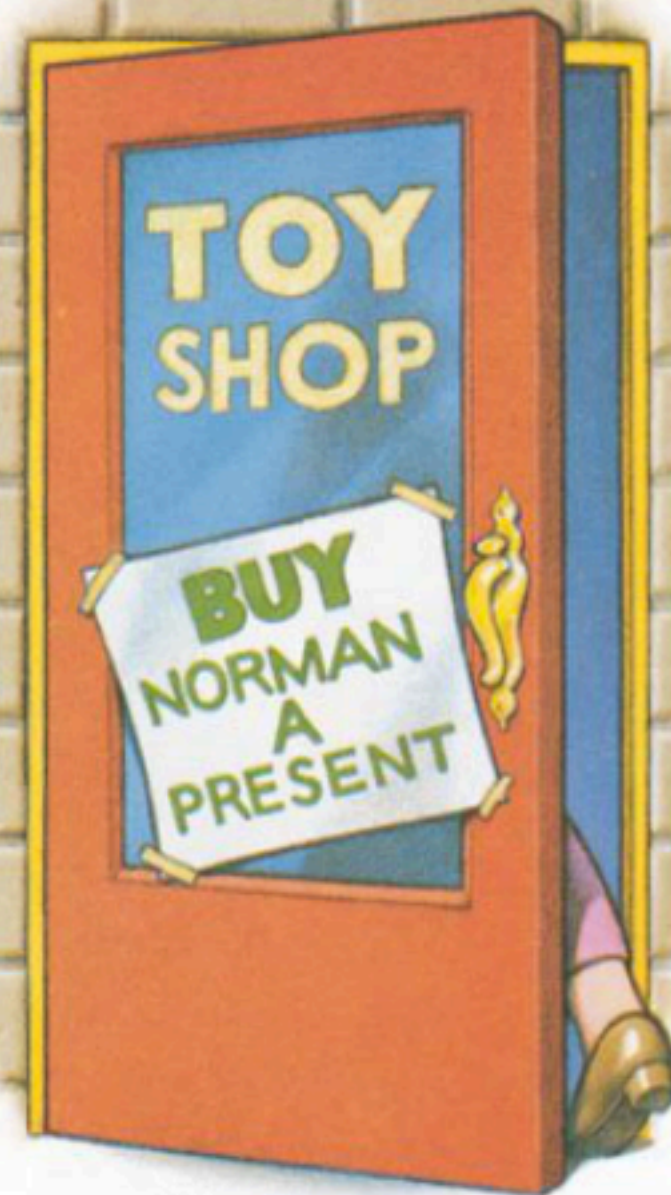


The following day Norman jumped from the top of the fountain in the park. As he swam, he thought to himself, I can do lots of things with signs. Ideas filled his head.

That afternoon when Norman went to work, the signmaker said, "I must drive to the next town and paint a large sign on a storefront. I'll return tomorrow evening, so please lock up the shop tonight."



As soon as the signmaker was gone, Norman started making signs. He painted for hours and hours and hours.



In the morning people discovered new signs all around town.

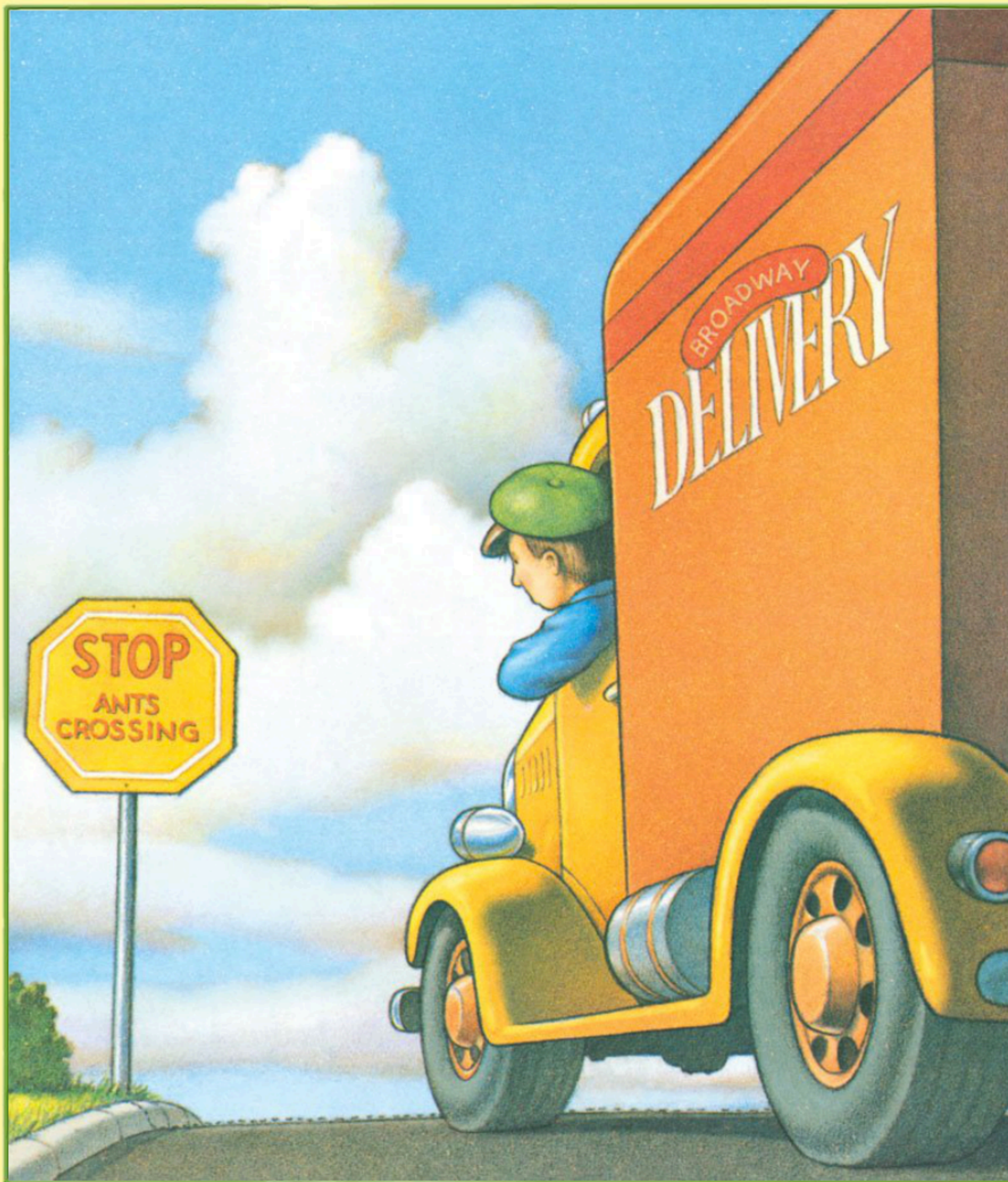


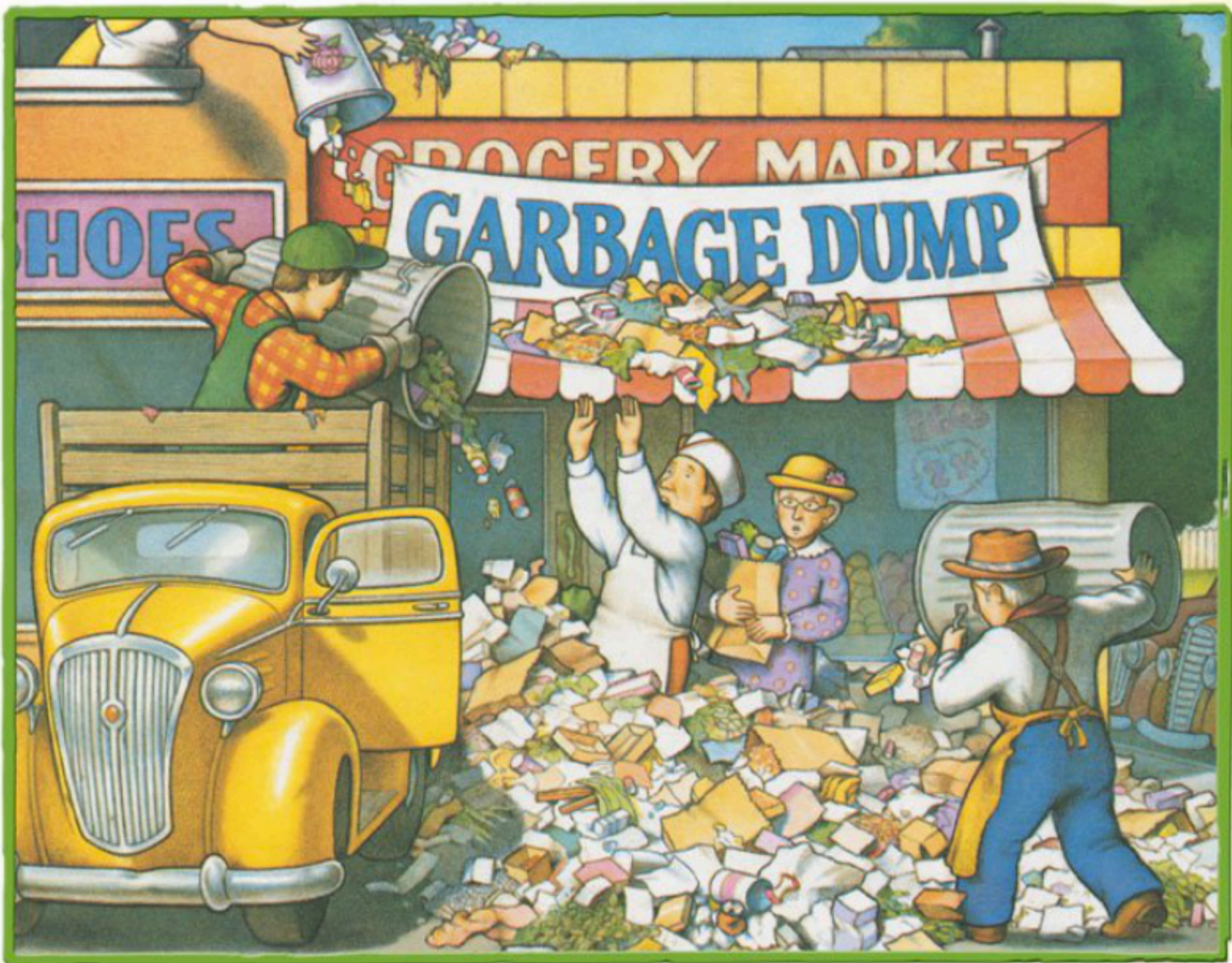
STOP AND THINK

Text and Graphic Features

What makes Norman's signs so funny?







STOP AND THINK

Author's Craft Why does the author show rather than write about what the townspeople are doing?

TEKS 2.16B



- Norman watched it all and laughed until tears came to his eyes. But soon he saw people becoming angry. “The signmaker is playing tricks,” they shouted. “He has made fools of us!”

The teacher tore down the NO SCHOOL TODAY sign. Suddenly people were **tearing** down all the signs—not just the new ones but every sign the signmaker had ever painted.



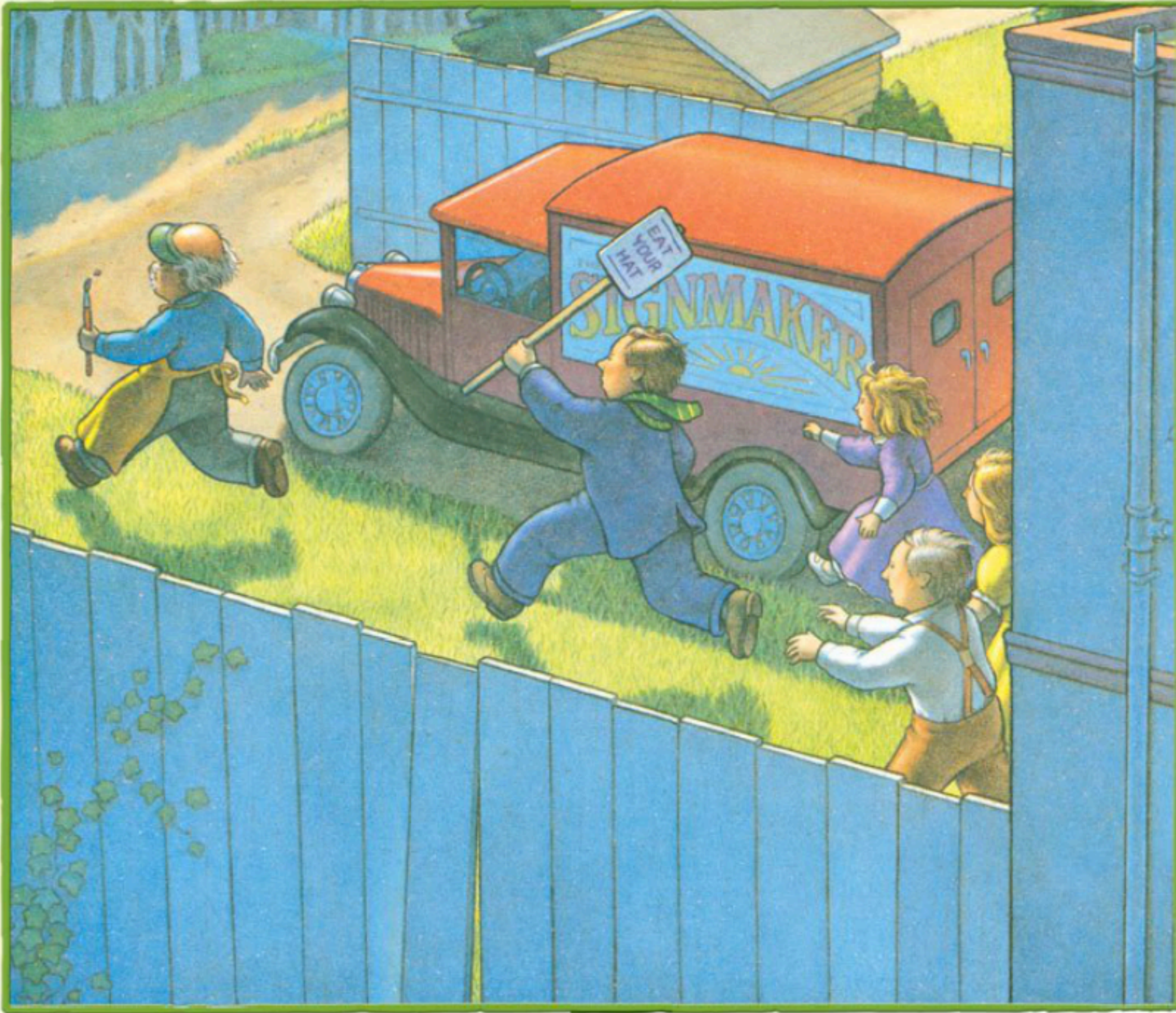
Then the real **trouble** started. Without store signs, shoppers became confused. Without stop signs, drivers didn't know when to stop. Without street signs, firemen became lost.



STOP AND THINK

Question What question about the signs do these pages answer? What new questions do you have?

TEKS RC-2(B)



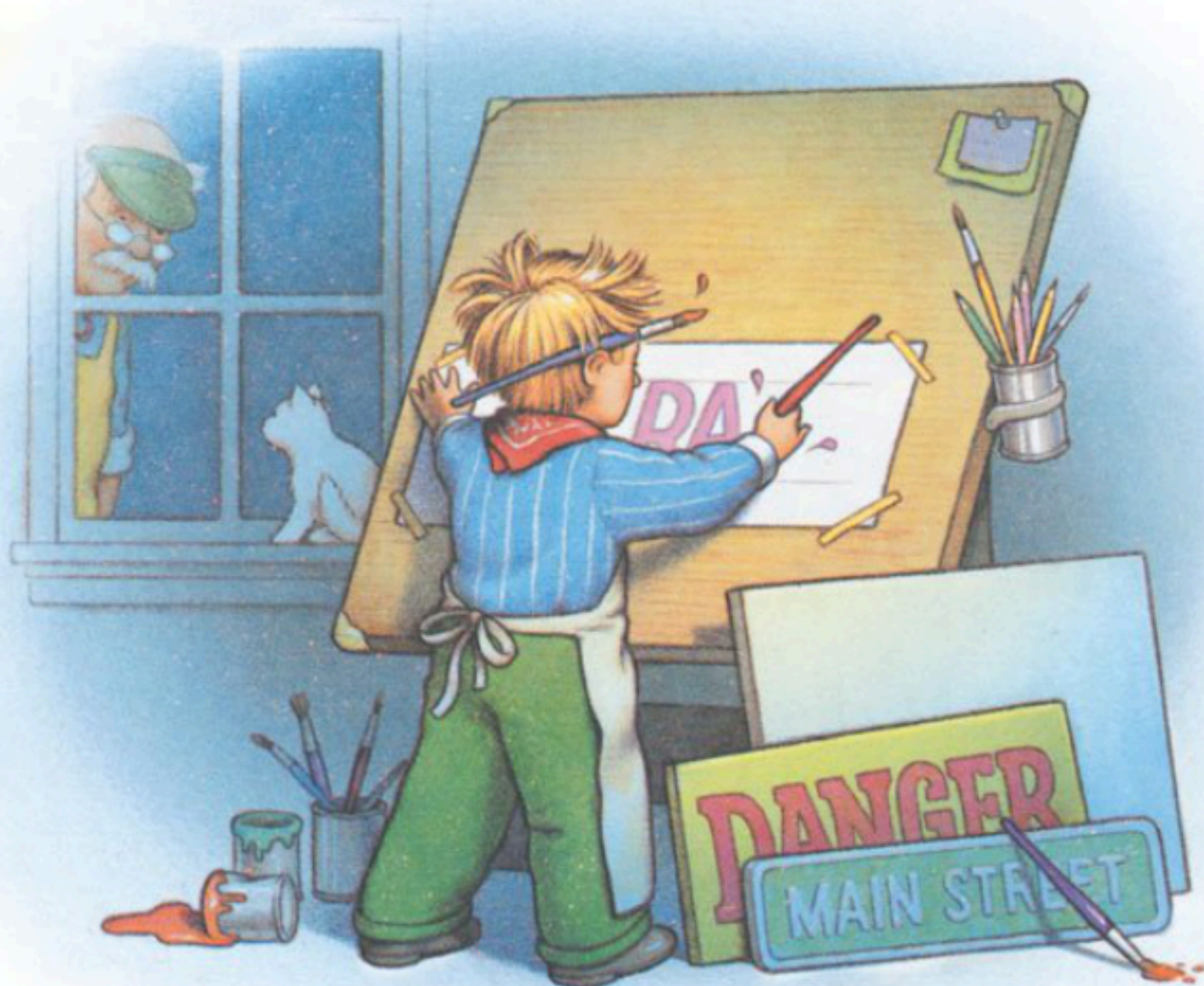
In the evening when the signmaker returned from his work in the next town, he knew nothing of Norman's tricks. An angry crowd of people met him at the back door of his shop and chased him into the woods.






As Norman watched, he suddenly realized that without signs and without the signmaker, the town was in danger.

"It's all my fault!" cried Norman, but no one was listening.

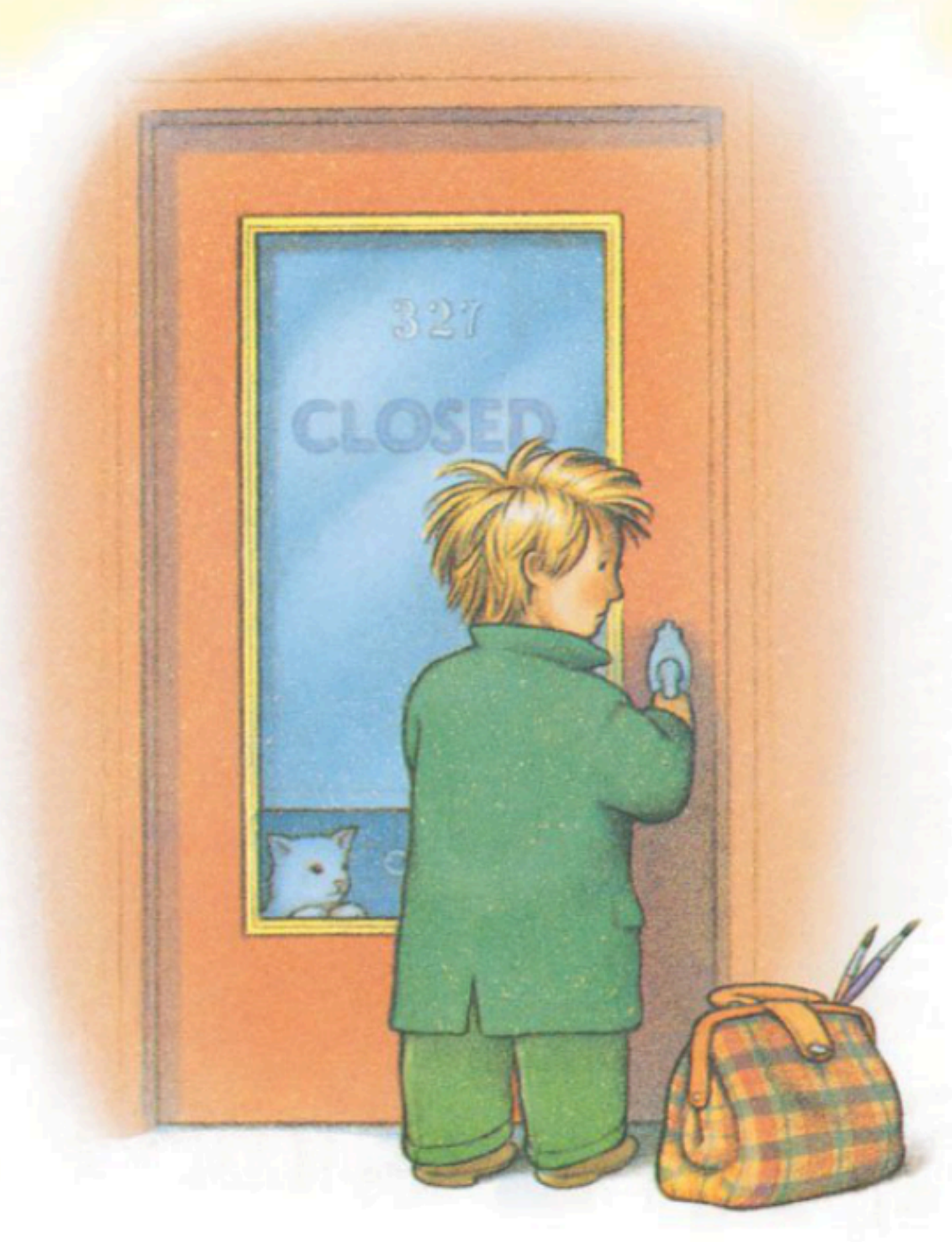


- 🔊 Late that night the signmaker returned and saw a light on in his shop. Norman was feverishly painting.

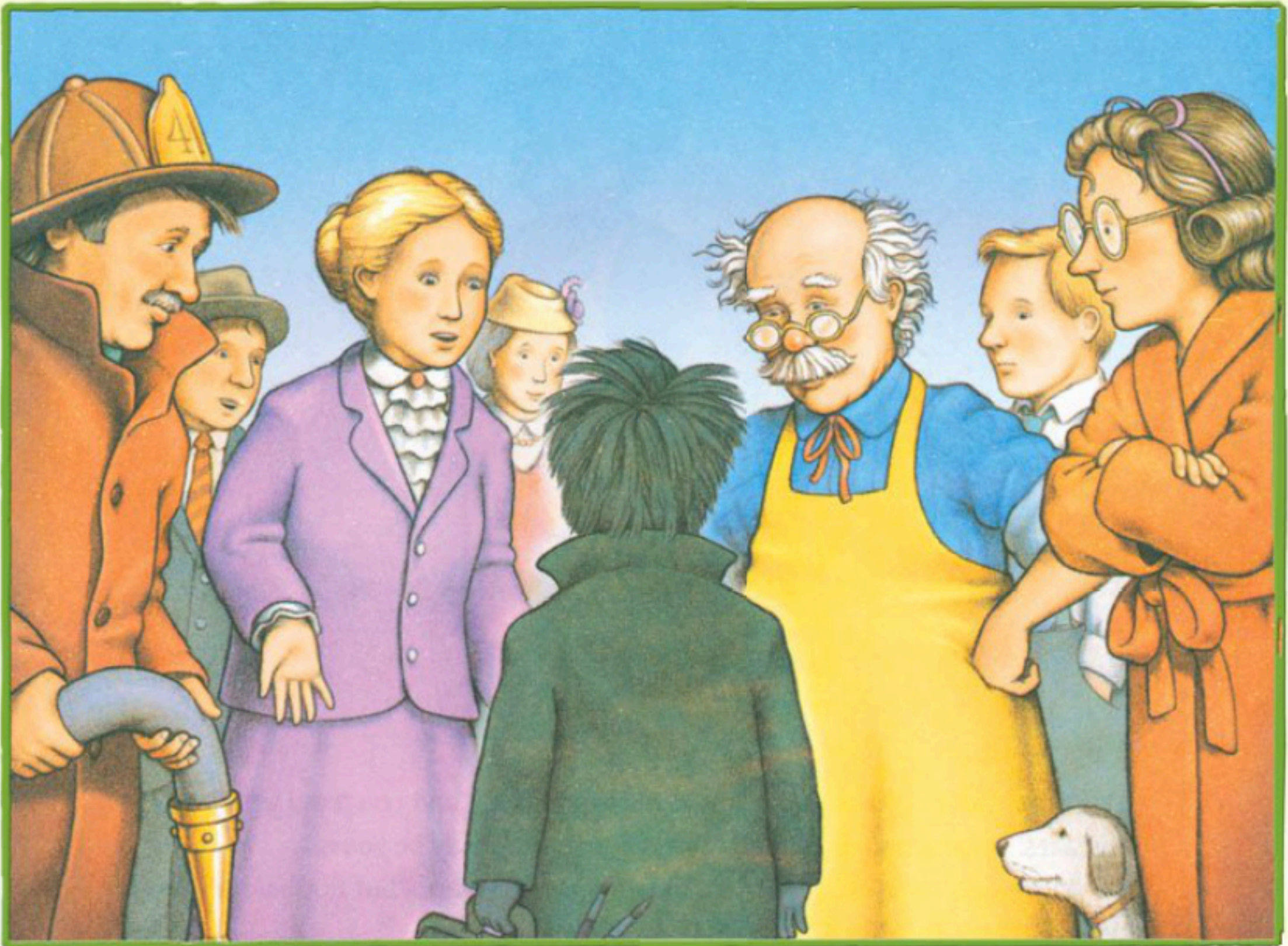


-  While the town slept and the signmaker watched, Norman put up stop signs, shop signs, street signs, danger signs, and welcome signs; in and out signs, large and small signs, new and beautiful signs. He returned all his presents and **cleared** away the garbage at the grocery store. It was morning when he finished putting up his last sign for the entire town to see.





Then Norman packed his things and locked up the shop. But as he turned to go, he discovered the signmaker and all the townspeople gathered at the door.



“I know you’re angry with me for what I did,” said Norman with downcast eyes, “so I’m leaving.”

“Oh, we were angry all right!” answered the school principal. “But we were also fools for obeying such signs without thinking.”





“You told us you are sorry,” said the signmaker, “and you fixed your mistakes. So stay, and work hard. One day this shop may be yours.”

“Perhaps,” answered Norman, hugging the old man, “but not before I finish cleaning those brushes.”



Your Turn

1. What happened right after Norman put up a sign that said "No School"?

- ☐ The signmaker got angry.
- ☐ Firefighters did not know where to go.
- ☐ The children cheered and went home.
- ☐ The children got angry.

TEKS RC-2(E)

2.  **TARGET SKILL** **Text and Graphic Features**

What information can you get from the signs in the story? Use a chart to answer. **TEKS 2.3B, ELPS 4I**

3.  **TARGET STRATEGY** **Question**

What question would you ask Norman? **TEKS 2.3B, 2.28A**

4. **Oral Language** Use the Retelling Cards to tell what Norman does. Ask questions if you do not understand. **TEKS 2.28A, RC-2(E), ELPS 2D, 3D**



Retelling Cards



TEKS 2.3B ask questions/clarify/locate facts/details/support with evidence; **2.28A** listen/ask clarifying questions; **RC-2(E)** retell important story events; **ELPS 2D** monitor understanding of spoken language/seek clarification; **3D** speak using content-area vocabulary; **4I** employ reading skills to demonstrate comprehension