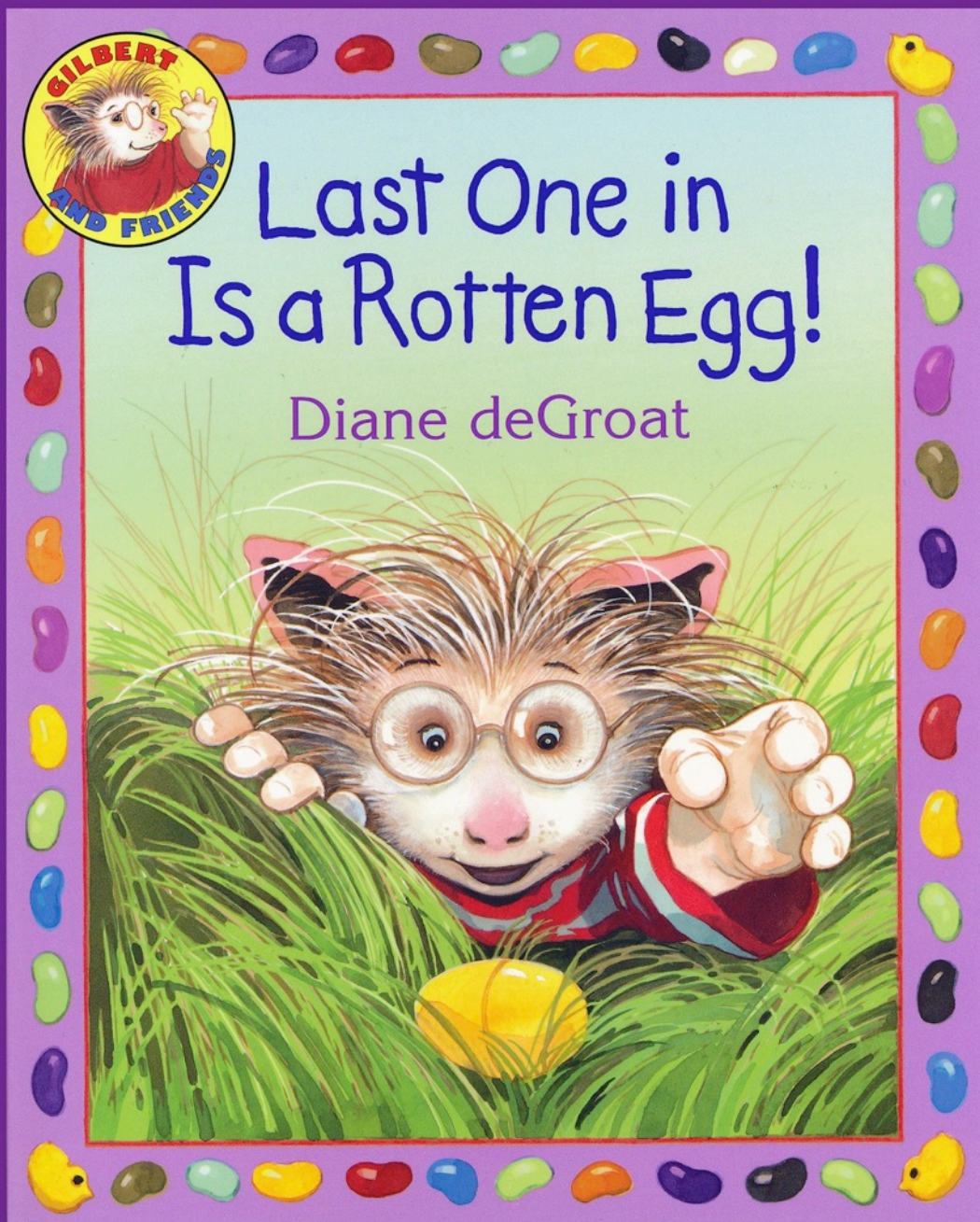


# Curriculum Guide and Activity Kit

Aligns with Common Core State Standards



[www.dianedegroat.com](http://www.dianedegroat.com)

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Children will relate to the story, which imparts  
a gentle lesson on how to be a friend.  
—SLJ

# Last One in Is a Rotten Egg!

Written and illustrated by Diane deGroat

Teacher friendly and ready to use, this guide aligns with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and is appropriate for kindergarten through grade three. It includes discussion questions, fun multidisciplinary activities, and printable sheets. It is a perfect tool to use for your Diane deGroat author study. Your students will be meaningfully engaged and ask for more books about their favorite opossum, Gilbert.

Guides for other Gilbert and Friends books can be found at [www.dianedegroat.com](http://www.dianedegroat.com).

## About this Book:

Gilbert and Lola are excited because their cousin Wally is coming for a visit. But they realize the moment he bounds through the door that Wally has to be the first and best at everything. His competitiveness almost ruins the town's big Easter Egg Hunt! Gilbert has to find a way to show Wally that nobody likes a bully.

## About the Author:

Diane deGroat didn't like to read when she was growing up. She only wanted to draw and paint. As a first grade student, she would often rush through her classwork to get to the painting corner of her classroom. It wasn't until many years later, when Diane wanted to become a writer, that she discovered her big mistake. In order to be a writer, one must first be a reader. She did become an avid reader, and eventually an author. Along with writing and illustrating the 19 books in the Gilbert series, she has illustrated over 130 books for other authors. A perfect day for Diane might include sleeping late, digging in her garden, riding her bike, and of course, writing and illustrating more books. She lives in Amherst, Massachusetts. Learn more about Diane deGroat and her books at [www.dianedegroat.com](http://www.dianedegroat.com).

*Last One in Is a Rotten Egg* has won the following award:  
Bank Street College of Education Best Children's Book of the Year 2008

This guide may be downloaded for home and classroom use. Not for resale.

Curriculum written by Kristy Graves, a first-grade teacher and a contributor to the Common Core curriculum for the Spencer-Brookfield School District in Spencer, Massachusetts.

## **Pre-reading Discussion Questions:**

Before reading this book, launch a discussion with students and invite them to engage in the story's theme.

- What is the title of this story? Listen to this phrase, “Last one in is a rotten egg!” Has anyone ever said that to you before? What does it mean?
- In this story Gilbert's cousin is coming over to visit. How do you feel when a relative is coming over? What kind of things do you like to do with them?
- What do you think Gilbert is doing in this picture?
- Have you ever been to an Easter egg hunt? Describe what you might do at an egg hunt.
- Make a prediction based on the cover of this book. Will this story be fiction or non-fiction? Why?

## **Post-reading Discussion Questions:**

- Describe Gilbert's cousin Wally. Use examples from the story to support your answer.
- What did Wally think about egg hunts at the beginning of the story? Did his opinion change at the end of the story? Why?
- What did Gilbert do during the egg hunt to show that he cared about his sister Lola?
- Who found the golden egg? What happened when the golden egg was discovered?
- Why did Gilbert exclaim, “Last one down is a rotten egg!” at the end of the egg hunt? What happened after Gilbert said Wally's favorite phrase?
- Why did Gilbert and Wally share the prize?
- What would you do if you were Gilbert at the egg hunt? Would you share with Wally?
- Does this story remind you of a situation you have been in? Tell about it.
- Why do you think the author wrote this story?

RL1, RL2, RL3, RL4, RL5, RL7, SL1, SL2, SL3, SL4, SL6, L1, L4, L6



## Activities

**Writing:** (grades K-1) RL3, RL7, W1, W3, SL4, SL5, L1

Invite children to complete a simple response to the story they just heard. Begin the discussion by asking the class to give a quick thumbs up or thumbs down to tell whether they liked or disliked the story. Invite a few students to verbally explain their opinions. After talking about the story, model how to complete the follow up sheet on page 4.


Show students the heading of the worksheet. Discuss the humor in the word “egg-cellent” and write the real word “excellent” next to it on the board. Read the two choices to the children and think aloud what to do next. Check one or the other and then model completing the rest of the worksheet. Model drawing the characters in the story. Try to capture the traits of each character by carefully drawing their faces with accurate expression and details. Allow students to share their opinions with the class.


**Writing:** (grades 2-3) RL3, L1, L2,

A Venn diagram is a good way to have students compare and contrast the traits of the characters in the book. Before introducing the Venn diagram, ask the students to think about how Gilbert and his cousin Wally were alike and how they were different in the story. Discuss their personalities and encourage children to state specific examples from the story that would support their ideas. For example, “Wally was selfish when he took the golden egg that Lola had found.” Next, ask students to transfer these character traits onto the Venn diagram on page 5. This can be done in a whole group, individually, or in pairs depending on the needs of the class. Have children compare Gilbert and Wally to determine what they have in common. Then have students write these traits in the middle section of the diagram. Have children contrast the characters to find what is different about them. They will write this information on the respective outer sections of the circles. Use the graphic organizer to encourage further discussion questions such as:

- List some of the words you used to describe Gilbert and Wally.
- Did Gilbert and Wally have more similarities or differences?
- After noticing Gilbert and Wally’s differences, do you think these differences are important to the story?
- Is the relationship between Gilbert and Wally important to the story? Why or why not?

Do you think  
*Last One in Is a Rotten Egg!*  
is an “egg-cellent” story?

\_\_\_\_\_ I liked it 

\_\_\_\_\_ I did not like it 

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

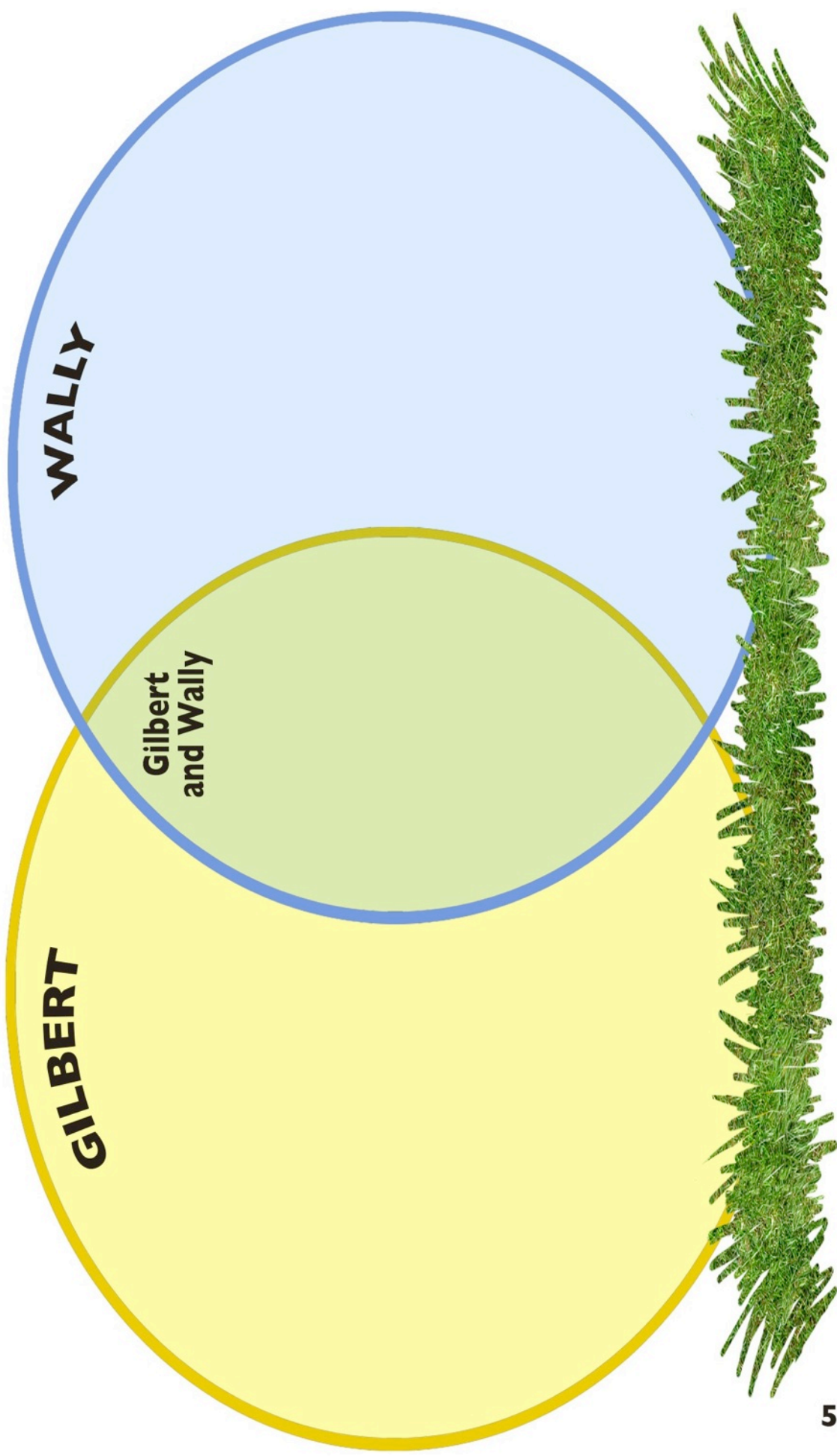
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

These were the characters  
in the story:

# Character Traits



**Math:** (grades K-I) 1.NBT

Tell the children that they are going to go on an egg hunt just like Gilbert, Lola, and Wally. Ask them if they thought Gilbert's egg hunt went well. Discuss why it wasn't much fun with Wally around. Talk about the rules for your class egg hunt and how each child should behave during the activity. The hunt can be done outside on the playground using colored plastic eggs or in a sand table in the classroom using jellybeans. Hide different colored eggs. Jellybeans may be preferred as they are cost effective, smaller, and can be hidden within a confined area. Several bags of jellybeans can be used, but you may want to cap the number of beans each child is allowed to collect. Give each child a white paper lunch bag to decorate with Easter pictures. This bag will be used to collect eggs during the activity. Mention that they should not attempt to eat the soiled jellybeans, but that fresh ones would be available after the hunt. Allow children to hunt for eggs during an allotted time and then complete the recording sheet on page 7.

**Math:** (grades 2-3) 2.MD

Ask students why Gilbert and Lola had to ask Wally for help to get the golden egg. They will recall that neither Lola nor Gilbert was tall enough to reach the egg in the tree. Tell students that they are going to compare their height with a friend. Randomly partner up children by placing sets of matching Easter stickers in a basket. Ask each child to choose a sticker from the basket without looking. Children will pair up by finding the classmate with the matching sticker. Ask the pairs of students to measure one another using Unifix cubes or other non-standard unit of measure, such as paper clips or straws. Have one child lie down on a piece of large butcher paper and have his partner mark a line at his feet and another line at the top of his head. They should write the student's name next to the lines. Have the student stand up and get the Unifix cubes. Each pair of children will need about 60 to 80 cubes depending on the height of the students. Next, ask the pair of children to work together to connect the Unifix cubes to measure from line to line on the butcher paper. Once the cubes are placed down on the paper the children will count how many cubes tall the student is. Snapping the long line of cubes into towers of 10 may be helpful when counting the total number of cubes. Have children record their answers on the worksheet (page 8) and repeat the process for the other child. Once the partners have obtained the number of Unifix cubes to state how tall each child is, the activity will move to utilizing standard measurement. Give each pair of students a tape measure. Have the children measure the lines from head to toe again and come up with a number of inches to describe height.

# EGG HUNT!



I collected \_\_\_\_\_ eggs.

Draw your eggs and circle the groups of ten. You may have some leftover, or you may have less than ten. These will be your ones.

--

Now write the number.



Tens	Ones
_____	_____

Sort the eggs by color and count them.

I have the most \_\_\_\_\_ colored eggs.

I have the fewest \_\_\_\_\_ colored eggs.



## Who Will Reach the Golden Egg?

My name \_\_\_\_\_ My Partner \_\_\_\_\_



I am \_\_\_\_\_ Unifix cubes tall.

My partner is \_\_\_\_\_ Unifix cubes tall.



I am \_\_\_\_\_ inches tall.

My partner is \_\_\_\_\_ inches tall.

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Make a statement about your findings. Compare your height to your partner's. Who could reach the egg best if you were on the egg hunt with Gilbert?

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**Science:** (grades K-I) W7, W8, SL1, SL2, SL3, SL6, L1

Ask the children what Gilbert won at the egg hunt. Talk about the large amount of candy that was in the basket and why it was a good idea for Gilbert to share it. Lead students to realize that while candy tastes good, it is not good to have a large amount. Sugary treats can damage teeth and this fun science experiment will illustrate this fact. Talk about foods that are good and foods that are bad for our teeth. Ask children what drinks are unhealthy for our teeth. Make a chart of students' ideas.

Show the class a hard-boiled egg and discuss why we would dye a cooked egg rather than a raw one for Easter. Pass the egg around and have each child touch the hard shell. Explain to students that the shell of an egg is similar to the enamel on a tooth. It protects the soft inside of the tooth, the dentin, from damage. (See diagram page 10.) However, some of our food and drink choices make it difficult for the enamel to do its job. This experiment will show what soda can do to our teeth and the importance of brushing our teeth after eating unhealthy snacks and drinks. Ask students to predict what they think will happen when a hard-boiled egg is placed in a cup of soda to soak overnight. Write down students' responses.

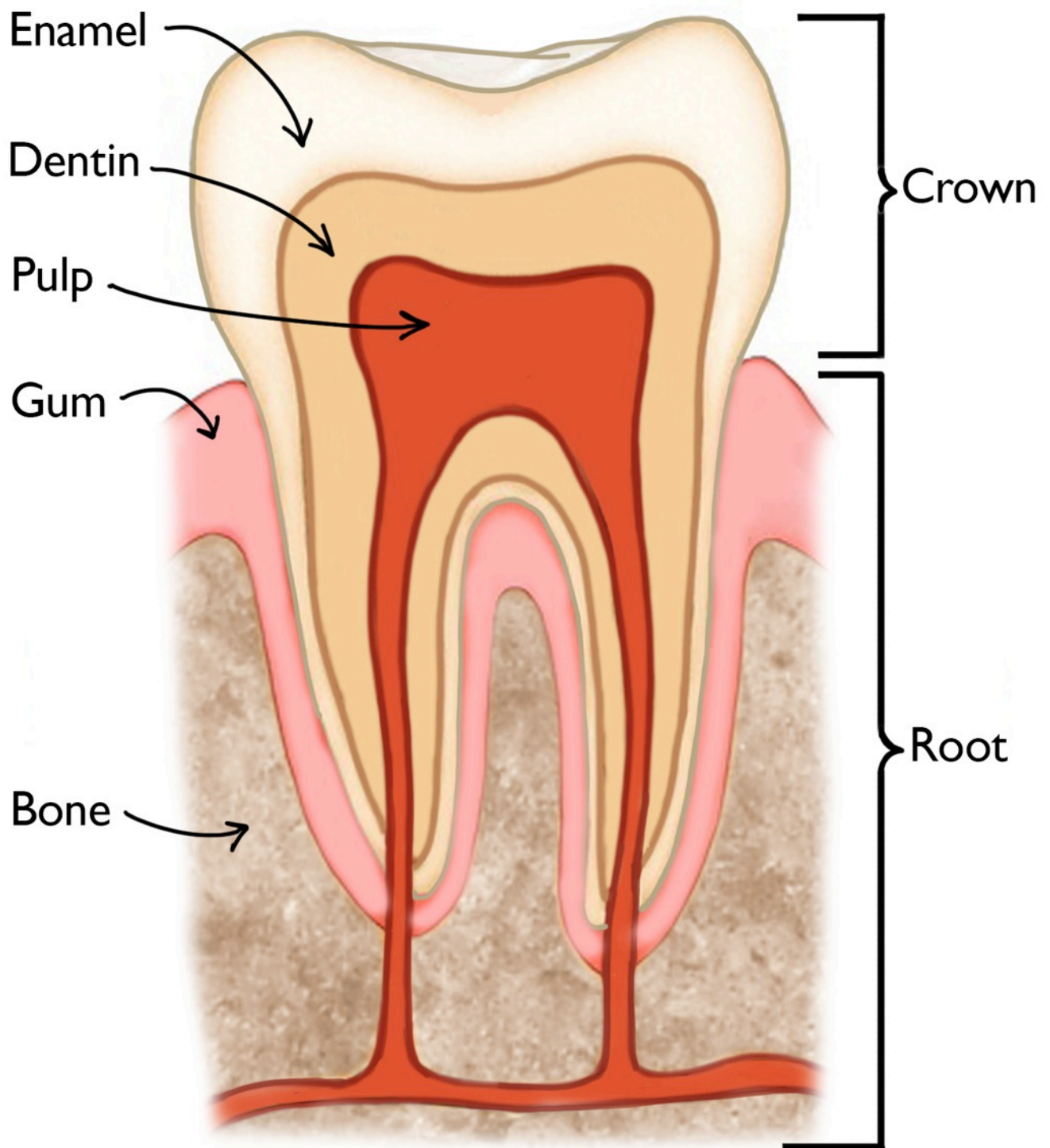
To conduct this experiment you will need:

- 2 white hard boiled eggs (plus some extras in case of any cracks)
- 2 plastic cups (transparent works best so kids can see what's happening)
- 1 can or small bottle of a dark soda, such as cola, orange, or grape
- water
- toothbrushes and toothpaste

Carry out the experiment by placing one egg in a cup and then covering it with soda. Place the other egg in a different cup and cover it with water. Leave the eggs overnight. The next day students will discover that the egg in the soda has turned light brown. Ask students what is starting to happen to the egg. They will find that the egg's covering is also beginning to change. Why? Discuss the fact that the sugar and acid found in soda and has started to eat away at the egg's hard enamel, much like when soda sits on our teeth. Have students use toothbrushes and toothpaste to brush the egg clean. The color will begin to come off but some damage has already occurred to the shell. Allow the egg to sit in the soda for another week and watch what happens!

This experiment can be taken a step further by asking children if there are any other drinks they might want to soak an egg in. Encourage children to think of other drinks they enjoy, such as various types of juices or chocolate milk. Would the results be the same if the egg soaked in another beverage? Children can also vary the time that the egg is left in the liquid. Children will soon realize that the healthiest drinks are those with little or no sugar.

# What's inside a tooth?



**Science:** (grades 2-3) W7, W8, SL1, SL6, L1, L2, L3

Ask children if they believe a raw egg will float or sink in water. Allow children to make predictions and create a class tally chart. Children will place a tally mark under the heading **Float** or **Sink**.

Place an egg in a bowl about 2/3 full of tap water and observe what happens. Make sure the egg is very fresh so that it sinks to the bottom of the bowl or rests on a slight angle. Older eggs will naturally float as air seeps through the shell with age. (See note at bottom.)

Tell the students they are going to learn how to make an egg float. Talk about what they could add to the water to make this happen. Partner up the children so that they can discuss their ideas in pairs and write about them. Gather together and share the information. Perhaps one of the students will suggest using salt.

Take the egg out of the bowl and have a student add about 5 tablespoons of salt to the water. Place the egg back into the bowl. If it still sinks, add more salt until the egg floats.

Discuss why the egg floats in salt water. Objects sink in the water when they are denser than the water. By adding salt it makes the water denser than the egg. Once the water is denser than the egg, the egg will float.

If time allows, try this experiment with other additives suggested by the children.

*Teachers please note that you can tell the approximate freshness of an egg by the way it sits in a bowl of cold water. This may affect the experiment with your students. Drop an egg into a bowl of cold water and observe. If the egg:*

- sinks to the bottom and stays there, it is very fresh.*
- sinks, but floats at an angle, it's more than a week old.*
- sinks, but then stands on end, it's about 2-4 weeks old.*
- floats, it's too old and should be discarded.*

**Art:** (grades K-I) SL1

Young children will be excited to make a “golden egg” sun catcher. You will need:

9 X 12” construction paper or cardstock  
scissors  
contact paper  
different colors of tissue paper  
gold glitter

To prepare for the activity you will first need to cut an egg shape from a piece of construction paper or cardstock for each child. The cut-out should be at least  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” from the edge. Discard the middle.

Next, get a piece of clear 9 X 12” adhesive contact paper and peel off the back. Stick the construction paper onto the contact paper, leaving a sticky center.

Give each student a pile of tissue paper squares that have been pre-cut to about 1 inch in size. Have the children place the tissue paper squares onto the sticky center of the egg, making sure to overlap the pieces.



When the students are finished placing the tissue paper on the egg, allow them to sprinkle gold glitter over the tissue. This will help to create a golden egg, like the one in the story.

*Continued next page.*



Peel the backing off another piece of contact paper and carefully stick it over the whole piece. Start by pressing it from the middle outward to avoid any air bubbles. Cut around the egg shape, leaving a border about  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Hang the egg up in a sunny window to create a sun catcher.



Allow children to use adjectives to describe their sun catchers hanging in the window. Write down their responses on chart paper. For example, children may use words such as “sparkly”, “shiny”, “shimmering”, “glossy”, or “glittery.” Talk about how the sun makes the transparent tissue paper look like it is glowing. Ask the children what their sun catchers would look like if the sun were behind the clouds. This art project can lead to a discussion on the importance of the sun and its many purposes.





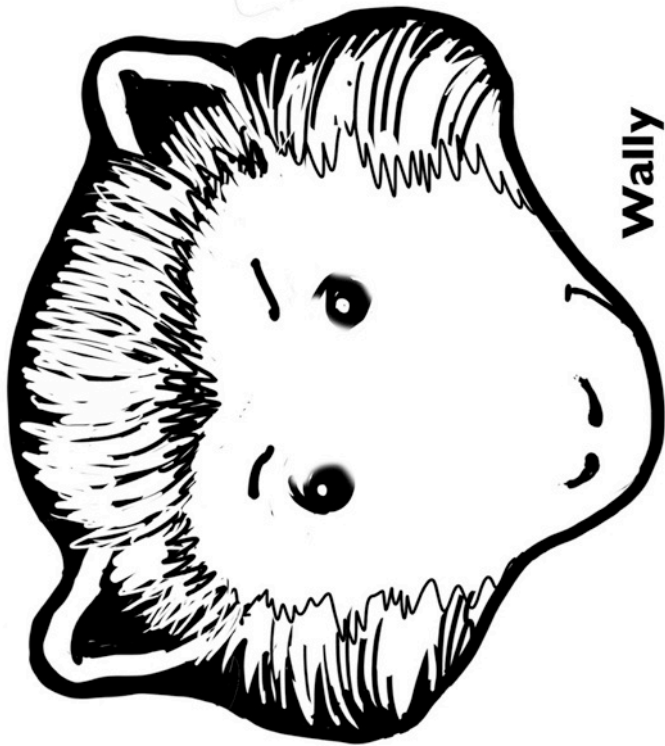
**Art:** (grades 2-3) SL1

Show the students the last page in the book depicting the sugar egg that Lola won at the hunt. Talk about the scene inside the egg and how it looks 3-dimensional. If possible, show the children a real panoramic egg or some pictures of these beautiful sugar eggs. Have students make their own 3-D scene in a shoebox. As a brainstorming activity, children may want to create an idea web to jot down the name of objects they may want to include in their spring scene.

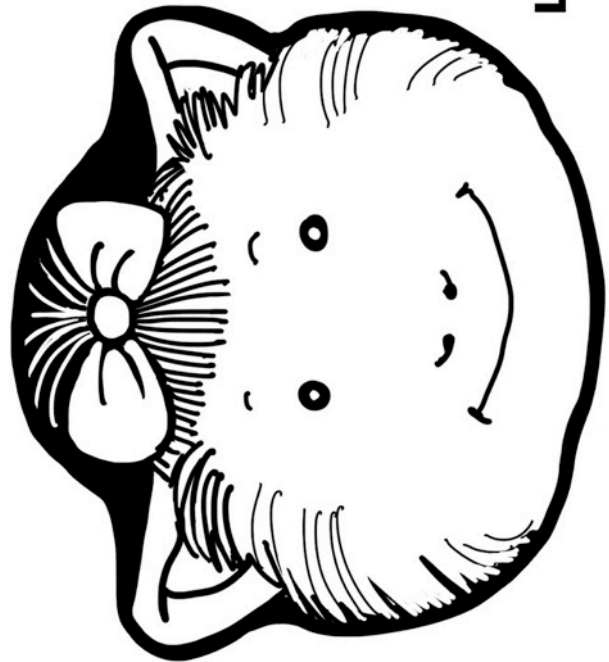
For this project, provide shoeboxes with lids for each child. You could request that students bring boxes from home if they have them.

1. Remove the lid, and turn the shoebox on its side, either vertically or horizontally.
2. Paint the box, or glue construction paper onto the inside and the outside of the box, as well as on the lid.
3. Use construction paper or clay to create objects that will portray the Spring theme. Some ideas might be a bunny, a lamb, chicks, a basket of Easter eggs, daffodils, or any other signs of spring. Encourage the children to be creative with this process.
4. Place the objects inside the box and secure them with glue. Paper objects can have a folding flap on the bottom to help them stand. Objects can also be suspended from the top using fishing line.
5. Cut a large oval shape opening in the lid.
6. Replace the lid onto the front of the box to view the scene inside.

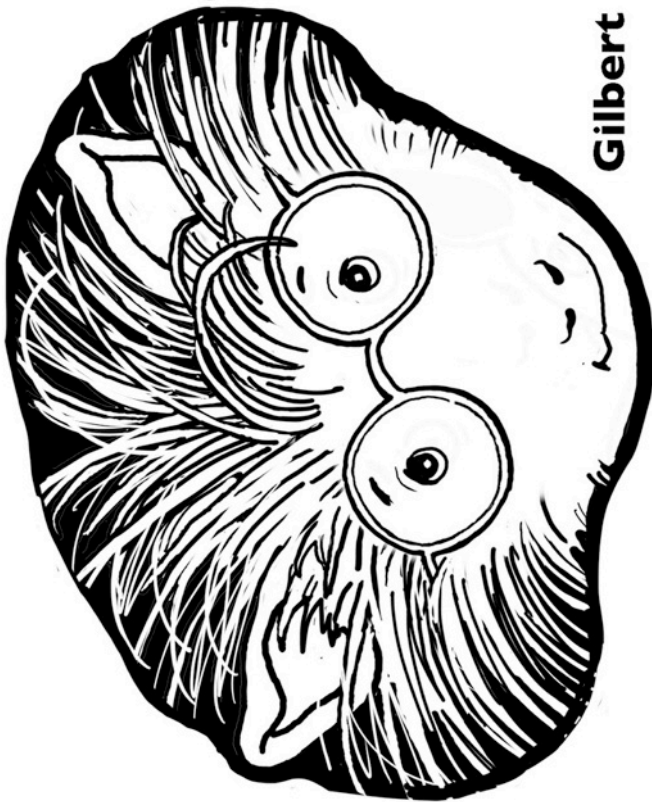
Display the dioramas in the classroom to celebrate the season.



Wally



Lola



Gilbert

### Paper Bag Puppets

Cut out a face and  
glue to the bottom  
of a lunch bag.  
Draw on a body,  
Optional: glue arms.





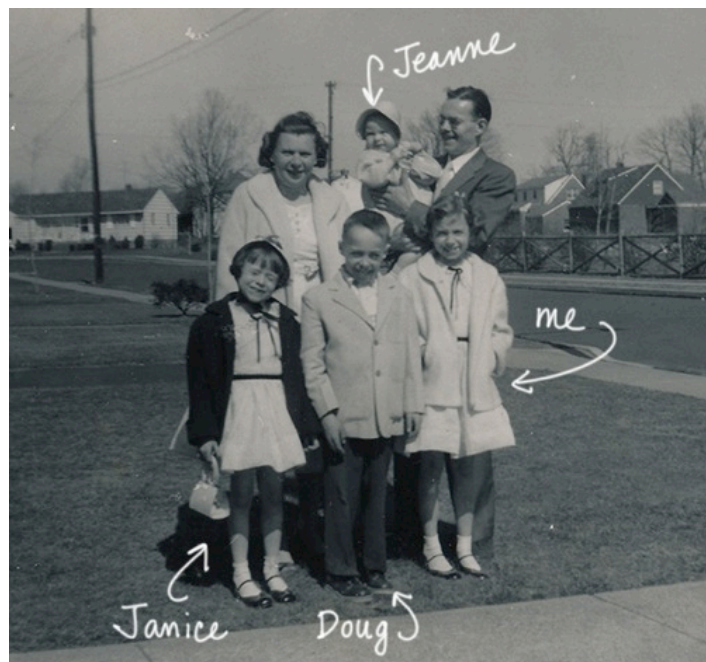
## Author's Note

After Halloween, Easter is the holiday of choice for sugar lovers. As a child, I didn't make the connection between cavities and diet, and I didn't have parents who oversaw their children's dental hygiene with any regularity. I've since paid the piper with a multitude of fillings, bridges, root canals and implants, but I still have fond memories of my childhood Easters. My family's tradition was to dye eggs with vinegar and food coloring. On Easter Eve, the Great Bunny hid the eggs around the house, along with a basket of treats for each child. In the morning my siblings and I rushed to find our baskets—who wanted hard boiled eggs?—and the sugar rush began. Sometime that same morning, we were herded off to Sunday School in dress-up clothes, but the solemnity of the day took a back seat to the jellybeans in my pocket. Lunch was inevitably egg salad, but first came the "contest." We each selected one of our dyed eggs and lightly tapped our opponent's egg, pointy end to pointy end, to see whose would crack first. The last intact egg was the winner. My older brother always won. I never learned his secret.

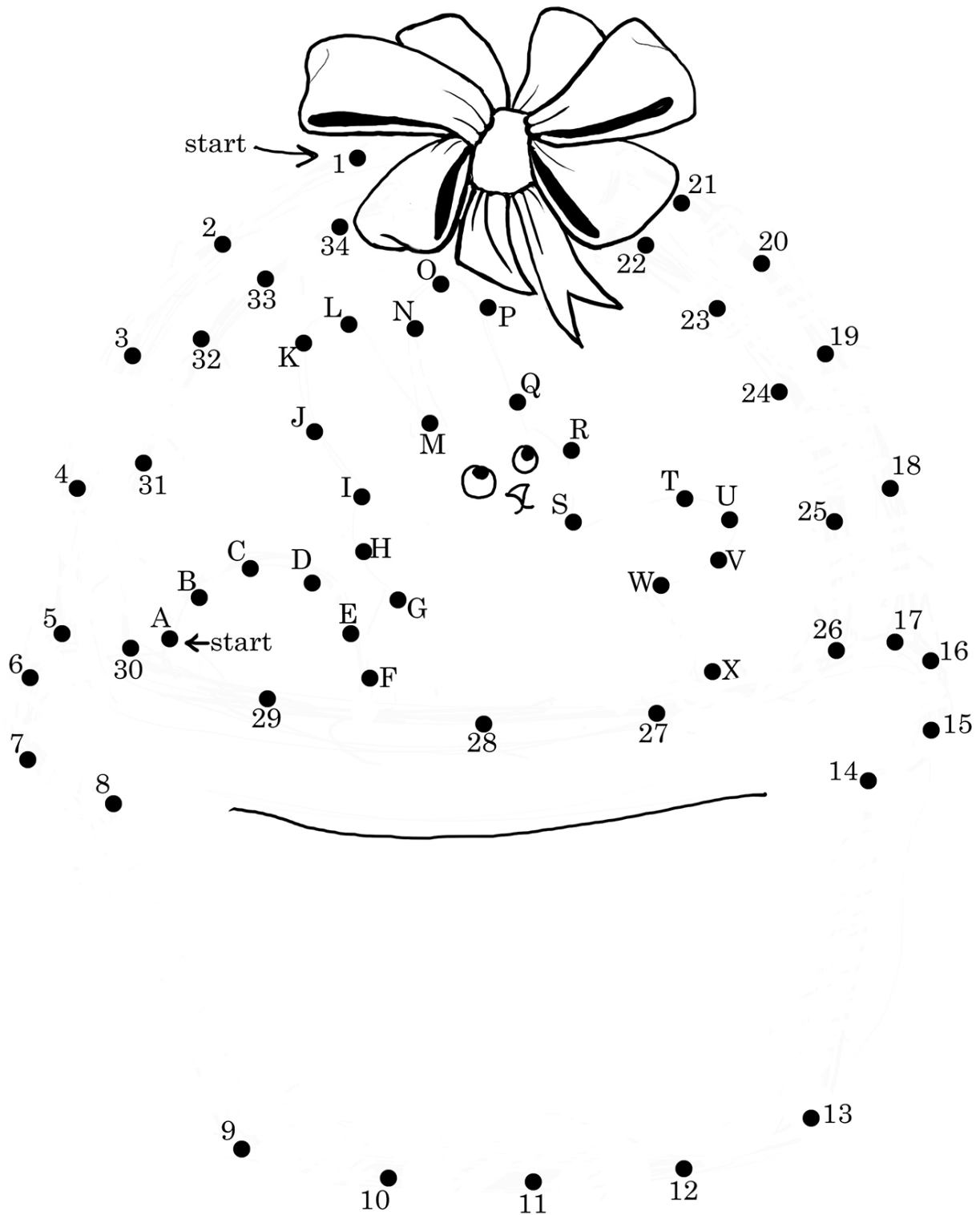
Like *Jingle Bells*, *Homework Smells*, I chose to downplay the religious aspect of the holiday to make it accessible to a larger audience. Some have called this story a "bully book." I didn't write it based on my own experience, but I was certainly aware of its consequences. My brother Doug was born with a severe heart defect. As a result, his growth was stunted and he was teased by other children. In the photo below, I am 8 and my brother is 11. I confess that I did not have the wherewithal that Gilbert had to protect my sibling from bullying. Despite my reticence, my brother has lived a long and interesting life. Whether this was due to resilience developed from oppression, or by sheer luck, we'll never know. Maybe it was all that sugar. If so, I'll live to be 104.

—Diane deGroat

PS: Raise your hand if you know what a crinoline is.



What was Gilbert's Easter gift?  
Connect the numbers.  
Connect the letters.





# Easter Maze



Help Gilbert find the golden egg!

