

Passages

Reading Level 4



Title: Do Bananas Chew Gum?

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Sample From The Book

If there's one thing I hate it's people calling me names. It makes me sick. I don't know why they can't call me just plain Sam Mott. I mean, why not? But I found out when I was in third grade that if you make a really big stink about it, kids keep it up, on and on. I lived in New Jersey then and these kids in my Penguin reading group (the slowest one) kept calling me Dumbhead Sam when the teacher wasn't looking. The other kids in the class started it, too. I kept yelling back at them, but they never let up till we moved. My dad said just forget it, but I didn't know how to do that.

By sixth grade, at least I knew enough to laugh most of the time. "Ha, ha. Very funny," I chuckled, like Wally had really laid down a knee slapper. I'd only had braces a month, but when I moved to Stockton in March, Wally was already flashing his own. "If I'm Tinsel Teeth," I told him as I drip-dried, "you must be the original Magnet Mouth. I bet you've worn them a lot longer than I have." I reached down to pick up a dime that was stuck between the cracks in the sidewalk. "Hey, good luck," I said.



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