

## **Silent-E Stories**

Ms. Smith's Class Blog (Part 1) p. 2

Ms. Smith's Class Blog (Part 2) p. 4

Picnic at the Lake p. 6

Let's Have a Bake-Off p. 8

Riding Bikes p. 10

First Day at the Cabin p. 12

Skipping Rocks p. 13

Some Facts About Ants p. 15

Swimming for Sticks p. 17

Finding Lost Keys (Part 1) p. 19

Finding Lost Keys (Part 2) p. 21

A Hike to Alpine Lake p. 23

A Small Task for Gramps p. 25

Why Do Crickets Sing? p. 27

## **Ms. Smith's Class Blog (Part 1)**

**(Story words: school, year)**

Ms. Smith had a class blog for the moms and dads of her fifth grade class. This blog was just for them, not for the kids.

Ms. Smith's class had been good for most of the year with a slump here and there. Today the kids said, "For our end of school bash, we want something big! A class raft trip would end our fifth grade year with a bang!"

Ms. Smith said, "I think a raft trip would be a fantastic end to the year, but I am thinking that it would cost too much."

The kids looked glum. But then, Mike said, "What if we can make the cash to fund the trip?"

Jill said, "Yes, what if we ran a snack shop at school? If we sold cold drinks and snacks, I bet we would make a lot

of cash. We could use the profits to fund the trip.” Now the whole class was chatting.

“Ok, give me some time to think about all of this,” Ms. Smith told the class. “It is time for our math lesson.”

## **Ms. Smith's Class Blog (Part 2)**

**(Story words: school, teacher)**

At the end of the day, Ms. Smith pulled out her laptop and went onto the class blog. She posted about the day and about how the kids hoped to fund a raft trip at the end of the year with a school snack shop. She said that she was impressed by the kids' bold thinking.

The moms and dads felt grateful that Ms. Smith let them know what was happening in class. She was the kind of teacher who consulted them. Thus, Ms. Smith had their trust.

One mom, Beth, posted, "A raft trip is fun. And to run a school snack shop would be just as much fun! But if I were a mom of a child who was not in our grade, I would be upset if my child would skip lunch and toss her sandwich out just so she could munch on all the fifth grade snacks!"

Ms. Smith was glad Beth had posted this as she could see that this could be a big problem.

One dad, Jeff, posted, “What if the snack shop happens when lunch is over?”

A good plan was made. The next day, Ms. Smith would tell the class that she was behind their snack shop and raft trip plan.

## Picnic at the Lake

Josh woke up and went to wake up Sam. He told Sam that he had a fun plan for the day.

Josh said, "What if we plan a picnic at the lake? We can make sandwiches and then pack a big lunch with lemonade and chips. We will set up a tent and bring some blankets. We can take our raft and inflate it there. We can think of some fun games to bring along."

"What about our badminton net and rackets?" asked Sam.

"That would be fantastic," said Josh.

"But here is the best thing! We will not tell Bill, Beth, and Steve about our plans. We will set it all up and then come back here. We will ask them to come on a bike ride to the lake. Then they will see all the fun things we put there."

Sam said, "What a fun plan! You can bring the gang to the lake. I will rest there with our stuff while you bike home and get them to come. We would not want bugs or chipmunks to get into our lunch."

## Let's Have a Bake-Off

**(Story words: three, Aunt, cool, green)**

Miles and Jill loved to bake cakes and make their baked goods look fantastic. They posted pics of their best cakes on the web and kept track of which cakes got the most likes.

Miles said, "This time let's see if we can get Jen and Mike and Sal to bake too, and we can have a bake-off. We can even have a prize for the one who makes the cake that gets the most votes."

Jill liked this plan but said, "I like baking, but how about you being the one who makes the post? My posts with more than one pic get messed up."

Jill set about making her cake. She had square baking pans in three sizes. She baked cakes in all three sizes and left them to rest on her baking racks until they were cool.



Then she mixed a lot of white frosting as a base. She stacked her cakes and smiled. Her cake seemed almost the size and shape of her Aunt Jen's wedding cake. Her plan was to put pink and red rose buds all over the top of the cake.

She mixed up pink, red, and green frosting. She put the green frosting in her plastic cone and then put her smallest tip at the end. The frosting came out in fine lines she used to make the stems. Next, she put red frosting into a new bag with a big tip and made thick rose buds.

When she was finished, she took lots of pics of her cake so that she could send Miles the best one.

## **Riding Bikes**

**(Story words: school, meet)**

Sam woke up with a glad smile. There was no school today. And he was going to go on a bike ride with Meg. They had made a plan to meet at ten.

But at nine, Meg called. She told Sam that she woke up and felt hot and damp. She felt that she was getting sick with a cold and was resting in bed.

Sam was sad to miss his bike ride with Meg, but Sam felt too that rest was the best thing for a cold.

The day now felt long and dull. His mom said, "Why not take a ride on your bike?"

Sam said, "It is not fun biking all by myself."

But after a long time of sitting and gazing outside, Sam got up, grabbed his helmet, and left the house. He got on his

bike. He rode by the school. He stopped by the swings and the slides. Sometimes Meg and Sam hopped off their bikes and had some fun there just as if they were still small kids. Sam did not get off his bike.

He rode fast up the big hill on Preston Drive. He did not stop at the top of the hill but kept pumping fast. He sped down the hill just like Meg and he would do.

When he got home, Sam was glad that he went for a bike ride. It was not as fun without Meg, but it was still more fun than just sitting at home.

## **First Day at the Cabin**

### **(Story word: first)**

June is the time that all five of us, Mom, Dad, Mike, Jane, and me, get to visit the cabin at Alpine Lake. When we get there, we unpack the van and pile all our bags on the deck.

We think of all the fun things we want to do. We can swim in the lake, hike to the old log shack, or fish from the dock.

But first, there is one more job to do. We spend time raking and picking up the brush and plants close to the cabin. This helps a cabin to be safe from fires that can happen.

We fill black trash bags with all the brush, sticks, plants, and twigs we can find. We compete to see who fills their bag the fastest. When we finish the job, we plan the fun for the rest of our first day.

## Skipping Rocks

**(Story word: sideways)**

Fran is good at skipping rocks. Sometimes she can make a rock skip six or seven times when she skips it on the lake.

She likes to help her pals skip rocks and shares her methods with them.

You have to find stones that are made for skipping. A stone that is too small will not skip. A stone must have some heft and bulk. And rocks that have a flat shape are the best.

One thing that you cannot plan for is the water. If there are big waves on a lake, those waves will block your rock. Your rock will skip one or two times at most before crashing into a wave. When the lake is flat like glass, a rock can skip many times.

Even when the lake has waves and is not the best for skipping, you can still polish your skipping skills for next time. When the lake becomes tranquil again, you will be all set with your skills.

As you would expect, there is a trick to how you toss the rock to make it skip. Fran likes to help her pals by demonstrating the way she tosses her rocks with a quick, sideways toss.

If you asked Fran, “Why do you like skipping rocks?”

She would tell you, “I do not know. It is just fun!”

## Some Facts About Ants

**(Story words: body, head, three, weight, brown, sidewalks, wood, feet, wreck)**

Ants have six legs and a body with three segments. You will note that an ant has a head that is quite big in size. While ants are small, they are strong. An ant can lift something as much as 20 times its weight.

Fire ants are reddish, and they sting. When people spot fire ants, they will not stand too close if they are wise.

Pavement ants are brown or black and do not bite or sting. They got their name because they like to nest in the cracks of pavement. You can often spot them if you look at the sides of concrete that make up sidewalks.

Ants listen with their feet. When the land shakes, ants will sense this with their feet and legs. And when ants travel to find snacks, they sometimes put down a smell so that they can find that spot again.

Some ants like to munch on wood, and these ants can be a big problem for people. With time, many ants munching can wreck a deck or the base of a home.

If you want to put a stop to ants coming too close to your house, there are things you can do. Do not let piles of branches or sticks sit next to your house because ants will want to nest in them. Also, do not let standing water be next to your home because water invites ants and insects to come over for a drink.



## Swimming for Sticks

**(Story word: Aunt)**

Aunt Jane has two dogs, Ben and Willa, who love to take a dip in the lake. When Aunt Jane and the kids take the dogs to the dock, the dogs will do more swimming if the kids toss sticks for the dogs to bring back.

Aunt Jane will ask the kids, “Will you find some sticks and toss them for the dogs?” She likes to see the dogs swim and have fun.

Willa is rude when it comes to swimming after sticks. Willa swims fast, so she will get to all the sticks before Ben.

When the kids toss a second stick close to Ben so that he can get one too, Willa swims over to Ben, drops her stick, and takes Ben’s stick away from him. The kids think that Ben’s eyes look sad when Willa takes his stick.

The kids tell Aunt Jane how unkind and selfish Willa is when it comes to Ben. Aunt Jane is not shocked. She

knows that Willa sees herself as the boss of Ben, but she will yell, “Oh, Willa! Can you be a good dog and let Ben have just one stick?”

Because Willa lets her stick drift away when she takes Ben’s stick, the kids have to hunt for more and more sticks to toss. Finding sticks that are a good size and shape for tossing can be quite a job.

Sometimes one of the lost sticks will drift back to the dock. The kids will jump in and swim to get it. Aunt Jane smiles. She is glad to see the kids jump in and swim.

## **Finding Lost Keys (Part 1)**

**(Story word: keys)**

It is often the case that when it is time to go somewhere, Beth cannot find her handbag, glasses, or keys. Her key ring is the smallest thing, so it gets lost the most.

Sometimes, after a long time hunting, Beth will find her keys at the bottom of her handbag. They had not been lost after all.

Her husband Bill was getting tired of the constant hunt for keys. At a cute shop, he saw a long ribbon for keys that Beth could use to put her keys around her neck. The ribbon had red and pink zig-zag stripes. He hoped that Beth would like it.

Beth was not insulted by this gift. She was tired of all the lost time spent looking for things too. And the ribbon did help. But, when it was time for Beth to go out on Sunday, she could not find her keys. They were not in her bag.

She went into the kitchen and looked at the bench where she often put her bags, backpack, or the ribbon with the keys. The backpack was there but not the keys.

She then looked over at Franklin, her dog. Franklin was sitting on the soft rug by the sink licking his red plastic bone.

## **Finding Lost Keys (Part 2)**

**(Story words: keys, three)**

Franklin was three but still acted like a pup most times. If Bill or Beth were picking up the house, fixing lunch, or getting dressed, Franklin wanted to be in on what was happening. He would nab a dropped sock or rag hoping for a fun game of chase.

When Bill came into the kitchen, Beth said, “I think Franklin made off with my keys for a game.”

“It has now come to this!” Bill joked. “We are now going to suspect a dog for the fact that we cannot find your keys! Let’s not tell anyone this, or they will conclude that we have lost our minds.” Bill lent Beth his keys, and they stopped looking for the day.

The next day, Beth went to get an umbrella from the closet. Just by luck, she looked down and spotted a missing sock and the red and pink ribbon with her keys.

She called Bill over. “I want you to be my witness. I was not by the closet until just now. Unless you hid my keys as a prank or we are living with a ghost, we must admit that Franklin is the culprit.”

Franklin ran over to the closet to see what was happening with Bill and Beth.

Bill said, “Gosh, you will just have to be more careful not to put the ribbon in a spot where Franklin can grab it, and then the problem will be solved.”

## **A Hike to Alpine Lake**

**(Story words: family, tree)**

Mom and Dad wanted to take a big hike to Alpine Lake. Russ did not see the fun of going. The last time the family hiked to Alpine Lake it had felt like an endless climb. It had been hot, and he was huffing and puffing the whole way.

Dad said that the last time they went, Russ was only seven, so it had been a long trek for a small kid. Now Russ was ten, so it should not seem so long. Dad bet that it would take about two hours to get to the lake.

Russ chose to go along. The family rested often on the hike and stopped for water and snacks. Sometimes Dad ran fast up the path and then hid behind a big rock or tree. When the rest of the family passed, he would jump out with a big yell to scare them. After this, Russ would scan the path looking for hiding spots Dad could have chosen.

When they got to the top, Russ saw the old lemonade shack. He had not been thinking about the lemonade that was sold at Alpine Lake.

Russ felt tired from the hike, but tired in a good way. The family would hang out at the lake for an hour or so, and the hike downhill would not be bad at all.



## **A Small Task for Gramps**

**(Story words: chair, waste, maybe)**

Mom had a list of tasks to do. One thing she had been putting off was finding a spot to take Gramps's broken lamp.

The lamp by Gramps's best chair had been broken for quite a while, and its shade had a small hole. Last week, Mom had taken the lamp home after telling Gramps that she would get it fixed. Mom was looking on the web for a spot that sold shades and would re-wire an old lamp.

Frank said, "Mom, this is such a waste of time. We could find a new lamp online and have it shipped to Gramps in no time!"

Mom said, "Gramps likes his old stuff. He will not like a new lamp as much he likes this one. If Gramps was still driving, he would have gotten this lamp fixed himself."

Frank was thinking about Gramps and his old pants and jackets. He could see why Mom felt that Gramps would want his old lamp back.

And, in fact, when they dropped off the lamp for Gramps, Gramps looked at the old lamp with a big smile. Gramps said, "This lamp is just like me: a bit on the old side but still going strong."

Frank looked at his mom and smiled as if to say, "Maybe fixing the lamp was not a complete waste of time after all."

## Why Do Crickets Sing?

**(Story words: female, other, vibrates, louder, loud)**

At about sunset at the end of a hot day, you can often listen to crickets “singing.”

Most songs come from male crickets. They hope to attract a mate with their singing. They also want to scare off other males who are competing with them to find a female cricket. Crickets live for only about 90 days, so they do not have much time to mate.

Most female crickets do not sing, but there are some who do.

Crickets “sing” by scraping one wing against the other. A cricket’s wing is like a comb that vibrates when you scrape it.

Crickets are louder when it is hot outside. Some people say that this is because the cricket moves its wings fast

when the cricket becomes hot. The scrapes are not louder, but there are more scrapes to listen to. When many crickets are all singing fast, it can be quite loud outside.

In the daytime, crickets are hiding from things that hunt them. They are resting, and they do not sing.

If crickets are singing in a shrub, and you move in close to take a look, they will stop singing if they are scared and wish to hide from you.