

LESSON ELEVEN

OBJECTIVE 3: STAYING IN CONTROL

LESSON 11: Violence in Cartoons

OBJECTIVE

- Students will become aware of violence in some cartoons.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

- ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
 - * **CCSS.2.W.1** With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including collaboration with peers.
 - * **CCSS.2.W.7** Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).
- MATHEMATICS
 - * **CCSS2.OA.1** Use addition and subtraction within 100 to solve one- and two-step word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using drawings and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.

LESSON OVERVIEW

- Students will view a cartoon and tally acts of violence.
- Students discuss what would happen if this was real life.
- Students will write a friendly letter to parents.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- *Rose and Too Much TV (Early Elementary version)*
- Student tally Worksheet 11.1: 1 per student
- Friendly letter Worksheet 11.2: 1 per student
- Prerecorded cartoon of your choice (pick one up at your local video store)

Teacher's Note: In Lesson 14 you will be using a project to help inform others about what is being learned in the Take the Challenge curriculum. The information learned in this lesson may be used to help get the message out.

PROCEDURE

Step 11.1: Students Watch a Cartoon and Tally the Violence

*CCSS.2.W.7 & CCSS.2.OA.1

Read through page 7 in *Rose and Too Much TV*. The shaded box at the bottom of the page tells students to keep track of violent acts they see in a cartoon. Tell students that is exactly what we are going to do today!

- **Ask Students:** What is violence? Allow students to respond, prompting them to name acts of violence (hit, kick, push, tease, bully).
- **Tell Students:** Today we will watch a cartoon. Each of you will receive a tally chart. While watching, you will need to look for acts of violence in the cartoon. Use tally marks to record how many times you see characters hitting, pushing, kicking, teasing, and bullying.

Teacher's Note: You may want to make an overhead of the Tally chart to model how to record tally marks.

Distribute Worksheet 11.1.

Show students a cartoon. Have them make tally marks on the chart.

After viewing the cartoon, discuss types and amount of violence they saw.

- **Ask Students:** What would happen if this was real life? Elicit discussion.

Step 11.2: Students Write a Friendly Letter

*CCSS.2.W.1

- **Tell Students:** You are going to write a letter to your parents telling them about the violence you saw in the cartoon.

Distribute Worksheet 11.2.

Following the friendly letter form, guide students through the letter writing process. You may want to explain the parts of the friendly letter as students work through it.

Have students sign and send home the letter.

Violence in Cartoons

Tally Chart

Watch the cartoon and use tally marks to record how many times you see characters doing the following actions.

Action	Tally Marks	Number
Hit		
Push		
Kick		
Tease		
Bully		

Total: _____

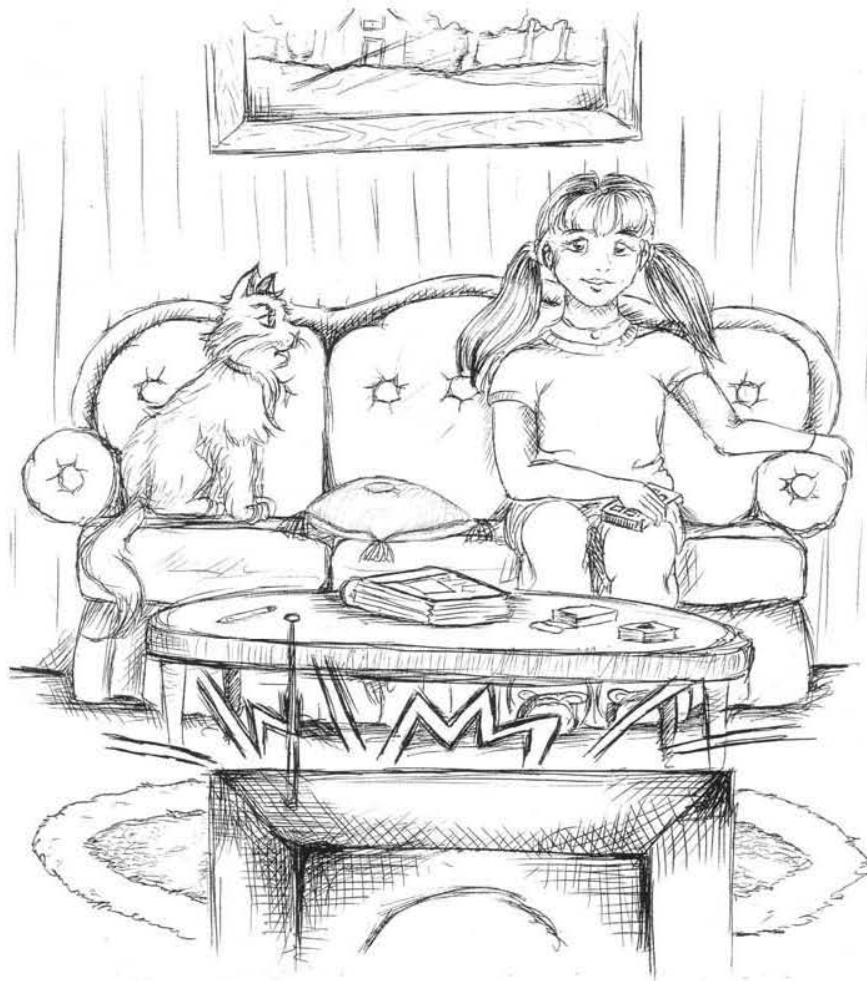
Date _____

Dear _____,

Today we watched _____.
While we watched the show, we looked for _____
_____. I was _____. We
found that _____
_____. I plan to think carefully about what I
watch on TV! I hope you do to!

Sincerely,

Rose and Too Much TV



By Kathryn O'Donnell
Illustrated by Amy Plouff

Early Elementary Version



It was fall. All the leaves on the trees were changing colors and Rose was back in school. Rose liked school. Fourth grade was the best year so far. Ms. Lee, Rose's teacher, was really nice. Ms. Lee had taken the class on a field trip to a museum in a real lighthouse.

The only thing Rose liked more than school was playing soccer. In the summer Rose and her two best friends, Rob and Samantha, played on a soccer team together. Their team was called the Bumblebees. Their shirts were black and yellow striped. When they scored their fans would make buzzing noises to cheer for them.

Now that soccer season was over they played soccer together at the park most days after their homework. The three friends always made time for other games as well. They would go down the big slide or see who could swing the highest. Sadly, you can't go to the park everyday...some days it rains.

It was one such rainy day when Rose and her older brother Charlie had just finished their homework.

"I wish it wasn't raining, I am soooo bored! I wonder how long it will rain?" said Rose.

"It will rain the rest of the day and be sunny tomorrow," said Charlie.

"How do you know that?" asked Rose

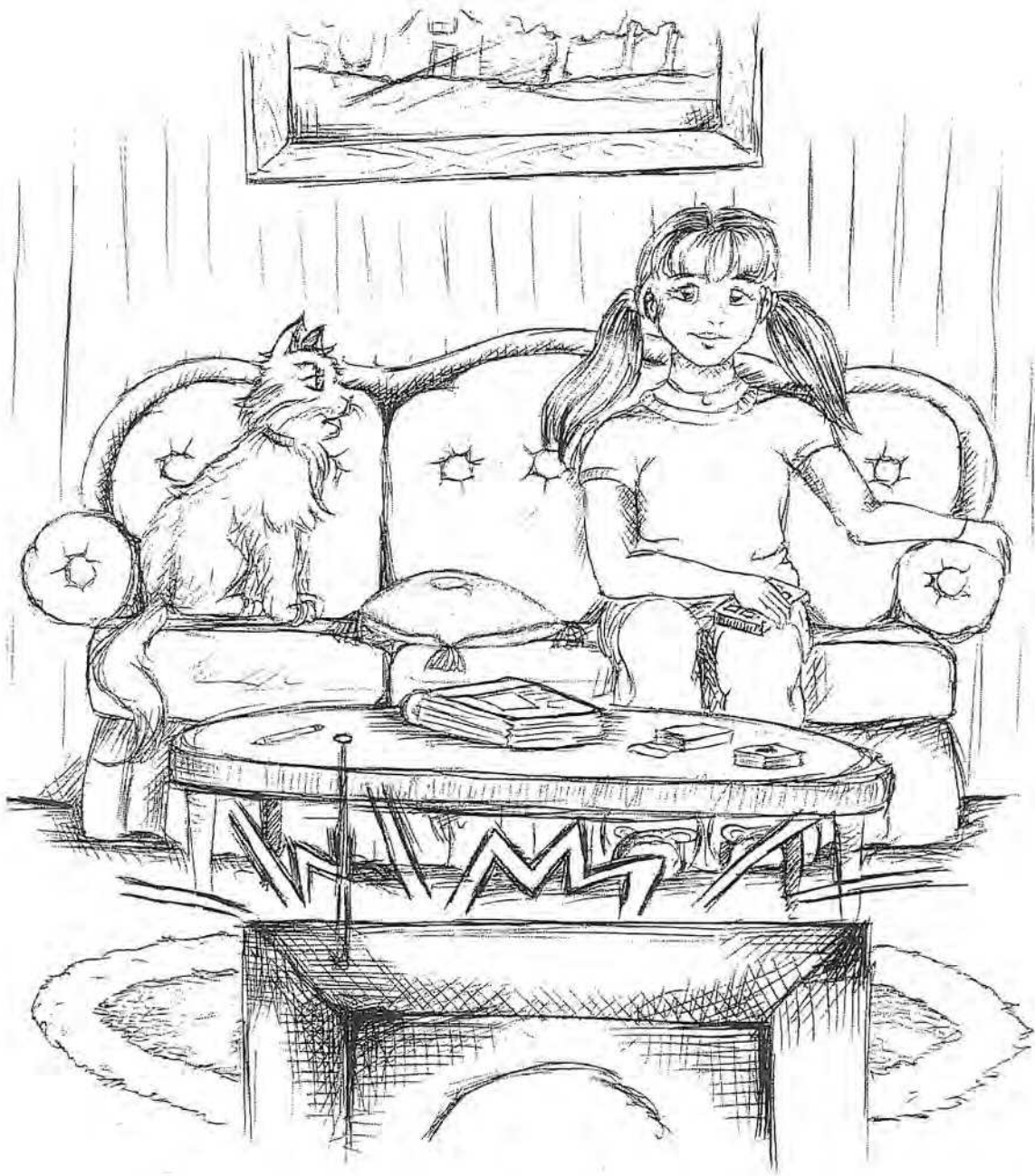
"I saw the forecast on the Weather Station this morning," said Charlie.

"That's what we can do!" said Rose.

"What's that?" asked Charlie.

"Watch TV!" said Rose.





Rose sat down on the couch next to Fluffer the family cat. She turned on the TV and started to flip channels with the remote control. Rose stopped on a show with a cartoon dog and cat fighting. When Rose was younger that cartoon had made her sad. Back then she had thought the cat and dog were mean to hurt each other with frying pans and hammers. Now, after watching the show so many times she thought they were funny.

After the show was over Charlie stood up and yawned.

“Do you want to play a card game now?” he asked.

“No thanks. I am going to watch another show,” said Rose.

Rose didn't hear Charlie say he was going upstairs to read because she was already watching the next fighting cat and dog show.

Next time you watch a cartoon, count how many times people do something to hurt each other. How many times do they hit, scratch, pinch, kick, or push one another? In real life if people hurt each other like that they would be in lots of pain and they would get in trouble.



The next day Rose didn't go to the park to play with Rob and Samantha because she wanted to watch the show "Teen Princess." She told her friends that she couldn't go because she was busy. Over the next few months Rose would make up more excuses not to play with her friends, her brother, and even Fluffer her cat.

Sleep is the only thing kids spend more time on than watching TV. If you watch just two hours of TV a day that still adds up to nearly one month if you watched all that TV in one sitting.

“Charlie! Rose! Please come and set the table!” Papa called from the kitchen where he was making dinner.

“Why do we never have Sugar Cruncher cereal?” asked Rose. She turned her nose up at the healthy food Papa was cooking, thinking instead of the food she had seen advertised on TV.

“Your Papa cares enough about us to make yummy and healthy food. You should be thankful for all the work he put into this tasty meal,” said Rose’s Mama.

Papa was sad. All the people who came to eat at the restaurant where he was a chef loved the food he made. Why didn’t his daughter like his food like she use to? He worried that with all the junk food she kept asking him to buy she would learn unhealthy eating habits for the rest of her life.

In 2001, \$46 billion dollars were spent on advertising because it works. Commercials and other ads can make people think they need something they don’t, even if it is bad for them.



Rose was finding school harder and harder. When she sat down to do her homework she could not think. Twice she had lied about being done with her homework so that her parents would let her watch “Celebrity Challenge Island.”

Rose never wanted to do anything besides watch TV, even play a board game. After the first snow of the season Charlie wanted to build a snow fort. Instead of joining him, Rose used the snow as another reason to stay inside and watch TV.

“It’s too cold!” she said.

More TV and video game use is related to less reading, finishing less homework, worse grades, lower test scores, and lower IQ.



One night after Rose was in bed and Mama and Papa had turned off the light, Rose became scared and pulled her blanket over her head. She tried to count sheep but she could not stop thinking about a TV show she had watched. The family on the show had been robbed while they were sleeping.

“What if the same thing happens to us?” Rose thought. She was really worried about Fluffer, who slept in his cat bed all the way downstairs.

“How can anyone sleep soundly with all the violent crimes happening? The world is a big scary place,” she thought. The sun was starting to come up before Rose was finally able to fall asleep.

In the real world, 87% of crimes are nonviolent; but in the make-believe world of TV and movies, 87% of crimes are violent. Watching lots of violent TV can make people overly afraid. They may think the world is more dangerous than it really is.





The next day Fluffer and everyone else were safe and sound. However, Rose was so tired that she could not pay attention at school. The day's lessons seemed to whiz and spin around her head without ever going in. In social studies her teacher, Ms. Lee, called on her to read and she didn't know what page the class was on. Rose's face turned red and she sank down low in her desk.

“Psst, page 118,” whispered Rob from his desk next to hers. He smiled at Rose as she quickly turned to the right page and began to read aloud.

“Hey Rose,” called Samantha after school as she and Rob hurried over to where Rose was pulling on her red knit hat. “How are you?”

“Fine. How about you?” Rose answered, feeling guilty for avoiding her friends lately.

“Ahhhh, good...I just want to tell you that we are here if you need anyone to talk to,” blurted Samantha.

“What do you mean by that?” asked Rose, her guilt turning into anger.

“Just that you haven’t been yourself lately. We are worried...almost falling asleep in class today, never wanting to play anymore,” Rob said nervously.

“I don’t need your help anymore than I need to play your dumb games in the dumb park with dumb you!” Rose shouted. She threw her backpack over her shoulder and stormed away.

Weeks later Rose was no longer thinking about how angry she had been with Rob and Samantha. She was too busy watching and thinking about TV.

“You know we have to finish our homework before we can watch television Rose,” said Rose’s older brother Charlie.

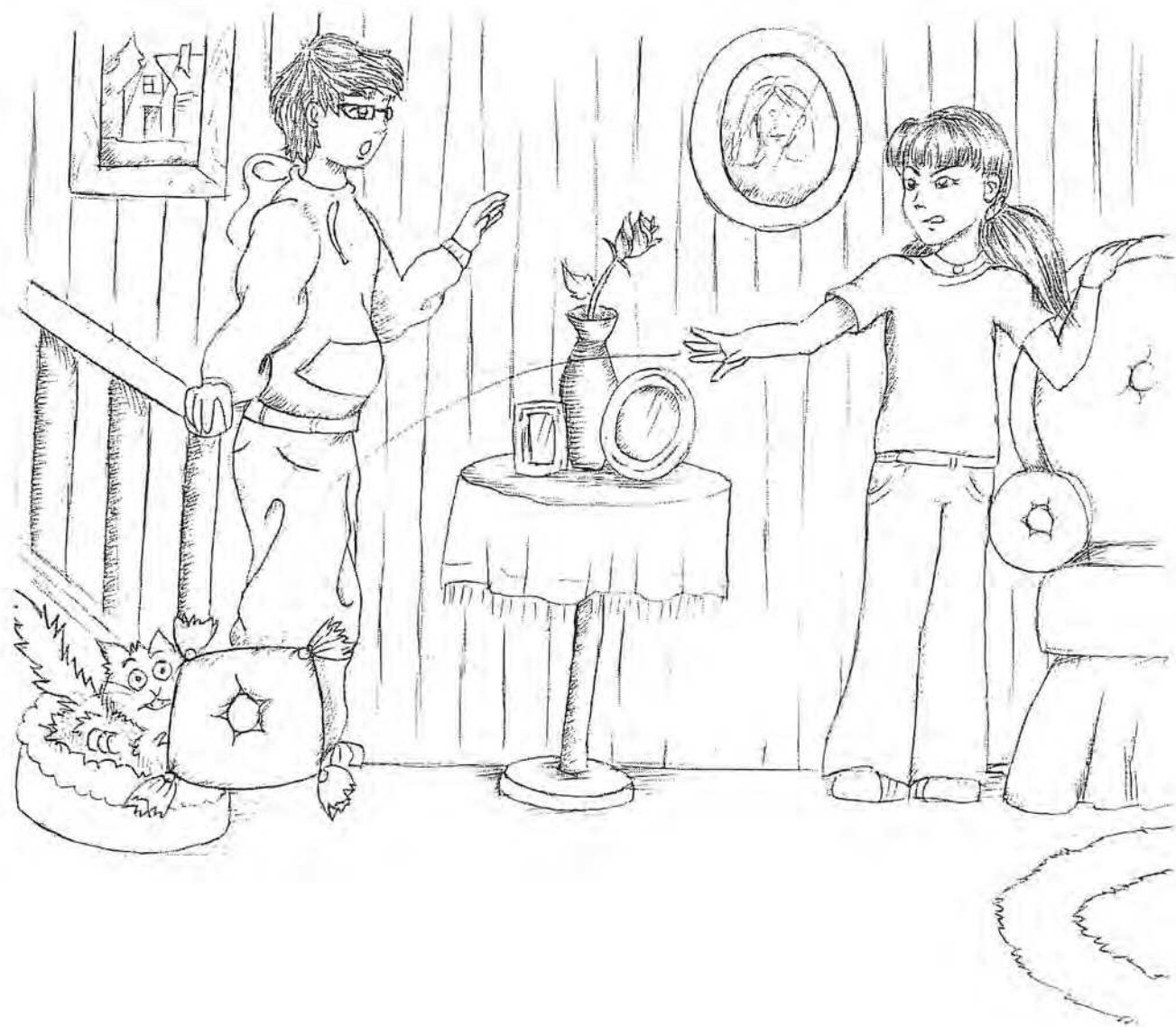
“Leave me alone Charlie,” Rose snapped.

Seeing that Rose was making no effort to turn off the TV, he picked up the remote she had set on the couch and clicked the television off.

“I will help you study for your spelling test if you like.”

“If I like? I would like you to leave me alone! A-L-O-N-E!” yelled Rose. She grabbed the nearest pillow and threw it at Charlie. The pillow missed Charlie and hit Fluffer the cat who had been standing behind Charlie watching the fight. Fluffer ran upstairs to hide under Mama and Papa’s bed.

Watching violent TV and video games can lead to acting and thinking in a mean way.



“Have a good weekend class. Remember your book reports are due two weeks from today,” said Ms. Lee. “I am especially looking forward to reading your report Rose, it was so clever how you compared your cat to the Bengal tiger for your animal report.”

“Oh no,” thought Rose “I haven’t even picked out a book yet.”

Kids who watch less violent TV and movies and play fewer violent video games show more brain activity in the part of the brain that controls thinking, learning, reasoning, and controlling emotions when they were given brain scans.

ADDRESS QUESTIONS

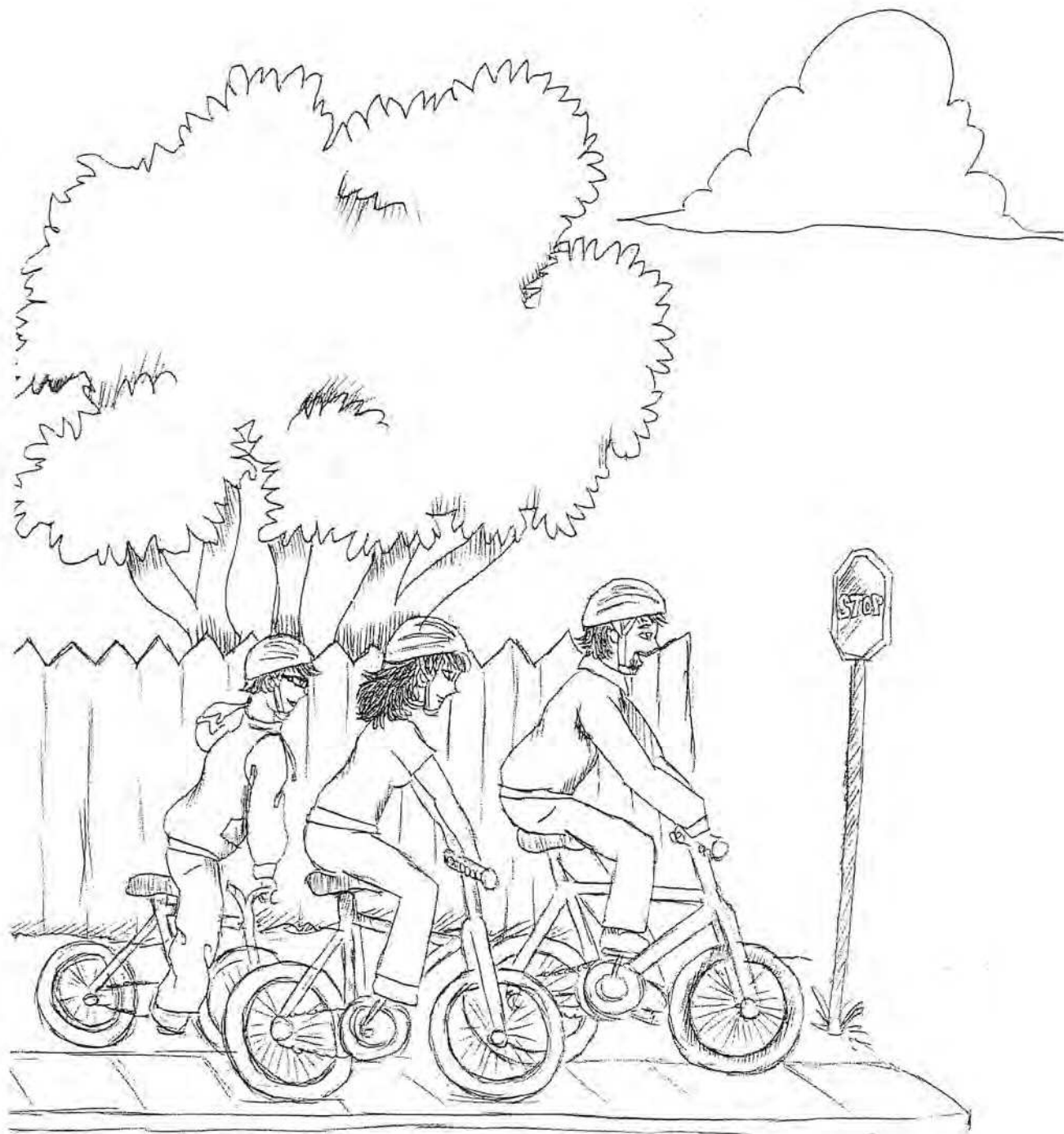




When Rose got home from school she asked Mama if they could go to the library so that she could find a book for her report. Seeing Rose, Fluffer ran away into the other room. Fluffer seemed to be afraid of her ever since she hit him with the pillow.

“Hey now, that sounds like a good excuse for a family bike ride on a nice spring day like today!” said Mama.

“And when we get home we can barbecue,” said Papa.



“Cool!” said Charlie.

“Great!” said Papa.

“I will never get home in time to watch the clown car racing derby,” thought Rose.

Once they had fastened their helmets and got going, the bike ride didn't seem as bad as Rose had expected, although she felt out of breath. Rose was glad they had to stop at every street corner to check for cars because it gave her time to catch up with the others.



Mama, Papa, and Charlie found books right away but Rose walked up and down the rows without any luck.

“Can I help you find something?” asked a silver-haired librarian.

“Well, I need to do a book report for school but I don’t know what to read,” said Rose.

“What are some of your interests?” he asked.

“I like soccer and I love to watch TV,” Rose answered.

“I see,” said the librarian, as he wrinkled up his nose. “Not just kids, but people in general seemed to be watching more and more TV and coming to the library less and less. “What kind of TV shows do you like best?” he asked.

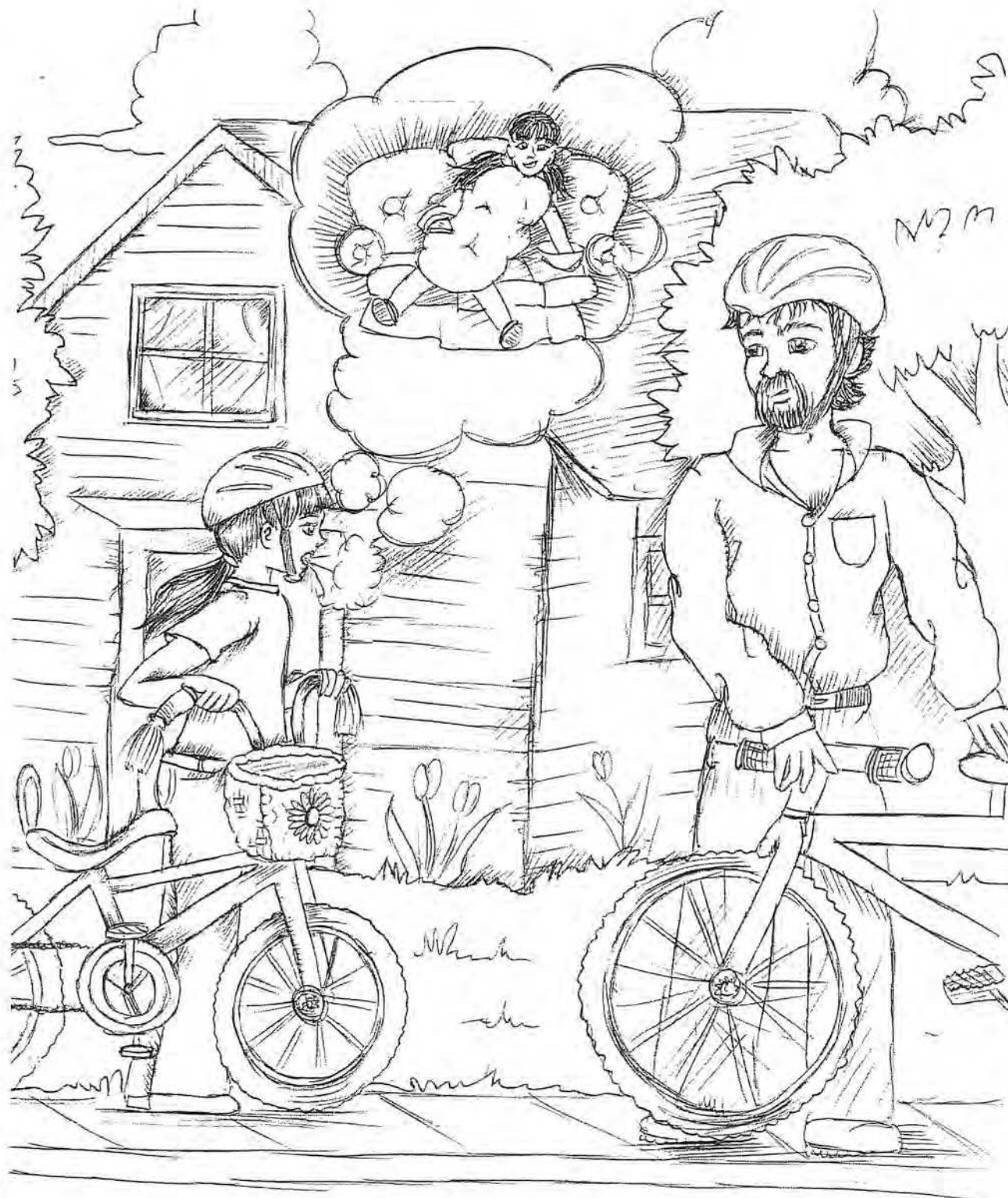
“My favorites are really exciting shows where lots happens,” said Rose.

“I think I know what to get for you, follow me,” he said as a smile spread across his face and a twinkle appeared in his eye. “Treasure Island,” he said, a few rows later, as he handed Rose a book. “This is the action movie of books!”

On the bike ride home Rose had to ask her family to stop. She had to rest because she felt out of shape and could not peddle any farther.

“Oh no! I think we have a potato on our hands,” said Papa. “A couch potato.”

You burn fewer calories while watching TV than when just sitting quietly, doing nothing.



After the family got home Rose asked Charlie for advice.

“How can I finish my book report and have time to exercise?” she asked.

“At the Middle School, we’re going to have a screen-free week starting Monday. I bet if you stopped watching TV with me you would have the time you are looking for and you might have an easier time in school,” said Charlie.

“But how would that help me in school?” asked Rose with a frown.

“They told us about a scientific study that showed how the thinking part of your brain works more if you don’t watch lots of violent TV,” answered Charlie.

Rose still wasn’t looking forward to a whole week without TV, but she knew it would be easier if she and Charlie did it together.





It wasn't easy at first, but as the week without TV went on Rose found more time for her schoolwork and spending time with her family and friends. Papa taught her how to bake bread from scratch, Mama let her help plant the garden, she got an A+ on her book report, and she told her brother and her friends that she was sorry for being mean.



“I have an idea. We should use the two big apple trees at the park as goal posts and kick in between them for a goal,” Rose said as she, Samantha, and Rob walked home from school.

“And if we miss and hit one of the trees maybe those big red apples will fall down for us to eat!” joked Rob. Samantha and Rose laughed at the thought of a soccer ball being buried by a pile of apples. She was happy to be back playing with her friends, and they were glad to have her back.



What would you do if there were 2 to 4 more hours in your day? Start a band with your friends? Write and draw your own comic book? Maybe start a dog walking business? Watching TV is no substitute for the real world. Time spent in front of screens limits learning and time with others. Basically, you miss out on learning about the world and making friends.



Just like Rose, you can turn screens off and turn life on!