

HOW MANY IS A HUNDRED?

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illustrated by Michelle Sellers

HOUSE WITH THE LIGHT BOOKS
United States of America

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HOUSE WITH THE LIGHT BOOKS

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For Sean and Rach.
You've helped in a hundred ways.
Thank you!

CONTENTS

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | How Many Is a Hundred? | 26 | Caution! |
| 2 | Where Fire Engines Go | 27 | Let's Turn Off the TV |
| 3 | Friendship | 28 | Our Rosebush |
| 4 | Really Spring | 29 | Outing |
| 5 | Bug Ballet | 30 | Fog |
| 6 | Up in the Morning | 31 | The Magpie |
| 7 | The Big Yellow School Bus | 32 | Moose Crossing |
| 8 | The Goo-Goo Box | 33 | The Seaplane |
| 9 | Thunderclaps | 34 | The China Rose |
| 10 | The Silver Rain | 35 | Jump Rope Rhymes |
| 11 | One Shoe | 36 | Tidal Pools |
| 12 | Thunder Rolling | 37 | Planting Beans |
| 13 | One Thing at a Time | 38 | Damselfly |
| 14 | Washing Windows | 39 | Cracker Box Houses |
| 15 | Peace and Quiet | 40 | Shipwreck! |
| 16 | Big Jobs | 41 | Salad Today |
| 17 | With a Measure | 42 | Arugula |
| 18 | The Letter Box | 43 | Table Manners |
| 19 | Faithfulness | 44 | Fig Bars |
| 20 | Angry Words | 45 | Spaghetti |
| 21 | Honesty | 46 | Tea |
| 22 | Thrift | 47 | When Aunt Elaine Crochets |
| 23 | Graciousness | 48 | Art and Time |
| 24 | Pals and Friends | 49 | Watering Plants |
| 25 | Is "More" "Better"? | 50 | Halfway Done |

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------------|-----|-------------------|
| 51 | The Governor's House | 76 | Put It Away |
| 52 | Tape | 77 | Keep an Eye on It |
| 53 | The Smell of Paper | 78 | My Alpaca Socks |
| 54 | Bob | 79 | Seasons |
| 55 | Papers and Pencils | 80 | Almost Fall |
| 56 | Office Gray | 81 | Stuck in a Box |
| 57 | Short Books | 82 | Sick |
| 58 | Simple Faith | 83 | I Need the Rain |
| 59 | The Little Fern | 84 | Mood Changes |
| 60 | Something to Say | 85 | Go for a Walk |
| 61 | Seagulls | 86 | To Have a Friend |
| 62 | Top of a Tree | 87 | Tin Whistle |
| 63 | Red Ferns and Green Ferns | 88 | Anorak |
| 64 | Silly Questions | 89 | My Window Spider |
| 65 | Alliterations | 90 | The Evening Sky |
| 66 | Getting Ready | 91 | I Do Not Know |
| 67 | Family Visit | 92 | Star Maker |
| 68 | Uncle Lennie | 93 | Snow |
| 69 | My Favorite Shirt | 94 | Wood Stove |
| 70 | Daddy's Fix-It Room | 95 | Camping Sleep |
| 71 | How Blue | 96 | Skylight |
| 72 | Taking My Snake for a Walk | 97 | Getting to Sleep |
| 73 | Bottles and Tins | 98 | Fuzzy Blankets |
| 74 | Grandma's Button Box | 99 | Rocking Chair |
| 75 | Free Concerts | 100 | Goodnight Hug |



1 HOW MANY IS A HUNDRED?

How many is a hundred?
Give me some time to look —
I bet I'll find A HUNDRED poems
RIGHT here in THIS BOOK!

2 WHERE FIRE ENGINES GO

I hope someday that I may know
Where screaming fire engines go
That scurry by in streaks of light
And all too soon are out of sight.

3 FRIENDSHIP

If you're stuck in your truck
With your wheels in the muck,
Just give me a shout
And I'll come pull you out.

4 REALLY SPRING

In March I like to watch my kite
Soar up and dance on dizzy height
And feel the wind tug at the string.
Then I know it's really spring.

5 BUG BALLET

Insects spot the picnic fare,
Launch lunchtime missions in the air,
Fly flybys and won't go away,
Dancing the bug ballet.

6 UP IN THE MORNING

I love getting up in the morning —
Can't wait for the day to begin.
So, call anytime without warning ...
Just AFTER I'm done sleeping in!

7 THE BIG YELLOW SCHOOL BUS

The big yellow school bus rolls by
And here at the window am I,
Too little to go to that school.
I wonder who made such a rule.

8 THE GOO-GOO BOX

I made a little goo-goo box
Of plied and painted tin,
So now I have a goo-goo box
To keep my goo-goos in.

9 THUNDERCLAPS

Thunderclaps wake kids from naps
And make us jump in fear,
But when they're done we think they're
 FUN
And laugh, "Look! We're still here!"

10 THE SILVER RAIN

The silver rain, the silver rain
Draws ribbons on my windowpane
And fogs the glass so I can't see
How far it fell to get to me.

11 ONE SHOE

I've often wondered what I'd do
If I could only find one shoe.
Would I search till my eyes turned red?
Or would I just go back to bed?

12 THUNDER ROLLING

What makes the sound of thunder
 rolling —
Marbles in a metal cup?
My grandma says it's angels bowling,
But I think she is making that up!

13 ONE THING AT A TIME

One thing at a time.
Take just a little bite.
Let's learn to crawl before we walk
Until we're crawling right.

14 WASHING WINDOWS

Washing windows where I stand,
I think I'm giving Mom a hand.
So, why is it they break my heart
By looking worse than when I start?

15 PEACE AND QUIET

If your neighbor's a drummer who
 bangs on all summer,
The minute he starts to begin it
You'll add peace to your life if you'll
 hand him a knife
And ask him if he knows what's in it!

16 BIG JOBS

Jobs won't be big if you'll dig in
And do some now and do some then.
It's funny how the work decreases
When you break it into pieces.

17 WITH A MEASURE

Walk through your day with a measure —
You'll look just like a constructional whiz.
You can check lengths and widths at
 your leisure
And find out how big or small
 everything is.

18 THE LETTER BOX

Run to the letter box down at the mall
And drop your stamped offering in,
To speed through the cities and
 airports and all
Until it arrives at the home of your
 friend.



19 FAITHFULNESS

Do I love you? Yes, I do.
Forever I will wait for you.
I'll be here without a doubt
Though everyone on earth walks out.

20 ANGRY WORDS

When you're angry count to ten
Before you let your words begin.
Words can injure and attack
And never can be taken back.

21 HONESTY

If I always say what's true,
Even when it's hard to do,
The peace of God will rest on me
Because He'll love my honesty.

22 THRIFT

A penny saved's a penny kept,
And I might need that penny
Someday when bitter tears are wept
Because I don't have any.

23 GRACIOUSNESS

A little more kindness each day that we live,
Looking for others to bless,
A little more given than what we must give
Is the practice of graciousness.

24 PALS AND FRIENDS

A pal sticks by while life is fun;
A friend stays on when fun is done.
Pals are many, friends are few,
But fair and honest, close and true.

25 IS "MORE" "BETTER"?

Is "more" "better"? This I know:
Sometimes yes, usually no.
What great advice this saying brings:
"Moderation in all things."

26 CAUTION!

Think about it just a minute —
Don't just throw your whole self in it.
You may see the folly to it
And be glad you didn't do it.

27 LET'S TURN OFF THE TV

Let's turn off the TV.
Let's turn off the glare.
Let's turn off the volume.
Let's turn on fresh air!

28 OUR ROSEBUSH

A flower, a flower, a blossom an hour,
Our rosebush just blooms and blooms,
Stretching tall and fair in the summer air,
Spreading its sweet perfumes.

29 OUTING

Put block stacks in backpacks,
Throw a blanket right down in the park,
Remember some lunch and a snack that
 goes crunch,
And you'll stay entertained until dark.

30 FOG

I like to tiptoe through the fog,
Especially when I walk my dog.
He barks at things I cannot see
Until they're right on top of me!

31 THE MAGPIE

The magpie's tail is so long,
When he walks it must leave a track.
When he sits on a branch and holds on
I don't know why he doesn't tip back.

32 MOOSE CROSSING

Moose crossing, stone tossing,
 deep in the wood,
Covered with pinecones and brush —
Don't stand where the moose cross
 unless you would
Not mind being moose-meet mush!

33 THE SEAPLANE

I watch the seaplane circling round
Before it comes in for a stop
Then very slowly swooping down
And landing on the water's top.

34 THE CHINA ROSE

The petals on the China rose
Are pink and perfumed velvet flows,
Long-stemmed ladies flecked with dew
Waltzing all the summer through.

35 JUMP ROPE RHYMES

JUMP! ROPE! I! HOPE!
My LIFE will have PLENTy of TIMES
As I GO on my WAY and look
 BACK to toDAY
And reMEMber those JUMP rope
 RHYMES!

36 TIDAL POOLS

Have you ever watched the tide
Form puddles near the ocean wide
With foamy edges all around,
Then slowly sink into the ground?

37 PLANTING BEANS

Plant a bean in a coffee cup
Then water it, don't dry it.
That bean will soon grow way, WAY up!
You really ought to try it!

38 DAMSELFLY

Pin bug, pin bug,
Just look at the shape that you're in —
You're a free-flying rod, and someday
 I'll ask God
Why He made you so long and so thin.

39 CRACKER BOX HOUSES

Cracker box houses on the hill —
I search each roof and porch and pane.
I've never known and don't know
still
What makes one cute, another plain.

40 SHIPWRECK!

I like to watch my toasted oats
Sail round and round like little boats
At high tide on a milk lagoon —
Until I sink them with my spoon!

41 SALAD TODAY

I really want some food
That must be really chewed.
Crunch! And it's on its way —
Salad for me today!

42 ARUGULA

A-ROO-Goo-La! A-ROO-Goo-La!
I like to say its name,
But on the lips or on the tongue
It suits me all the same.

43 TABLE MANNERS

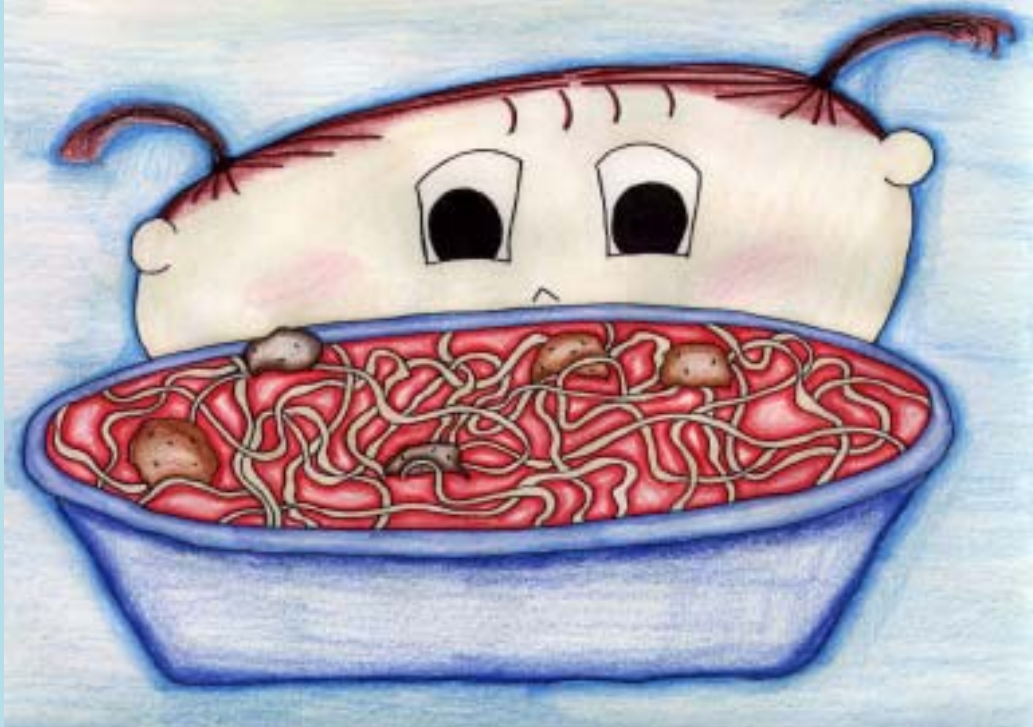
Don't play with your food.
Your parents think it's rude.
Besides, your stomach's found
It feels much better going down.

44 FIG BARS

Fig Newtons — or fig bars — are awfully
good.
I'll probably still like them when I'm big.
There's just one thing I wish I understood:
How do they get the dough around the fig?

45 SPAGHETTI

I wonder where spaghetti ends
That whirls and twirls and twists and bends.
Are there breaks inside the thing?
Or is it all just one long string?



46 TEA

Let us pause in the afternoon
From the stress of the day, you and me,
For a mark of a civilized person
Is to take a few moments for tea.

47 WHEN AUNT ELAINE CROCHETS

See her stick her yarn hook in there,
In what looks like empty space?
Soon A SWEATER will begin there
When our Aunt Elaine crochets.

48 ART AND TIME

Little girl by the terrace fence —
Old painting shows how time makes sense.
In life that girl's grown old and gone,
But the child in the painting by the
fence stays on.

49 WATERING PLANTS

Children should give drinks to plants —
Not too many or too few —
To make leaves smooth, keep away ants.
They need it, just like people do.

50 HALFWAY DONE

We're halfway done with all this fun,
But this book was designed
With just as many rhymes to come
As we have left behind!

51 THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE

I stand here and stare at the
Governor's House
And wonder if there is a Governor's mouse
And what the Governor would do
If HE could only find one shoe.

52 TAPE

Tape, tape, up on the shelf,
Clear as a bell, light as a feather,
Helping the world hang onto itself,
Sticking the world together.

53 THE SMELL OF PAPER

The smell of paper, the smell of ink,
The smell of crayons makes me think
Of all the artwork I could do
To make the world seem bright and new.

54 BOB

Bob is the cat on my desktop.
His wide, yellow eyes watch it all,
And his tail's like a great, curling
parsnip
Overlooked by the farmer last fall.

55 PAPERS AND PENCILS

Papers and pencils —
What do I see?
My key to the world
As I'd like it to be.

56 OFFICE GRAY

I like the way an office feels —
Computers, printers, chairs on wheels —
But everything's in shades of gray.
Why does it have to be that way?

57 SHORT BOOKS

Short books, tall books, standing on the
hutch,
Some with their covers worn away,
Some bent and old and not looking like much,
But their thoughts as fresh as their
publishing day.

58 SIMPLE FAITH

God gave us dirt and weather.
God gave us plants to grow.
God keeps the world together.
That's all I need to know.

59 THE LITTLE FERN

Who made the little fern,
Its fronds all in a row?
That's something you may learn,
But I already know.

60 SOMETHING TO SAY

The pitter-pat rain on the rooftop,
The wind in the cottonwood tree,
The brightness of birds as they
 warble their words
Have something to say to me.

61 SEAGULLS

How do they know how to stay in a row
And in step on the go as they fly,
Like sharp little snips of paper
Running around the sky?

62 TOP OF A TREE

I'd love to be at the top of a tree
After the winter has died
When sweet little sleeves of aspen leaves
Open their fingers wide.

63 RED FERNS AND GREEN FERNS

Red ferns and green ferns persistently grow
Through summers and winters all
 covered with snow,
Run over by cars, trampled under the swing,
But red ferns and green ferns come
 back every spring.



64 SILLY QUESTIONS

Do the stairs go up or down?
Where does a circle start?
Who tied the knots in the wood?
Can a person be heartless at heart?

65 ALLITERATIONS

What's an alliteration?
A rehashed repeat of what's read?
Or a consonant-copied creation?
Or a similar sound so soon said?

66 GETTING READY

Getting ready to go on a trip
And knowing the secret you're knowing
With a gleam in your eye and a smile
 on your lip
Can be more fun than actually going!

67 FAMILY VISIT

Visiting our relatives
Is such a great, fun thing to do.
Each finds out how the other lives
And talks about old times and new.

68 UNCLE LENNIE

Uncle Lennie cannot walk —
He suffers from a leg condition —
But when we sit around and talk
He always takes the time to LISTEN.

69 FAVORITE SHIRT

I forgot to pack my favorite shirt —
A whole year of planning gone wrong.
I washed it and pressed it and kept it
 from dirt
Then forgot to take it along.

70 DADDY'S FIX-IT ROOM

Chains to bikes and two-wheeled trikes and broken everything,
Two halves of wooden yo-yo that can't climb back up the string.
I bring my tattered trophies, and he'll mend them, I presume.
A hospital for treasures is my Daddy's fix-it room.

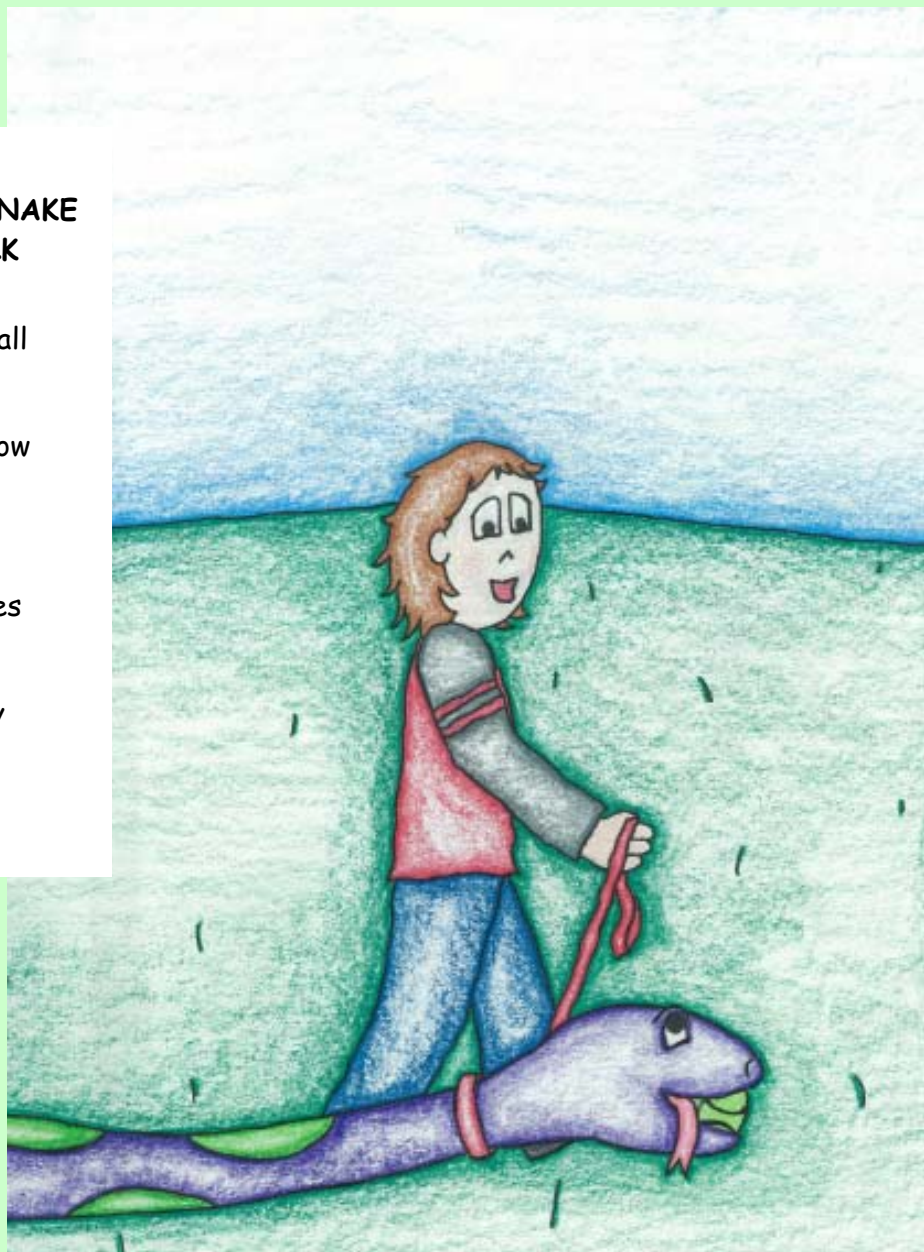
71 HOW BLUE

How blue was the ribbon I wore on the day
That we drove to the airport when Aunt went away.
How short was the car ride, the weather, how fair,
And how blue was the ribbon I wore in my hair.



**72 TAKING MY SNAKE
FOR A WALK**

You ought to watch all
the people!
You ought to hear how
they talk!
You ought to see
how their eyes
follow me
When I'm taking my
snake for a
walk!



73 BOTTLES AND TINS

I watch as Mother opens them and think how long it's been
Since they stood new and open wide and food was first put in.
How well they keep it fresh for us till suppertime begins,
Those jugs and jars and cases and cans and packets and bottles and tins!

74 GRANDMA'S BUTTON BOX

They're round and square and barely there — so clear I see right through.
They're silver, gold, and double-holed, and green and red and blue.
I mix them up like nonsense and then sort them out like rocks —
So much fun with the contents of my Grandma's button box!

75 FREE CONCERTS

I like to go to concerts
When they have them at the mall.
They let the kids, if well behaved,
Go dancing through the hall!

76 PUT IT AWAY

If I fold it back up, collapse it back down,
Set it back in its place every day,
If I carefully store it I won't have to
 look for it,
Not if I put it away.

77 KEEP AN EYE ON IT

If you kept one eye on the place that
 you're going
And kept one eye on your stuff
And kept one eye on the ball that
 you're throwing ...
You wouldn't have nearly enough!

78 MY ALPACA SOCKS

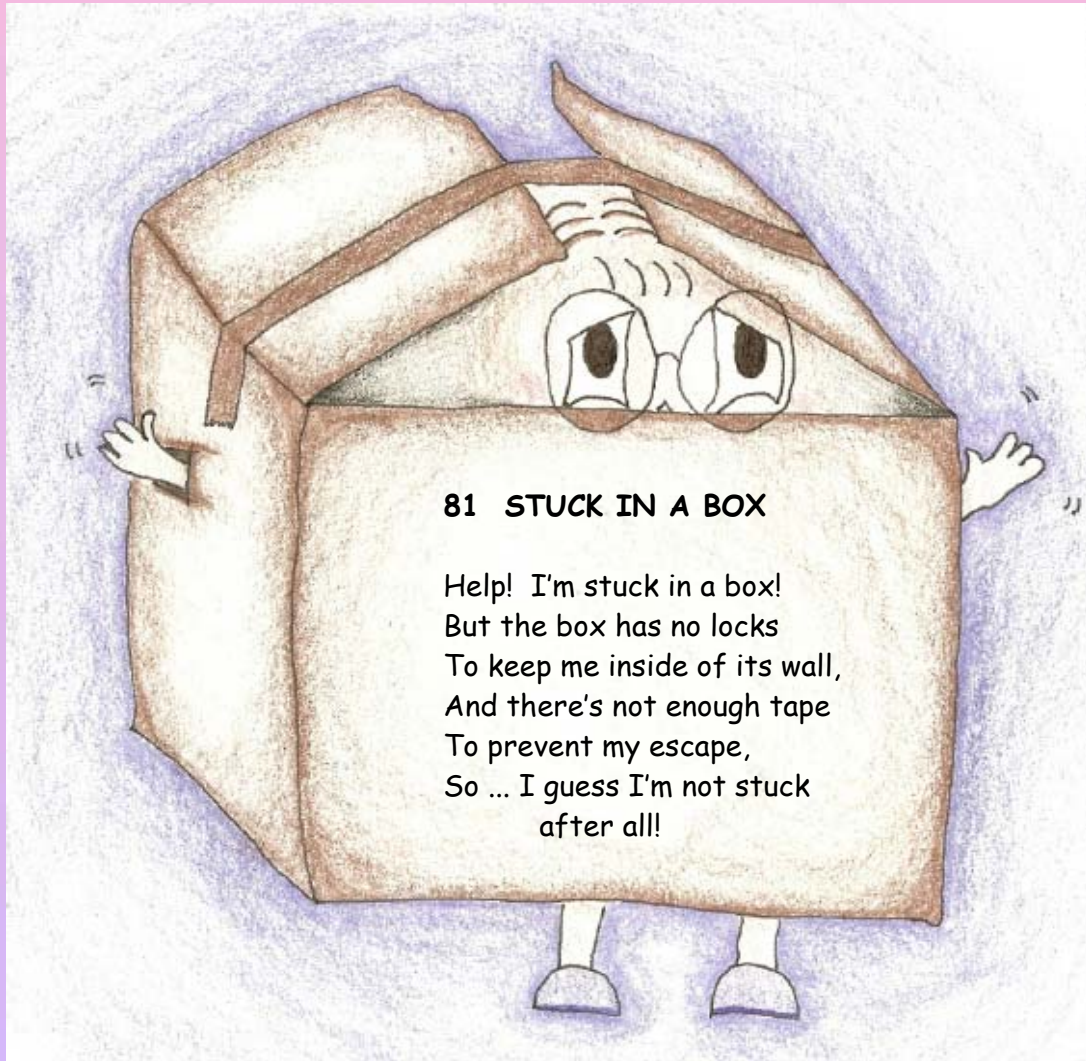
My socks are made of alpaca wool
From faraway Tibet
Where a fuzzy little camel gave hair for me,
And my feet haven't gotten cold yet.

79 SEASONS

First the ground is all frozen and new,
Then the plants poke their little heads
 through,
Then we play and forget about school,
Then it's finally comfortably cool.

80 ALMOST FALL

When you're half a year away from the
 daffodils
And there's an icy ring around the moon
And fog, like silver ribbons, winds
 around the hills,
You can be sure that fall is coming soon.



81 STUCK IN A BOX

Help! I'm stuck in a box!
But the box has no locks
To keep me inside of its wall,
And there's not enough tape
To prevent my escape,
So ... I guess I'm not stuck
after all!

88 ANORAK

Wrap me up in my anorak,
Fleece in the front and bulk in the back.
It keeps me warm wherever I go
Like all of the people who live on the snow.

89 MY WINDOW SPIDER

The spider that lives in my window
Waits for a storm to begin,
Then he sits there and watches
the wind blow
And dines on whatever blows in.

90 THE EVENING SKY

What do I see in the evening sky?
Tails of the sun as it's passing by.
What do I see when I squint so far?
A fingernail moon and a tiny,
shiny star.

91 I DO NOT KNOW

"Why is it that some people see
The shining star and living tree,
But not the God who made them so?"
"I do not know, Child, I do not know."

92 STAR MAKER

Come look at the stars in the cold
night air
As the wispy white clouds roll away
And talk to the God who hung them there
Who listens to all that you say.

93 SNOW

It dams up driveways at the street,
Coats cars and curbstones, steps
and feet,
Gives folks with shovels lots to do,
But makes the world look so brand new.



94 WOOD STOVE

Try to get a wood stove
If contentment's your desire.
Keep your fingers from the flames,
But sit and watch the fire.

95 CAMPING SLEEP

I'd love to sleep on the forest floor
After a camping day
And hear the winds whipping overhead
And wonder what they say.

96 SKYLIGHT

If my room had a skylight
I'd camp indoors under the sky;
I'd go to bed at twilight
And watch the pink clouds
 sailing by.

97 GETTING TO SLEEP

Here is a way to get to sleep
When insomnia's all you can find:
Imagine a place that you'd like to be
And then go there in your mind.

98 FUZZY BLANKETS

Grab the edge; give a tug.
Nothing else feels quite as snug
As fuzzy blankets at your nose
And warmly winding through your toes.

99 ROCKING CHAIR

Give me your hand. Lift me up there.
Let's go for a rock in the old rocking chair.
The day may be blue, the sky may be gray,
But I'm happy with you when we're
 rocking away.

100 GOODNIGHT HUG

I hug my pillow as I creep
Into the deep, deep arms of sleep
And smile to know that as I do
God smiles at me and hugs me, too.

Now, Good Night!

