



## Stories of Stuff

**Wile. E Watched**  
**by Joshua Edwards**  
**as told by a teacher**



“Sanjid had 8 apples. Susan had 7. How many apples could they share equally between themselves and Muhammed, and how many would be left over?”

Mark read the question aloud and watched as Coco thought for a minute, scribbled down an arbitrary number and then moved onto the next page. He reckoned she could read the questions just fine, but he'd been assigned to her during the exam and he had to read them out to her or what was the point of him being there? He couldn't help her; if she'd asked anything about a specific question, he had been instructed to tell her they could discuss it after the exam. He wasn't even allowed to suggest that she move onto the next question if she'd appeared flummoxed.

He read her the next question. He watched as she wrote another wrong answer.

The next question was a little more complex. It involved perimeters and measurements and there was a big grid next to it. Mark read it aloud again, but didn't think he could bear to watch as she got another one wrong, so he let his eyes wander as Coco's pencil scratched the crisp exam booklet.

All the children who required additional help were in this room, a low stop start hum of adult voices whisper-talking to children who looked confused or bored or nervous, or some combination of the three. At points it sounded like some weird version of a round, a question finishing as another voice started it up again.

Mrs. Noy, who had been selected to be overseer paced around the room, trying to look busy. Occasionally she'd flick through a booklet or make sure the craft paper covering the wall displays was securely blu-tacked.

Then Mark's eyes drifted to the clock, hung above the white board. He'd not been into this room very often, it being year 6 and he a year 5 teaching assistant, so he didn't know it. The clock caught his eye.



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Next to each number on its face sat a Looney Tune. Stock images in poses he'd seen before on lunchboxes, t-shirts and, at one time, Tazos. The clock was pretty cheap looking so he reckoned it wasn't officially licensed, but he could be wrong. Bugs Bunny lounged atop the 12. Naturally. He was the lead Looney Tune, the Mickey Mouse botherer. That made sense.

At 1 stood Yosemite Sam, which Mark thought odd. Only twelve spaces and one of them is used up by an antagonist? And not even Bugs' best one. Why not Elmer Fudd?

Road Runner stuck his tongue out at number 2 which seemed appropriate as he was a turd; like all sane people, Mark hated Road Runner.

Porky Pig next, holding up 3. Mark was glad he'd made the cut. Not many people remembered that Porky used to be the star. He was the first one, except the weirdly racist one that no-one wanted to acknowledge.

4 Speedy Gonzales and 5 Pepe Le Pew, both problematic in the new woke world, but there they were.

Daffy Duck angrily flexed at number 6.

Because of the glare of the sun and the angle he was sat at, Mark couldn't see 7 or 8.

Taz at 9. Foghorn Leghorn at 10. Sylvester at 11.

Coco finished her long sum and Mark read out the next one. He then immediately turned his attention back to the clock.

He couldn't see 7 or 8, but he wanted to know who was there. Based on the Looney Tunes accounted for, the style of the artwork used and the slightly faded pictures he reckoned the clock came from the late 90s or early 2000s. He'd bet money that one of the last spots would be Tweety Pie, but who else?



# THE WRITERS' BLOCK

He wanted it to be Wile E. Coyote. He had held a belief for a long time that Wile E. Coyote was one of the greatest characters in fiction, if not the greatest. Hard working, clever, charismatic, sympathetic and with a try, try, try again attitude that most of us could only hope to emulate. He was just the best.

And it could've been him. Bugs and Yosemite Sam (Elmer was robbed) were there, and Sylvester and (presumably) Tweety. One more iconic pair with Road Runner made sense.

He tried to crane his head round discreetly, tried to angle himself to see the clock properly, but the glare was too much.

When he turned back to Coco, she had finished writing and was looking at him. She looked confused, but she said nothing.

“That’s the last question,” Mark said, “You should...”

Then he remembered he wasn't allowed to tell her to check her work, so he just watched as she closed her paper and they waited until the time ran out, Mark continuing to try and see who sat in the obscured spaces, whilst Coco stared blankly forward, perplexed at why Mr. Harman was so obsessed with the clock on the wall.

Stories of Stuff is a community arts project discovering the stories inspired by treasured objects. It has been created by The Writers' Block.

