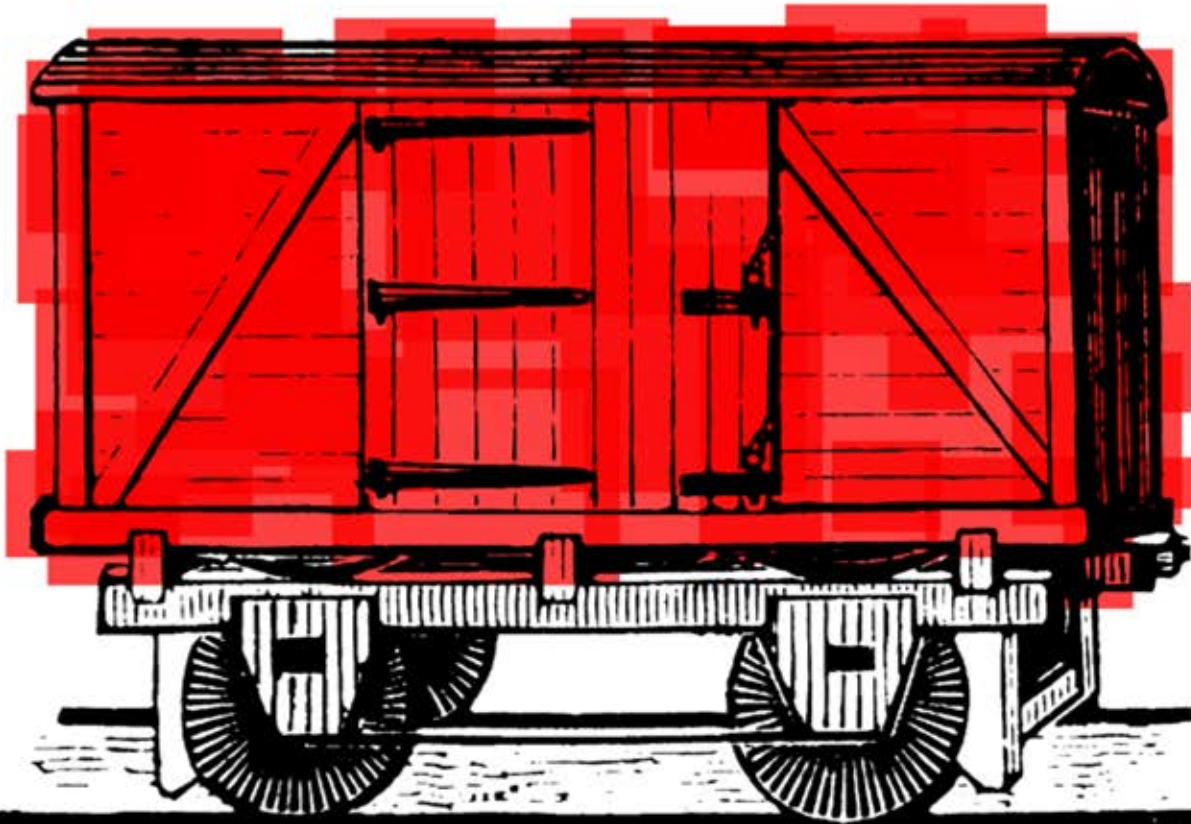


The Boxcar Children

COMPREHENSION GUIDE



THE BOXCAR CHILDREN

*Comprehension Guide for Book One
Includes activities for use with
all other Boxcar Children books*

by Deb Chapin

Designed by
Ned Bustard



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BOXCAR CHILDREN

How to Use this Guide

This guide is intended to help you study, understand, and enjoy *Boxcar Children*, Book One. You might ask if a guide is really necessary to read a book. Is the student not just working to improve reading skills while being taught to enjoy reading a book? Certainly, it is the case that the more a child reads, the more he should improve his skills, but quantity is not the only issue. Once a child has received adequate phonetic training he should learn how to read a book. Most educators using this guide will be teaching children in the grammar stage, generally understood to be during the elementary years in a classical education. (For a thorough understanding of classical Christian education we recommend reading *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* or *The Case for Classical Christian Education*, both by Douglas Wilson.) The basic goals of reading in the grammar stage are as follows:

The student should be able to:

1. Fluently read a given selection orally.
2. Show an increased desire for reading.
3. Show comprehension on a literal and inferential level.
4. Demonstrate an increased vocabulary.
5. Identify basic Biblical values in the literature being read.
6. Identify various styles (myths, poems, fantasy, fiction, nonfiction, etc.)

Answers to the questions are found in the back of the guide. The students' answers should be in complete sentences, and they should restate the question in their answer.

Example:

Question: Why did Henry go to town?

Answer: Henry went to town to try to get work to buy food.

Such writing practice trains the student to answer thoroughly, completely, and with proper grammar. Another reason is to encourage integration. We want students to understand that how they write something is as important as what they write.

You may wonder how to grade the student's work in this guide. Keep it simple. Unless otherwise indicated you should assume that each question is worth ten points.

In this guide you will find patterns for origami people. We have given you two kinds of patterns. One pattern is the actual children and the other is blank so you can create your own boxcar children or make other characters from the books. In addition you may want to take a shoebox and turn it into a boxcar for the origami children to play in.

BOXCAR CHILDREN

Character Traits

Education is value transmission. To train our children is to impart a definite set of views, values and virtues. Consider our setting. American government education is not only unconcerned to inculcate Biblical values, in our era “public schools” are almost synonymous with images of violence. As I write this, it is in the wake of yet another armed student attack at such a school, resulting in the bloody death of a school administrator and a student suicide. But why is this so unexpected in a value-free, godless, indoctrination center which perpetuates the myth that human beings are sheer accidents from bio-chemical processes? We should see such tragic events as vivid demonstrations of the failure of relativism in contemporary education. It would be better if we could be convinced by sound arguments rather than shocking news reports. Even in the face of these kinds of horrible events, many Christians are still unpersuaded to give their children an education which glorifies their Maker and Redeemer. When our children cannot assert “Jesus is Lord” in their classroom, it is not unlike the dilemma of believers in Rome—except that today most do not say, “Jesus is Lord.”

From this it should be clear that there is no education which evades imparting values. All education is value education. Someone’s values get through, one way or the other. As believers, we are under marching orders from our King to raise our children in the values of Christ. “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). Thus, intentional character education is critical. Godly training must shape the soul by the regular means at the disposal of parents. While our intentional educational plans are central, character is to be carved from every episode of life. It does not end at 3:00 p.m.

Moral judgment, on the other hand, is not all that is imparted in education, nor should it be. The classical paradigm emphasizes developing the tools of learning. There are virtues in the skills of learning to learn. The liberal arts education of classical Christian education historically contrasts with slave education for a specific trade, or vocational education. The original sense of “liberal” was “freeing.” Such an education frees the mind from false values and grants the skills to make true and wise judgments. In medieval times sincere monks arduously prepared for a life of celibacy and separateness. Similarly, many Christians today prepare their children to abstain from culture with a sincere desire to make them holy. Our challenge ought to be recapturing the intentional character training, while not reducing education to mere moral development. We must pursue holiness and dominion.

What follows on the next page is a list of specific character traits illustrated and referred to in the Bible. First in the list are several passages which list various characteristics of godly people. These are well known.

Gregg Strawbridge

BOXCAR CHILDREN

Character Traits, Page 2

Galatians 5:22–23: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Romans 5:1–4: Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

2 Peter 1:2–8: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Alertness: watchful, ready to take action, especially against danger or attack. Col. 4:2, Josh. 8:4

Availability: capable of being used by those who need me. Est. 4:14, Isa. 6:8

Compassion: feeling or showing pity for the suffering of another. Ex. 2:6, Matt. 9:36

Courage: overcoming fear, bravery. Josh. 1:9, Ps. 27:14

Decisiveness: able to decide quickly and effectively. [Accurately] Josh. 24:15, 1 Kgs. 3:16–28

Determination: being firm in a purpose, doing what is necessary to reach a goal. Dan. 3:16–18, 1 Cor. 15:58

Endurance: the power or habit of reaching the goal. Heb. 12:1, James 5:11

Flexibility: to bend and adapt to the wishes of others without breaking. 1 Pet. 3:7, 1 Cor. 9:19–22

Generous: giving freely at the right time. Mark 12:42–44, Acts 20:35

Hospitality: receiving others with generous entertainment. Heb. 13:2, Gen. 18:2–8

Initiative: being the first to take action with assurance and wisdom. Prov. 6:6–11, 2 Cor. 8:16–17

Joyfulness: showing or causing gladness or pleasure, cheerfulness. Isa. 61:10, 2 Cor. 7:4

Loyalty: being true and faithful to those who I care for or to those who care for me. 1 Kgs. 11:4, Luke 16:13

Orderliness: putting everything in its right place. (Clean, put in order) Titus 1:5, 2:5, Matt. 23:25–26

Patience: waiting without complaining. Eccl. 7:8, 1 Th. 5:14, James 5:7

Resourcefulness: able to use what is available to deal quickly and effectively with problems. Eccl. 9:10, Matt. 25:14–29

Responsibility: doing what is right and best for those who count on me. Gen. 39:4, 22, 41:41, Luke 22:25–28

BOXCAR CHILDREN

Chapter One—“The Four Hungry Children”

Alertness: watchful, ready to take action, especially against danger or attack

1. How does Jessie show alertness in finding a place for them to sleep?

2. How were the children alert in recognizing that it was time to run away?

3. How were the children alert against danger in the way they left the bakery?

4. Where else do you see alertness in this chapter?



BOXCAR CHILDREN

Chapter One, Project—Origami Kids

These simple origami dolls are made by folding paper. After making the Boxcar Children, you can use the technique to make the characters the children meet in all the later books.

Supplies

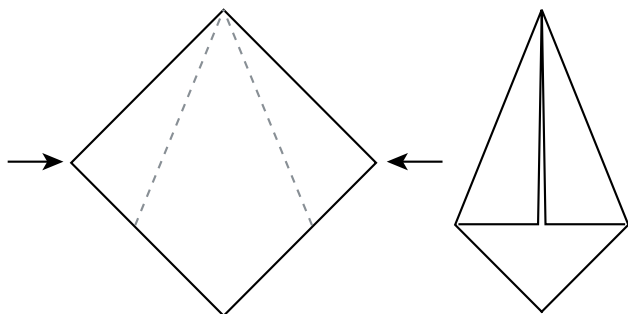
Paper templates (on the following pages)

Scissors

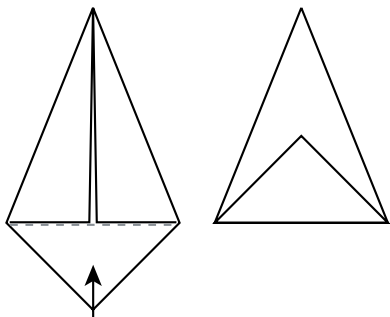
Markers or crayons

Directions

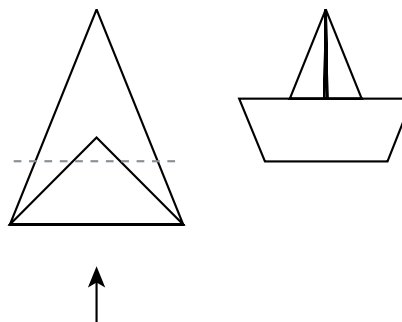
Cut out a square piece of paper.* Fold each of the two top edges to the center line. You'll now have a diamond shape.



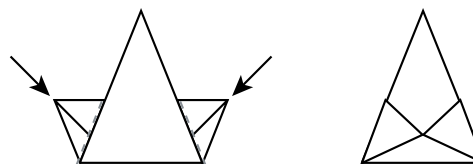
Fold the triangle at the bottom upwards.



Fold near the center of the triangle, bringing the bottom part up over the top part. Flip the entire origami piece over.



Fold each of the two triangular flaps towards the center.

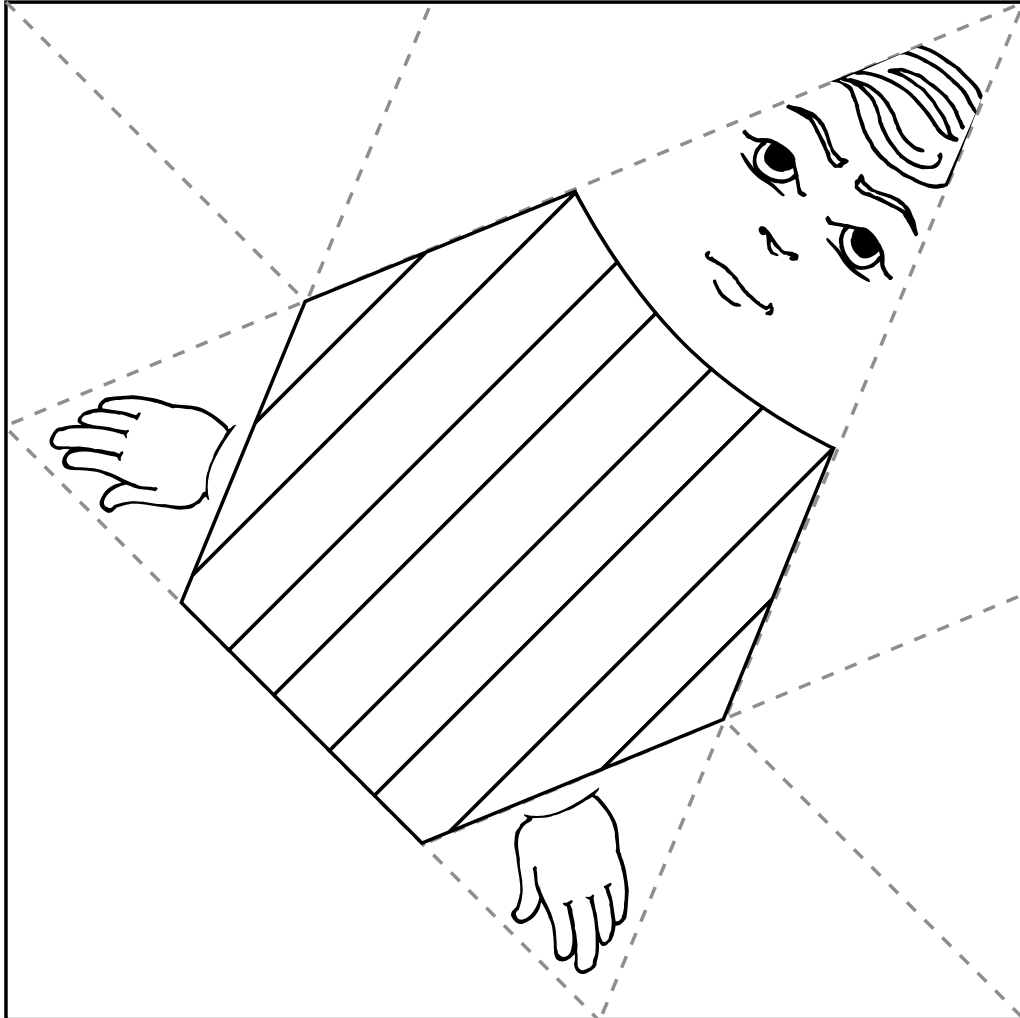


You can fold over the top of the head to make a flat head if you like. If not using the patterns on the next pages, draw a face, hair, clothes, hands, and other features.

If not using the designs on the following pages, a square can be made from a rectangular piece of paper by folding one corner of a piece of paper over to the adjacent side. To finish making the square, cut off the small rectangle, forming a square (which is already folded into a triangle). Open up the triangle into a square.

BOXCAR CHILDREN

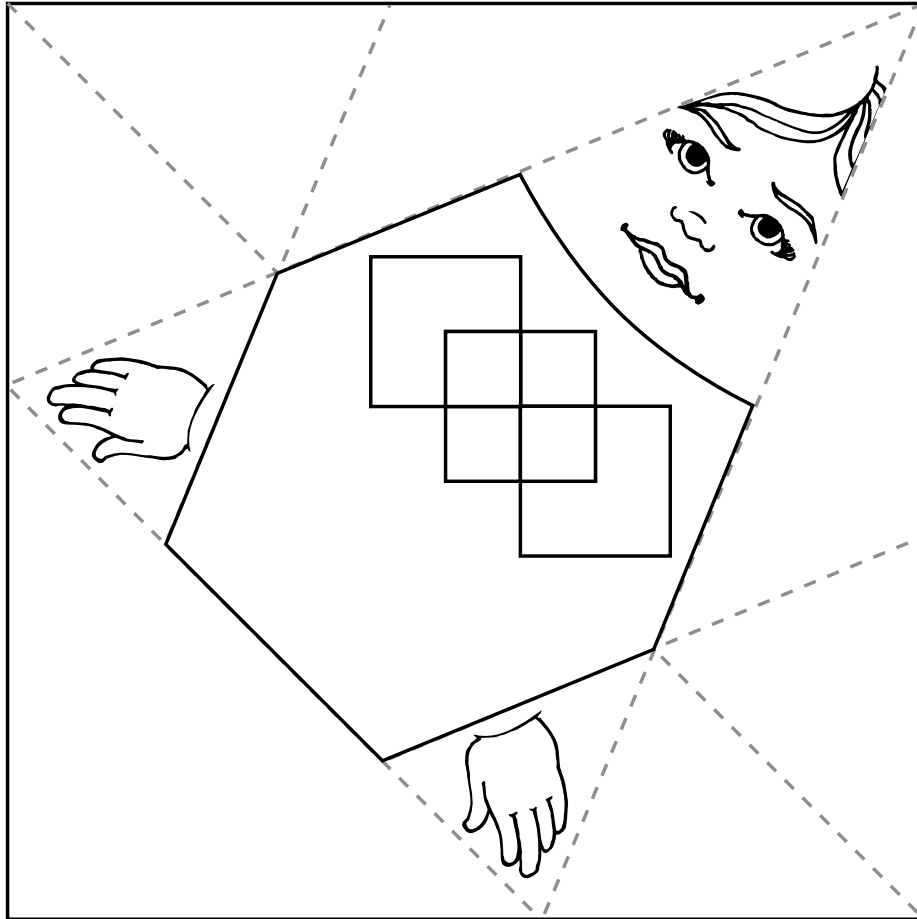
Chapter One, Project, Page 2



Henry

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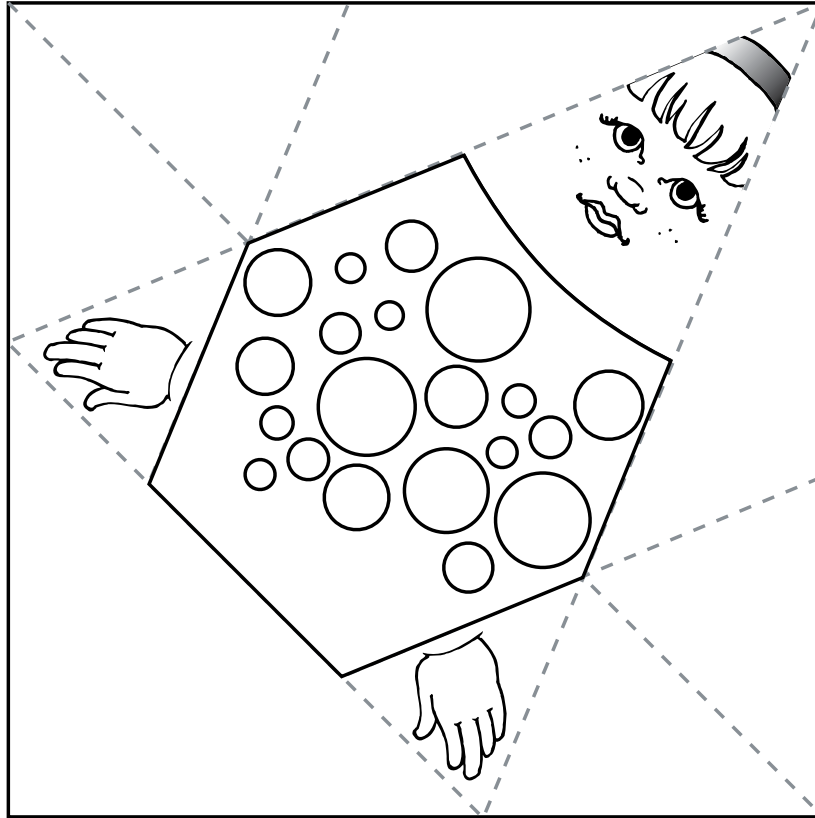
Chapter One, Project, Page 3



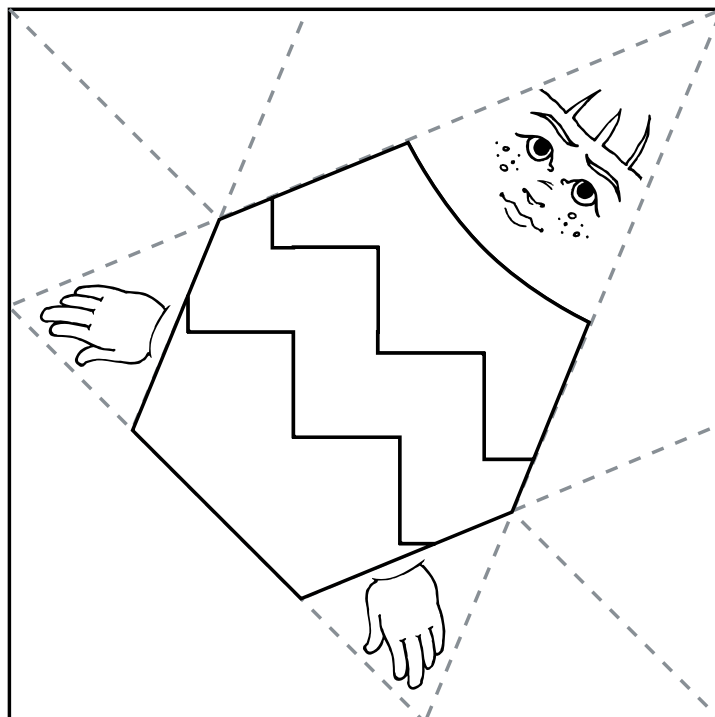
Jessie

BOXCAR CHILDREN

Chapter One, Project, Page 4



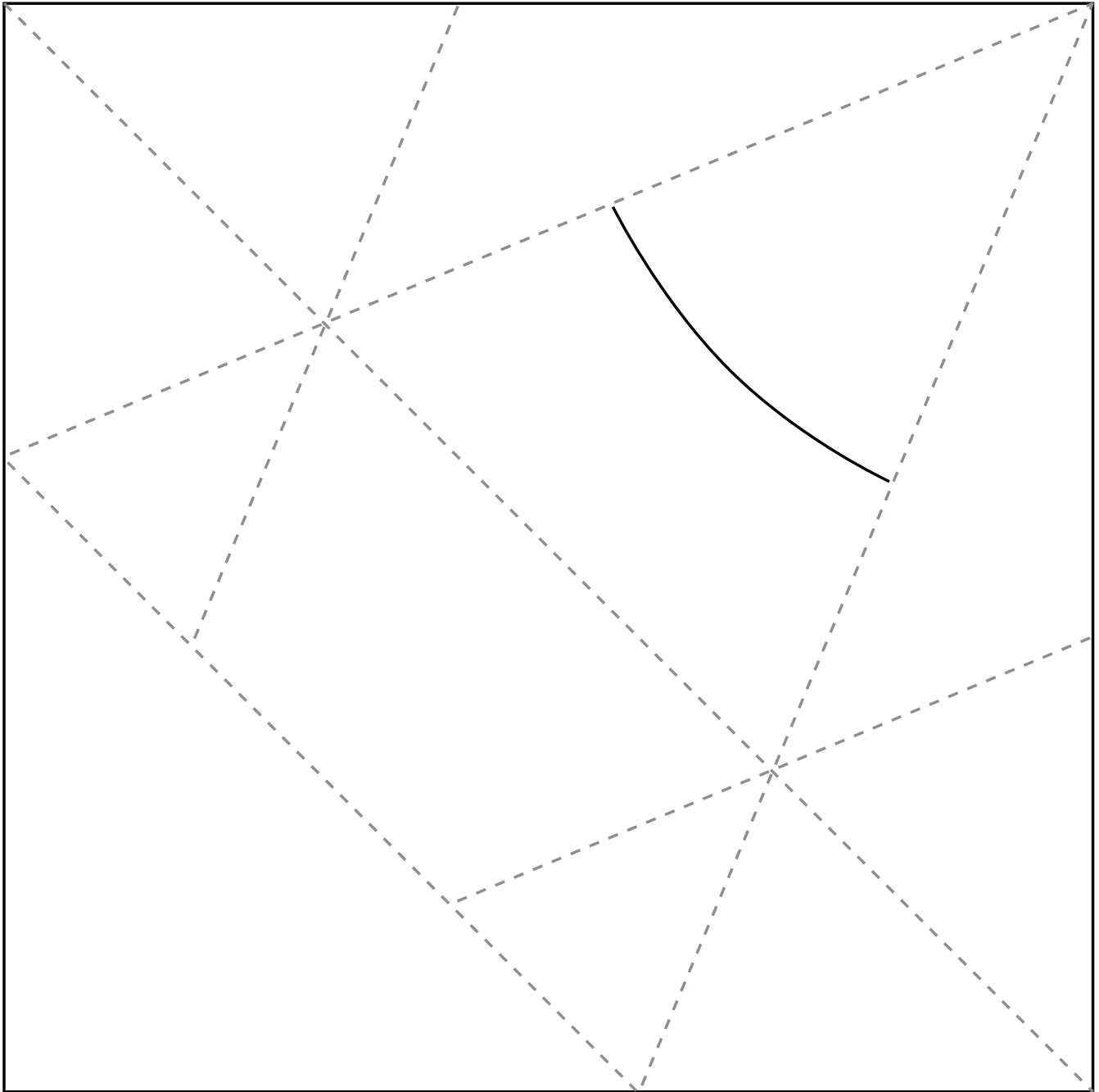
Violet



Benny

BOXCAR CHILDREN

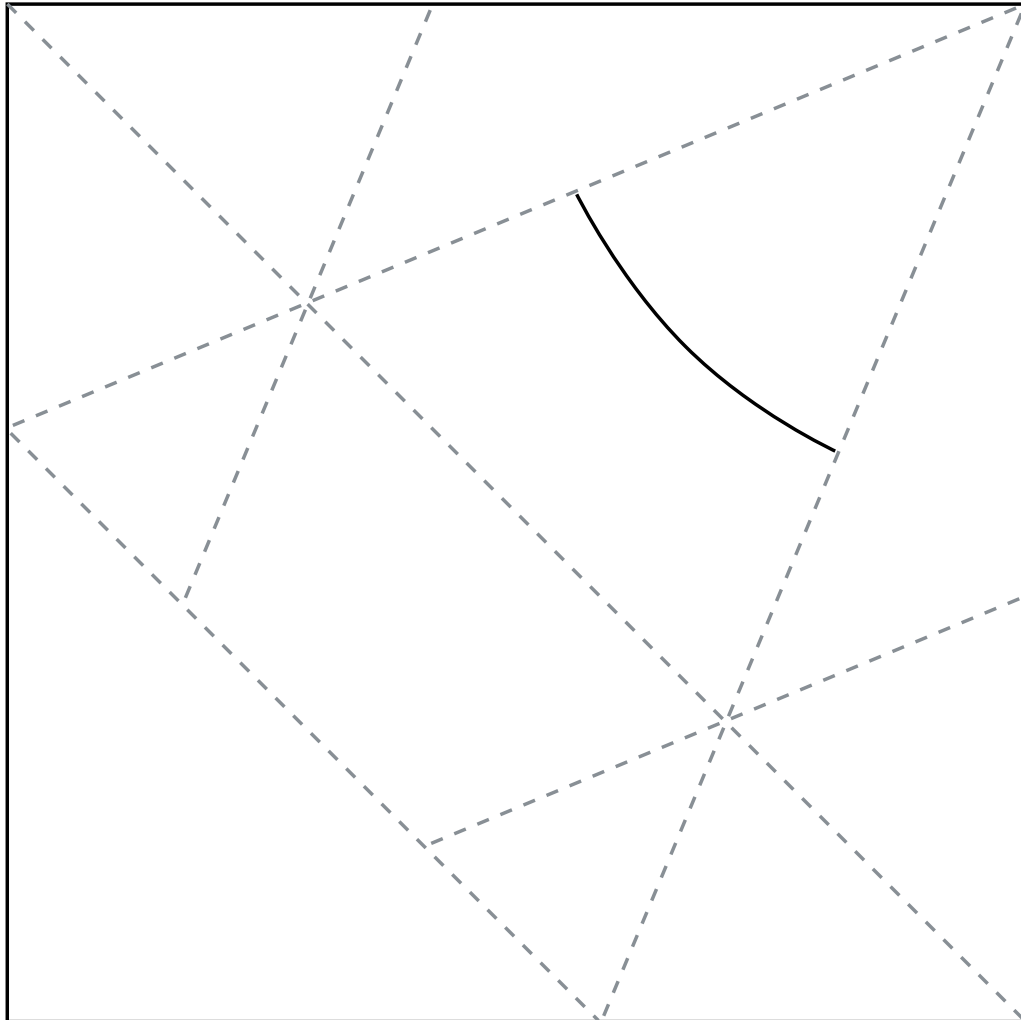
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Adult

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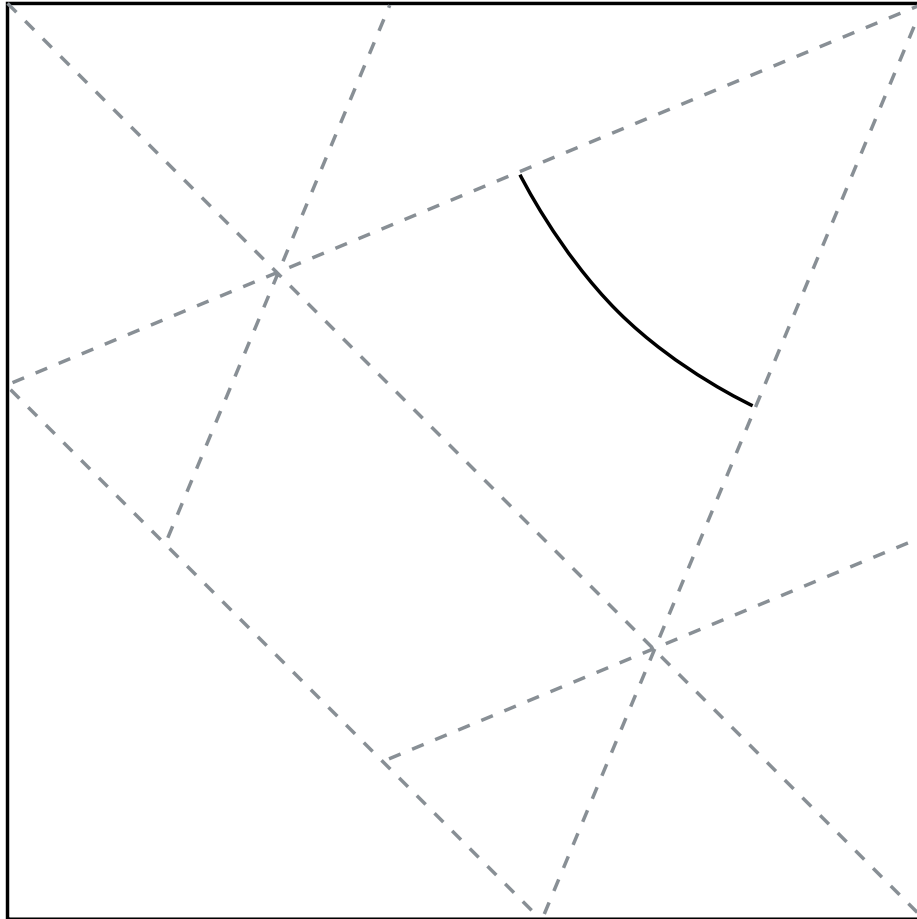
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Henry or another child

BOXCAR CHILDREN

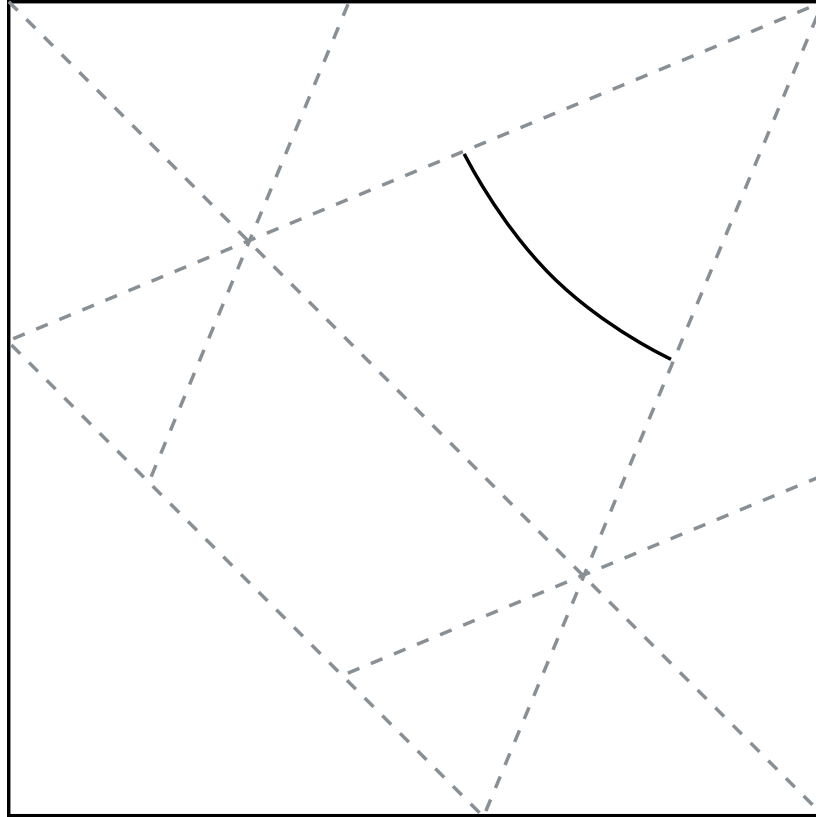
Chapter One, Project, Page 7



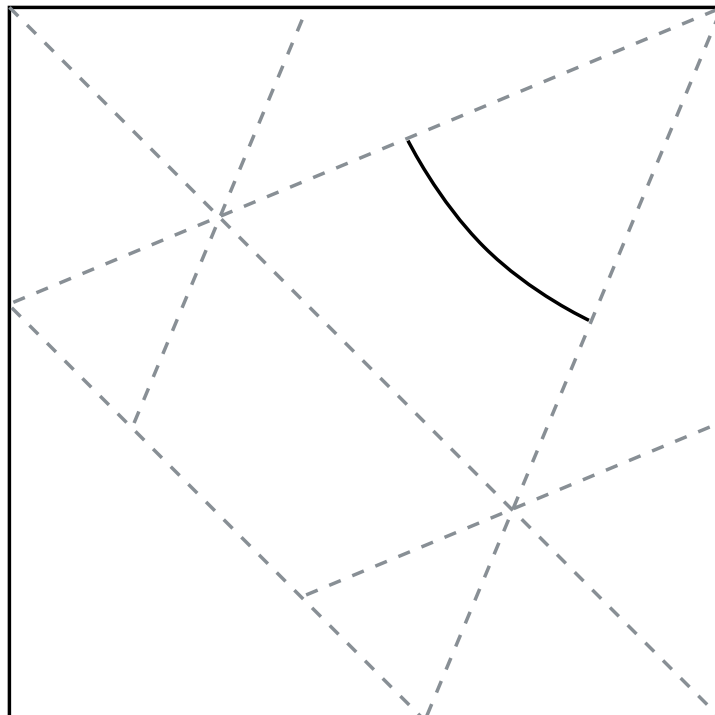
Jessie or another child

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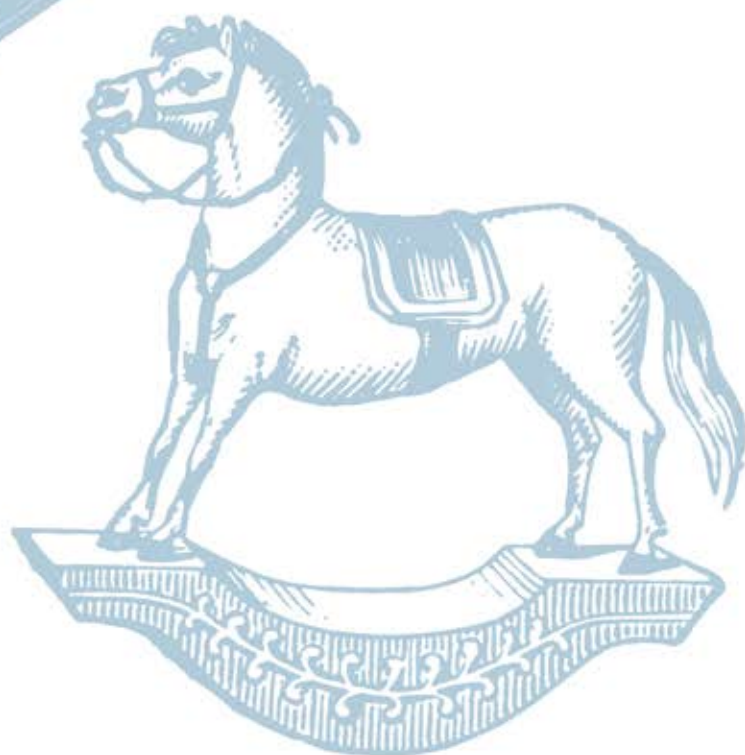
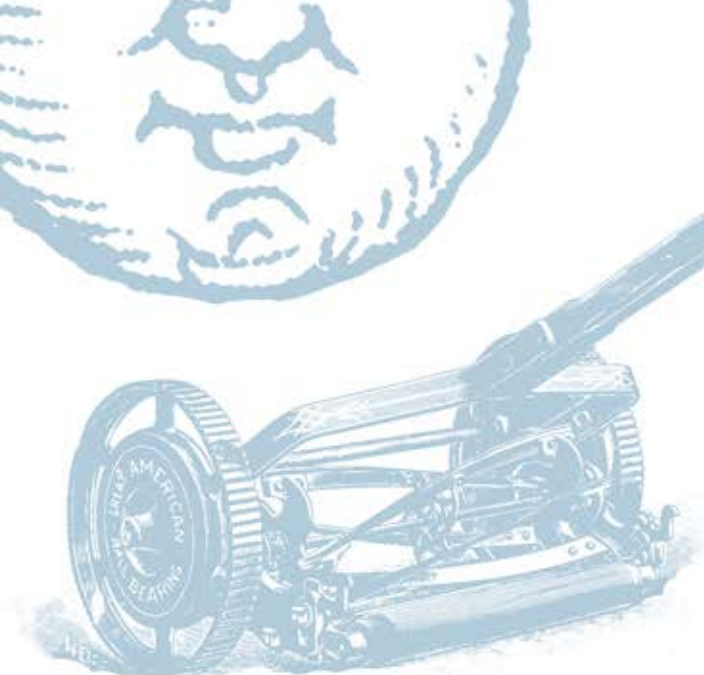
Chapter One, Project, Page 8



*Violet
or another
child*



*Benny
or another
child*



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