

# Building Comprehension

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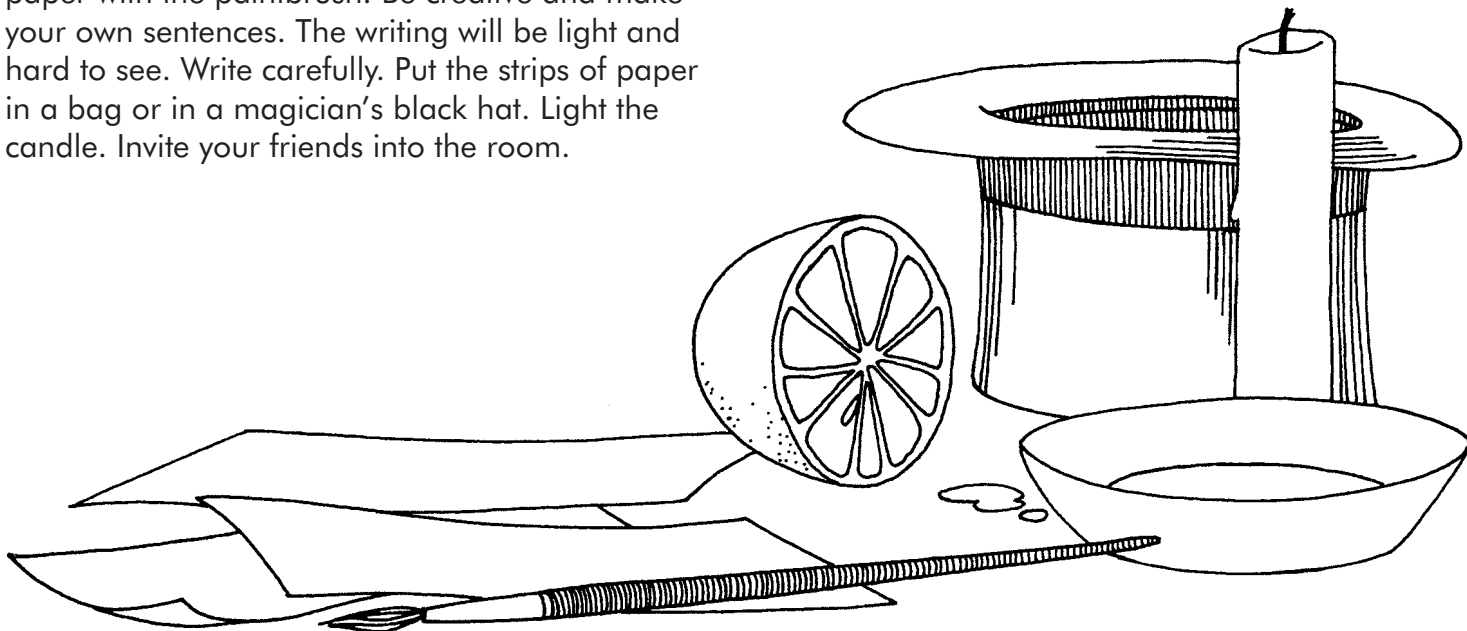
# Magic Words

Here is a magic trick for you to try. It will amaze your friends. Tell them that you can make words appear on paper without writing a thing.

You will have to do some work beforehand to set up this trick. First, get some lemon juice, strips of paper, a thin watercolor paintbrush, and a candle. Dip the paintbrush into the lemon juice. Write words like "Hello" or "How are you?" on the paper with the paintbrush. Be creative and make your own sentences. The writing will be light and hard to see. Write carefully. Put the strips of paper in a bag or in a magician's black hat. Light the candle. Invite your friends into the room.

Show them the strips of paper. The paper will look blank because the lemon juice "ink" is invisible. Make up your own magical words or sayings. Wave your hand or a magic wand over the papers.

Tell your friends to hold their paper up to the candle. Words will appear. The light from the candle will make the lemon juice appear.



## Main Idea

1. This story tells you how to
  - a. paint with watercolors.
  - b. become invisible.
  - c. do a magic trick.

## Significant Details

2. The most important element in the writing is
  - a. good ink.
  - b. lemon juice.
  - c. a black hat.

## Context Clues

3. When writing is *invisible*, it
  - a. cannot be seen.
  - b. is very dark.
  - c. is all capital letters.
4. A *creative* person is
  - a. clumsy.
  - b. clever.
  - c. cheery.

## Inference

5. Magic tricks are entertaining because they can \_\_\_\_\_ the viewer.
  - a. amaze
  - b. frighten
  - c. burn

## Drawing Conclusions

6. Several things could go wrong with this trick. Perhaps the most dangerous outcome would be
  - a. fire.
  - b. poisoning.
  - c. failure.

## Following Through

7. Some famous magicians such as Houdini have had many books written about them. Find a book about a magician or a magic act and share an amazing episode.



# Caleb and Bertha

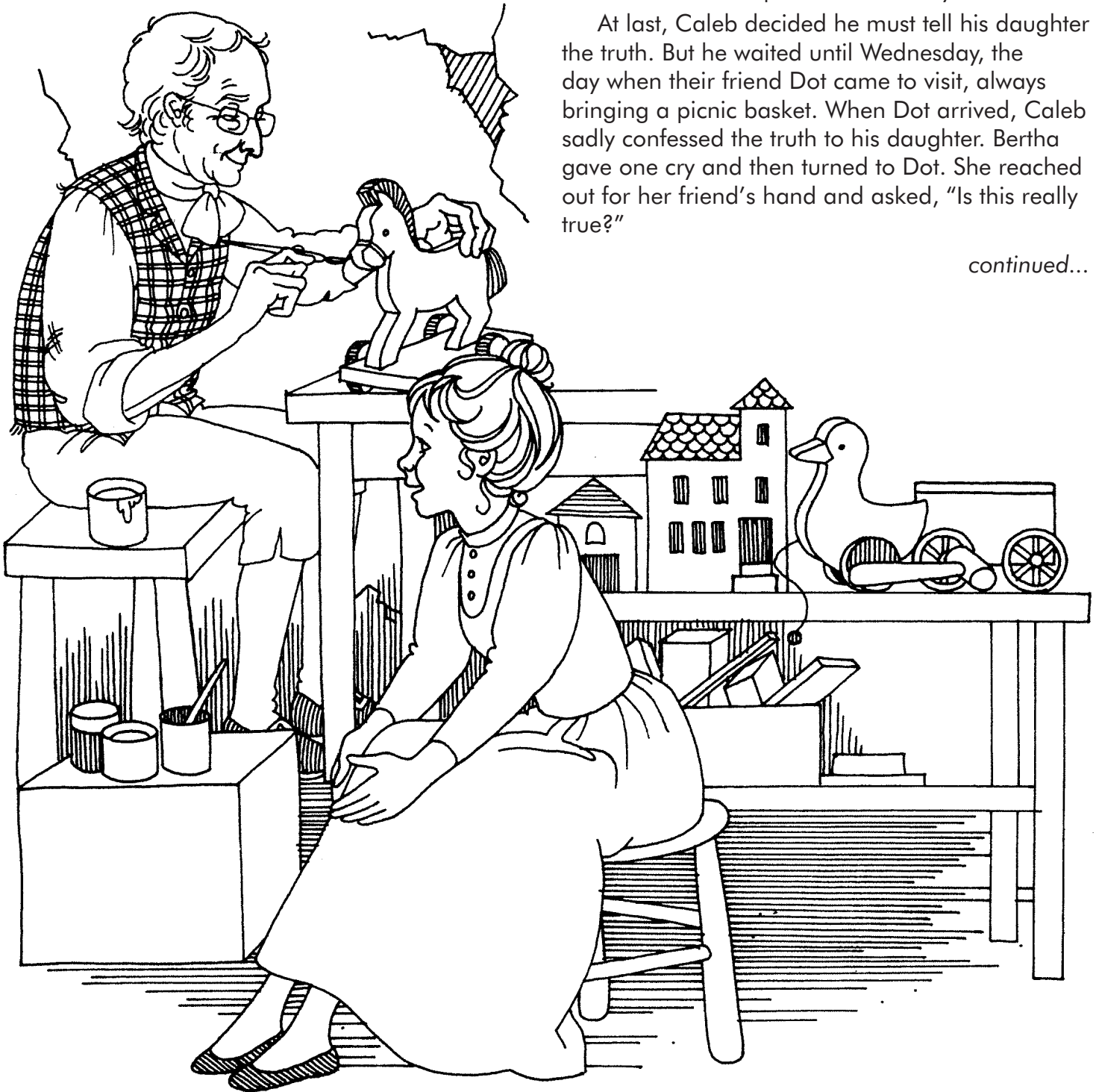
(Adapted from a *The Cricket on the Hearth* by Charles Dickens)

Caleb Plummer and his blind daughter Bertha lived in a small wooden house. The house was next to the large brick toy store where Caleb sold his work. His worked day and night making clever toys for the store owner to sell. His pay, however, was so small that the wooden house had very little in it.

But Bertha knew nothing of the rotting walls and peeling paper. She could not see that her father's few hairs were turning gray, or that his shoulders were stooped and he was thin from lack of food. She believed that the toy store owner was good to them. But it was not so. Bertha's father kept her believing that they lived in a snug, comfortable home. Bertha did not know what an effort it was for the poor man to carry on.

At last, Caleb decided he must tell his daughter the truth. But he waited until Wednesday, the day when their friend Dot came to visit, always bringing a picnic basket. When Dot arrived, Caleb sadly confessed the truth to his daughter. Bertha gave one cry and then turned to Dot. She reached out for her friend's hand and asked, "Is this really true?"

*continued...*



Dot answered, "Yes, it is true. The walls are rotting, your father is getting older, and there is scarcely enough to eat. His fine clothes that he tells you about are little more than rags. He has worked so hard, but there is not much to show for it. But do not be sad. I have a wonderful surprise."

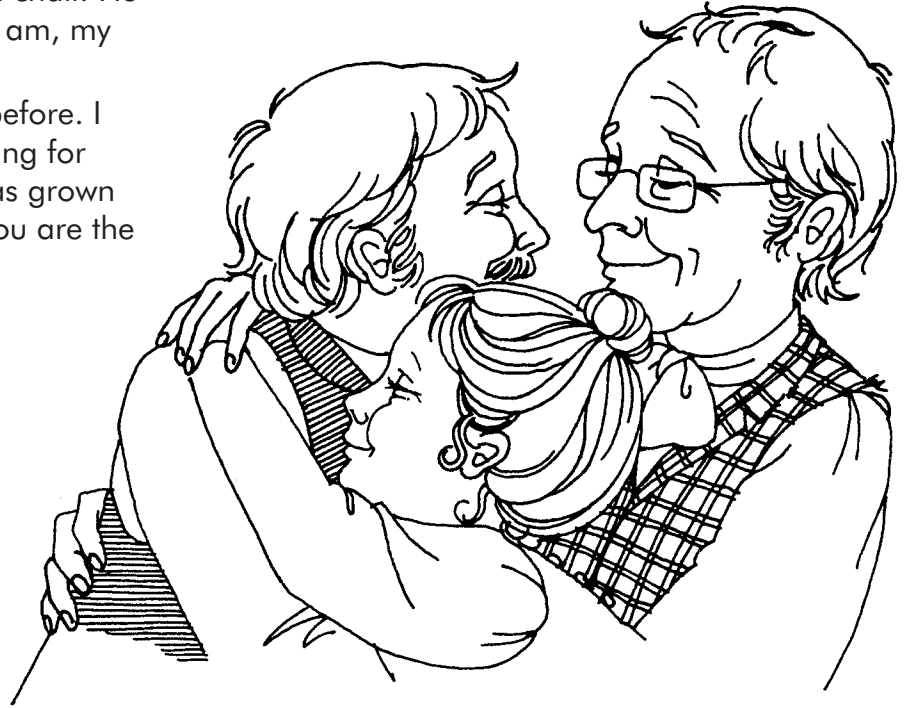
Bertha said, "I am not sad and I need no surprise. I just need to talk to my father. Where are you, Father?"

Caleb had crouched in a corner on a chair. He turned hopefully to his daughter. "Here I am, my dear."

"Oh, Father, I have truly been blind before. I did not know what efforts you were making for me. Now I know, and my love for you has grown so much that I feel my heart will burst! You are the best of fathers."

Caleb was ready to disagree when carriage wheel were heard at the door.

"Here is my surprise," said Dot. The door opened and a young man walked in. It was Caleb's only son, whom he thought was lost at sea. The son hugged his father and sister. Then he gave an extra hug to Dot, who had found him and brought them all together again. From then on, things became truly snug in Caleb's little house.



## Main Idea

1. This story tells about
  - a. a poor family.
  - b. a blind man.
  - c. a wooden house.

## Significant Details

2. Bertha did not know the walls were rotten because she was
  - a. deaf.
  - b. blind.
  - c. young.

## Context Clues

3. When the story says, *his shoulders were stooped*, it means they were
  - a. thick.
  - b. broken.
  - c. bent over.

## Inference

4. Caleb waited for Dot because
  - a. she would tell the truth for him.
  - b. she would comfort Bertha when she learned the truth.
  - c. he was hungry on Tuesday.

## Drawing Conclusions

5. It is possible to guess that Caleb's son
  - a. was very poor.
  - b. had done well.
  - c. was selfish.

## Following Through

6. Write a story of your own about a family with problems that were solved unexpectedly. Or write a follow-up to this story and tell what might happen in years to come.