



I was fast asleep when my friend, Howie came to wake me up for school. "Wake up, Delbert! The bus is almost here!"

I pulled the blankets over my head. "Get someone else to go with you, Howie. I don't want to go to school today. I'm uh...sick. Yeah, sick."

"Again? This is the third time this month. You're not sick!" said Howie.

The truth was that I was sick...sick of school. I was trying my hardest but just not catching on like the other kids were.

I'm talking about the reading and writing. When it came time for recess, I noticed the other kids were already done with their work. They were doing way better than I was, and it really made me feel sad.

I mean, what the heck? I was having a seriously hard time!

It made me feel like I wasn't as smart as the other kids in class. I didn't need any more reasons to feel like that.





What I didn't know at the time was that I was super smart... but I didn't know it yet. At the time, I was seeing the letters differently than the other kids. Another way that made it harder for me to read.

I didn't realize this for so long though, because it was how letters and words had always looked to me.

If you think about it, my eyes were the only eyes I had ever used before. So, how could I have known? I had nothing to compare them to!

The eye doc had even given me glasses. So, I assumed nothing was wrong with how the letters looked on the page. Except they were hard for me to read.

Sometimes when I tried to read, I would get a headache and tired eyes. It was so much harder than trying to choke down Aunt Flora's raisin plum pudding! That's how I knew it was bad.



Some days, it even looked like the letters would move and change on me or that they had a weird shadow.

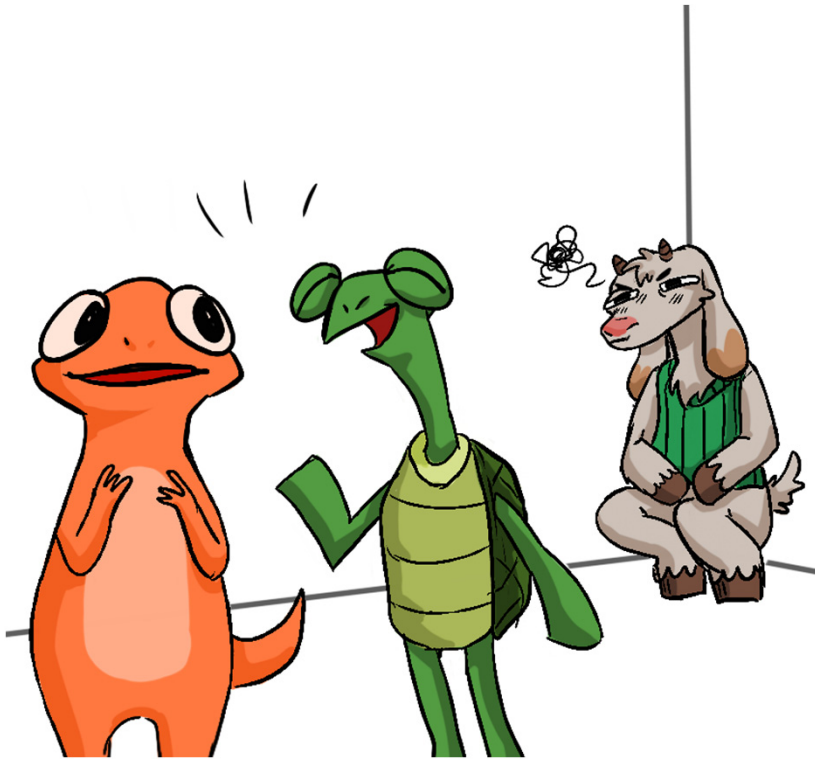


Sometimes I felt so sheepish about it all that I would goof off and act silly at recess just to make the other kids laugh.





This was my way of making sure the kids still thought I was way cool, and really *bad to the bone*, even if I wasn't a good reader.



Other times I would feel so embarrassed that I would get real quiet in class and didn't feel like playing with the other kids at all.

That's because some of them would snicker whenever I read or spelled in front of them. I felt like they were judging me for always being the last one to finish my work in class.



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Now I know that I'm super-de-duper smart, and it feels amazing! Turns out, I was smart all along.