

## **TROUBLE ACCORDING TO HUMPHREY**

### **Teacher's Guide**

#### **JOBS AND COMMUNITY**

- In the story, the students of Room 26 build a model community called Humphreyville. Read the section of the book that describes this town and making a drawing of one of the buildings or streets and/or a model of one of more the buildings. Draw a map of one of Humphreyville's streets. Draw a map of your own street.
- Have you ever wondered where town names come from? Where did the name of your town come from? The name of your street? What do you think would be a better name for your street?
- Look at a map of your area and write down the names of ten local communities. Where do you think those names came from? Check a reference book or the internet to find out how the names were chosen.
- If you were going to build a street from scratch, what would you name it? Why? What would it look like? Describe it in words or draw it.
- What is the tallest building in your community? What is the oldest building? What is the newest building? And finally, what is your favorite building in your community?
- Ask your parents, neighbors, local business people and local politicians how they got their jobs. Ask them what they like best about their jobs.
- Go through the local newspaper's classified ads and see what kind of jobs are available. Are there any jobs you think you'd like to do? Why?
- Try writing your own Help Wanted ad. Write one for the job of a classroom hamster. Describe all of the jobs Humphrey does in Room 26. Write an ad for your dream job. What are the qualifications for a job you think you'd like. Write an ad for a job as a character in your favorite book or in a fairy tale or legend.

- Ask your parents, grandparents and other friends and relatives what was the best job they ever had. What was the worst job they ever had? Why did they like or not like their job?
- Make your own newspaper! Nominate different pets, people or places to name it after and vote for a winner. Then report on the latest school news or what students and teachers did on vacation. Add a Humphrey comic strip that's FUN-FUN-FUN.
- Countries always have flags, but local towns and communities often have flags, too. Look up the flags of other countries, states and communities. How do people decide what should be on a flag? Design a flag for your town. Design another flag for your school or for your room at home.

### **ART AND PAUL**

- Art is really good at imagining things like his dream house and the railroad tracks in his bedroom. Paul is really good at understanding numbers and math. Explain how Paul's math skills helped Art solve a problem, and how Art's creativity could help Paul.
- Not everybody likes the same subject. Take a poll of your classmates and/or friends and find out each person's favorite subject. Then make a class graph with each student's favorite and least favorite subject. Ask people why they feel the way they do about their most favorite and least favorite subject.
- Write or tell a story of a time you tried something new and it didn't go well. Then tell about something new that you did really well right away. Did you ever try something and think you weren't good at it the first time, but later became good at it? What made the difference?
- Draw a track for a model train layout. Could a train really follow this track? Add other features: a waterfall, lake, tunnels, a town. Can you turn your drawing into a board game? How would you do that?

### **MIRANDA'S PROBLEM**

- Humphrey didn't squeak up to clear Miranda's name right away because he was afraid his lock would be locked for good (and because he can't talk). Have you ever felt guilty about someone else taking blame that belonged to you? (or felt afraid to admit to something that was your fault)? How did that work out?
- Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do? How did you feel? How did the problem work out?
- Was Mrs. Brisbane wrong to accuse Miranda of leaving the cage door open?
- How well do you think Miranda handled the problem? Is there anything else she could have done?

### **THE PAYNES**

- Mandy Payne's family is cranky because her dad lost his job and her mom has to work a lot. What are some of the things that make each of the Paynes cranky? What are some things that make your family members cranky? What do you do to cheer them up? What do you do to cheer yourself up?

### **DR. DREW**

- Humphrey is nervous when he visits the veterinarian for the first time because he's never been to a doctor before. Can you remember a time when you were nervous about going somewhere for the first time? How did it turn out?
- Different pets need different types of care. If you have a pet, make a list of ten important things to know about caring for that animal. (If you need help, check out a book in the library, go on the internet or ask a veterinarian.) If you don't have a pet, pick an animal you like or write down what is important to know about taking care of Humphrey. (For some hints, check out the chapter endings in the first book, *THE WORLD ACCORDING TO HUMPHREY*.)
- Name a pet you don't have, but think you'd like to own. On a piece of paper, make two columns. List the advantages of having such a pet on one side. List the disadvantages of having that pet on the other side. Which list is longer?

- Did you ever want a certain pet and your parents said “no?” Why do you think they said “no?”

### **GRANDMA DOT**

- Seth's grandmother can remember her town before a lot of modern changes were made. Ask adults in your area (teacher, parents, grandparents, relatives, neighbors), what changes they've seen in your community. Make a list. What buildings now exist that weren't there when they were growing up? What things are gone that they miss? What changes do they see as being good? What changes do they see as being bad?
- If you could see into the future, what might your school look like in 25 years? In 100 years? How about your street? What changes would you like to see?