

RUN IN WITH TEACHER

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(1) The class waited for the dreaded verdict in harsh silence. We waited for what seemed an eternity, always expecting the worst but hoping for something less. What would our punishment be this time? Would it be fifteen minutes of hard labor in our math workbooks? Or worse yet, a trip to the library with a book report pending? It might even be something so terrible we couldn't even begin to imagine it. As we considered the possibilities, the time dragged on, and with it remained that ungodly calm before the storm.

(2) At last Miss Finazzo cleared Her throat sharply, a precise announcement, heralding a forthcoming decision. The tension and fear in the air were stifling.

(3) "Children," She began, pushing Her bifocals higher on Her nose and smoothing Her jet black hair down in one practiced motion, "It has come to my attention that you do not wish to hold class today."

(4) She paused as if expecting a reply. There was none.

(5) "I will have no one, no one, besides myself running my classroom," She continued. "We will hold a group reading session for the remainder of the morning. Take out your social science textbooks, children!"

(6) She smiled gleefully.

(7) A groan arose from the classroom, for we knew that our punishment was only so much drudgery. Group reading was one of the most hated activities that took place at Asbury Elementary School, and Miss Finazzo knew it. Unfortunately, the session was a school policy (much to the students' dismay). This penalty was a severe blow indeed.

(8) Amidst the shuffle of books and desks, Jimmy Bains leaned over to me and whispered, "I don't have my book." The apprehension in his voice was all too clear.

(9) "That's okay," I said, "we can share."

(10) Miss Finazzo grinned mischievously as we slid our desks together, but we ignored Her. Jimmy and I had often saved each other from serious scrapes. We helped each other out when we could, especially when it involved making Her look bad.

- (11) "Susan Reese," She called.
- (12) The group reading session began, but I was determined to have things my way. No second-grade teacher would force me to suffer! I'd show Her.
- (13) I slid my latest word search puzzle at Jimmy, beneath my textbook, I looked pointedly at Jimmy, a question poised on my lips.
- (14) He nodded, and I relaxed.
- (15) Our old system would be put to use once again. Jimmy would watch the text very closely, and he would nudge me at the beginning of each paragraph. This way I could work my puzzle and still be able to find my place instantly should I be called upon.
- (16) The reading continued, and I fell deeper and deeper into my own world. I walked a maze of letters, attempting in every way possible to fit them into a comprehensible form.
- (17) I felt a nudge from Jimmy, and another one immediately following the first. I realized that I had not been paying much attention to my surroundings.
- (18) I looked up into a pair of huge vicious brown eyes. She stood over me, arms folded across Her chest: a formidable adversary.
- (19) "Christopher Peet," She rasped, "what do you think you are doing?"
- (20) My blood took on an instant chill. My face flushed under her unmerciful scrutiny. I made a last-ditch effort to shove the puzzle back under the textbook.
- (21) It was no use. She snatched it up, made a cursory inspection, and suddenly She was upon me, all claws and teeth.
- (22) I felt the hot tears of shame and indignation roll down my cheeks as She hurled me from the room. She pointed me in the direction of the Principal's office.
- (23) No further words were necessary.
- (24) I turned and walked dejectedly towards my doom. I had no choice. My fate now lay just out of my reach. I had made a dreadful mistake, and I knew I would have to pay the consequences.

Reflections on the Composition

I began this paper by creating two lists. First, I listed everything I could remember about Miss Finazzo, my second-grade teacher. Second, I listed all the details I could recall about the most memorable incident in her classroom. These lists gave me enough to begin the task of writing.

I tried to incorporate every item on my lists into the tale, but some things just wouldn't work such as height (she was very short) and age (about 40). I remembered many more details about her as I wrote, such as eye color and her insistence upon the use of full names.

Throughout, I attempted to paint the picture of a tyrannical schoolmistress. I consistently capitalized any pronouns referring to Her, in what I hoped was a negative connotation. As a child I didn't understand that I was only getting my just rewards, and She did appear to be quite the dictator.

After the rough draft I had the opportunity for both my parents to read it. They agreed that my information on the incident and Miss Finazzo was very accurate. This leads me to believe that the human brain has an incredible memory; we just can't get to all of it. As we work more diligently, however, more details seem to pop into mind. Truly this thing called the brain is amazing.