Mr. Keene was a principal who loved his school. Every morning he strolled down the hallway and saw the children in their classes. He saw them learning shapes and colors and numbers and letters. He saw them reading and writing and drawing and painting. He saw them making dinosaurs and forts and pyramids.

“Oh!” he would say. “Aren’t these fine children? Aren’t these fine teachers? Isn’t this a fine, fine school?”
Near Mr. Keene’s school, Tillie lived with her parents and her brother and her dog, Beans, in a small house next to a big tree.

On Mondays and Tuesdays and Wednesdays and Thursdays and Fridays, Tillie went off to school.
At school, Tillie learned her shapes and colors and numbers and letters. Sometimes, when she saw Mr. Keene standing in the hallway, he waved.

“Aren’t these fine children?” he said to himself. “Aren’t these fine teachers? Isn’t this a fine, fine school?”
On the weekends—Saturday and Sunday—Tillie climbed her favorite tree,

and she took Beans on walks and threw him sticks,

and she pushed her brother on a swing and tried to teach him how to skip.
But on Mondays and Tuesdays and Wednesdays and Thursdays and Fridays, Tillie went off to school. Beans and her brother did not like to see her go. “Hurry, hurry, hurry home!” her brother called.
One day, Mr. Keene called all the students and teachers together and said, “This is such a fine, fine school! I love this school! Let’s have more school! From now on, let’s have school on Saturdays, too!”

The teachers and the students did not want to go to school on Saturdays, but no one knew how to tell Mr. Keene that. He was so proud of the children and the teachers, of all the learning they were doing every day.
And so, that Saturday, Tillie set off for school. “But it’s Saturday! What about the swings?” her brother called.

The following month, Mr. Keene announced, “This is such a fine, fine school! I love this school! Let’s have more school! From now on, let’s have school on Sundays, too!”

The teachers and the students did not want to go to school on Sundays, but no one knew how to tell Mr. Keene that. He was so proud of the children and the teachers, of all the learning they were doing every day.
And so, that Sunday, Tillie set off for school. “But it’s Sunday! What about the skipping?” her brother called.

The following month, Mr. Keene called everyone together and said, “This is such a fine, fine school! I love this school! Let’s have more school! From now on, let’s have school on holidays, too—on Easter and Ramadan and Thanksgiving and Christmas and Hanukkah—on all the holidays on every calendar!”

The teachers and the students did not want to go to school on holidays, but no one knew how to tell Mr. Keene that. He was so proud of the children and the teachers, of all the learning they were doing every day.
And so, on Christmas, Tillie set off for school. “But it’s Christmas! What about Christmas?” her brother called.
The following month, Mr. Keene called everyone together and said, “This is such a fine, fine school! I love this school! Let’s have more school! From now on, let’s have school in the summer, too, all summer long, every single day!”
“How much we will learn!” he said. “We can learn everything! We will learn all about numbers and letters, colors and shapes, the Romans and the Egyptians and the Greeks. We will learn about dinosaurs and castles and—and—everything! We will learn everything!”
The teachers and the students did not want to go to school on Saturdays and Sundays and holidays and all summer long, every single day. But no one knew how to tell Mr. Keene that. He was so proud of the children and the teachers, of all the learning they were doing every day.
And so, on the first day of summer, Tillie set off for school. “But it’s summer! What about summer?” her brother called.
And that day, Tillie went to see Mr. Keene. She stood in his office, in front of his desk.

“What a fine, fine school this is!” Mr. Keene said. “What amazing things everyone is learning!”

“Yes,” Tillie said, “we certainly are learning some amazing things.”

“A fine, fine school!” Mr. Keene said.

“But,” Tillie said, “not everyone is learning.”
“What?” Mr. Keene said. He looked very worried. “Who? Who isn’t learning? Tell me, and I will see that they learn!”

“My dog, Beans, hasn’t learned how to sit,” Tillie said. “And he hasn’t learned how to jump over the creek.”

“Oh!” Mr. Keene said.
“And my little brother hasn’t learned how to swing or skip.”

“Oh!” Mr. Keene said.

“Wrong way, Beans!”

“And I—” she said.

“But you go to school!” Mr. Keene said. “To our fine, fine school!”

“True,” Tillie said. “But I haven’t learned how to climb very high in my tree. And I haven’t learned how to sit in my tree for a whole hour.”

“Oh!” Mr. Keene said.
That day, Mr. Keene walked up and down the halls, looking at the children and the teachers. Up and down he walked. Up and down, up and down.
The next morning, Mr. Keene called everyone together. The children and the teachers were very worried.

Mr. Keene said, “This is a fine, fine school, with fine, fine children and fine, fine teachers. But not everyone is learning.”

The children and the teachers were very, very worried.
Mr. Keene said, “There are dogs who need to learn how to sit and how to jump creeks.”

What did he mean? Was he going to make their dogs come to school?

“There are little brothers and sisters who need to learn how to swing and how to skip.”

What did he mean? Was he going to make their younger brothers and sisters come to school, too?

The children and the teachers were very, very, very worried.
“And you, all of you—children and teachers—you need to learn how to climb a tree and sit in it for an hour!” Mr. Keene said.

The children and the teachers were very worried.
“And so from now on we will . . .
... not have school on Saturdays or Sundays or holidays or in the summer!"
A huge, enormous, roaring cheer soared up to the ceiling and floated out the windows so that everyone in the town heard the fine, fine children and the fine, fine teachers shout, “Fine! Fine! Fine!”
And the fine, fine children and the fine, fine teachers lifted Mr. Keene up, and they carried him down the hallway and out the doors and through the town, up and down, in and out. And everywhere they went, the people said, “What a fine, fine school with such fine, fine teachers and fine, fine children and a fine, fine principal!”
THE RECESS QUEEN
MEAN JEAN was Recess Queen and nobody said any different.
Nobody swung until Mean Jean swung. Nobody kicked until Mean Jean Kicked. Nobody bounced until Mean Jean bounced.
If kids ever crossed her, she’d push ‘em and smoosh ‘em, lollapaloosh ‘em, hammer ‘em, slammer ‘em, kitz and kajammer ‘em.
“Say WHAT?” Mean Jean growled.

“Say WHO?” Mean Jean howled.

“Say YOU! Just who do you think you're talking to?” Mean Jean always got her way.
“Say WHAT?” Mean Jean growled.
“Say WHO?” Mean Jean howled.
“Say YOU! Just who do you think you’re talking to?”
Mean Jean always got her way.

UNTIL one day . . .
a new kid came to school.
Katie Sue!
A teeny kid.
A tiny kid.
A kid you might scare
with a jump and a “Boo!”
But when the recess bell went ringity-ring, this kid ran zingity-zing for the playground gate. Katie Sue **SWUNG** before Mean Jean swung.

Katie Sue **KICKED** before Mean Jean kicked. Katie Sue **BOUNCED** before Mean Jean bounced.

The kid you might scare with a jump and a "BOO!" was too new to know about Mean Jean the Recess Queen.
Well, Mean Jean bullied through the playground crowd. Like always, she pushed kids and smooshed kids, Lollapalooshed kids, hammered ‘em, slammered ‘em, kitz and kajammered ‘em, as she charged after that Katie Sue.
“Say **WHAT?**” she growled.
“Say **WHO?**” she howled.
“Say **YOU!**” she snarled and grabbed Katie Sue by the collar.

“Nobody swings until Queen Jean swings. Nobody kicks until Queen Jean kicks. Nobody bounces until Queen Jean bounces,” and she figured that would set the record straight.
She figured wrong. Katie Sue talked back!
Just as sassy as could be, she said, “How **DID** you get so bossy?”
Then that puny thing that loony thing, grabbed the ball and bounced away.
Oh! Katie Sue was one quick kid. She bolted quick as lightning.

BOUNCITY BOUNCITY BOUNCE.

KICKITY KICKITY KICK.

SWINGITY SWINGITY SWING.
Mean Jean thundered close behind.

The Recess Queen was **NOT** amused.
She raced and chased and in-your-faced that Katie Sue.

No one spoke.
No one moved.
No one **BREATHE**D.
Then from her pack pulled Katie Sue a jump rope clean and bright. “Hey, Jeanie Beanie,” sang Katie Sue. “Let’s try this jump rope out!”

Here’s one thing true—until that day no one DARED ask Mean Jean to play. But that Katie Sue just hopped and jumped and skipped away.

“I like ice cream, I like tea, I want Jean to jump with me!”
Jean just gaped and stared as if too **scared** to move at all.
So Katie Sue sang once more.

“I like popcorn,
I like tea,
I want Jean to jump with me!”
Then from the side a kid called out,

“GO, JEAN, GO!”

And too surprised to even shout,

Jean jumped in with Katie Sue.

“I like cookies,
I like tea,
I want YOU to jump with me!”
And too surprised to even shout,
The rope whizzed and slapped,

FASTER,

FASTER,

the rope spun and flapped,

FASTER,

FASTER!

Till it caught in a tangled disaster.
But they just giggled and
JUMPED AGAIN!
Well—now when recess rolls around that playground’s one great place. At the school bell’s ringity-ring those two girls race zingity-zing out the classroom door. Jean doesn’t push kids and smoosh kids, lollapaloosh kids, hammer ‘em, slammer ‘em, kitz and kajammer ‘em—‘cause she’s having too much fun rompity-romping with her FRIENDS.
Bouncity, kickity, swingity,
Hoppity, skippity, jumpity,
Ringity, zingity,
YESSSSSSSS!
School Bus
by Lee Bennett Hopkins

This wide-awake
freshly-painted-yellow
school bus
readied for Fall
carries us all—
Sixteen boys—
Fourteen girls—
Thirty pairs of sleepy eyes
and
hundreds
upon
hundreds
of
school supplies.

Countdown to Recess
by Kalli Dakos

Sun climbs.
Wind chimes.
Five minutes until recess.
A baseball glove.
A game I love.
Four minutes until recess.
I whisper to Pat,
"Get ready to bat."
Three minutes until recess.
My work’s all done.
I gotta run.
Two minutes until recess.
Clock, hurry!
Hands, scurry!
One minute until recess.
Brrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrring!
Dash!
Gone in a flash!
Crayons
by Jane Yolen

This box contains a wash of blue sky, spikes of green spring, a circle of yellow sun, triangle flames of orange and red.

It has the lime caterpillar inching on a brown branch, the shadow black in the center of a grove of trees.

It holds my pink and your chocolate and her burnt sienna and his ivory skin.

In it are all the colors of the world.

ALL the colors of the world.
When I can count the numbers far,
And know all the figures that there are,
Then I’ll know everything, and I
Can know about the ground and sky,
And all the little bugs I see,
And I’ll count the leaves on the silver-leaf tree,
And all the days that ever can be.
I’ll know all the cows and sheep that pass,
And I’ll know all the grass,
And all the places far away,
And I’ll know everything some day.
Text


Illustrations

61 Sean Kane
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