

# Three Sideways Stories From Wayside School

By Louis Sachar

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

Narrator 4

Mrs. Jewels

Joe

Bebe

Calvin

Louis

NARRATOR 1: We're going to tell you about three of the children in Mrs. Jewels's class, on the thirtieth story of Wayside School.

NARRATOR 4: But before we get to them, there is something you ought to know. Wayside School was accidentally built *sideways*.

NARRATOR 2: It was supposed to be only one story high, with thirty classrooms all in a row.

Instead, it is *thirty* stories high, with one classroom on each *story*.

NARRATOR 3: The builder said he was very sorry.

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NARRATOR 1: Our first story is about Joe. One day, Mrs. Jewls kept him in from recess.

MRS. JEWLS: Joe, you are going to have to learn to count.

JOE: But, Mrs. Jewls, I already *know* how to count. Let me go to recess!

MRS. JEWLS: First count to ten.

NARRATOR 4: Joe counted to ten.

JOE: Six, eight, twelve, one, five, two, seven, eleven, three, ten.

MRS. JEWLS: No, Joe, that is wrong.

JOE: No, it isn't! I counted till I got to ten!

MRS. JEWLS: But you were *wrong*. I'll *prove* it to you.

NARRATOR 2: She put down five pencils.

MRS. JEWLS: How many pencils do we have here, Joe?

NARRATOR 3: Joe counted the pencils.

JOE: Four, six, one, nine, five. There are five pencils, Mrs. Jewls.

MRS. JEWLS: That's *wrong*.

JOE: How many pencils *are* there?

MRS. JEWLS: Five.

JOE: That's what I said! May I go to recess now?

MRS. JEWLS: No. You got the right answer, but you counted the wrong *way*. You were just lucky.

NARRATOR 1: She set down eight potatoes.

MRS. JEWLS: How many potatoes, Joe?

NARRATOR 4: Joe counted the potatoes.

JOE: Seven, five, three, one, two, four, six, eight.

There are eight potatoes, Mrs. Jewls.

MRS. JEWLS: No, there are *eight*.

JOE: But that's what I said! May I go to recess now?

MRS. JEWLS: No! You got the right answer, but you counted the wrong *way* again.

NARRATOR 2: She put down three books.

MRS. JEWLS: Count the books, Joe.

NARRATOR 3: Joe counted the books.

JOE: A thousand, a million, three. Three, Mrs. Jewls.

MRS. JEWLS: (*bewildered*) Correct.

JOE: May I go to recess now?

MRS. JEWLS: No.

JOE: May I have a potato?

MRS. JEWLS: No! *Listen* to me. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Now *you* say it.

JOE: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

MRS. JEWLS: Very good!

NARRATOR 1: She put down six erasers.

MRS. JEWLS: Now, count the erasers, Joe, just the way I showed you.

NARRATOR 4: Joe counted the erasers.

JOE: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. There are ten, Mrs. Jewls.

MRS. JEWLS: No!

JOE: Didn't I count right?

MRS. JEWLS: Yes, you *counted* right, but you got the wrong *answer*.

JOE: This doesn't make any sense! When I count the *wrong* way, I get the *right* answer, and when I count *right*, I get the *wrong* answer.

MRS. JEWLS: (*in great frustration*) *Ooh!*

NARRATOR 2: Mrs. Jewls hit her head against the wall five times.

MRS. JEWLS: (*turning away and butting her head*)  
Uh . . . uh . . . uh . . . uh . . . uh . . . . (*turns back to JOE*) How many times did I hit my head against the wall, Joe?

JOE: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. You hit your head against the wall ten times.

MRS. JEWLS: No!

JOE: Four, six, one, nine, five. You hit your head five times.

NARRATOR 3: Mrs. Jewls shook her head no and said,

MRS. JEWLS: (*shaking head*) Yes, that is right.

NARRATOR 1: Just then, the bell rang.

JOE: Oh, darn.

NARRATOR 4: . . . said Joe.

JOE: I missed recess!

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NARRATOR 3: Our second story is about Bebe.

NARRATOR 1: Bebe was the fastest draw in Mrs. Jewls's class. She could draw a cat in less than forty-five seconds, a dog in less than thirty, and a flower in less than eight seconds!

NARRATOR 4: But of course, Bebe never drew just *one* dog, or *one* cat, or *one* flower.

NARRATOR 2: Art was from 12:30 to 1:30. Why, in that time, she could draw fifty cats, a hundred flowers, twenty dogs, and several eggs or watermelons!

NARRATOR 3: You see, it took her the same time to draw a watermelon as an egg.

NARRATOR 1: Calvin sat next to Bebe. He didn't think he was very good at art. It took him the whole period just to draw one airplane.

NARRATOR 4: So instead, he just helped Bebe. He was Bebe's assistant.

NARRATOR 2: As soon as Bebe would finish one masterpiece, Calvin would take it from her and set down a clean sheet of paper. Whenever her crayon ran low, Calvin was ready with a new crayon.

NARRATOR 3: That way, Bebe didn't have to waste any time. And in return, Bebe would draw five or six airplanes for Calvin.

NARRATOR 1: It was 12:30, time for art.

NARRATOR 4: Bebe was ready. On her desk was a sheet of yellow construction paper. In her hand was a green crayon.

NARRATOR 2: *Calvin* was ready. He held a stack of paper and a box of crayons.

CALVIN: Ready, Bebe?

BEBE: Ready, Calvin.

MRS. JEWLS: All right, class.

NARRATOR 3: . . . said Mrs. Jewls.

MRS. JEWLS: Time for art.

NARRATOR 1: She had hardly finished her sentence when Bebe had drawn a picture of a leaf.

NARRATOR 4: Calvin took it from her and put down another piece of paper.

BEBE: Red!

NARRATOR 2: Calvin handed Bebe a red crayon.

BEBE: Blue!

NARRATOR 3: He gave her a blue crayon.

NARRATOR 1: They were quite a pair! Their teamwork was remarkable.

NARRATOR 4: Bebe drew pictures as fast as Calvin could pick up the old paper and set down the new.

NARRATOR 2: A fish.

NARRATOR 3: An apple.

NARRATOR 1: Three cherries—

NARRATOR 4: *bing,*

NARRATOR 2: *bing,*

NARRATOR 3: *bing.*

NARRATOR 1: At 1:30, Mrs. Jewls announced,

MRS. JEWLS: Okay, class, art is over.

NARRATOR 4: Bebe dropped her crayon and fell over on her desk.

NARRATOR 2: Calvin sighed and leaned back in his chair. He could hardly move.

NARRATOR 3: They had broken their old record. Bebe had drawn three hundred and seventy-eight pictures! They lay in a pile on Calvin's desk.

NARRATOR 1: Mrs. Jewls walked by.

MRS. JEWLS: Calvin, did you draw all these pictures?

CALVIN: No, *Bebe* drew them all.

MRS. JEWLS: Well then, what did *you* draw?

CALVIN: I didn't draw anything.

MRS. JEWLS: Why not? Don't you like art?

CALVIN: I *love* art. That's why I didn't draw anything.

MRS. JEWLS: I don't understand.

CALVIN: It would have taken me the whole period just to draw one picture. And *Bebe* would only have been able to draw a *hundred* pictures. But with the two of us working together, she was able to draw three hundred and seventy-eight pictures! That's a lot more art.

NARRATOR 4: Bebe and Calvin shook hands.

MRS. JEWLS: No, no! *That* isn't how you measure art. It isn't how *many* pictures you *have*, but how *good* the pictures *are*. Why, a person could spend their whole life drawing just one picture of a cat. In that time, I'm sure Bebe could draw a *million* cats.

BEBE: *Two* million.

MRS. JEWLS: But if that one picture is better than each of Bebe's two million, then that person has produced more art than Bebe.

NARRATOR 2: Bebe looked like she was going to cry. She picked up all the pictures from Calvin's desk and threw them in the garbage.

NARRATOR 3: Then she ran from the room, down all the stairs, and out onto the playground.

NARRATOR 1: Louis, the nice yard teacher, spotted her.

LOUIS: Where are you going, Bebe?

BEBE: I'm going home to draw a picture of a cat.

LOUIS: Will you bring it to school and show it to me tomorrow?

BEBE: *Tomorrow? By tomorrow I doubt I'll be finished with even one whisker. (rushes off)*

NARRATOR 2: Our final story is about Calvin. One day, Mrs. Jewls said,

MRS. JEWLS: Calvin, I want you to take this note to Miss Zarves for me.

CALVIN: Miss Zarves?

MRS. JEWLS: Yes, Miss Zarves. You know where she is, don't you?

CALVIN: Yes. She's on the nineteenth story.

MRS. JEWLS: That's right, Calvin. Take it to her.

NARRATOR 3: Calvin didn't move.

MRS. JEWLS: Well, what are you waiting for?

CALVIN: She's on the nineteenth story.

MRS. JEWLS: Yes, we have already established that fact.

CALVIN: The *nineteenth story*.

MRS. JEWLS: Yes, Calvin, the *nineteenth story*.  
Now take it to her before I lose my patience!

CALVIN: But, Mrs. Jewls—

MRS. JEWLS: NOW, Calvin!

CALVIN: Yes, ma'am!

NARRATOR 1: Calvin walked out of the classroom and stood outside the door.

NARRATOR 4: He didn't know where to go.

NARRATOR 2: As you know, when the builder built Wayside School, he accidentally built it sideways. But he also forgot to build the nineteenth *story*.

NARRATOR 3: He built the eighteenth and the twentieth, but no nineteenth. He said he was very sorry.

NARRATOR 1: There was also no Miss Zarves.

NARRATOR 4: Miss Zarves taught the class on the nineteenth story. Since there was no nineteenth story, there was no Miss Zarves.

NARRATOR 2: And besides *that*, as if Calvin didn't have enough problems, there was no note.

NARRATOR 3: Mrs. Jewls had never given Calvin the note.

CALVIN: (*sarcastically*) Boy, this is just great! I'm supposed to take a note that I don't have, to a teacher who doesn't exist, and who teaches on a story that was never built!

NARRATOR 1: He didn't know what to do.

NARRATOR 4: He walked down to the eighteenth story,

NARRATOR 2: then back up to the twentieth,

NARRATOR 3: then back down to the eighteenth,

NARRATOR 1: and back up again to the twentieth.

NARRATOR 4: There was no nineteenth story.

NARRATOR 2: There had never *been* a nineteenth story.

NARRATOR 3: There would never BE a nineteenth story.

NARRATOR 1: Calvin walked down to the administration office on the first story. He decided to put the note in Miss Zarves's mailbox.

NARRATOR 4: But there wasn't one of those, either. That didn't bother Calvin too much, though, since he didn't have a note.

NARRATOR 2: He looked out the window and saw Louis, the yard teacher, shooting baskets.

CALVIN: *Louis* will know what to do.

NARRATOR 3: Calvin went outside.

CALVIN: Hey, Louis!

LOUIS: Hi, Calvin. Do you want to play a game?

CALVIN: I don't have time. I have to deliver a note to Miss Zarves up on the nineteenth story.

LOUIS: Then what are you doing all the way down here?

CALVIN: There is no nineteenth story.

LOUIS: Then where is Miss Zarves?

CALVIN: There is no Miss Zarves.

LOUIS: What are you going to do with the note?

CALVIN: There is no note.

LOUIS: I understand.

CALVIN: That's good, because / sure don't.

LOUIS: It's very simple. You are not supposed to take no notes to no teachers. You already haven't done it!

NARRATOR 1: Calvin still didn't understand.

CALVIN: I'll just have to tell Mrs. Jewls that I couldn't deliver the note.

LOUIS: *That's* good. The truth is always best. Besides, I don't think / understand what I said, either!

NARRATOR 4: Calvin walked back up the thirty flights of stairs to Mrs. Jewls's class.

MRS. JEWLS: Thank you very much, Calvin.

CALVIN: But I—

MRS. JEWLS: That was a very important note, and I'm glad I was able to count on you.

CALVIN: Yes, but you see—

MRS. JEWLS: The note was very important. I told Miss Zarves *not* to meet me for lunch.

CALVIN: Don't worry.

NARRATOR 2: . . . said Calvin.

CALVIN: She won't!

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NARRATOR 1: So now you know about Wayside School. Some people say these stories are strange and silly.

NARRATOR 4: That is probably true.

NARRATOR 2: But when the children at Wayside School heard stories about *us*, they thought *we* were strange and silly.

NARRATOR 3: And *that's* for *sure!*