

McRuffy Press
Third Grade
Language Arts

ISBN 1-59269-063-7

Sample pages:

Phonics Scope & Sequence

Language Scope & Sequence

Book List

Sample Lesson Plans

Sample Workbook Page

Sample Reading Book Chapter

NOTE: Some characters may not display properly in the PDF format, especially apostrophes(í) and quotation marks (î).

Phonics Scope and Sequence

Lesson	Week	Concept
1	1	Blends with b, c, d, f
6	2	Blends with g, p, s, t
11	3	Long a
16	4	Long e
21	5	Long i
26	6	Long o
31	7	Long u
36	8	Review for Test 1
41	9	Short vowels
46	10	Vowel digraphs oo (both sounds) ow
51	11	Vowel digraphs ou, ow
56	12	Vowel digraph ea (different sounds)
61	13	Vowel digraphs and diphthongs oi, oy, oa
66	14	Vowel digraph ie, and sounds of y (long e and long i)
71	15	Consonant digraphs sh, th, ch, wh, ph
76	16	Review for Test 2
81	17	Three and four letter vowel sounds
86	18	Vowel + r
91	19	-air- sounds with various spellings
96	20	3-letter beginning blends sch, thr, str, squ, spr, spl, shr, scr
101	21	Ending blends
106	22	Compound words
111	23	Broad o sound au, ough, aw
116	24	Review for Test 3
121	25	Exceptions to rules
126	26	Silent Letters (beginning, medial, and ending)
131	27	Number prefixes (such as bi-, tri-, etc.)
136	28	Hard and Soft g and c
141	29	Words ending with the suffix -able
146	30	Words ending with the suffixes -ful and -less
151	31	Finding root words in multi-syllable words
156	32	Review for Test 4

Language Scope and Sequence

Lesson

1. Vocabulary Development
2. Grammar
3. Contractions
4. Creative Writing
5. Comprehension
6. Plurals
7. Nouns and Verbs
8. Singular or Plural Nouns
9. Creative Writing
10. Interpret a Graph
11. Synonyms
12. Pronouns
13. Nouns and Pronouns
14. Creative Writing
15. Story Order
16. Antonyms
17. Adverbs
18. Add Adverbs to sent.
19. Creative Writing
20. Cause and Effect
21. Suffixes ing and ed
22. Adjectives
23. Present & Past Tense
24. Creative Writing
25. Following Directions
26. Dictionary Skills
27. Irregular Nouns
28. Kinds of Sentences . ! ?
29. Creative Writing
30. Recalling Details
31. Homophones
32. Helping Verbs
33. Scrambled Sentences
34. Creative Writing
35. Inferences
- 36-40 Review and Test 1
41. Classifying Words
42. Prepositions
43. Fact vs. Opinion
44. Creative Writing
45. Main Idea
46. Prefixes un & re
47. Plural Nouns
48. Categories
49. Creative Writing
50. Combining Sentences
51. Dictionary Skills
52. Tense: present, past, and future
53. Analogies
54. Creative Writing
55. Figurative Language
56. Homophones
57. Nouns or Verbs by Context
58. Paragraphs
59. Creative Writing
60. Recalling Details
61. Prefix: pre-
62. Subject Part of a Sentence
63. Completing Sentences (Cloze)
64. Creative Writing
65. Adding Details
66. Categories
67. Predicate Part of a Sentence
68. Similes
69. Creative Writing
70. Inference
71. Analogies
72. Subject and Predicate Parts
73. Matching Subjects to Predicates
74. Creative Writing
75. Compare and Contrast
- 76-80 Review and Test 2
81. Semantic Map
82. Predicate Adjectives
83. Add Adj. And Adv. to Sentences
84. Creative Writing
86. Prefix - over
87. Cloze activity
88. Analogies
89. Creative Writing
90. Note-taking (Outlining)
91. Distinguishing their, there, and they're
92. Prepositions (rev.)
93. Questions: The Five W's

Language Scope and Sequence

94. Creative Writing
95. Graphic Organizer
96. Analogies
97. Possessive Pronouns
98. Combining Sentences
99. Creative Writing
100. Paraphrasing
101. Synonyms or Antonyms
102. Articles: a, an, the
103. Choosing a & an
104. Creative Writing
105. Drawing conclusions - inference
106. Categories
107. Irregular Verbs
108. Types of sentences
109. Creative Writing
110. Note-taking (rev.)
111. ABC order to any letter
112. Proper Nouns: titles and history
113. Parts of speech
114. Creative Writing
115. Fact vs. Opinion
- 116-120 Review and Test 3
121. Helping verbs
122. Commonly Confused Words: to, its, there, your
123. Analogies
124. Creative Writing
125. Cause and Effect
126. Single-syllable comparative adjectives & adverbs
127. Subject-Verb Agreement
128. Two-syllable comparative adjectives & adverbs
129. Creative Writing
130. Compare and Contrast
131. Review parts of speech
132. Linking Verbs
133. Facts vs. Opinions
134. Creative Writing
135. Graphic Organizer
136. Review subject and predicate
137. Change . to 's (word order)
138. Sentences and the 5 Senses
139. Creative Writing
140. Writing Directions
141. Analogies
142. Adding nouns to sentences
143. Categories
144. Creative Writing
145. Using a variety of ways to name a subject in a paragraph
146. Cause and effect
147. Subject and Predicate, adjectives review
148. Review prepositions
149. Creative Writing
150. Finding the main idea
151. Similes
152. Parts of Speech ñ All
153. Analogies
154. Creative Writing
155. Story Sequence
- 156-160 Review and Test 4

Reading Book List

Lesson	Book/Story
1	A Tune For Tess
6	Mattís Birthday Blessing: The New Bike
11	Mattís Birthday Blessing: Happy Birthday
16	The Wrong Goal
21	One Is Enough: Part 1
26	One is Enough: Part 2
31	My Shoes Got the Blues: Like Layers of an Onion
36	Test 1 Review: No story
41	My Shoes Got the Blues: The Skyís the Limit
46	My Shoes Got the Blues: Sole Winning
51	Tidbit and the Bell
56	Tidbit to the Rescue
61	Fritz and the Fire
66	Bobcat Cowboys on Trial: Part 1
71	Bobcat Cowboys on Trial: Part 2
76	Bobcat Cowboys on Trial: Part 3
81	The Underground Railroad (article in workbook 2)
82	Elijahís Coming: Part 1
86	Elijahís Coming: Part 2
91	Elijahís Coming: Part 3
96	Matthew and Goliath: Chapters 1 to 5
101	Matthew and Goliath: Chapters 6 to 9
106	Bobcat Cowboys Steal the Show: Part 1
111	Bobcat Cowboys Steal the Show: Part 2
116	Bobcat Cowboys Steal the Show: Part 3
121	The King is Coming
126	Big Tomís CafÈ
131	Pigs in the Pancakes
136	The Case of the Missing Trumpeter
141	The Case of the Missing Trumpeter
146	Bobcat Cowboys Take the Cake: Part 1
151	Bobcat Cowboys Take the Cake: Part 2
156	Test 4 Review: No story

Lesson 66

Lesson Objectives

1. Students will review the vowel digraph ie the long vowel sounds of y. (P)
2. Students will spell words correctly. (S)
3. Students will categorize words. (L)
4. Students will learn vocabulary words. (L)
5. Students will begin reading the story Bobcat Cowboys On Trial. (R)
6. Students will copy sentences neatly and correctly. (H)

Materials

Dictionary

Workbook page 59

Book: Bobcat Cowboys On Trial

Teaching

1. Write the words field and tie. **What vowels do these two words have in common? (ie) Do they make the same sound? (no) What vowel sound do you hear in the word field? (long e) What vowel sound do you hear in the word tie? (long i)**

Write the words try and hurry. **What is the last letter in these two words? (y) Do they make the same sound? (no) What sound does Y make in the word try? (long i) What sound does Y make in the word hurry? (long e)**

When we add suffixes that begin with e such as e-d or e-s to words that end in with Y what happens to the Y? (Drop the y and add i) Change try to tries and hurry to hurried. Have students read the words. Does the i-e in the suffixes make the same sound as the Y did before it was dropped? (yes)

Workbook page 59 part 1: Read the sentences. A word is underlined that contains either ie or y. Does the ie or y make the long I sound or the long E sound? Fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

2. Have the students write the following words on a piece of paper as spelling dictation:

**achieve, magnify, pies, motorcycle, ability, believe, multiplied,
windshield, everything, butterflies, why, movies, shriek, country**

You may also want to add words from the vocabulary section 4.

This is the spelling list for the spelling test given in Lesson 70. After giving the spelling dictation, write the words on a chalkboard and have children make any corrections needed to their spelling dictation. Students will use this list to prepare for the test. The teacher should check the student's lists.

3. Write the words chalk, pencil, and pen. **How are these words alike? (They are things used for drawing or writing.) Now let's do something different. This time I will say how things are alike and you tell me three words. These are kinds of pets.** (Students should respond by saying three types of pets such as dog, cat, and bird.)

Use workbook page 59 part 2. Have students read the sentences that describe categories. Students will write three words to fit each category.

Ask students to write some of their own categories on a blank piece of paper. Student should come up with three things that fit the category. Ask other students to come up with more things that fit the category.

- Introduce the vocabulary words for the story *Bobcat Cowboys On Trial*. Students may look at the list on the back of the book.

hippopotamus, porcupine, prosecuting, stenograph

Make sure students can read the words. Students should know the meanings of the animal words. The word *stenograph* is defined in the context of the story. Help students derive the meaning of *prosecuting* from the glossary (*prosecuting attorney*).

Students should also read through the words listed in the *Courtroom Glossary* on page 1. Students may refer back to the glossary during the story.

- Introduce the story. Have students look at the book cover. Students should read the title and the description on the back cover.

Students continuing from the *Second Grade* curriculum may remember other stories involving the *Bobcat Cowboys*. Ask students what a trial is. Tell students that they will begin reading about the trial of the *Bobcat Cowboys*. Ask students to make guesses as to what the *Bobcats* did wrong.

Students will begin reading *Bobcat Cowboys On Trial*. The book is presented in three parts over the next three weeks. Part 1 contains Chapters 1 to 4. Have students begin reading Chapter 1.

- Use the handwriting sheet or have the children write the following sentences:

The butterflies landed on a hippopotamus.
The broken windshield is dangerous.

Workbook Answers

Part 1

- ò Long e m Long i
- m Long e ò Long i
- m Long e ò Long i
- ò Long e m Long i
- m Long e ò Long i

Part 2

Answers vary.

T1 & 3

Part 1: Read the sentences. A word is underlined. Do the letters *ie* or *ei* make the long *e* or long *i* sound? Fill in the correct circle.

- A dime is worth ten pennies. Long e Long i
- The dragonfly buzzed over the pond. Long e Long i
- My left shoe is untied. Long e Long i
- Everything taste so good! Long e Long i
- Kay multiplied the two numbers. Long e Long i

Part 2: Read the sentences. They describe a category. Write these words that fit each category.

- People in a family.
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
- Things you see in the sky.
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
- Different kinds of pies.
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
- Things you find in a field.
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
- Foods that are fried.
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Lesson 67

Lesson Objectives

1. Students will review the vowel digraph ie the long vowel sounds of y. (P)
2. Students will identify the predicate part of a sentence. (L)
3. Students will read part of the story Bobcat Cowboys On Trial. (R)
4. Students will copy sentences neatly and correctly. (H)

Materials

Workbook page 60
Book: Bobcat Cowboys On Trial

Teaching

1. Use workbook page 60: Solve the crossword puzzle using words with y and ie. A word list is provided.
2. **We learned last week that sentences have different parts. The part that tells who or what the sentence is about is called the subject part of the sentence. The part that tells what it does is called the predicate part of the sentence. Today we will find the predicate parts of sentences.** Read this sentence: **The big gorilla threw a banana.**

What is this subject part of the sentence? (The big gorilla) **The rest of the sentence tells what the big gorilla did. What did the gorilla do?** (threw a banana) **This is called the predicate part of the sentence. The predicate part of the sentence tells what the subject does. I'm going to underline the predicate part of the sentence.** Underline *threw a banana*.

Repeat for the following two sentences (the predicate part is underlined). Write the sentences. Underline the predicate part after students identify it:

The loud siren came from the fire truck.
The blue computer is new.

Write a third sentence that students dictate to you. Have students identify the predicate.

Ask students to write more sentences on blank paper. Students should underline the predicate parts.

3. Ask the questions about chapter 1 of Bobcat Cowboys On Trial then begin reading chapter 2.

Describe Sheriff Prairie Dog's gun. (a gun that shot rubber bands that were held on with a clothespin)
What happened when Papa Prairie Dog tested the gun? (The rubber band went off. It hit the lantern and Miss Fussybunny.)

What lesson about guns can be learned from this? (Never assume a gun won't go off. Be careful.)

What happened to Otto Muskrat? (He sat in a hole in the bench and got stuck.)

Why didn't he want Tumbly to help him? (He didn't like getting stuck by the porcupine's quills.)

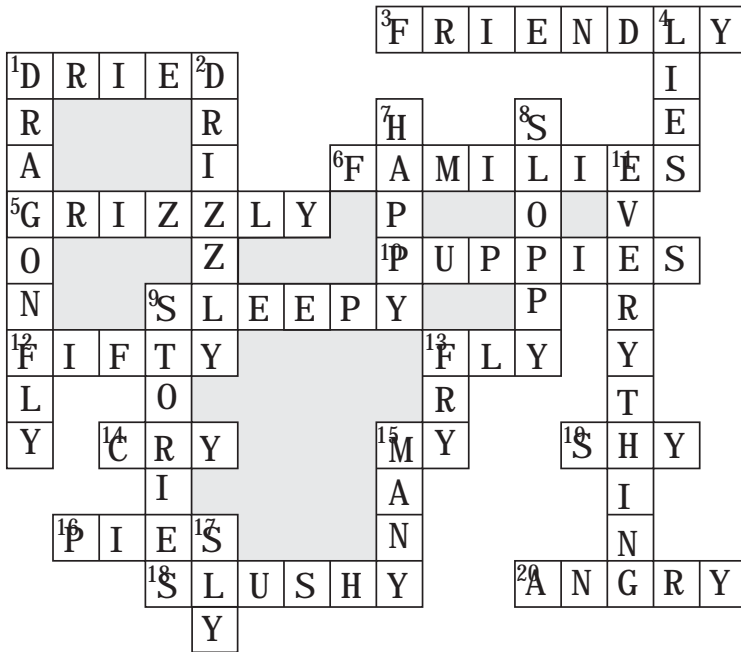
Why was everyone afraid of Judge Polecat? (He was known as the hangin' judge.)

What do you think will happen next in the story?

4. Use the handwriting sheet or have the children write the following sentences:

You can achieve more if you believe.
The magnifying glass multiplied the size.

Workbook Answers



T1

Read the clues. Find the word from the word list that answers the clue or completes the sentence. Write the answers in the boxes.

Word List

- many fifty
- fly friendly
- slightly
- grumpy angry
- clippy pass
- dirty fly
- humble shy
- clumpy tin
- sleepy my
- series city
- dent suppose
- everything
- happy

ACROSS →

1. The we clothes washed to be _____
3. Nice
5. _____ bear a kind of bear.
6. More than one family
8. This is under your skin.
9. Driveway
10. Dog babies
12. Dirty
13. The way high move
14. A kind person does this
15. Belongs to me
16. Cherries or apples baked in a crust
19. Melting snow is _____
20. Mad

DOWN ↓

1. A kind of bag
2. Rainy a light, cold rain
4. A dishonest person does this
7. Opposite of out
8. Messy
9. Breaks left these
11. Opposite of nothing
13. A way to cook food
15. Opposite of few
17. Tacky like a fox

Lesson 68

Lesson Objectives

1. Students will explain similes. (L)
2. Students will review vocabulary words. (L)
3. Students will review the spelling list. (S)
4. Students will read part of the story Bobcat Cowboys On Trial. (R)
5. Students will copy sentences neatly and correctly. (H)

Materials

Workbook page 61

Book: Bobcat Cowboys On Trial

Teaching

1. **A simile is a figure of speech where two essentially unlike things are compared. But, they are alike in some way that we don't normally think about. So, this makes us think more about the special way the two things are alike. A simile often uses the words as or like to compare the two things.**

Here is an example of a simile: I'm as hungry as an elephant. An elephant is a very big animal that eats a lot. So, saying *I'm as hungry as an elephant* is an interesting way to say I'm very hungry.

What do you think this one means? My horse is as old as the hills. (The horse is very old.)
Why? The hills have to be older than anything on them.

Part 1 of workbook page 61: Students will write a sentence telling what each simile means.

2. Have students review the words in the glossary. Ask students to identify the characters that match the definitions of bailiff, defense, defense attorney, prosecuting attorney, and the jury.

Discuss the meanings of the words.

3. Use part 2 of workbook page 61. Students will use spelling words to answer the clues. Students may write the unused words on the back of the worksheet: achieve, ability, believe, multiplied.
4. Ask questions about chapter 2 of Bobcat Cowboys On Trial, then begin reading chapter 3.

Why did the animals think the mouse was pretending to be a horse? (Because the word horse sounds like the word hoarse.)

What does it mean to have a frog in your throat? (It means that it is hard to talk, usually because of a sore throat.)

Why were the critters afraid of Alice McHoot? (Because owls eat small animals.)

What was her dream? (to be an attorney for farm animals)

Why was Frazzle O'Hare afraid of the jury? (They looked like they wanted to eat him.)

How did the judge help Frazzle? (He asked the sheriff to get the jury and Alice some hamburgers.)

Why? (To make them less hungry.)

What do you think will happen next?

5. Use the handwriting sheet or have the children write the following sentences:

Why did that colorful bird shriek?

We rode a motorcycle to the country.

Workbook Answers

Part 1

Answer vary

Sample answers

1. The truck was very slow.
2. We'll be there very soon.
3. Trish felt like she didn't belong.
4. My throat is very dry.
5. The boy is a good swimmer.

Part 2

1. pie
2. everything
3. butterflies
4. why
5. windshield
6. motorcycle
7. country
8. magnify
9. movies
10. shriek

T1 & 3

Part 1: Write a sentence telling what each simile means.

1. The truck was as slow as a turtle.

2. We'll be there as quick as a wink.

3. Trish felt like a fish out of water.

4. My throat is as dry as the desert.

5. The boy swims like a duck.

Part 2: Use spelling words to answer the clues.

1. Have a slice of this for dessert.

2. This is the opposite of nothing.

3. Caterpillars turn into these.

4. This is the first word of a question.

5. This is part of a car.

6. This has two wheels.

7. The United States is this.

8. This means to make something look bigger.

9. You can see these in a theatre.

10. Something that is afraid might make this sound.

Lesson 69

Lesson Objectives

1. Students will review spelling words. (S)
2. Students will read part of the story Bobcat Cowboys On Trial. (R)
3. Students will write a story. (CW)
4. Students will copy sentences neatly and correctly. (H)

Materials

Book: Bobcat Cowboys On Trial

Teaching

1. Have students sort and write the spelling words into four groups. Words where ie makes the long e sound, words where ie makes the long i sound, words where y makes the long e sound, words where y makes the long i sound.

Answers: Long e spelled ie: achieve, believe, windshield, shriek, movies
Long i spelled ie: butterflies, pies, multiplied
Long e spelled y: everything, country, ability
Long i spelled y: motorcycle, , magnify, why

2. Ask questions about chapter 3.

Who are the defendants in the trial? (Billybob, Bobbybill, and Bubba)

What is a stenograph machine? (a machine that the court reporter uses to type in the words said in a trail)

Why do you think it would be important to type all the words said in a trial? (Answers vary.)

What was Alice McHootís favorite food? (carrots)

What did the other animals think she wanted to eat? (them)

How do you know that? (They all ran when she asked them to lunch.)

What did the wolf do that was wrong? (It ate the rat.)

What did the wolf mean when he said the rat would rat on him? (tell on him)

What do you think will happen next?

Students will now read chapter 4 of the book Bobcat Cowboys On Trial.

3. Now the wolf is in jail for eating the rat. What do you think will happen at the wolfís trial? What will the rat say? How do you think the wolf will be punished? Write a story telling what happened at the wolfís trial.
4. Use the handwriting sheet or have the children write the following sentences:

The same prosecuting attorney was in two movies.

The judges liked momís apple pies.

Lesson Objectives

1. Students will answer questions about the story Bobcat Cowboys On Trial. (L)
2. Students will take a spelling test. (S)
3. Students will answer questions requiring inference. (L)
4. Students will read the stories they have written. (R)
5. Students will copy a sentence neatly and correctly. (H)

Materials

Creative writing assignment

Book: Bobcat Cowboys On Trial

Workbook pages 62

Spelling word list: achieve, magnify, pies, motorcycle, ability, believe, multiplied, windshield, everything, butterflies, why, movies, shriek, country (plus any words from the vocabulary list)

Teaching

1. Use part 1 workbook page 62. Answer the questions about the story.
2. Have students number their paper from 1 to 14. Give the following words as dictation.
 1. butterflies, 2. pies, 3. believe, 4. country, 5. everything, 6. shriek,
 7. multiplied, 8. motorcycle, 9. why, 10. ability, 11. windshield, 12. movies,
 13. achieve, 14. magnify
3. Sometimes when we read our stories in reading, you are asked questions. Some questions just ask you to remember something about what you've read. But there are different kinds of questions.

Sometimes you need to answer a question using information you already knew before the story and combine that with information in the story. The story may not tell you the exact answer. You kind of have to guess. This guess based on what you already know is called inference.

I'll read a little story for example: Christy put on her heavy coat. She wrapped her favorite scarf around her neck. The scarf reminded her of the bright sun. She wouldn't be seeing the sun today. She opened the door and felt the chilly breeze.

What time of year is it? (probably winter) **Why do you think so?** (Christy put on a coat, so it must be cold.) **The story doesn't tell us it is winter, but we can be pretty sure it is. The story infers that it is a cold time of the year and winter is cold. So we used inference to make a very good guess.**

Discuss the other inference questions in the same way:

What color was the scarf (yellow, or orange ñ the color of the sun)

Was it cloudy or sunny outside?

Was Christy inside or outside when she put on her coat?

Use part 2 of workbook page 62. Students read the short story and answer the questions using inference.

4. Have students read stories from the creative writing assignment.

Lesson 70

5. Use the handwriting sheet or have the children write the following sentences:

A porcupine has the ability to throw quills.
The court reporter typed on a stenograph machine.

Workbook Answers

Wording of answers will vary on both parts.

Part 1

1. Miss Fussybunny fell on his tail.
2. The mouse couldn't talk.
3. He thought some animals were going to eat him.
4. A wolf ate it.
5. They thought the trial was on a road.

Part 2

1. for a birthday party
2. no
3. white
4. chocolate
5. a dog or puppy

T1 & 3

Part 1 Read the questions about the story, Bobcat Goodbye on Trial. Answer them with complete sentences.

1. Who fell on Davey Beaver's tail?

2. Why did the sheriff take over the bailiff's job?

3. Why was Frazzle O'Hare so afraid?

4. What happened to the rat?

5. Why didn't the bobcats go to the courthouse?

Part 2 Read the short story and answer the questions. You will need to make inferences to answer the questions.

This is one of my favorite days of the summer. Another box came in the mail just for me. The box was from my grandparents. Inside was a present. Mom was baking a special cake. It smelled just like hot cocoa. The frosting mom made reminded me of snow. Lots of my friends are going to be here soon. I think I know what one gift is. I heard it barking in the garage.

1. Why were friends coming to this person's house?

2. Was his or her grandparents going to be there?

3. What color was the icing on the cake?

4. What flavor was the cake?

5. What gift was in the garage?

Name _____

Part 1: Read the questions about the story, Bobcat Cowboys on Trial. Answer them with complete sentences.

1. Who fell on Davey Beaver's tail?

2. Why did the sheriff take over the bailiff's job?

3. Why was Frazzle O'Hare so afraid?

4. What happened to the rat?

5. Why didn't the bobcats go to the courthouse?

Part 2 Read the short story and answer the questions. You will need to make inferences to answer the questions.

This is one of my favorite days of the summer. Another box came in the mail just for me. The box was from my grandparents. Inside was a present. Mom was baking a special cake. It smelled just like hot cocoa. The frosting mom made reminded me of snow. Lots of my friends are going to be here soon. I think I know what one gift is. I heard it barking in the garage.

1. Why were friends coming to this person's house?

2. Was his or her grandparents going to be there?

3. What color was the icing on the cake?

4. What flavor was the cake?

5. What gift was in the garage?

Sample chapter from Bobcat Cowboys on Trial

Chapter 1 Disorder in the Court

The courtroom was packed. Rodents and other small furry critters from miles around filled the rows of benches. This was the most interesting trial in the history of Rowdent Gulch. Sheriff Prairie Dog checked his gun to make sure it was loaded. He needed his gun to make sure everyone was safe. Sure enough, the red rubber band was tightly held by the clothespin.

The sheriff admired the old gun. It had been his father's. He had been sheriff, too, when Sheriff Prairie Dog was just a little prairie pup. His Papa was one of the most famous rubber band gunslingers in the whole territory. Sheriff Prairie Dog grew up in his famous father's shadow. That was kind of nice, because the sun gets mighty hot in Rowdent Gulch during the summer.

Yet, his father had never seen a trial like this one. Thinking of his father made Sheriff Prairie Dog a little sad. He missed his dear old Papa. The sheriff sniffed. A little tear formed in the prairie dog's eye. How he wished his father could see him now.

"What are you crying about, sonny?" said a voice in the crowd.

"Papa," answered Sheriff Prairie Dog. "You told me this morning you didn't want to watch the trial. You were going to play checkers in the park all day."

"Well, I changed my mind. I've never seen a trial like this one before. Besides, all my checker playin' buddies are already here."

Sheriff Prairie Dog gave his Papa a big hug.

"Ouch!" cried Papa Prairie Dog as he rubbed his foot. "Why didn't you put the safety on that rubber band slingin' gun? Who taught you to use one of those things anyway?"

"You did, Papa," answered Sheriff Prairie Dog.

"Oh, that's right, Sonny," the old Prairie Dog remembered. "I forgot to show you how to lock the trigger. It's that little button right there. Here I'll show you."

Papa took the gun and pushed the button.

"Now when I pull the trigger, nothin' will happen."

Papa pointed the gun to the ceiling and pulled the trigger. The rubber band flew off the gun. It knocked a lantern off the ceiling. The lantern crashed to the floor. The rubber band was still going. It pushed Miss Fussybunny's hat right over her eyes. That caused her to trip over her big bunny feet.

She landed right on Davey Beaver's floppy tail. Davey squealed in pain. The beaver bit a chunk out of the wooden bench in front of him. Otto Muskrat was about to sit down. He didn't see the hole in the bench. He sunk down and was firmly stuck.

"Help! Help!" cried Otto.

Tumbly the Porcupine rushed to help him.

"Ouch! Not you Tumbly," cried Otto as he pulled a quill from his cheek.

Otto tossed the quill. It hit Walt Woodchuck just as he was lighting his pipe. The startled woodchuck dropped the match. It fell on the oil from the broken lantern. Within seconds a fire was burning in the courtroom.

Sheriff Prairie Dog threw a bucket of water on the flames. The fire was out, but the courtroom was a mess. The sheriff groaned. Papa Prairie Dog handed him back the gun.

"I think I've made my point. A loaded gun is a dangerous gun. Don't forget that!" said Papa Prairie Dog. "That trigger lockin' button never did

work right. I would have taken that gun back. Then, I lost the receipt. Now where did that rubber band go?â

â Thanks Papa,â sighed the sheriff. He watched his Papa crawl under a bench.

Mrs. Mink screamed.

â Iíve found it,â yelled Papa Prairie Dog.

â Sorry to startle you, Mrs. Mink.

This wonít take but a minute. We canít leave rubber band slinginí gun ammo lyiní all around.â He tugged at her tail. â Iíve almost got it!â

â Heís stealing my red tail ribbon!â yelled Mrs. Mink.

Sheriff Prairie Dog pulled his father away from Mrs. Minkís tail. â Sorry, Mrs. Mink,â said the sheriff.

â Come and sit down Papa.â

â Never mind me!â cried Papa. â Somebodyís a stealiní Mrs. Minkís tail ribbon. Arenít you gonna do anything about it? And this courtroom is a mess.

Guns going off, rubber bands flying everywhere, fires, quill stabbinís, bunnies attacking beavers, bench bitiní. You need to get a little law and order in here sonny. Iím goiní back to the park. Thereís just too much crime in this here courtroom for me!â

â See you tonight, Papa.â

Ì Íím looking forward to it. And Sonny,Ì The old prairie dog paused. Ì Íím real proud of you. Keep up the good work!Ì

Ì Thatís my Papa. Heís the greatest sheriff that ever lived,Ì thought Sheriff Prairie Dog as he smiled proudly. He waved goodbye to his father.

So there was no doubt right from the beginning. This was truly the most interesting trial Rowdent Gulch had ever had, and it hadnít even started! Yet, somehow things went a bit smoother after Papa Prairie Dog left.

Otto got unstuck. The muskrat decided to stand for the whole trial. Mrs. Mink fixed her tail. Davey Beaver finished chewing the bite he took out of the bench. He rather enjoyed the snack. Miss Fussybunny was a little embarrassed and her hat was squished. Otherwise she was ok.

Sheriff Prairie Dog decided not to reload his gun. He felt everyone would be safer that way. Tumbly the Porcupine cleaned up the broken glass from the lantern. He wasnít afraid of the sharp edges. He had sharp objects all over his body. Walt hung a new lantern. He managed to light it and his pipe without starting a fire. Now all they needed were the judge and the criminals.

Ì Whoís the judge today?Ì asked an otter.

Ì I donít know,Ì answered Sheriff Prairie Dog.

Just then a mouse wearing a tiny uniform tugged on Sheriff Prairie Dog's pant leg. The sheriff bent down to the mouse. The mouse whispered into the sheriff's ear. Everyone tried to listen. No one could hear. The mouse really was as quiet as a mouse. Sheriff Prairie Dog gulped and turned a little pale as he listened to the mouse.

Sheriff Prairie Dog stood up and cleared his throat. "A little mouse has told me that the judge is none other than Judge Polecat."

Fear gripped the crowd. All the little animals gasped, "Oooooo". Judge Polecat was known as the hanging judge.

"We're going to need a lot of rope," sighed Sheriff Prairie Dog.