

Chapter 2

Breaking

panic travel connected suddenly empty attic
implements level positively within intelligence

Silent E

home hoses fire flames smoke waved
scared broke pane clothes firemen white

Open Syllable/Changing

became trusty suffocate beginning escape
opened maple sliding famous began
demonstrated Tony figure position secured

Phrases

big old white building a big limb in that position
had three brothers to the windows fireman's clothes
could do nothing several times an honorary fireman

Chapter 2

Fire!

It was three years after I first got Hobo that his intelligence positively amazed my folks. One day when Hobo and I were coming home, I smelled smoke and heard fire trucks. Hobo and I ran after the fire trucks. The trucks stopped in front of Bobby's house. Bobby was in my class, and he had three brothers and three sisters. They were all smaller than Bobby. I began to panic. Were they trapped in this house that was on fire?

The firemen quickly connected their hoses to a fire hydrant near a big old white building. The firemen couldn't get close to the windows because the fire was so hot. They ran with their hoses but stopped ten feet from the house. With a big blast of water, they began to put out the fire.

Suddenly, we heard a big bang. Bobby and all his

brothers and sisters were hitting the window. The firemen gasped when they saw the kids. They were trapped in the attic. The flames hadn't reached them yet, but the smoke was beginning to suffocate them.

As the firemen quickly discussed a plan, the kids attempted to open the attic window. The window had been stuck all summer. There were no implements in the empty attic for Bobby to smash the window. How could they escape now? One of the firemen lifted a ladder from the truck and put it up to the level of the kids. The fire and smoke were too thick. He had to get back from the flames. The kids yelled for help, but the firemen could do nothing!

I had a plan. I grabbed Hobo and ran to the fire truck. There was a hammer and a rope on the truck. "Hobo, bring the rope and hammer to the tree," I yelled. "Climb the tree and crack the window."

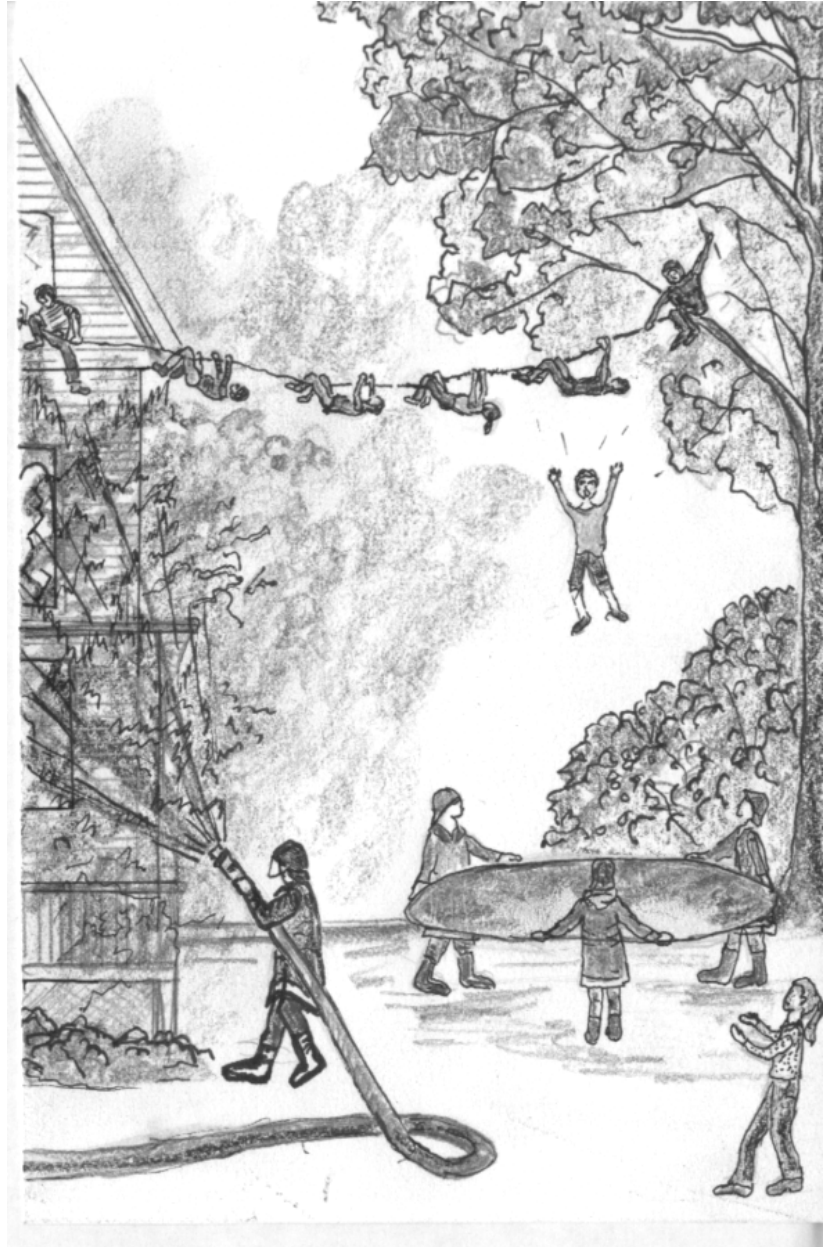
Hobo got the rope and hammer and ran up the big maple tree. He went to the top of the branches and



jumped off onto the tiles of the house. He then ran to the window and waved the kids back. He smacked the window, and it cracked. After the next tap with the hammer, the window broke from the windowpane. Hobo gave the rope to the kids, and then hit the bottom of the windowpane with his fist. The kids wrapped the rope around the pane and made a knot. Hobo ran and jumped into the tree with the rope. He spun around a big limb of the tree with the rope several times. This secured the rope.

“Hobo, rope game,” I yelled. The rope game was a game I used to play with him in the forest. It involved sliding along a rope using your hands and feet. Hobo grabbed the rope with his hands and feet and demonstrated to the kids how to use their hands and legs to slide along the rope.

The kids were scared as the fire broke into the attic. They quickly grabbed the rope with their hands and wrapped their feet on the rope. They inched along



the rope to the tree. Several firemen quickly grabbed a big net and ran below the kids.

“Drop into the net,” I yelled to Hobo. “The kids need to see you fall.” Hobo pulled himself along the rope above the net and then dropped into the net.

The last child, Tony, was only six and scared of falling. He did not want to climb on the rope, so he dropped the rope and froze next to the gutter. The flames were now coming out of the window. The rope was getting hot, and the fire began to travel up the rope.

Hobo hopped from the net as the kids began dropping into it. He sprinted back up the tree and ran along the rope. The fire had traveled along the rope and was just about to reach Tony when Hobo grabbed Tony’s hands. Hobo demonstrated to Tony how to put his hands and feet on the rope. Tony quickly followed Hobo and inched along the rope.....

