

# Three Sideways Stories From Wayside School

By Louis Sachar

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**NARRATOR 1:** We re going to tell you about three of the children in Mrs. Jewls s class, on the thirtieth story of Wayside School.

**NARRATOR 4:** But before we get to them, there is something you ought to know. Wayside School was accidentally built *sideways*.

**NARRATOR 2:** It was supposed to be only one story high, with thirty classrooms all in a row. Instead, it is *thirty* stories high, with one classroom on each *story*.

**NARRATOR 3:** The builder said he was very sorry.

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## STORY 1

**NARRATOR 1:** Our first story is about Joe. One day, Mrs. Jewls kept him in from recess.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Joe, you are going to have to learn to count.

**JOE:** But, Mrs. Jewls, I already *know* how to count. Let me go to recess!

**MRS. JEWLS:** First count to ten.

**NARRATOR 4:** Joe counted to ten.

**JOE:** Six, eight, twelve, one, five, two, seven, eleven, three, ten.

**MRS. JEWLS:** No, Joe, that is wrong.

**JOE:** No, it isn't! I counted till I got to ten!

**MRS. JEWLS:** But you were *wrong*. I'll *prove* it to you.

**NARRATOR 2:** She put down five pencils.

**MRS. JEWLS:** How many pencils do we have here, Joe?

**NARRATOR 3:** Joe counted the pencils.

**JOE:** Four, six, one, nine, five. There are five pencils, Mrs. Jewls.

**MRS. JEWLS:** That's *wrong*.

**JOE:** How many pencils *are* there?

**MRS. JEWLS:** Five.

**JOE:** That's what I said! May I go to recess now?

**MRS. JEWLS:** No. You got the right answer, but you counted the wrong *way*. You were just lucky.

**NARRATOR 1:** She set down eight potatoes.

**MRS. JEWLS:** How many potatoes, Joe?

**NARRATOR 4:** Joe counted the potatoes.

**JOE:** Seven, five, three, one, two, four, six, eight. There are eight potatoes, Mrs. Jewls.

**MRS. JEWLS:** No, there are *eight*.

**JOE:** But that's what I said! May I go to recess now?

**MRS. JEWLS:** No! You got the right answer, but you counted the wrong *way* again.

**NARRATOR 2:** She put down three books.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Count the books, Joe.

**NARRATOR 3:** Joe counted the books.

**JOE:** A thousand, a million, three. Three, Mrs. Jewls.

**MRS. JEWLS:** (*bewildered*) Correct.

**JOE:** May I go to recess now?

**MRS. JEWLS:** No.

**JOE:** May I have a potato?

**MRS. JEWLS:** No! *Listen* to me. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Now *you* say it.

**JOE:** One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Very good!

**NARRATOR 1:** She put down six erasers.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Now, count the erasers, Joe, just the way I showed you.

**NARRATOR 4:** Joe counted the erasers.

**JOE:** One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. There are ten, Mrs. Jewls.

**MRS. JEWLS:** No!

**JOE:** Didn't I count right?

**MRS. JEWLS:** Yes, you *counted* right, but you got the wrong *answer*.

**JOE:** This doesn't make any sense! When I count the *wrong* way, I get the *right* answer, and when I count *right*, I get the *wrong* answer.

**MRS. JEWLS:** *(in great frustration)* Ooh!

**NARRATOR 2:** Mrs. Jewls hit her head against the wall five times.

**MRS. JEWLS:** *(turning away and butting her head)* Uh . . . uh . . . uh . . . uh . . . *(turns back to JOE)* How many times did I hit my head against the wall, Joe?

**JOE:** One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. You hit your head against the wall ten times.

**MRS. JEWLS:** No!

**JOE:** Four, six, one, nine, five. You hit your head five times.

**NARRATOR 3:** Mrs. Jewls shook her head no and said,

**MRS. JEWLS:** *(shaking head)* Yes, that is right.

**NARRATOR 1:** Just then, the bell rang.

**JOE:** Oh, darn.

**NARRATOR 4:** . . . said Joe.

**JOE:** I missed recess!

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## STORY 2

**NARRATOR 3:** Our second story is about Bebe.

**NARRATOR 1:** Bebe was the fastest draw in Mrs. Jewls s class. She could draw a cat in less than forty-five seconds, a dog in less than thirty, and a flower in less than eight seconds!

**NARRATOR 4:** But of course, Bebe never drew just *one* dog, or *one* cat, or *one* flower.

**NARRATOR 2:** Art was from 12:30 to 1:30. Why, in that time, she could draw fifty cats, a hundred flowers, twenty dogs, and several eggs or watermelons!

**NARRATOR 3:** You see, it took her the same time to draw a watermelon as an egg.

**NARRATOR 1:** Calvin sat next to Bebe. He didn t think he was very good at art. It took him the whole period just to draw one airplane.

**NARRATOR 4:** So instead, he just helped Bebe. He was Bebe s assistant.

**NARRATOR 2:** As soon as Bebe would finish one masterpiece, Calvin would take it from her and set down a clean sheet of paper. Whenever her crayon ran low, Calvin was ready with a new crayon.

**NARRATOR 3:** That way, Bebe didn t have to waste any time. And in return, Bebe would draw five or six airplanes for Calvin.

**NARRATOR 1:** It was 12:30, time for art.

**NARRATOR 4:** Bebe was ready. On her desk was a sheet of yellow construction paper. In her hand was a green crayon.

**NARRATOR 2:** *Calvin* was ready. He held a stack of paper and a box of crayons.

**CALVIN:** Ready, Bebe?

**BEBE:** Ready, Calvin.

**MRS. JEWLS:** All right, class.

**NARRATOR 3:** . . . said Mrs. Jewls.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Time for art.

**NARRATOR 1:** She had hardly finished her sentence when Bebe had drawn a picture of a leaf.

**NARRATOR 4:** Calvin took it from her and put down another piece of paper.

**BEBE:** Red!

**NARRATOR 2:** Calvin handed Bebe a red crayon.

**BEBE:** Blue!

**NARRATOR 3:** He gave her a blue crayon.

**NARRATOR 1:** They were quite a pair! Their teamwork was remarkable.

**NARRATOR 4:** Bebe drew pictures as fast as Calvin could pick up the old paper and set down the new.

**NARRATOR 2:** A fish.

**NARRATOR 3:** An apple.

**NARRATOR 1:** Three cherries

**NARRATOR 4:** *bing,*

**NARRATOR 2:** *bing,*

**NARRATOR 3:** *bing.*

**NARRATOR 1:** At 1:30, Mrs. Jewls announced,

**MRS. JEWLS:** Okay, class, art is over.

**NARRATOR 4:** Bebe dropped her crayon and fell over on her desk.

**NARRATOR 2:** Calvin sighed and leaned back in his chair. He could hardly move.

**NARRATOR 3:** They had broken their old record. Bebe had drawn three hundred and seventy-eight pictures! They lay in a pile on Calvin's desk.

**NARRATOR 1:** Mrs. Jewls walked by.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Calvin, did you draw all these pictures?

**CALVIN:** No, *Bebe* drew them all.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Well then, what did *you* draw?

**CALVIN:** I didn't draw anything.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Why not? Don't you like art?

**CALVIN:** I *love* art. That's why I didn't draw anything.

**MRS. JEWLS:** I don't understand.

**CALVIN:** It would have taken me the whole period just to draw one picture. And *Bebe* would only have been able to draw a *hundred* pictures. But with the two of us working together, she was able to draw three hundred and seventy-eight pictures! That's a lot more art.

**NARRATOR 4:** Bebe and Calvin shook hands.

**MRS. JEWLS:** No, no! *That* isn't how you measure art. It isn't how *many* pictures you *have*, but how *good* the pictures *are*. Why, a person could spend their whole life drawing just one picture of a cat. In that time, I'm sure Bebe could draw a *million* cats.

**BEBE:** *Two* million.

**MRS. JEWLS:** But if that one picture is better than each of Bebe's two million, then that person has produced more art than Bebe.

**NARRATOR 2:** Bebe looked like she was going to cry. She picked up all the pictures from Calvin's desk and threw them in the garbage.

**NARRATOR 3:** Then she ran from the room, down all the stairs, and out onto the playground.

**NARRATOR 1:** Louis, the nice yard teacher, spotted her.

**LOUIS:** Where are you going, Bebe?

**BEBE:** I'm going home to draw a picture of a cat.

**LOUIS:** Will you bring it to school and show it to me tomorrow?

**BEBE:** *Tomorrow? By tomorrow I doubt I'll be finished with even one whisker. (rushes off)*

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### STORY 3

**NARRATOR 2:** Our final story is about Calvin. One day, Mrs. Jewls said,

**MRS. JEWLS:** Calvin, I want you to take this note to Miss Zarves for me.

**CALVIN:** Miss Zarves?

**MRS. JEWLS:** Yes, Miss Zarves. You know where she is, don't you?

**CALVIN:** Yes. She's on the nineteenth story.

**MRS. JEWLS:** That's right, Calvin. Take it to her.

**NARRATOR 3:** Calvin didn't move.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Well, what are you waiting for?

**CALVIN:** She's on the nineteenth story.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Yes, we have already established that fact.

**CALVIN:** The *nineteenth story*.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Yes, Calvin, the *nineteenth story*. Now take it to her before I lose my patience!

**CALVIN:** But, Mrs. Jewls

**MRS. JEWLS:** NOW, Calvin!

**CALVIN:** Yes, ma'am!

**NARRATOR 1:** Calvin walked out of the classroom and stood outside the door.

**NARRATOR 4:** He didn't know where to go.

**NARRATOR 2:** As you know, when the builder built Wayside School, he accidentally built it sideways. But he also forgot to build the nineteenth *story*.

**NARRATOR 3:** He built the eighteenth and the twentieth, but no nineteenth. He said he was very sorry.

**NARRATOR 1:** There was also no Miss Zarves.

**NARRATOR 4:** Miss Zarves taught the class on the nineteenth story. Since there was no nineteenth story, there was no Miss Zarves.

**NARRATOR 2:** And besides *that*, as if Calvin didn't have enough problems, there was no note.

**NARRATOR 3:** Mrs. Jewls had never given Calvin the note.

**CALVIN:** (*sarcastically*) Boy, this is just great! I'm supposed to take a note that I don't have, to a teacher who doesn't exist, and who teaches on a story that was never built!

**NARRATOR 1:** He didn't know what to do.

**NARRATOR 4:** He walked down to the eighteenth story,

**NARRATOR 2:** then back up to the twentieth,

**NARRATOR 3:** then back down to the eighteenth,

**NARRATOR 1:** and back up again to the twentieth.

**NARRATOR 4:** There was no nineteenth story.

**NARRATOR 2:** There had never *been* a nineteenth story.

**NARRATOR 3:** There would never BE a nineteenth story.

**NARRATOR 1:** Calvin walked down to the administration office on the first story. He decided to put the note in Miss Zarves s mailbox.

**NARRATOR 4:** But there wasn t one of those, either. That didn t bother Calvin too much, though, since he didn t have a note.

**NARRATOR 2:** He looked out the window and saw Louis, the yard teacher, shooting baskets.

**CALVIN:** *Louis* will know what to do.

**NARRATOR 3:** Calvin went outside.

**CALVIN:** Hey, Louis!

**LOUIS:** Hi, Calvin. Do you want to play a game?

**CALVIN:** I don t have time. I have to deliver a note to Miss Zarves up on the nineteenth story.

**LOUIS:** Then what are you doing all the way down here?

**CALVIN:** There is no nineteenth story.

**LOUIS:** Then where is Miss Zarves?

**CALVIN:** There is no Miss Zarves.

**LOUIS:** What are you going to do with the note?

**CALVIN:** There is no note.

**LOUIS:** I understand.

**CALVIN:** That s good, because / sure don t.

**LOUIS:** It s very simple. You are not supposed to take no notes to no teachers. You already haven t done it!

**NARRATOR 1:** Calvin still didn t understand.

**CALVIN:** I ll just have to tell Mrs. Jewls that I couldn t deliver the note.

**LOUIS:** *That s* good. The truth is always best. Besides, I don t think *I* understand what I said, either!

**NARRATOR 4:** Calvin walked back up the thirty flights of stairs to Mrs. Jewls s class.

**MRS. JEWLS:** Thank you very much, Calvin.

**CALVIN:** But I

**MRS. JEWLS:** That was a very important note, and I m glad I was able to count on you.

**CALVIN:** Yes, but you see

**MRS. JEWLS:** The note was very important. I told Miss Zarves *not* to meet me for lunch.

**CALVIN:** Don t worry.

**NARRATOR 2:** . . . said Calvin.

**CALVIN:** She won t!

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**NARRATOR 1:** So now you know about Wayside School. Some people say these stories are strange and silly.

**NARRATOR 4:** That is probably true.

**NARRATOR 2:** But when the children at Wayside School heard stories about *us*, they thought *we* were strange and silly.

**NARRATOR 3:** And *that s* for *sure!*