

Taming Tricky Words

A word association method for learning irregular high frequency words.



The What

‘Taming Tricky Words’ is a word association strategy that helps children develop their sight vocabulary.

The Why

Knowledge of these essential function words builds fluency and ultimately helps develop prediction of other words. Children acquire language best when it is tangible, and they have a mental image of the word eg. dog, cat, Mum, Dad are words children learn early on as the association is straight forward. Word association helps children attach a mental image to an abstract word, through a carefully selected sentence. This association gives children a strategy for thinking the word through. The technique helps children to build and retain an effective sight vocabulary of tricky words.

The How

The words are taught in manageable sets. The children are introduced to a word and a picture. The word and the picture have no obvious correlation, this is achieved through the sentence – a little story! When the story is read, the target word is given extra emphasise, hence why it is written in capital letters. When the children have practised hearing the words using the story and picture as prompts, the picture can be covered. The children can then be encouraged to identify and read the tricky words using the links they’ve developed from using the images and hearing the stories. We explicitly teach tricky words in class, noting which parts of the words can be sounded out and which parts can’t. The cards can be used to play games like Pairs and Snap to help reinforce the correlation between word and image and increase exposure to the sight vocabulary.

The Who

Taming Tricky Words is a scheme that supports all learners to develop their sight vocabulary and visual memory. For many children, acquiring tricky words is a challenge and so this word association strategy supports them to learn the words in an engaging and manageable way. The method supports multiple learning styles and helps to improve learner’s confidence and engagement in their early reading.



I

I am Sam
I am!



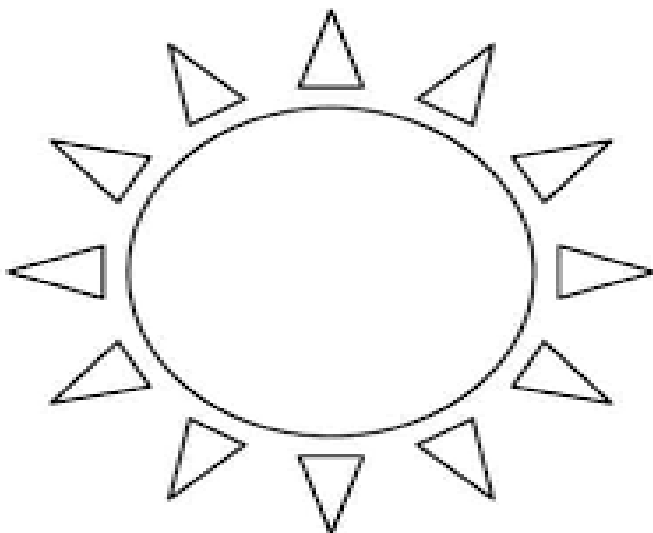
the

We only have one
moon it's called THE
moon. THE moon.



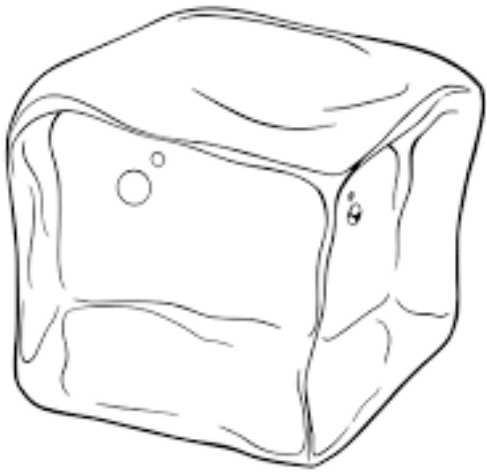
a

A cat sat on A
mat.



is

It IS a sunny day.
It IS hot.



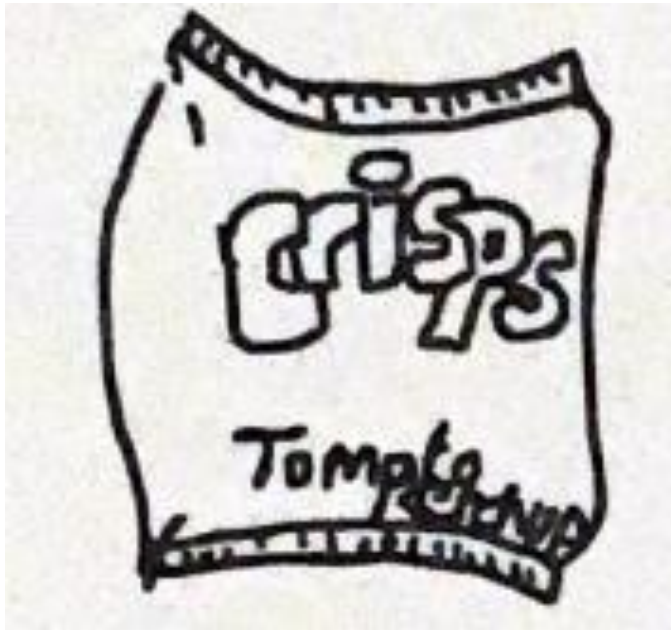
as

It's AS cold
AS ice.



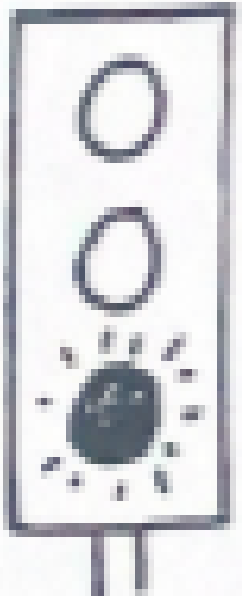
to

I am going TO a
party. We going TO
eat Birthday cake.
We are going TO play
games.



of

The packet has crisps
in it. We call it a
packet OF crisps! I
love packets OF
crisps.



go

When the lights are
green the cars can
GO.



no

Do you like ghosts?
NO! Are there any
ghosts? NO! NO! NO!



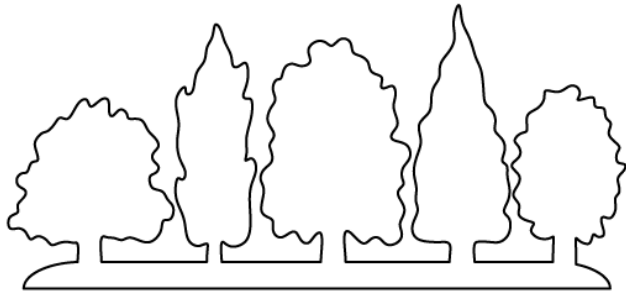
has

It HAS been a good
day!
It HAS been a really
good day.



his

It is HIS hat.
He wears it on HIS
head.



into

Let's go INTO
the woods.



he

HE is a boy.
HE looks happy.



she

SHE is a ladybird.
SHE is red and black.
SHE is a girl



we

My family are going
on holiday. WE are
sleeping in a tent.
Who likes sleeping in
a tent? WE do.



me

My Mum has a
picture of ME when I
was baby.



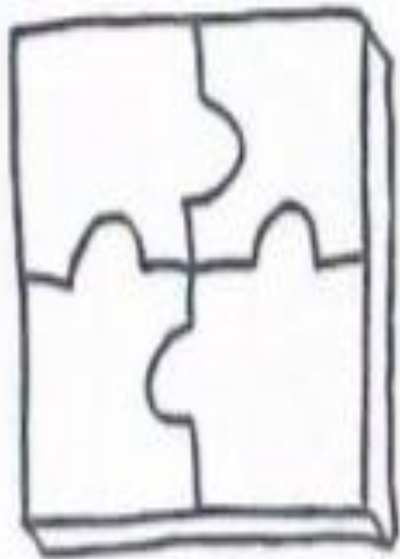
be

BE a good boy. BE
quiet and BE still.



was

The little girl WAS crying. She's better now but yesterday she WAS upset. Oh dear, she WAS upset.



all

Pick up ALL the
pieces. Put them ALL
together. Put them
ALL back the box.



they

THEY are sisters.
THEY are twins. THEY
look like each other.



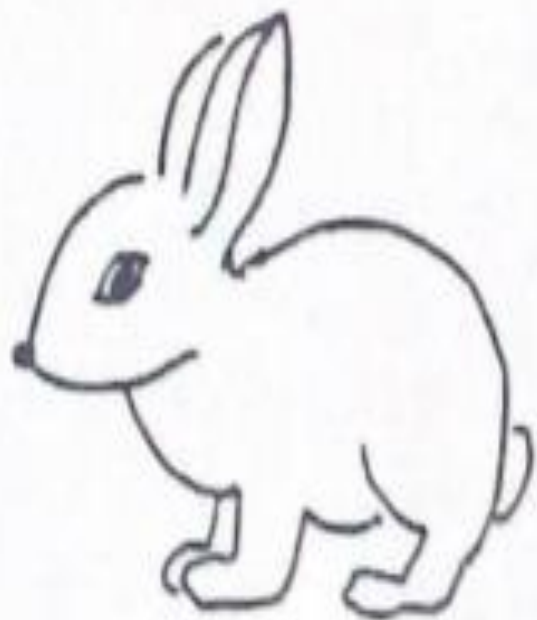
my

This is MY teddy.
I love MY teddy.
(Make a hugging
action.)



are

Ostriches ARE very
big birds. Their eggs
ARE enormous.



her

Mummy Rabbit is
looking for HER baby.
She has lost HER
baby. The baby
belongs to HER.




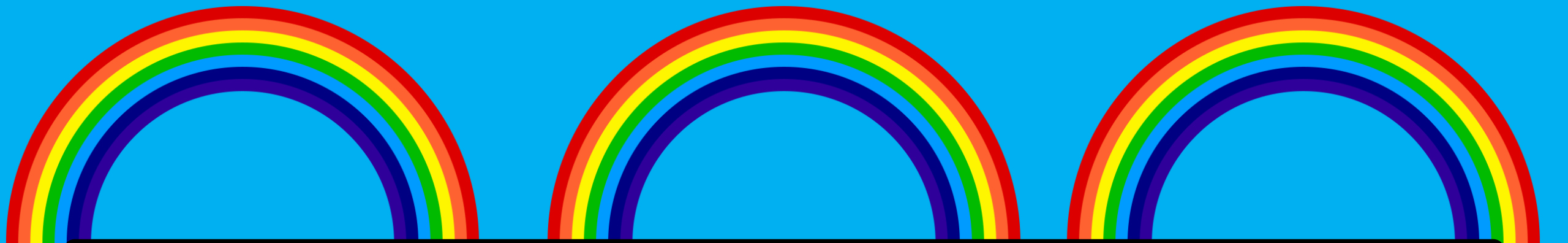
you

This apple is for YOU
(point to one child)
and this one is for
YOU (point to
another child.)
Repeat if necessary.



put

You need to PUT
your hand! PUT
your hand up to
speak.



put



push

PUSH the door to
open it. PUSH it
hard.



pull

I PULL a cracker
with my Mum. I
PULL it and win.



said

Mummy SAID, "Will
you get me a cup of
tea please?"
Mummy SAID it
again. Then she SAID
it again.



have

Giraffes HAVE very
long necks.



like

I LIKE ice cream with
a flake in it. What ice
cream do you LIKE
best? Do you LIKE ice
cream all over your
face?



SO

I have a rash SO I
have to stay in bed.
My Mum said SO.



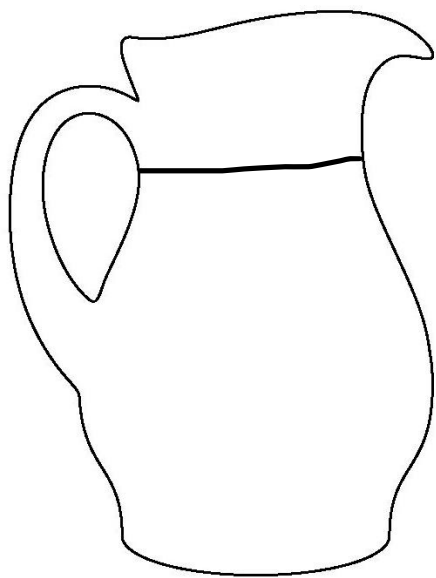
do

DO you have milk at
school? I DO, DO
you?



some

This word is SOME.
There are SOME eggs
in the nest. Not
many, but SOME.



full

The jug is FULL.
It is FULL to the
top.



come

COME and help me
fly my kite. COME,
COME, COME.
(Make a beckoning
gesture)



little

The mouse is LITTLE.
She lives in a LITTLE
hole with her LITTLE
friends.



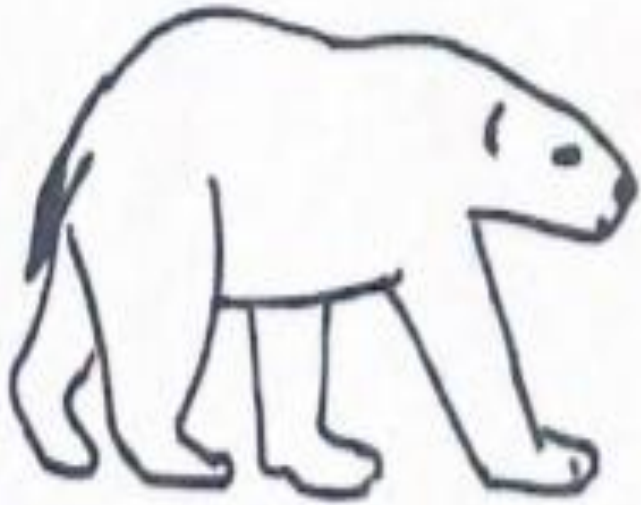
one

The pirate has ONE
eye and ONE arm
and ONE leg.



were

These socks WERE
very smelly. They
WERE! They've been
washed now, but oh
they WERE smelly!



there

THERE is a bear over
THERE.
Look – THERE!



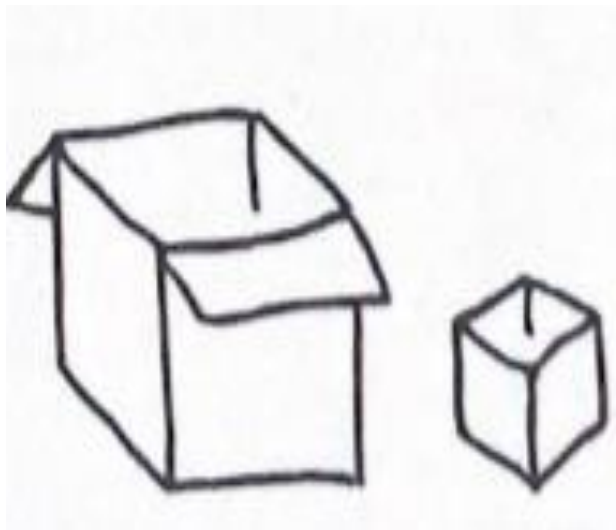
what

WHAT a silly hat!
WHAT a funny hat.
WHAT will I look like
in this hat?
WHAT do you think?




when

WHEN will it snow?
WHEN it snows we
can build a
snowman. It will
snow WHEN it is
wintertime.



out

In this box is another box. Take it OUT. In the little box is another box. Take it OUT. (Repeat as necessary.)

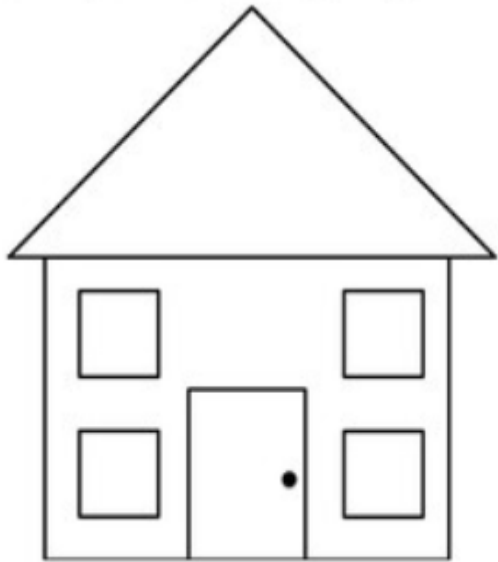


?	ask	I ASK lots of questions.
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become

We will BECOME
bigger. We will
BECOME adults.



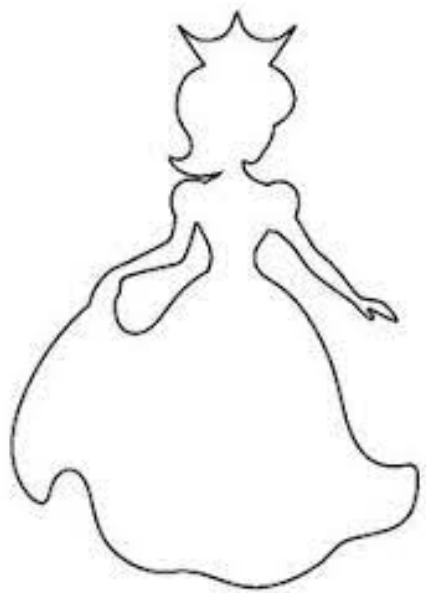
house

We live in a HOUSE.
The HOUSE has
windows.
The HOUSE has a
door.



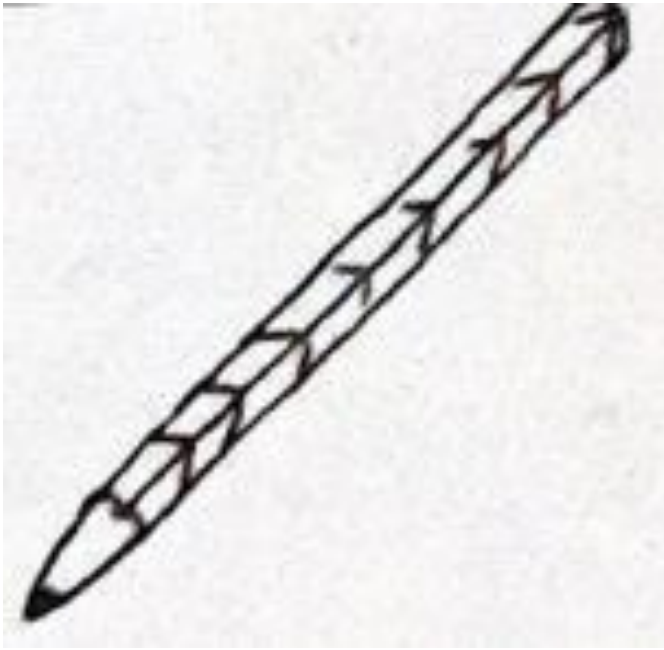
here

You are HERE!
HERE you are!



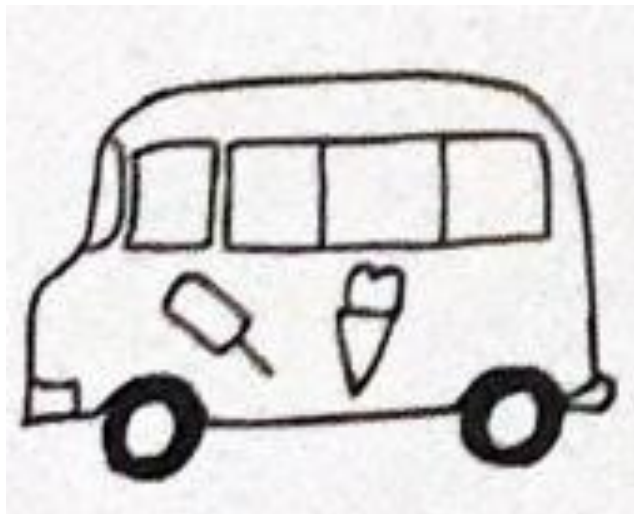
ago

A long time AGO
there was a
princess.



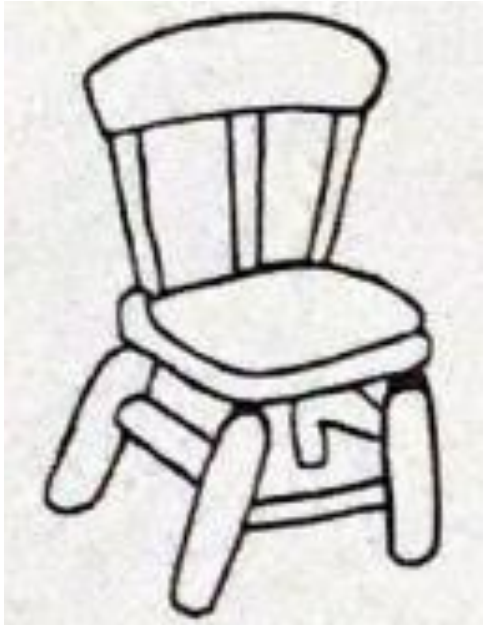
school

We do lots of writing
at SCHOOL. I have
my own pencil at
SCHOOL.



by

The ice cream van
went BY. It went BY –
it didn't stop! Oh
dear! The ice cream
van BY!



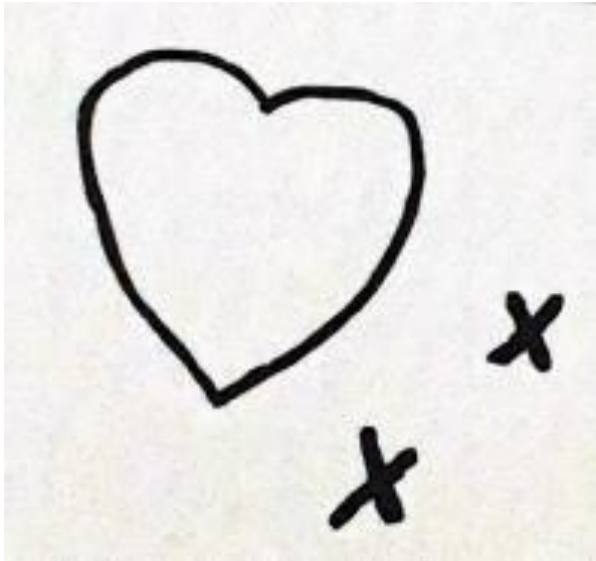
your

I've saved this chair
for you. It's YOUR
chair. (Point to a
child; repeat with
another child.)



our

This is OUR slide.
It belongs to us.



love

I LOVE chocolate.
I LOVE my Mum.



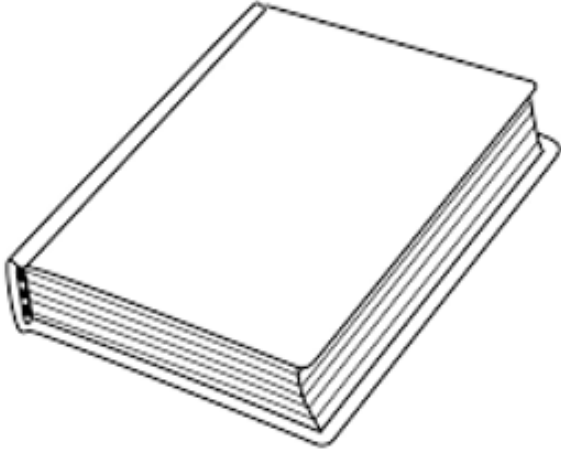
Mr

“Oh no!” said
MR Bear. “I
can’t stand
this!”



Mrs

MRS Bear
began to snore!
Snore, snore,
snore!



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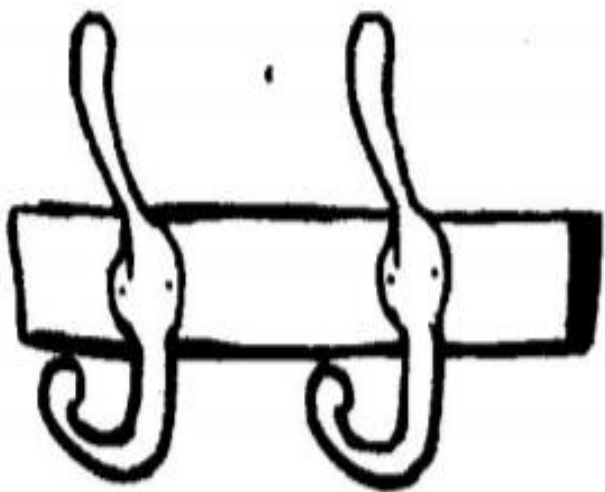
looked

Have you
LOOKED at
that book?



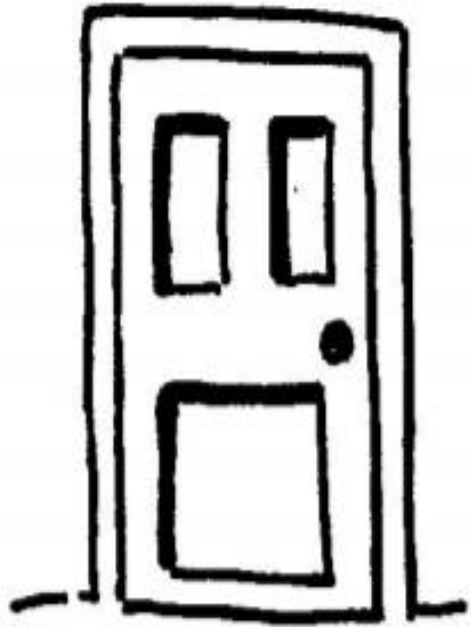
asked

I ASKED and
ASKED and
ASKED Mummy
for some
sweets.



school

The children hung
THEIR coats on
THEIR pegs.



called

I CALLED for my friend. I knocked on the door. His Mum CALLED him to come outside to play.



people

PEOPLE live in
houses.



could

I had a bike. I
COULD ride it to
school. I COULD!