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Farm Tales



HIGHLIGHTS PRESS

Honesdale, Pennsylvania



Hello, World!

Finally! It seems like I've been trying forever to get out of that stuffy _____ and spread my _____. First I had to figure out all by myself how to use my pointy yellow _____ to peck through the tough _____. I didn't expect that to take so long, but it was harder than hammering a square _____ into a round _____!

Once I got the hang of it, though, I made a big _____ right down the middle and pushed my way out into the bright, beautiful _____. But I know I still have a lot to learn. My mom will show me how to scratch in the _____ to find a juicy _____ to eat. My dad promised that, when I'm older, he will teach me how to crow "_____!" just like he does every morning. Yes, I'm going to show the world what I can do, as sure as my name is...

"What IS my name?" I asked my mom and dad.

They chuckled. " _____ Junior," they said.



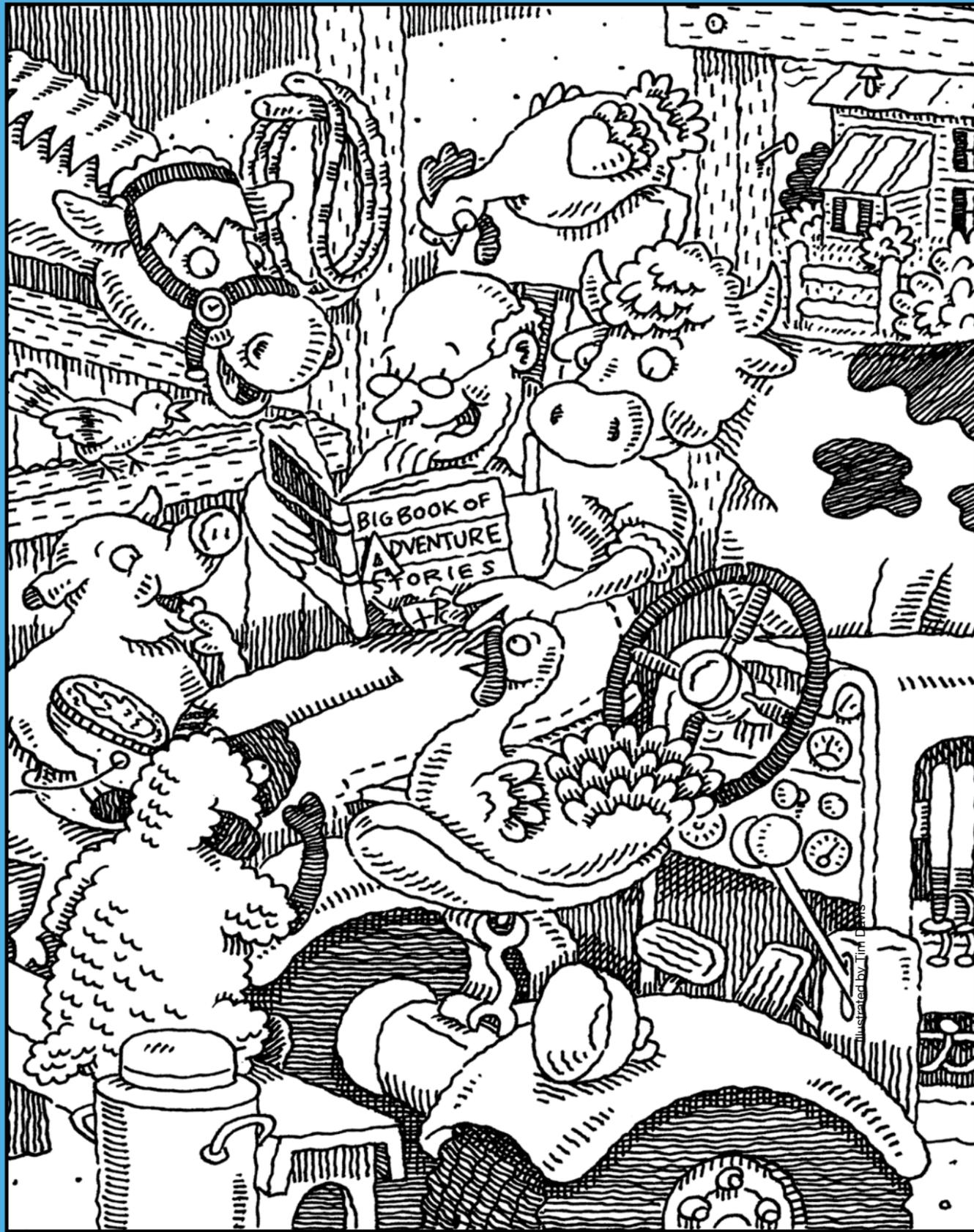


The Plowing Cow

Today's the day, I thought when I woke up early this morning after a good night's _____ in the wooden _____. I'd watched Farmer Maria plow the _____ plenty of times. Why not let her sleep in just once and help her with her chores? So I put a snappy _____ on my head and climbed up on her trusty _____. It took me a few tries to get the _____ running, but then I grabbed the steering _____ and drove easily across the soft _____. I think I did a pretty good job making the rows straight—which is especially important for planting our famous sweet-_____ crop. Sure, my chicken friends seemed a little nervous as I passed by and I did spot some kids down by the _____ looking a bit surprised. Why, you'd think they'd never seen a full-grown _____ riding a red _____ before! Well, they'd better get used to it, because I just might do it again tomorrow, too.

BONUS: Can you also find the fishhook and envelope?





BONUS: Can you also find the crown, snake, crescent moon, and cane?

Story Hour

Everyone likes to listen to a thrilling _____ at bedtime. At the end of every day, Mr. McDonald walks into the _____, sits in his rocking _____, and opens "The Big _____ of Adventure Stories." All the barnyard residents gather around, hoping to hear their favorite.

"Please read the one about the brave little _____ who stopped the big, bad _____ from huffing and puffing and blowing the _____ down!" oinks Pig.

"How about the courageous _____ who jumped over the very far away _____?" moos Cow.

"Oh, I like hearing about the clever _____ who warned everyone that the _____ was falling!" clucks Hen.

But no matter what is read, it always ends the same way: Even before Mr. McDonald has turned the last _____, the animals have settled down in their beds and fallen fast asleep.





BONUS: Can you also find the banana and heart?

Horse Talk

It's nine o'clock—time to hit the hay at the Double-_____ Ranch.

I always try to follow a nightly routine: I brush my teeth, climb into my flannel _____, and snuggle in with my favorite stuffed _____.

But after an exciting day rounding up a stray _____ and galloping over the dusty _____, it's sometimes hard to go to sleep, even after sipping a soothing cup of herbal _____. It helps if I talk out my day with my pal Charley. But we don't want to bother our stable mate, _____, who is a pretty light sleeper. (Just dropping a mushy _____ on a soggy _____ will wake him up!) So Charley and I rigged up this cool way to communicate after the lights go out. We each have an empty tin _____ and we attached them with a long piece of _____ stretched in between. It's amazing how well we can hear each other even if we whisper. And the best thing about it: We can never dial a wrong _____!





BONUS: Can you also find the needle, musical note, and iron?

New Shoes

Yesterday afternoon, I was trotting along by the _____ field when I noticed that my _____ hurt quite a bit. Was it possible that I had already worn out last year's _____? So today I stopped by Oinkie Headquarters, a local _____ that sells stylish shoes and other essential _____ supplies. Mr. Oinkie measured my hooves and noted their size. It turns out that my front left _____ is bigger than my front right _____! His assistant then handed me a thick _____ showing many different shoes. Should I choose the pink ones with the sparkly _____ on the sides? It wasn't easy making up my mind. Some of the other customers there were horsing around— one stuck a huge _____ on his head! But I ignored the nonsense and tried on a few sets of shoes. I finally decided on the blue ones— they're the same color as my favorite _____. Now I can't wait to show them off at the _____ party I'm going to tomorrow!





Munch Crunch

Tell me, have you ever heard the old saying “The _____ is always greener on the other side”? Well, I can tell you it’s tastier over there, too! That’s what got me into trouble one fine _____. I spotted this patch of fresh _____ on the other side of the _____, poked my nose through, and happily munched away. Mmmm! That patch tasted as sweet as the _____ topping on a three-layer _____. But after I finished lunch, I realized that my _____ was stuck! In the meantime, a few playful butterflies were tickling my left _____. I tried to swish them away with my long _____, but, of course, I couldn’t turn around—the pesky _____ was in the way. Luckily, a friendly _____ was passing by and noticed my problem. He tried pulling, then pushing me through the opening. Finally he came up with a better solution. That reminds me of another old saying: “Sometimes you just have to grab the _____ by the horns!”





It's Show Time!

Thank you all for coming out to see the first performance of our play “_____ and _____.” This has been great fun to do, but it required a lot of hard work from our cast and crew. First we had to find just the right actors. Several of the sheep tried out for the part of Sir _____, but unfortunately none could really remember his lines.

Other problems arose that no one expected. During rehearsals, a piece of _____ fell down from the _____ and almost landed on the director's _____! Then the star of the show, Madame Henworthy, came down with a sore _____ just before opening night, and her usually lovely voice sounded like a rusty _____ on a haunted _____. Thankfully, she felt much better this morning, after she had soaked her _____ in a big bowl of warm _____ for a few hours. But in the theater—no matter what goes wrong—once the _____ goes up, the show must go on!



BONUS: Can you also find the book, cane, and golf club?



FPO

BONUS: Can you also find the fishhook?

At the Hoedown

No one remembers exactly who started it all. Someone says that it was Billy, who brought over his six-string _____ and began strumming a country-western _____. Someone else thinks it was Fido, who's always tucking his long-necked _____ under his _____ and playing a jaunty jig. In any case, before we knew it, we were all on our feet and twirling around as if we were each a _____ caught in a _____ storm. Now we have a hoedown every Saturday night. The Catersons usually lead us off with a square-dance step known as the _____ Stomp. "Swing your _____, do-sa-do," they call out. The Hamiltons are always the first out on the dance _____, kicking up their heels in their glossy _____ boots. Ben Bullerton invents his own moves, like the one he calls "The _____ Handstand." Maybe no one remembers exactly who started it all, but once we hear that lively _____ start, we don't ever want it to stop!



Illustrated by Ron Lieser

BONUS: Can you also find the fishhook, ring, safety pin, and ruler?

The Knitting Club

Henrietta and I always look forward to our Wednesday afternoons.

While our chicks play together, we each take out our _____

needles, a big ball of _____, and catch up on all the latest

_____ around the barnyard as we knit. Sometimes we like to turn

on the _____ and cluck along, as our needles click to each catchy

_____. The chicks have lots of fun, too, and the _____ just

flies by! But I must say that we wouldn't even have our knitting club if

it weren't for Shirley Sheep. She gave us her very own wool, which we

turned into long strands of soft _____. So far I've made a striped

_____ with a fluffy _____ on top for my youngest chick.

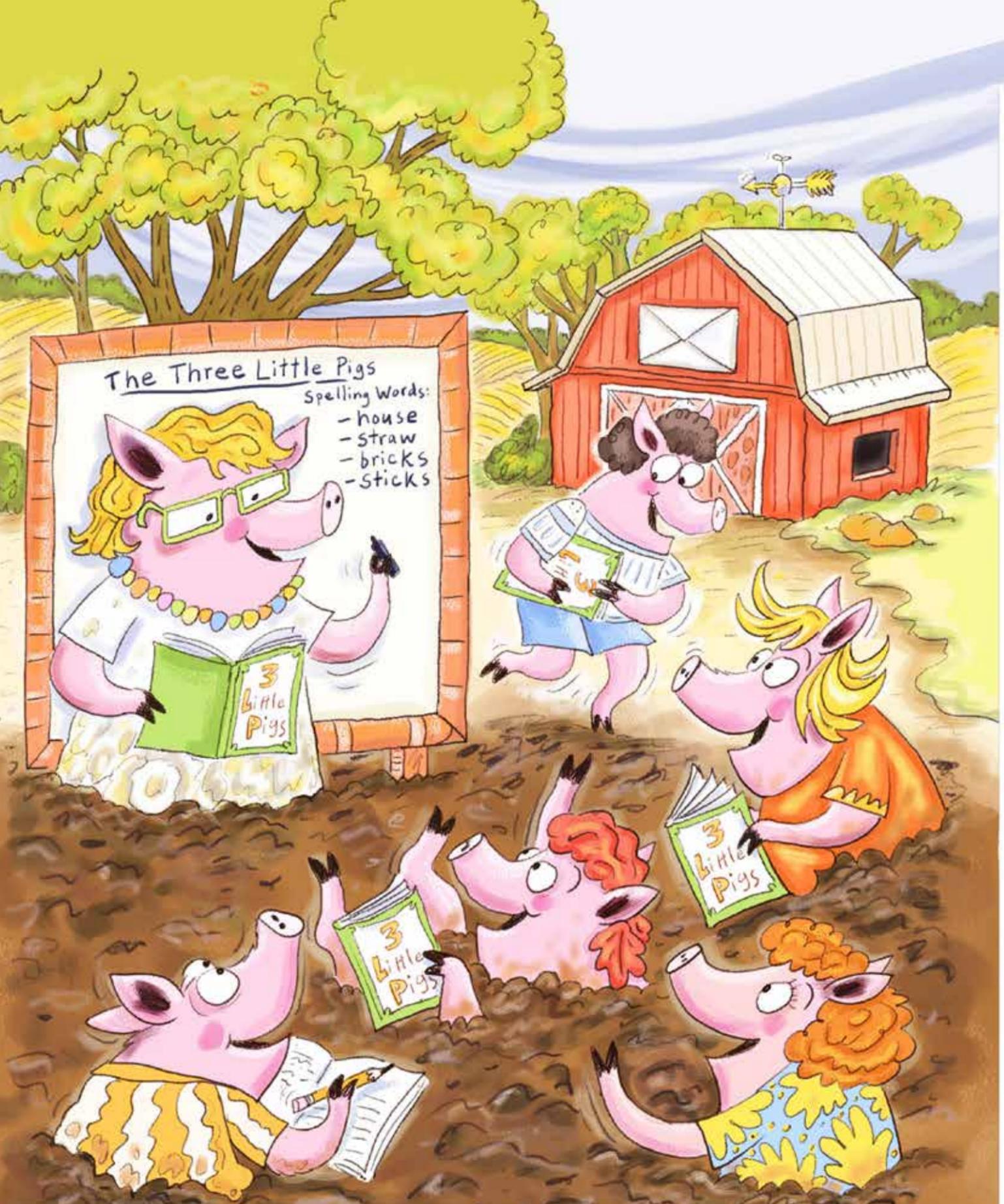
He wears it everywhere—even to the _____! What am I knitting

now? I'm working on a lovely long-sleeved, turtle-necked _____ for

Shirley Sheep. She gets a bit chilly without her _____. It's the

least I can do!





Late for Class

I can't wait to get to school—in fact, I'm usually early. But today, for the first time ever, I was late. I ran as fast as a turbo-charged _____ to class, but I saw that each of my classmates was already settled into his or her muddy _____. Hayley was answering a vocabulary ______. (She's always the first one to raise her _____.) Porter was busy taking notes with his favorite yellow No. 2 _____. (He always keeps it as sharp and pointy as a ninja's _____.) When our teacher saw me, she tapped her _____ impatiently.

"I'm sorry I'm late, Mrs. Hoggins," I said "I forgot something." I dropped my _____ on my _____ and sat in my _____.

"Your homework?" she asked. "You only had to read one chapter."

"No, ma'am, I did that," I said. "But I liked the chapter so much that I stayed up nearly all night to finish the whole _____. Then when my _____ rang this morning, I forgot to wake up!"



Illustrated by Paula Becker

BONUS: Can you also find the moon and heart?



Ducks in a Row

Listen up, ducklings! Today is your first swimming lesson. Let's waddle down to the _____ together in a straight, orderly _____.

Don't forget to bring your webbed _____ and your pair of inflatable _____ wings. I'll be taking attendance after our lesson, so when I call your _____, do quack up so I can hear you. Everyone follow closely behind me. But watch out for Mr. _____ driving his horse-and-_____ as we cross the road. Duncan Duck, please don't stop to chat with that friendly but slimy _____. Yes, it is interesting that she can carry her own _____ on her back, but you can talk with her about it another day. OK, here we are—dive in! Remember to keep your _____ down or you'll wind up bottom-up like Delbert here. My, my! You're all doing so well—you've taken to swimming like a duck to water! Now dry yourselves off with a fluffy _____ and next we'll play a game of "Duck, Duck, _____!"





Go for the Gold

This is the first time my cousin Rafael has ever been to the country, never mind inside a squawky _____ coop. Usually, we visit him in his family's big-city twenty-story _____, but he's spending this summer at our farm. My aunt Marisol thought he might like to learn how to slop a squealing _____ or herd a stubborn _____ into its pen. I decided to start him in the coop and show him how to gather "hen fruit." When Rafael saw a just-laid _____ sitting in a straw-lined _____, his _____ dropped open as wide as a jumbo _____. I just couldn't resist teasing him. "Sometimes, a chicken will lay a golden _____," I said. "It's good luck for whoever finds it." A few minutes later, he had filled his _____ and held up one of his finds. "Look! It's gold!" Actually, it was brown, but close enough. Mom fried that _____ sunny-side up this morning, and wouldn't you know? Its yolk was as golden as the noonday _____!





Illustrated by Rocky Fuller

BONUS: Can you also find the needle and apple?

Mule's Day Off

It might sound like bragging, but I have to say that I am the prize _____ around here. No one has a shinier _____ or a stronger _____ or a louder _____. I work the hardest, too. Who else can haul fifty bushels harvested from the _____ field to the market without breaking a _____? Some people say that mules are stubborn but I'm really very cooperative and easy-going. So it seems only fair that I should get the royal _____. To show his appreciation, Farmer Zook gives me Sundays off. Yep, I have free rein for 24 hours. I can go about snuffling each sweet-smelling _____ in the _____ garden or gobbling each ripe _____ that hangs from the lowest branch of the _____ tree. As a special treat, Farmer Zook sometimes hitches himself up to the rickety _____ that I pull the other days of the week and he trots me around for a while. I have to say, he's pretty good at it, too—almost as good as I am.



Spring Chickens

After they've been cooped up all winter long, the ladies of _____

Meadow Farm really look forward to spring. The warmer weather

beckons them outside with their chicks to enjoy the fresh _____

or to stretch out on a relaxing _____. It also gives each the chance

to show off her finest _____. It has almost become a contest to

see who can come up with the most creative _____! It's true that

Paula Pullet went a little overboard last year and attached a live, wriggling

_____ to her wide _____. But for the most part, each lady

sticks to decorating her headwear with a different silky _____

or a colorful bunch of _____ flowers. This year, their creations

all look lovely, but everyone agrees that Biddy Bantam's old-fashioned

_____ is practical as well as fashionable—she can lower its veil to

keep the gnats from swarming her _____. Yes, here at the farm,

spotting the first fancy _____ is a sure sign of spring!



BONUS: Can you also find the banana, ruler, and ladle?





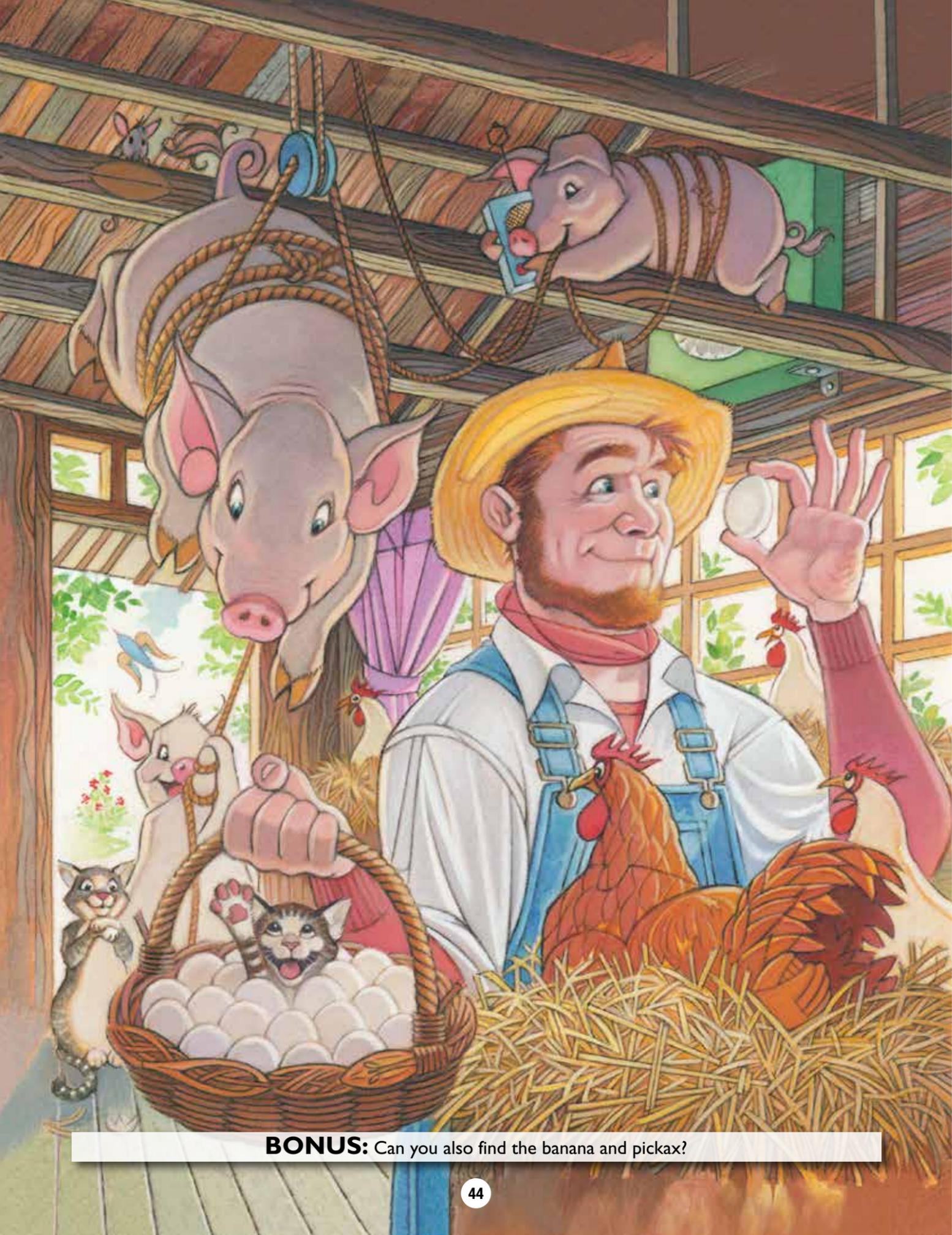
Illustrated by Ron Lieser

BONUS: Can you also find the heart, fishhook, key, ring, golf club, and slice of pie?

Goat Trouble

This day did not turn out as I planned. My baseball team's awards banquet was tonight and I was sure I was going to win Most Valuable _____. I had even rehearsed a speech, thanking my _____ for teaching me how to pitch a _____, my _____ for driving me to the games, and my _____ for always cheering me on from the bleachers. But as I was getting ready, I discovered that my blue _____ had shrunk two sizes after I'd put it in the dryer—it wouldn't fit on my _____. My favorite plaid _____ was torn, and the only clean one left in my _____ was two sizes too big. I tried to tie my _____ and the lace snapped in half. Then just as I was heading out, I saw that my goat, Frisky, had snapped his _____ in two, too, so I had to chase him back to his pen. When I showed up at the banquet, muddy and sweaty, an hour late, the award I actually got was Most Likely to Catch a _____. That really got my goat!





BONUS: Can you also find the banana and pickax?

Rescue Mission

It seemed like a good idea at the time. When Fiona came to Percy, Perry, and me to help her find her baby _____, we said, "We've got this!" We split up and looked all around the _____, under the _____, and between the _____ and the _____. Then from the doorway of the henhouse, we saw a furry _____ peeping out of a straw basket piled high with eggs. We didn't want to get the little guy in trouble. How could we lift him out without Farmer Funzter noticing? We put our heads together and came up with the most clever _____ ever! Percy found a 50-foot _____ and a super-duper heavy-duty _____ strong enough to hold my weight. Perry was the lookout and directed us through his two-way _____. Once I was in the perfect position, Percy lowered me from the highest _____. It almost worked, too. Let's just say that Farmer Funzter will be having a scrambled _____ for breakfast every day for a long time.

