



# Fourth Grade

## Reading Books

### Sample Chapters from Bobcat Cowboys Bad Hare Day and Wallpaper Island

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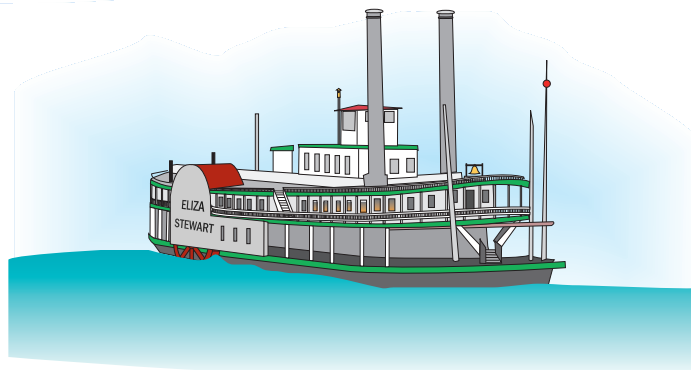
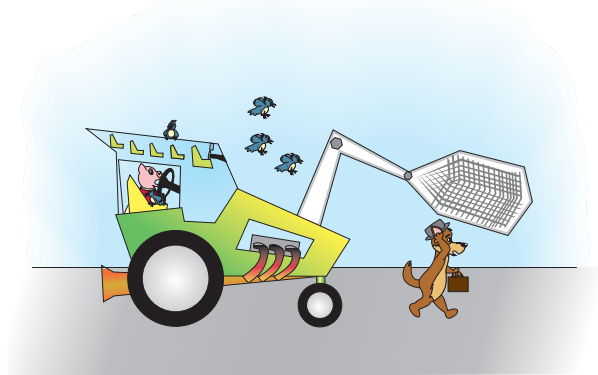
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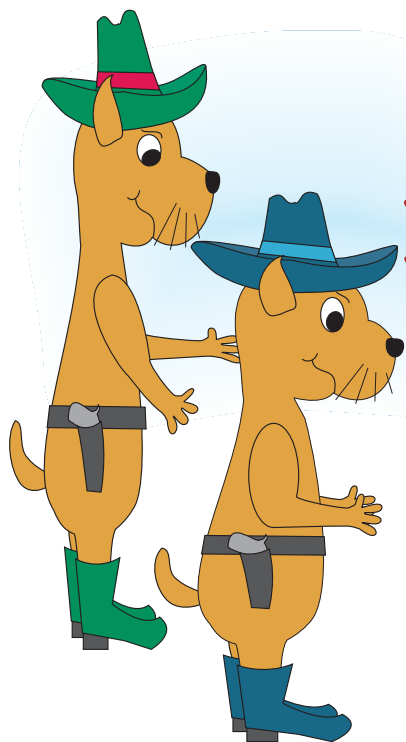
Written and illustrated  
by  
Brian Davis M.A. Ed.

McRuffy Press, LLC  
P.O. Box 212  
Raymore, MO 64083

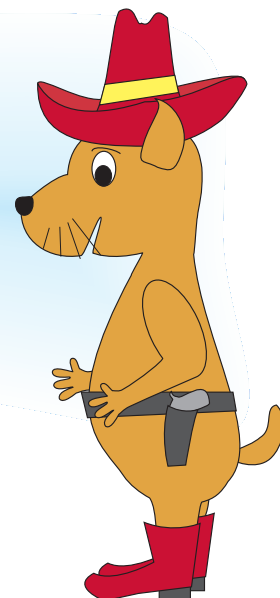
Email: [sales@mcruffy.com](mailto:sales@mcruffy.com)

Phone: 816-331-7831

[www.McRuffy.com](http://www.McRuffy.com)



# Bobcat Cowboys Bad Hare Day



Story and illustrations by  
Brian Davis

The Annual Carrot Harvest Festival is beginning in Rowdent Gulch. Most of the critters are busy getting ready for the big carrot chili cook-off. A couple of hare hair stylist are up to foul play with the Fowl Players. Meanwhile, the bobcat cowboys are cooking up their own batch of trouble.

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## Vocabulary Words

annual	predator
calico	prey
commotion	register
festival	thespian
governor	tuition

*Chapter 1*

Registration Forms

Otto Muskrat was wheeling and dealing with the customer on the other side of the counter.

“Okay, it looks like you filled out everything on the carpet order and registered for our free drawing,” said Otto. “You’ll steal the carpet from my store when it comes in this week.”

“Right,” said Bubba. “Just like the last time.”

“I’ll leave the door unlocked. Bobbybill messed it up last time I locked the door when you were planning on robbing me,” explained Otto.

“Billybob and I used him to ram the door. We tried to get Ricky Ram to ram the door, but we could only find a little lamb. It was way too small and fluffy to beat down the door. Bobbybill’s head was much harder.”

“Ricky Ram was probably over at the diner mixing the pancake batter,” guessed Otto Muskrat.

“That battering ram does make good pancakes,” commented Davey Beaver who was listening as he worked in the store. “I like the ones where he uses sawdust instead of flour.”

“We do have that big pancake breakfast coming up. I’ll give the sheep a key in case I forget and lock the door,” said Otto. “Now, if you’re going to steal the carpet, I’m going to have to charge more for the padding and insulation.”

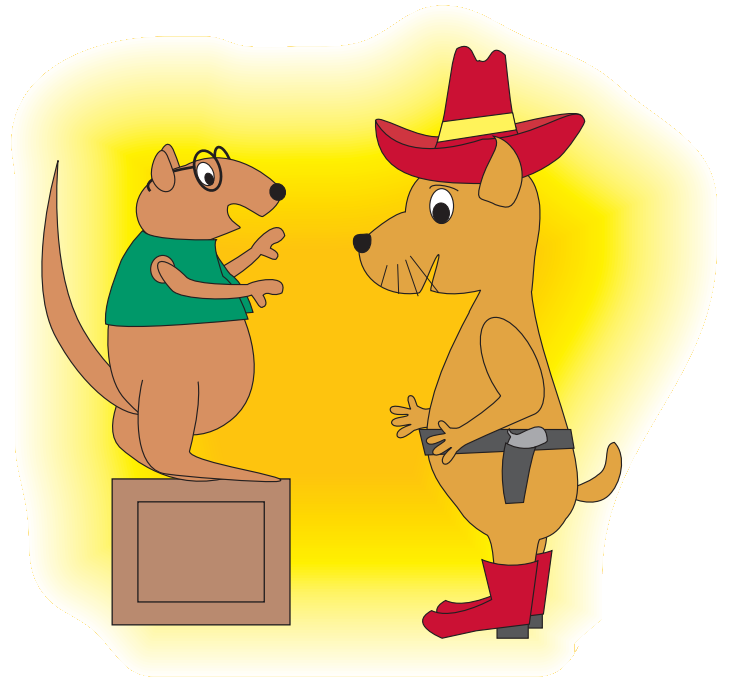
Bubba nodded in agreement, “You’ve got to make a living. Just write up the total and leave the money in the cash register. Bobbybill will need to rob it to pay you.”

Davey Beaver was sweeping the floor and listening. “Pardon me partner. I don’t mean to impose, but that just doesn’t make sense.”

“Why not?” asked Otto and Bubba at the same time.

“The bobcats steal new carpet,” Davey repeated. “Then, they steal the money from you to pay for padding and insulation.”

“Yes, that sounds right,” said Otto.



“It doesn’t make a lick of sense,” argued Davey. “Insulation is something you put in walls. Carpets are something you put on floors.”

“You’re right,” said Otto. “Now, how am I going to make any profit off of this?”

“You could charge for installation,” suggested Davey.

“That’s brilliant! It’s really hard to get insulation inside the solid rock walls of the bobcat’s cave. It would have cost me a fortune,” said Otto. “How did you get so smart all of the sudden?”

“I’ve been eating the old wooden schoolhouse,” answered Davey Beaver. “There’s a lot of learning in those walls.”

“That’s why I’ve noticed fewer chewed up broom handles around here,” Otto observed.

“Why do you need new carpet anyway?” Davey asked Bubba Bobcat. “Didn’t you just steal some last month?”

“I accidentally spilled spot remover on it,” explained Bubba. “Without spots it just doesn’t look very bobcat-like. At least I didn’t spill it on Bobbybill this time. I spilled some on him when he was four. Momma made him live with the cougars until the spots came back. He just didn’t look quite right for a month.”

Otto checked his notes for the carpet order, “You’re in luck, Bubba. I just had our drawing for the contest. You won free delivery on every theft over \$20 this week. You and your brothers won’t have to lug that heavy carpet all the way back to your cave on Gooseberry Mountain.”

Bubba smiled, “That’s mighty generous of you. It’s that kind of service that keeps my brothers coming back to rob you!”

“You won the prize fair and square,” said Otto. “But, maybe I should make my contests last more than ten minutes. It might give other customers a chance to enter.”

While Bubba was at the store, his brothers Billybob and Bobbybill Bobcat were in another part of Rowdent Gulch. As Bubba left, he knew right where to find them. The bell in the town square was clanging loudly. Someone would clang the bell every time there was trouble in town. Bubba knew if there was trouble, Billybob and Bobbybill couldn’t be too far away.

The trouble started as Billybob and Bobbybill tried to register for a booth at the Annual Carrot Harvest Festival. There must have been over a hundred rodents waiting in line. It took the bobcat brothers a couple of minutes to budge their way to the registration table in the town square. It was a lot of working tripping, pushing, and scaring the smaller animals out of the way. Deputy Guinea Pig and Walt Woodchuck sat at the table.

“We go to all the trouble of setting up a predator’s registration table so you wouldn’t cut in front of all the smaller critters,” scowled Deputy Guinea Pig.

“You need to see Larry the Rat at the predator table,” Walt Woodchuck firmly stated. “This table is for registration of prey only.”

“Did Wilber Wolf come here to pray before eating?” asked Bobbybill. “He just pointed over at this table.”

“He couldn’t talk. His mouth was full,” explained Billybob.

“Except for that rat tail toothpick sticking out of his mouth,” added Bobbybill.

“Rat tail toothpick!” exclaimed Deputy Guinea Pig. “Clang the bell. I need Sheriff Prairie Dog at the predator registration table!”

Soon, Wilber Wolf had two double barrel rubber band slinging shotguns pointed right at him. The wolf reluctantly opened his mouth. The slobber covered rat plopped down on the registration table. The sheriff and deputy hauled the wolf off to jail.



“What did I do wrong?” cried the wolf.

“It’s illegal to eat registration table workers,” explained Deputy Guinea Pig. “It makes everyone in line have to wait too long while we hire a replacement. If we let you get away with it, the next thing you know critters will be eating guinea pig registration table workers. I just can’t let that happen.”

At that moment Babs Bluejay landed next to Larry the rat. She had missed all the commotion.

“I’m here to relieve you for lunch,” Babs explained to Larry.

“I’ve already been lunch,” quivered the rat. “I’m taking the rest of the day off,” he said as he ran toward his home.

Babs sighed heavily at the table. “How did wolf slobber get on these registration forms? That rat and his friends sure are messy.” She gathered the papers and without looking up yelled, “Next!”

Billybob and Bobbybill stepped up to the table.

Babs looked up and got a surprised look on her face. “Do you want a booth at the Carrot Harvest Festival? You do know that the critters can’t be forced to come to a booth.”

“It’s not for us,” Billybob explained.

“Although we did think of opening a kissin’ booth,” Bobbybill smiled.

“Until we found out the Hawg family was willing to be our customers,” Billybob explained. “I hate gettin’ my lips muddy.”

“If it’s for Bubba, I guess he’ll do all right,” said Babs. “Is he going to serve his pineapple, marshmallow burgers? Everybody loves those.”

“That’s the plan,” said Billybob. “It’s an honest way to make a livin’, but he insists on doin’ it.”

“Sometimes I just don’t understand that bobcat brother of mine,” agreed Bobbybill. “Next thing you know he’ll be depositing money in a bank instead of robbin’ it.”

“Just fill out the form and give me the registration fee,” said Babs.

“We don’t have the registration fee,” explained Billybob. “We were going to rob you for it.”

Babs sighed, “Then, I’m afraid you’re in the wrong line. You’ll have to get in the prey registration line. When you get to the front, just prey on the registration table workers. Rob them and bring the registration fee back to me.”

“We just stood in that line,” complained Bobbybill. “They sent us here.”

“Did you explain to them that you needed to steal the money?” asked Babs.

Billybob stared down at the ground shamefully, “Well no, we just assumed they knew we were going to steal the money.”

“We did tell them a wolf ate Larry the Rat,” Bobbybill explained. “They came right over and rescued the rat.”

“And they didn’t make you stand in line at the ‘Report a Registration Worker Eaten table?’” asked Babs. “I’m going to have to go over our line waiting procedures with Walt and Guinea Pig. Next!”

At that, a fox stepped up to the registration table. Billybob and Bobbybill headed back to the end of the prey line to start cutting and budging their way to the front.

# Wallpaper Island

Story and illustrations by  
Brian Davis

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A young girl and her mother move to a mysterious house to take care of a sick aunt. While exploring the rooms in the house, Hannah discovers a secret. It leads her on a journey that will take courage, loyalty and an imaginary dog to complete.

## Vocabulary Words

appreciation	pantry
bedposts	pondered
decorative	precarious
disorganized	predicament
emanate	spiral
fascinating	substitute
horizon	trampoline
locksmith	tropical
nautilus	Victorian
	vegetation

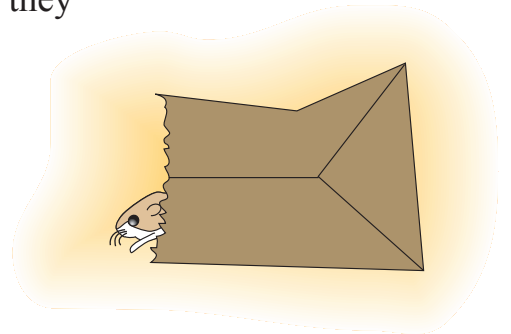
## Chapter 1

### Accept No Substitutes

Hannah knew it was going to be one of those days at school from the first moment she walked into the classroom. First, it was noisier than normal. Then she noticed the stranger standing at the teacher's desk.

A few of the boys in her class loved to challenge substitutes. To Hannah, it seemed her teacher must pack their brains in her briefcase each night and take them home with her. The boys sure didn't seem to use them whenever she wasn't there. They never seemed to remember how much trouble they would be in when the teacher got back.

By the history lesson, the substitute was already pretty frazzled. Somehow the gerbil ended up in her lunch sack. Then, the lesson plan book got mysteriously placed on the bookshelf.



The teacher wasn't able to teach the history lesson. In fact, she didn't even know there was a history lesson. That suited Hannah just fine. It was her least favorite subject. She thought it was so boring to learn about things that had already happened. It was too late to change any of it so what was the use?

Finally, someone flipped all the schedules around. The substitute took the students to the music room for P.E. She took the class to the library at music time. No one spoke up to correct her until the class reached the different parts of the building.

Things started to settle down after lunch. As always, Hannah was the first one finished with her spelling assignment. She raised her hand and asked if she could get a book from the reading center. Hannah walked to the back corner of the room. A rustling sound came from the closet.

Hannah peeked around the corner. Somehow James and Braydon had slipped into the coat closet without being noticed by the substitute. They were pulling Hoppity, the black and white rabbit, out of its cage. Braydon looked up and saw Hannah.

He put his finger to his mouth to signal for her to be quiet. James looked up, too. He waved a fist at Hannah. It was a warning not to talk. Hannah picked up the first book she could find and rushed back to her desk.

Although she kept her nose buried in the book, she did notice James and Braydon sneak back to their seats. Hannah worried about Hoppity. He was such a lovable rabbit. Surely, the boys wouldn't have hurt the rabbit. Then again, they were pretty mean.

Most of the class referred to them as "double trouble". She tried to stay clear of them as much as possible. A few of the girls hung around with them. Hannah could see why. They were just about as mean as the boys. They often called her names and made fun of her clothes.



Hannah's father was in another country. He was in the army. That wasn't his main job. He was in the reserves, but his unit was sent to protect people thousands of miles away. Sometimes Hannah wished he were home so he could protect her.

Since the army didn't pay as much as her father's regular job, her mom had to save money. One way they did this was by buying used clothes. They were nice enough, they just weren't the newest. Some of her dresses were a little faded and worn. Hannah understood that she was growing quickly. Her clothes would be replaced soon enough.

"Everyone put away your spelling books. Clear your desks. It's time for recess," instructed the substitute teacher.

She called one row of students at a time to get their jackets from the coat closet. When Hannah's row was called, James cut in line ahead of her. Braydon was in back of her. Hannah had an uneasy, queasy feeling in her stomach. As soon as they were out of sight of the teacher, James turned around.

"You saw nothing, and if you say anything..." James waved his fist at her.

The students waited in line at the door. The teacher walked back to the closet. She came back out holding her coat. The substitute slipped it on and reached into her pocket for her gloves.

Suddenly, she started screaming and dancing around. The teacher was trying to get the coat off as quickly as possible. It landed on the floor. All the students jumped back.

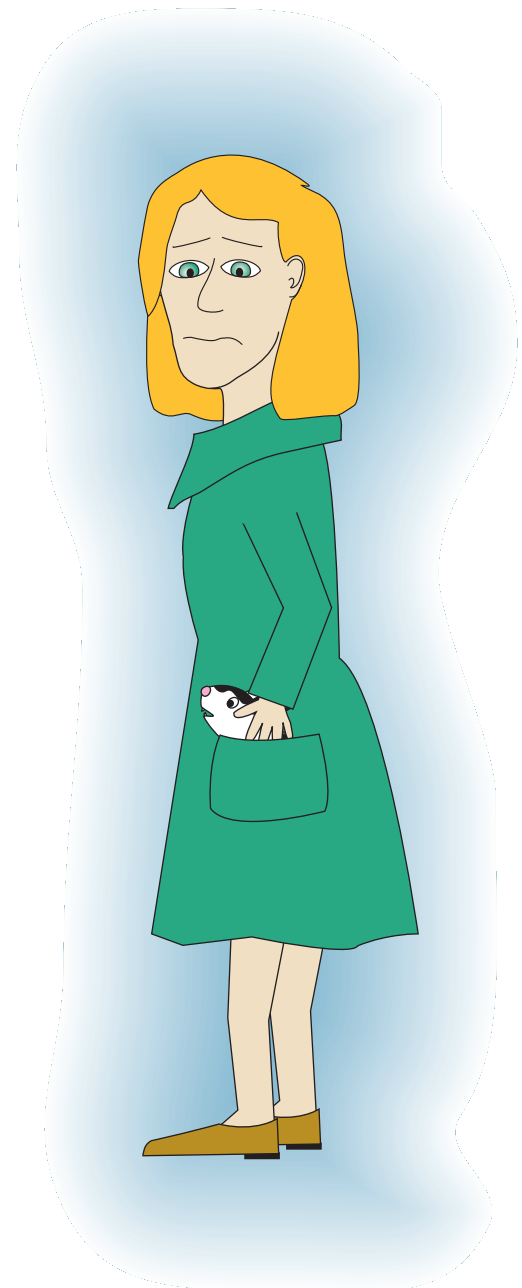
"There's something alive in the pocket!" one of the students shouted when she saw it move.

A few of the students jumped on top of their desks. The teacher got her pointer stick and prodded at her coat. That was when Hoppity decided to make his escape. He ran full speed around the classroom and right out the door. The students chased after their class pet into the hallway.

Mr. Kraig stepped from the principal's office to see what the commotion was all about. He was nearly knocked flat by the running students. Then the substitute walked up to him and pointed her finger in his face.

"This is the worst class I have ever substituted in. I don't ever want to come back. They're all yours for the rest of the day!"

The principal rounded up the students and ushered them back to the classroom. One of the boys put Hoppity back in its cage. Hannah had never seen the principal look this angry. He walked slowly up and down the aisles. His arms were crossed, and he sighed deeply.



“Does someone want to tell me how a rabbit ended up in Ms. Anderson’s coat pocket?” The principal looked slowly over the class. He peered into the eyes of every student.

Hannah slowly raised her hand.

“Yes?”

She was about to speak when James kicked her chair leg. Braydon made a fist and squeezed it tightly. Hannah began to shake.

“Is Hoppity alright?”

“The rabbit is fine, but he could have gotten injured,” frowned the principal. “I’m very upset with this class. Ms. Anderson is a good substitute teacher. She has never had a problem like this before. This class should be ashamed of itself.”

“Now, someone needs to explain what happened with the rabbit. Don’t make me punish the whole class.”

No one raised their hand. Only three people knew what happened. The boys didn’t want to get punished. Hannah didn’t want the boys to punish her.

The principal waited a few minutes. “If that’s the way you want it. Everyone take out a piece of paper. You will write an apology letter to Ms. Anderson.”

One of the girls raised her hand, “Is that our punishment?”

“Oh no,” said Mr. Kraig, “I’ll be talking to your teacher when she gets back. This is only the beginning of your punishment. I want to put some thought into what should happen with this class.”