

Musing Our Children



*Pages and Pens ~ Your Tools to
Imagination*

SUMMER 2010

<http://musingourchildren.tripod.com>

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How to Use *Pages and Pens* in Classrooms By Lea Schizas and Cheryl Malandrinos

Pages and Pens ~ *your tools to imagination* is a FREE publication offered to parents, children, and teachers. Several writers work hard to bring you interesting material to read and use within your homes and classrooms. Here are some of the ways you can use our newsletter:

Discussions

Read or have the children take turns reading *Pages and Pens* then discuss with them what they learned. Our interviews with published authors open doors for children to read about the creative process from the artist's point of view. Perhaps one of the published books might spark an interest for a class project: to write their own collaborative book, bind it, and have it on display in the library for other classes to get a chance and read their work.

Our Wonderful World

Our history and geography section opens up doors to many interesting class projects. This is an interesting subject for children to look up further information on the country/city we are discussing in each issue. Have them draw a map indicating where this country/city is located and compare their own location. Having them see the difference in distance on paper gives them a better understanding of its location. Discuss important historical events that took place there.

Reading Tips

Implement some of our tips with your students/children and have them write some of their own thoughts on what motivates them to read, what books they enjoy, and so forth. We always welcome letters from students, parents, and teachers to publish in one of our upcoming issues. All you have to do is send us an email to cg20pm00@gmail.com with "Reading Tips Submission" on the subject line.



Reviews for Kids by Kids

Here is an excellent opportunity to have the class write a short review on any books they've read. All we need is:

The title and author
School name and grade
Their short review

We'll publish them in one of our issues as well as in the Kids Review section found on our Musing Our Children website: <http://musingourchildren.tripod.com/>

Authors Circle

This is a chance to learn more about well known children's authors. Each issue will feature a brief biography and list of works along with links to websites where children find additional information about the author.

Poetry Corner

Use the poems found in this section to encourage children to write their own poetry. Students can compile a poetry collection and hold a poetry reading in their backyard or for classmates and parents. Send us your poems by emailing cq20pm00@gmail.com. Please put "Poetry Corner Submission" on the subject line.

Cryptogram Corner

Author Renée Hand provides fun cryptograms and puzzles in each issue of the newsletter.

Game Time

Learning is fun! Each issue has a variety of puzzles, games and activities that flow into the theme of the newsletter.



Welcome to our SUMMER 2010 issue of ***Pages & Pens - your tools to imagination!***

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES:

If you'd like to contribute to our newsletter just send your items to:

cg20pm00@gmail.com

making sure to place "Musing Our Children

Submission" on the subject line.

We love to hear back from parents, teachers and students.

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PENS" on the subject line and your

message within the body of the email.

Letter from the Editor

Our Wonderful World – America's Independence Day

Author's Circle – Shel Silverstein

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Game Time





Letter from the Editor



***"No more pencils!
No more books!
No more teachers'
dirty looks!"***

Summer is finally here! For a work-at-home mother such as me, that means my work schedule changes so our family can enjoy the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

We stay in Kill Devil Hills, home of the [Wright Brothers National Memorial](#). Wilbur and Orville Wright made nearby Kitty Hawk famous when they achieved the first successful airplane flights there in 1903.

Summer can be a tough time to keep kids educated and entertained. In this issue, we'll share some of our tips. We'll talk about Independence Day and share some summertime poetry by Peggy Fieland.

I'll be discussing my April visit to a third grade class at Stony Hill Road School in Wilbraham, MA, where the students participated in a two-day workshop on using your five senses in writing and developing your powers of observation.

Poet Shel Silverstein is featured in the Author's Circle and we'll review *Caves, Cannons' and Crinolines* by Beverly Stowe McClure.

You'll also find a new cryptogram from Renée Hand, and some summer games. We'll wrap up this issue with "Little Red Hoodie and the Mighty Wolf" by author Mayra Calvani.

Have a safe and fun summer!

Cheryl C. Malandrinos



Our Wonderful World – Celebrate America’s Independence Day

Every summer Americans celebrate Independence Day. This national holiday commemorates (honors) the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

Primarily written by Thomas Jefferson and signed by delegates (representatives) from the 13 original colonies, the Declaration of Independence served as a formal announcement that the 13 colonies were no longer under British rule and would be free and independent states. The colonists believed it was unfair for King George III in England to make them pay such high taxes when they didn’t live there. So, in 1774, the colonists sent delegates from the 13 colonies to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to form the First Continental Congress. They talked about what could be done, but weren’t ready to start a war.

King George had sent troops to America to control any rebellion, but in April 1775, Paul Revere rode through the streets announcing the British were advancing on Concord, Massachusetts. The Battle of Concord would unofficially begin the start of the war for Independence.



In May of the following year, delegates attended the Second Continental Congress, where they tried to work out their differences with England, but by June 1776 the colonists realized they must declare their independence.

Thomas Jefferson was chosen to write the first draft of the declaration that was then presented to congress. After many changes were made, the delegates voted to accept it. John Hancock, the President of the Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

The Declaration of Independence wouldn't be signed by representatives from all states until August, but the 4th of July was selected as the official date to celebrate America's independence.

The tradition of picnics, parades, and fireworks displays started in the early 1800's.

To learn more about Independence Day, please visit the following links:

http://www.history.com/topics/july-4th

http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Independence_Day.shtml

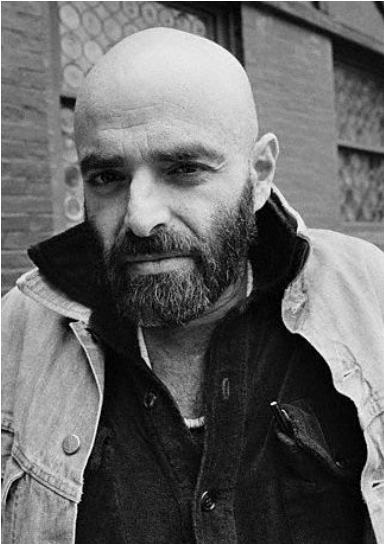
You can read the Declaration of Independence at:

<http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/>

Fun Baseball Fact: The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League was a special league for women that was formed in 1943 to save Major League Baseball parks, which were in danger of closing because men were being drafted during World War II. The league ran until 1954.



Authors Circle



Shel Silverstein was perhaps one of the most beloved children's poets and artists of his time.

From his very first book, *Lafcadio, the Lion Who Shot Back*, to his final book, *Runny Babbit*, published six years after his death, Silverstein's books, poems, and drawings captured the attention of children and adults for their unique style and zany characters.

With *The Giving Tree*, Silverstein was able to teach readers about unconditional love. Even though some publishers felt it was too short or too sad, Harper Children's Books took a chance on it and published it in 1964.

Silverstein would also see *A Giraffe and a Half* and *Uncle Shelby's Zoo: Don't Bump the Glump! and Other Fantasies* published in 1964.

***Where the Sidewalk Ends* was published in 1974 and encouraged children to follow their dreams. *A Light in the Attic* followed in 1981. The last book Silverstein saw published before his death in 1999, was *Falling Up*.**

Though Silverstein never intended to write and draw for children, *A Light in the Attic* was the first children's book to break into the *New York Times* Bestseller List. Silverstein definitely left his mark on the world of children's publishing.

To find out more about Shel Silverstein and his books, please visit: <http://shelsilverstein.com>



My Visit to Stony Hill Road School

By Cheryl C. Malandrinos



Right before our school district's April vacation, I visited Stony Hill Road School in Wilbraham, Massachusetts. The students partook in a two-day workshop on learning to use their five senses in writing. The workshop was also designed to help them develop their powers of observation.

On Day 1, we began by discussing the five senses. Then I read excerpts from popular children's books and asked the students to tell me which of the five senses were used by these authors.

Next, the children were put into groups and we performed an exercise. Each group pulled an item out of a bag I brought with me. I had included several household items and a couple of food items. Each group used their senses to describe the item they chose.



Then we moved on and began talking about being good observers. We also discussed how people's body language could mean one thing, while they were feeling the exact opposite.

The next exercise asked the students to observe me as I recited "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere" by [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#). They were instructed to write down what they saw and heard. I chose this selection because they had been studying the American Revolution. It also worked well because April is [National Poetry Month](#). Students were encouraged to share their observations with the group.

On Day 2, it was time for the children to do a bit of writing. We had a short review of what took place on Day 1. In November, the students had visited the [Old Indian House](#) in Deerfield, Massachusetts. In preparation for this workshop, I had given them a series of questions to answer while they were there, which the teacher collected at the end of the field trip. I used their answers to compile a list of common descriptive words. The students were asked to create a short story using some of these words. Once they were done, the teacher and I edited the stories with each student and then they were encouraged to share their stories with the class.

It was an excellent workshop. The level of writing in these children astounded me. Most of all, the students said they had a great time. I look forward to doing this with another class next year.

Fun Baseball Fact: The Dodgers played in Brooklyn from 1890 until 1957 and then moved to Los Angeles in 1958.



Poetry Corner

Summer Vacation by Peggy Fieldand

**We pile into Blue Nelly
Sis and me in the back seat,
sing "two hours to our favorite house,"**

**drive along dirty gray East River
past a bridge to Queens or something,
sing "ninety minutes to our favorite house,"**

**onto the Housatonic Parkway.
We celebrate green oaks,
sing "one hour to our favorite house,"**

**into Connecticut, through Danbury,
we look for top hats,
sing "half an hour to our favorite house,"**

**across railroad tracks,
along the road to New Milford,
sing "fifteen minutes to our favorite house,"**

**wind our way past the lake
to our favorite house.**



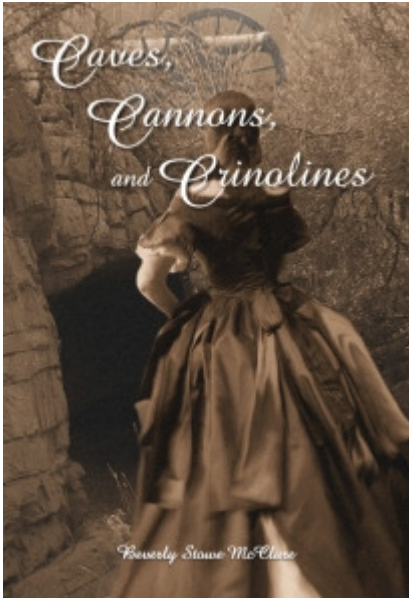


Independence Day by Peggy Fieland

**The pilgrims sailed across the sea
to land upon an unknown shore.
It wasn't where they thought they'd be,
and so they set out to explore**

**this great unknown, this new found land,
so full of things they'd never seen,
a field of corn, an Indian band.
They'd found a place so good and green,**

**they thought they'd found a colony.
They'd build their home, they'd plant their seeds.
They claimed this land, and that's why we
remember them and their brave deeds.**



Publisher: Twilight Times Books

ISBN: 1-60619-112-8

SRP: \$14.95

Reviewed by Cheryl Malandrinos

Caves, Cannons, and Crinolines by Beverly Stowe McClure is a fascinating story for teens that will bring them up close to the American Civil War and the siege of Vicksburg, Mississippi.

The year is 1863. Young Elizabeth (Lizzie) Stamford is fourteen years old, but has already lived a lifetime of troubles. Vicksburg is under siege by the Union Army. Shells fly overhead, damaging their beautiful home. The family is forced, like many in Vicksburg, to seek shelter in a nearby cave. Lizzie's mother has some of their belongings brought down to the cave, but no matter how many things from the house are placed inside, for Lizzie, it's still only a cave.

Lizzie's father tends to the wounded at the hospital, while her brothers Willie and Joseph fight for the Confederacy on the front lines. Lizzie's heart aches with worry over her brothers, being kept from her home, and rarely seeing her father.

Torn between living the life of a proper young lady during a time where nothing seems proper anymore, and her need to do her part, Lizzie disguises herself as a boy and decides to enlist in the Confederate Army. She quickly discovers the horrors of war. An encounter with a Yankee soldier places everything she knows about the North and the South in jeopardy. Is it possible the Yankees and the Rebels have more in common than she thinks?

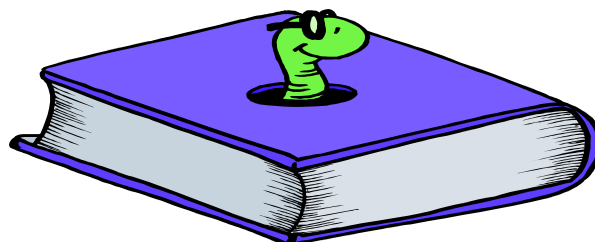


Every time I read a book by Beverly Stowe McClure, I am astounded by how much better her newest book is than the last. All of her books for teens that I've read have strong female leads, but the addition of her younger brother, Nat, in this book will also allow it to appeal to young men. While *Rebel in Blue Jeans* and *Just Breeze* were contemporary stories, with *Caves, Cannons, and Crinolines*, McClure shows she can write an excellent historical.

Having studied the American Civil War for many years now, I can say without a doubt that McClure did her research and used it well. I felt I was right in the middle of Vicksburg alongside Lizzie. In an age where we teach our children so much about tolerance and acceptance of others, this book could be helpful in relaying that message. Students studying the Civil War would also get a great deal out of reading *Caves, Cannons, and Crinolines*, as it would open up room for discussion on a variety of topics surrounding this period of American history.

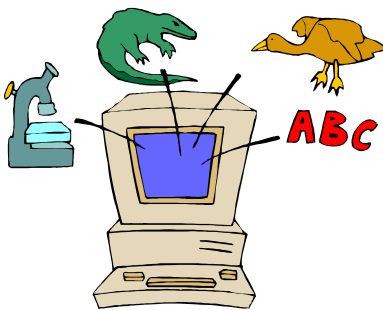
Caves, Cannons, and Crinolines is a thought-provoking, emotion-filled read. While targeted for young adults, don't be surprised if a parent ends up enjoying this one as well. Readers who appreciate strong female characters, those with an interest in American history, and anyone who likes books you just can't put down, will want to pick up a copy of this one.

An estimated 400 women disguised themselves as men in order to serve in the Union and Confederate armies.





Tips to Keep Your Kids Learning through the Summer



Many parents worry over the loss of learning during the summer. Around here my oldest daughter has already declared she will not read a single thing over summer vacation.

What is a concerned parent to do?

Contrary to the popular opinion by children that learning is boring, there are plenty of ways you can help your children stay on top of their game while enjoying some summer fun.

Visit Areas Rich in History

When planning your vacations, take the time to check out the local history. We spend a few days at Cape Cod over the summer. Last time, we took an hour to visit a maritime museum. They had some fun activities for the kids and we enjoyed learning more about boating and tying knots at the same time.

No travel plans this summer? Even your area has a history that people are willing to talk about. Check to see if your town has guided tours of its historical district or other events planned. Our town holds free summer concerts in one of the larger parks. We bring our lawn chairs and enjoy a variety of music all summer long.



Join the Summer Reading Program at Your Library

As a kid I enjoyed participating in our public library's summer reading program. Now it's my daughter's turn. Our youngest, at only 6, signed up this year. They offer fabulous incentives to motivate the kids.

This year's prize for all who reach their reading goal is a private party at the roller skating rink. Not only will my daughter be reading for 20 minutes a day, she will get some great exercise out of it too!

Enroll Your Child in a Day Camp

Summer camp sure has changed since I was a young. The programs they offer nowadays put those I attended to shame.



Every summer my girls go to an arts and crafts camp put on at the local high school and run by the art teacher. Each year's theme focuses on a different culture, so my girls participate in an activity they love while they learn about countries around the world.

Keep in mind the best camps fill up quickly, so book early.

Be Inventive

Be inventive when seeking to entertain and educate your children over the summer. Be willing to try something different, even if it means a bit of clean up afterwards. Here are some ideas for you to try:



- **Allow your kids to help you cook and bake. Have them read recipes and measure the ingredients.**
- **Put down wax paper on the kitchen table. Toss some flour onto the wax paper and have your child write her first name in the flour.**
- **Encourage older children to read to their younger siblings.**
- **Turn one night a week into "Family Reading Night". Pop some popcorn, turn off the television, and take out a good read aloud book. Take turns reading a page.**
- **Have your child tell you his or her favorite story and then ask him/her to create a new ending.**
- **Have your child draw a picture of a scene from one of his or her favorite story books.**
- **Write a short children's story and ask your kids to illustrate it.**
- **Take your kids on a scavenger hunt. If you prefer to do this outside, you and your kids can go on a nature hunt, but when the weather is nasty outside—too hot or rainy—an indoor hunt can be fun too.**
- **Have a "Family Arts & Crafts Night". Clear off the kitchen table and bring out a variety of age appropriate arts and crafts for everyone to work on. You could even invite relatives or friends over the next day for an art show displaying all your work.**

Making sure your children don't suffer the effects of "brain drain" over the summer doesn't have to be hard. With a bit of imagination, your kids will stay busy and be ready to get back into the swing of things when school starts in the fall.

Fun Baseball Fact: Baseball was heard on the radio for the first time in 1921.



CRYPTOGRAM CORNER

By Renee Hand

On Cryptogram Corner, you will find lots of fun cryptograms and/or puzzles to engage your time. These are challenging and fun. The theme is Summer. All answers will be provided in the next issue.

ACTIVITY 1:

In this activity you will need to solve the cryptogram. The message has something to do with summer. Clues are given to help you figure it out. An example of how the clues are used is shown as well. You will need to fill in the rest. Good luck and have fun!

Summer Message

M M				
G T K K C S	O G	A P D G	P M	M T U
Z V C U	O D	O G	G Q C U D	Z O D V
D V C	P U C G	H P T	A P J C .	

CLUES:

M=K, S=G, W=Z,



Summer Traveling Bingo

		Free Space		

This activity is fun to do in the car. Before you leave on vacation, or while you are in the car, have the children fill in the items they think they will see on the way or items they want to search for. For example, cars with different license plates. This can be fun because children can fill in all the different license plates they see. Once the Bingo Template is filled in, have them write down the names of the 50 states and place them in a hat or container. There you go. Games can be modified to include the places you have visited on vacation or animals seen, etc...



Another fun travel game is Mad Libs. They are relatively inexpensive and lasts awhile, or have the children write a short silly story leaving out a few nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc... and having everyone in the car fill in the spaces.

SPRING ISSUES ANSWERS

Spring is the time of year when everything comes to life. I begin by laying eggs by a milkweed plant. When I hatch I eat the milkweed for about two weeks until I am full grown. I then shed my skin before I transform into something different while I am hanging from a twig. In two weeks I emerge into something beautiful. The process then starts again. I go through a metamorphosis, but I am not the only one who does. What am I?

A BUTTERFLY



Apple Pie Trivia: When the colonists arrived in America, all they found were crab apple trees. Crab apples are the only native apples to the United States.



Little Red Hoodie and The Mighty Wolf **By Mayra Calvani**

Wolf lived in the heart of the forest. His cabin was cluttered with books. He was not very tidy and he was not very kind, but he loved a good story.

"There's nothing better than reading!" he said. "Well, maybe a juicy steak—but next to that, reading's the best!"

He grinned, reading his favorite book: *The Adventures of Mighty Wolf*, by Margaret Howard. He was impatiently waiting for the next installment in the series: *Mighty Wolf Saves the World*.

One day, on his daily jog through the forest, Wolf saw a girl dressed in a red hoodie and carrying a backpack. She shone like a scrumptious apple.

Not that I like apples, Wolf thought. I went veggie for a while. Not my kind of thing.

Talking of food... the girl *did* look tasty, even though she was on the skinny side.

Wolf sneaked behind a tree and leapt in front of the girl.

"Oh, you scared me!" the girl said.

"Sorry about that," Wolf said, using his sweetest voice. "I like your hoodie."

"Thank you. Grandma made it for me."

"What's your name?"

"I'm Little Red Hoodie," she said.





Somebody's not very original! Wolf thought.

"Are you some sort of, like, big bad wolf?" Little Red Hoodie asked, lowering her sunglasses.

"Me? No! I haven't eaten a human for the last two years!" Wolf lied, trying to look his innocent best. **"What do you have in the bag?"**

"I'm bringing provisions to Grandma, who lives in the cottage by the river."

"It looks heavy. Do you need help?" Wolf said. He took a step closer to sniff the bag, but he didn't catch any particular food smell.

Little Red Hoodie took a step back and said. "No, thank you. I must go now. Grandma is waiting for me. It was cool meeting you, Mr. Wolf."

The girl put on headphones and waved goodbye. Wolf waved back, narrowing his eyes.

I have to find out what's inside that bag! he thought, picturing all kinds of delicious treats. ***I hope she has salmon puffs. Old ladies like salmon puffs. Then, for dessert, I'll have Grandma!***

Wolf crept through the woods and followed Little Red Hoodie. He was careful not to let her see him. With the headphones on, she didn't look very interested in her surroundings.

He extended his leg and made her trip. Little Red Hoodie fell and her backpack fell with her, spilling one of the contents.

After she stood up and kept going, Wolf took a look at what had fallen from her backpack.



Sticky notes? Wolf thought. ***Why would Grandma want sticky notes?***



Once again, Wolf went after her. This time he threw an apple at her head. Little Red Hoodie tripped and, just as before, something fell from her backpack.

Stroking her head, Little Red Hoodie sauntered off.

Wolf picked up what had fallen from the backpack: a pencil sharpener! *Why would Grandma need a pencil sharpener?*

Yet again, Wolf went after the girl. He took a line of rope from his pocket and tied it between two trees.

Little Red Hoodie was so concentrated on the music, she didn't see the rope and... BUMP... fell flat on her face! Something shiny dropped from her backpack: a box of metal paper clips!

What's wrong with this grandma? Grandmas like things like fruit, cheese, cakes and salmon puffs—not sticky notes, pencil sharpeners and paper clips!

Then a thought struck him: *Maybe I should be heading straight to Grandma's, where the real food is. I'm going to take a shortcut and get to Grandma's before Little Red Hoodie does!*

And so he did. But when he walked into Grandma's cottage, he found it empty.

Where's Grandma? he wondered.

The cottage was almost as cluttered with books as Wolf's cabin was. Wolf was so taken with the books on the shelves, he forgot how hungry he was. Displayed above the mantelpiece were all his favorite *Mighty Wolf Adventures* series!

Suddenly he heard the door opening.

That must be Little Red Hoodie! Wolf thought. He was so mad she had interrupted him, he felt like gobbling her up, just to spite her.





He put on Grandma's barrette and pink poodle bathrobe and jumped under the covers.

"Hi there, Grandma," Little Red Hoodie said.

"Hello, dear," Wolf said, doing his best 'sweet little old lady' voice.

"Grandma, what happened to your ears? They look so big!"

"The better to hear your sweet voice with, dear."

Little Red Hoodie took a step closer. "Your nose is looking awfully big as well."

"The better to smell your lovely perfume with, dearie."

"Grandma--I mean, no offense, but those are some nasty teeth you have there."

"What better way to... EAT YOU WITH, DEAR?" And he leapt from the bed and pounced after her.

Little Red Hoodie screamed and ran to the door, crashing into Grandma, who had just walked into the cottage.

"What's going on here?" Grandma said. She carried a bunch of books in her arms.

When Wolf saw the title of the books, his heart stopped. It was *Mighty Wolf Saves the World*, the book he was so impatiently waiting for!



"How did you get that book?" Wolf asked, forgetting about eating Little Red Hoodie. "It's not published yet."



“These are sample copies from my publisher,” Grandma said.

“Are YOU Margaret Howard, author of the *Mighty Wolf Adventures?!?*” Wolf asked.

“I sure am,” Grandma replied.

Wolf couldn’t gobble up Grandma. She had to write all those wonderful stories!

He couldn’t gobble up Little Red Hoodie either. She had to bring all those provisions so Grandma could keep on writing!

He was hungry for one thing and one thing only:

“May I have an autographed copy, please?”

The End



Fun Baseball Fact: Fenway Park, home to the Boston Red Sox, is the oldest Major League Baseball stadium. It opened on April 20, 1912.



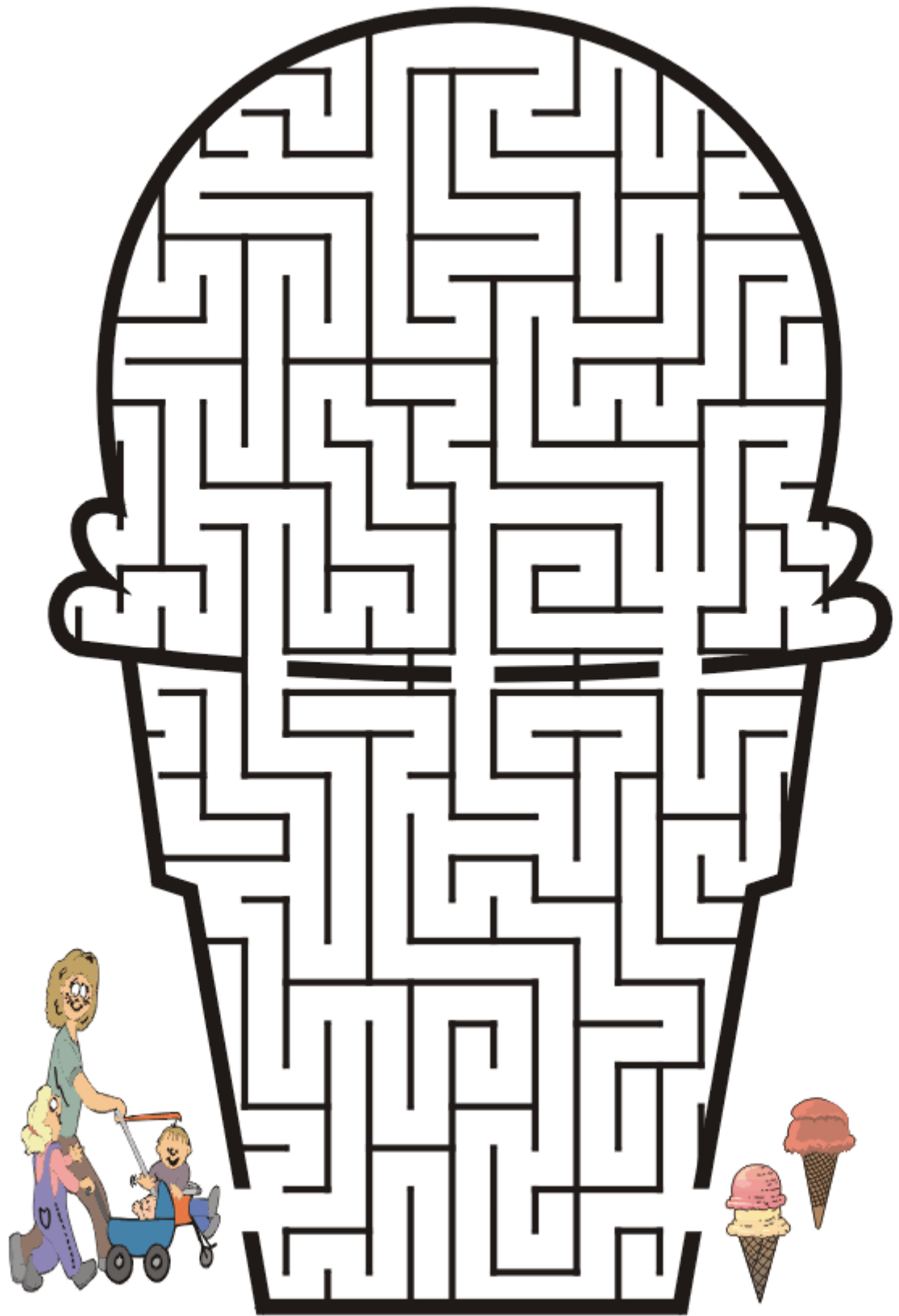


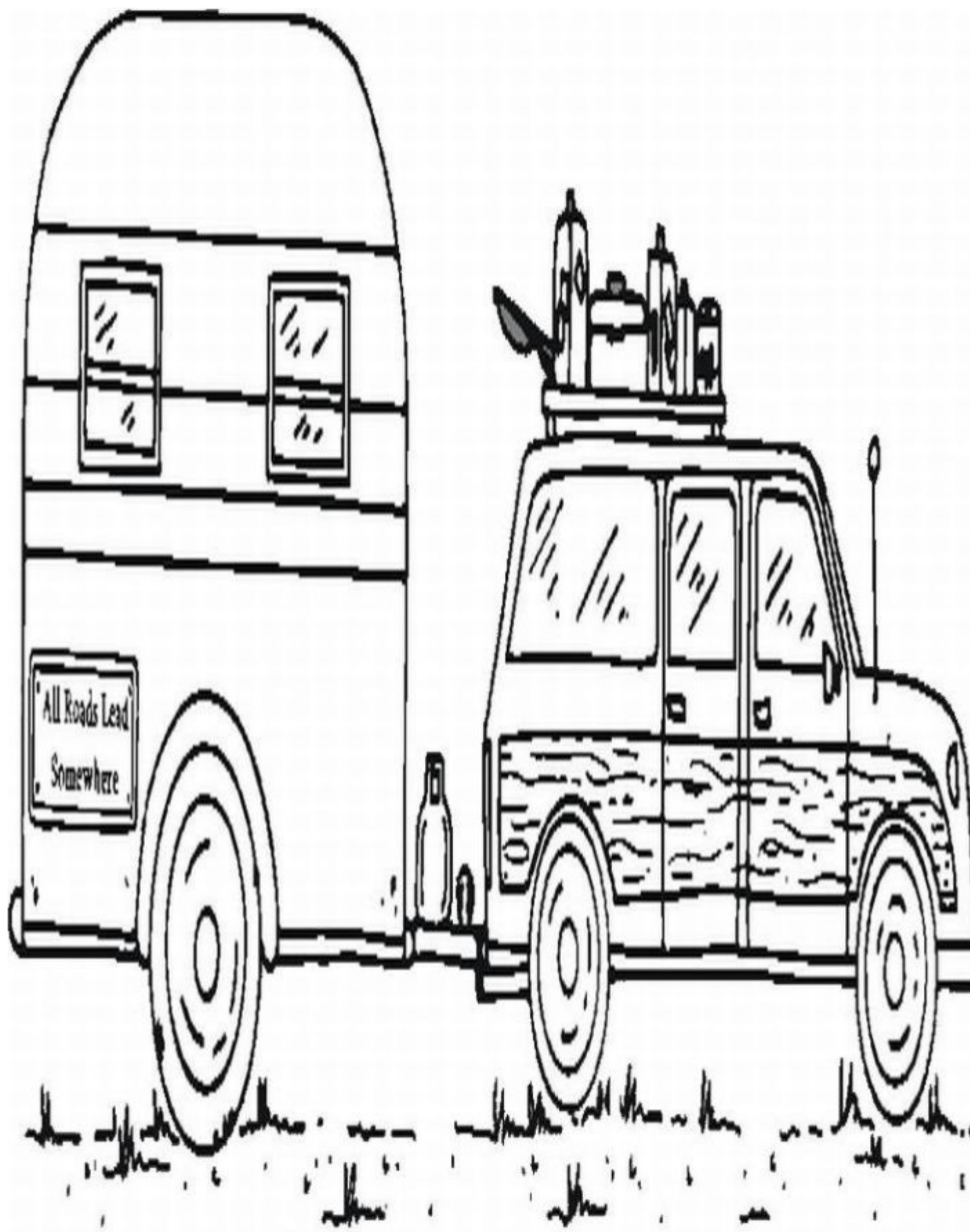
Summer Word Search Puzzle

S U M S A N D A L S J M H E R
S T A R U T S W H E N U I T S
T H E S G N U M M E M R L S O
H A T S U L B I K I N G S Y T
O I C E S A R U D O U O N D T
L H E T T W E N R R E L A X T
I Y S S W I M M I N G F S E C
D O B T N D O F E O J U N L E
A A A N R S D E F I I N I L S
Y H R E S O R W I T O H T A H
T H B E A C H E A A U T U B M
N E E Q S C U S I C N O X E N
E A C N R E T H N A T N U S E
T W U E N R T Y S V E C O A N
D S E O F S E P T E M B E B R

AUGUST
BARBECUE
BASEBALL
BEACH
BIKING
GOLF
HATS
HOLIDAY
HOT
HUMID

JULY
RELAX
SANDALS
SHORTS
SOCCER
SUNBURN
SUNSCREEN
SUNTAN
SWIMMING
VACATION







1		2		3		4		5
6				7				
8					9	10		
				11				
12		13				14		15
16				17				

Across

- 1. Extra
- 4. Use it to catch butterflies
- 6. Very important person
- 7. Push hard
- 8. Chick sound
- 9. Number of innings
- 12. An orchard fruit
- 14. Baby bear
- 16. Hearing organ
- 17. Head of a city

Down

- 1. Sports utility vehicle
- 2. Plenty
- 3. Simple
- 4. Actor Reeves in the Matrix
- 5. That place
- 8. Flat dish
- 10. Feel need to scratch
- 11. Group playing on same side
- 13. For each
- 15. Pub



Enjoy your summer!



Answers to Crossword

Across: 1.spare, 4.net, 6.vip, 7.shove, 8.peep, 9.nine, 12.apple, 14.cub, 16.ear, 17.mayor **Down:** 1.suv, 2.ample, 3.easy, 4.neo, 5.there, 8.plate, 10.itchy, 11.team, 13.per, 15.bar