

The Grouchy Day

By Kathy Warnes



As soon as she woke up, Susie knew that today would be a grouchy day. She felt like a dog growling, a cat hissing, a pig squealing!

Susie growled, GRRRRR! Susie hissed STTTT! Susie squealed SQUEELL! “I have a grouchy cloud hanging over my head,” Susie said.



Mother made oatmeal for breakfast which didn't help Susie's grouchy cloud at all.

“Grrr, I don't like oatmeal,” Susie said.

“Eat your oatmeal, Susie,” her mother said.

“Grrr, I don't want to eat my oatmeal,” Susie pouted.

Mother stood next to Susie and the bowl of oatmeal. Susie ate the oatmeal as slow as a caterpillar crawling. Finally, she finished eating and put on her coat and hat to go to school.

“SSSTTT! I don't want to wear my coat and hat,” Susie said.

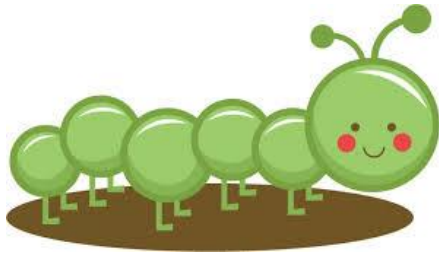
“You have to wear your coat and hat, Susie,” mother told her. “It's cold and snowy outdoors and you'll catch a cold if you don't.”

Susie stood still in the middle of the kitchen while mother put her arms in her coat and tied her hat under her chin. Mother buttoned up Susie's coat. “Be sure you leave your coat buttoned,” she said to Susie. “It's cold out there.”

Susie walked out into the cold air. “SQUELLLLLLL!” Susie said. “It's cold out here, but I don't want to wear my coat.”

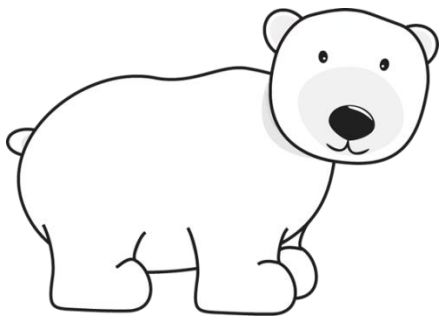
She unbuttoned her coat and walked toward the school. On the way she saw a caterpillar hanging on a tree branch. “Brrrrrr! You're out way too early. It isn't

spring yet,” she told the caterpillar. “You are going to freeze and I’m too grouchy to care!”



By the time Susie reached the playground where all of the other kids were playing, she shivered and shook. “GRRRR! WOFFFF! SSSTTT! SQUELLLLLL!” said Susie. “I’m ccccoold. I’m so ccccccold that I feel like a polar bear!”

Susie’s friend Amy squealed. “I’m afraid of polar bears,” she said running away from Susie.



Susie scowled. “Grrrr! I’m a polar bear.” She chased Amy all over the playground. “Amy’s a polar bear, Amy’s a polar bear,” Susie growled.

“Polar bears don’t wear coats and scarves and mittens,” Sam King said

“Amy is afraid of a polar bear!” Susie shouted so loudly that Miss Johnson heard her from inside the classroom.

Miss Johnson came out to the playground. “Susie, Amy, and Sam, what’s going on out here?” she asked.

“Grrrr,” Susie said.

“It’s time to come inside and work on our spelling words and reading,” Miss Johnson told them.

The rest of Susie’s day turned out to be grouchier yet. She missed three spelling words and an arithmetic problem. She didn’t know how to spell “arm, charm, and harm”, and she didn’t know the answer to $23 + 12$.



“Arm, charm, harm,” Susie muttered.

“Susie, are you talking in class?” Miss Johnson asked.

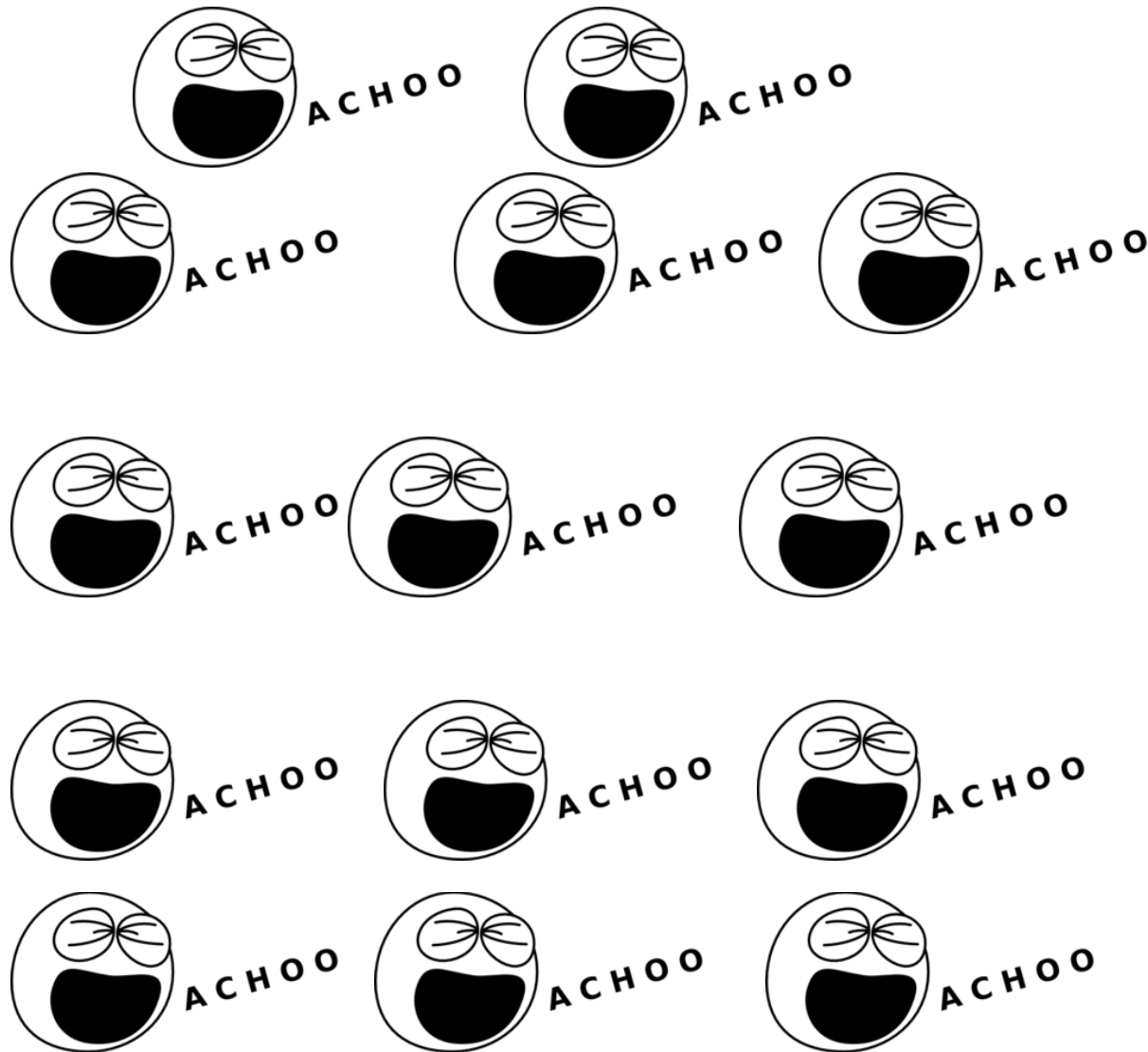
“I wish everyone would leave me alone,” Susie muttered. She liked having the grouchy cloud over her head.

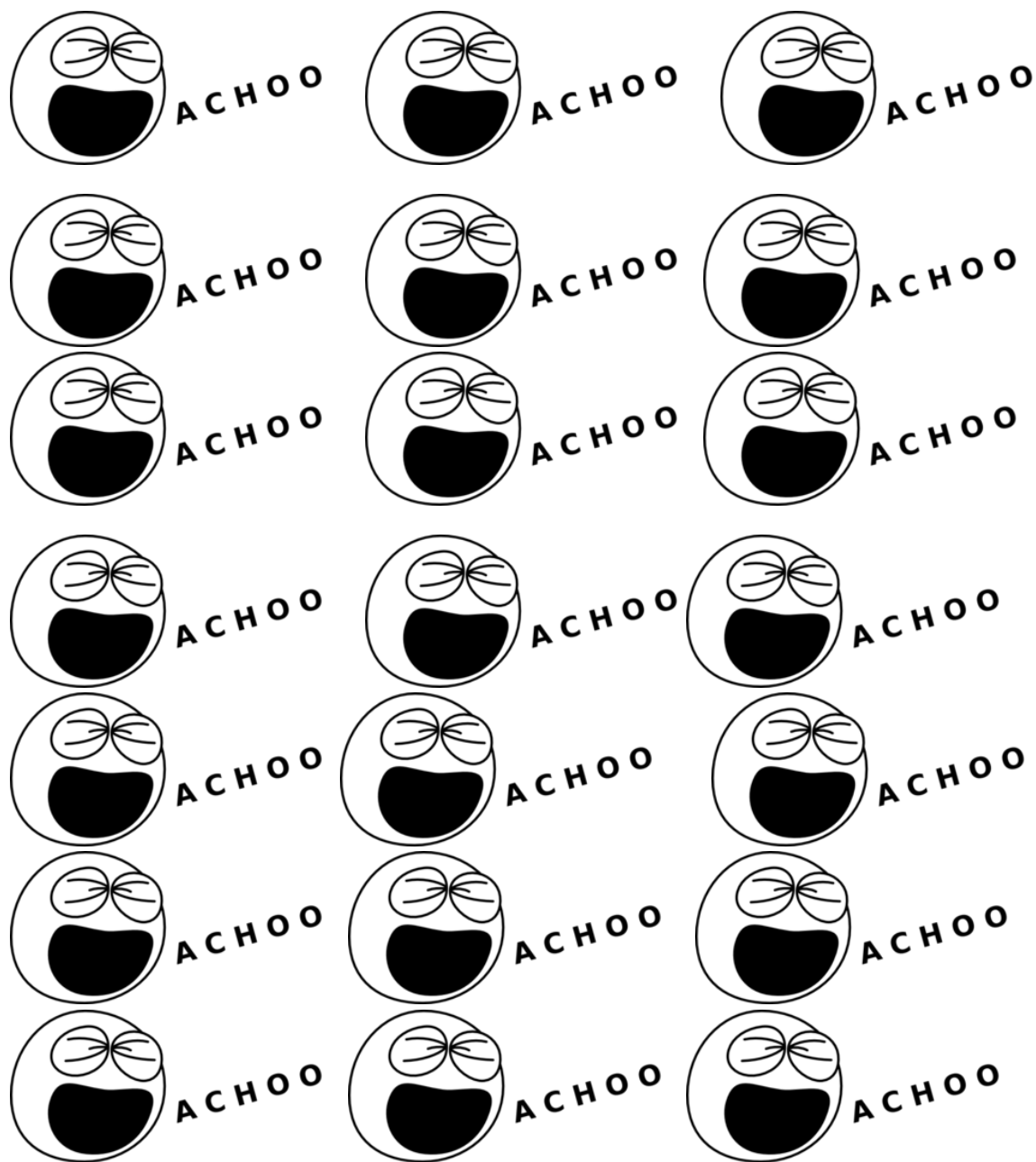
“Susie, you are talking in class,” Miss Johnson said sternly. “You may stay after school tonight and clean the blackboards.”

“Yes, Miss Johnson,” Susie said. In her mind she was thinking, “I ‘d like to turn into a polar bear so I could eat you up! Then I wouldn’t have to stay after school.”

Susie didn't turn into a polar bear. Instead, she stayed after school and cleaned the blackboards. When she dusted the erasers she got chalk dust all over her dress. Susie sighed. "Mother will yell at me for getting my dress all dusty. Susie sighed again. "It's been a grouchy day.

On the way home Susie fell into a pile of melting snow, Snow trickled down her boots and snow soaked her coat and mittens. "Ahhh Chooo!" Susie sneezed. "AAAACHOOO!" she sneezed again. By the time Susie got home she had counted thirty five sneezes.





(Count Susie's Sneezes)

Mother helped Susie take off her wet coat. "How was your day?" she asked Susie.

"Grouchy!" Susie said.

“Oh dear, was it as grouchy as it started out to be?” mother asked.

“It was worse, mother. I missed three spelling words and I didn’t turn into a polar bear. Miss Johnson made me clean blackboards after school. I got chalk dust all over my dress and snow melted down my boots and got my coat and mittens all wet.”

Mother hugged Susie. “It sounds like you had a real grouchy day.”

“Grrr! I had a grouchy day,” Susie said. “And do you know what else?”

“What else?” mother asked.

“AAACHOOOO! I’m catching a cold,” Susie told her. “I counted 35 sneezes!”

Mother looked at Susie as sternly as Miss Johnson had at school. “Did you button up your coat when you went outside this morning?”

Susie wiggled her toes and stared down at them. “I buttoned it, but then I unbuttoned it,” she said.

“Susie! Do you mean to tell me you walked to school with your coat unbuttoned? No wonder you are catching a cold.”

Mother made Susie a bowl of chicken noodle soup and a mug of hot chocolate.

She tucked Susie into her soft warm bed. Susie pulled the quilt over her head. “I hope tomorrow isn’t going to be another grouchy day,” she sighed.

Mother pulled down the quilt and tucked it around Susie’s chin. “If you’re happy you can make the day happy too,” she said. “And think about the 35 sneezes.”



The next morning Susie woke up with the same grouchy cloud over her head as the day before, but she didn't growl, hssstt, or squeal. Instead, she smiled at mother and said, "Good morning."

Susie ate her oatmeal even though other burned it. She buttoned up her coat even though one of the buttons popped off and landed under the couch. On the way to school she passed the caterpillar still hanging from the tree branch. Susie stopped and dug a tunnel in the dirt t under the tree. She put the caterpillar in the tunnel and covered it with dirt. She patted the dirt firmly on top. "Now you'll stay warm until spring," she told the caterpillar.



When Susie got to school, her friend Amy growled and squealed at her, but Susie didn't growl or squeal back. She just smiled and gave Amy a cookie from her lunch.

Miss Johnson gave the class a spelling test. Susie missed "harm". "Grrr," Susie said under her breath, but she promised Miss Johnson that she would write harm twenty times that night.

Today Susie didn't have to stay after school to wash the blackboards. She buttoned up her coat – except for the missing button – and she ran all of the way home from

school. She burst into the house hollering, “Mother, it wasn’t a grouchy day today!”

“Hello, Susie,” her mother smiled. “Why was today so much better than yesterday?”

“Today was a better day because I wanted it to be a better day. I smiled and saved the caterpillar and I didn’t even sneeze once even though you have to sew a new button on my coat!” Susie said. “And I found out I can make the day grouchy or I can make the day smiley all by myself!”

