

*Life of Fred*<sup>®</sup>  
*Begin Teaching*

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## *A Note Before We Begin*

This is the second book in the Life of Fred® language arts series. These language arts books will cover English from every angle.

In this volume, we will learn about the adventures of Fred from late afternoon on Tuesday until 9 a.m. on Wednesday. Even though Fred is only five years old, the readers of his adventures may/might/should be a little older.

By the end of this book you will be able to answer:

- ✿ What is the past perfect progressive form of the verb *to sing*?
- ✿ What are the five ways to pronounce the letter *a*?
- ✿ What are the meanings of the verbs *affect* and *effect*?
- ✿ What are the meanings of the nouns *affect* and *effect*?
- ✿ What are the 16 ways to create plurals in English?
- ✿ What does it mean to read *Moby Dick* at a deeper level than just as a fishing story?
- ✿ What is the rule for verbs in which the compound subjects are connected by *or*? *The hats or the coat is/are mine.*
- ✿ How can you define a consonant in terms of air flow, instead of just saying that it isn't a vowel?
- ✿ Why is it silly to put anapestic on an iambic foot?
- . . . and many more topics in language arts.

### AND MORE

There is an essential body of knowledge that every well-educated person should have. English is important.

Math is important. But so are many other areas of learning. There is no reason why each subject should be kept in water-tight compartments. They flow together naturally.



English!

In this book you will learn:

- ✿ why you can't buy a kangaroo at your local pet store
- ✿ where Tasmania is located
- ✿ how Russian has three numbers when English only has two (singular and plural)
- ✿ how to sing the "Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, Epsilon" song (The sheet music is included in this book.)

## HOW THIS BOOK IS ORGANIZED

Each chapter is a daily lesson. There are about four pages of reading about the adventures of Fred and a Your Turn to Play.

Have a paper and pencil handy before you sit down to read.

Each Your Turn to Play consists of about three or four questions. Write out the answers—don't just orally answer them.

After all the questions are answered, then take a peek at my answers that are given on the next page.

Don't just read the questions and look at the answers. You won't learn as much that way.

## A NOTE FROM STAN

Fred spends some exciting and some anxious moments getting ready to Begin Teaching a new subject (English) in a new country (Australia).

Almost every teacher experiences some of those feelings at the beginning of a new school year.

By the time that Fred finished his first hour of teaching, which is at the end of this book, he was feeling good again.

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# Chapter One

## Meeting Mack

**F**red was so happy to have found Mack. Together they hopped into Mack's car and headed to the Board of Missions office.



Mack

On Sunday Fred had written to the Board of Missions, "I want to be a friend, help people in trouble . . . I do love to teach."\*

Now, two days later, Fred was in Australia heading to the board office in Wagga Wagga. He was eager to begin teaching. He had taught math at KITTENS University for five years, and he knew he could teach any math course that was needed. It was June 4. He was going to spend the whole summer in Australia. He had never been outside the United States before. When Fred sat in Mack's car, he couldn't see anything except the sky. He was too short.



Fred is there, but you can't see him.

---

\*The three dots ( . . . ) are called an **ellipsis** (ee-LIP-sis). An ellipsis indicates something has been left out. In Fred's letter he had written, "*I want to be a friend, help people in trouble, teach, dig a well to get clean water, and kill mosquitos. I don't know how to dig a well or kill mosquitos, but I do love to teach.*"



Fred couldn't find any seatbelts. Fred thought *This must be a really old car.*

Mack said, "This car is not brand new."

### Time Out!

Both Fred and Mack said the same thing. Mack's way of saying it is called an understatement.

#### Understatements:

Oceans have some water in them.

Being run over by a car is irritating.

#### Understatements with "not":

This car is not brand new.

Fred is not extremely tall.

Having a pizza, a milkshake, and a piece of pie for lunch is not a starvation diet.

Understatements with "not" in them have a special name. They are called litotes. (LIE-toe-tease)

When someone learns that he has just won a million dollars, he might say, "That ain't bad." That's litotes.

Mack said, "The Mission Board here in Wagga Wagga does not have a lot a money (litotes). This car may be old, but it still runs. We are so happy that people like you, Fred, would volunteer to come and help."

"I'm too small to help dig wells," Fred said. "But I'm not bad at teaching (litotes)."

Mack was a little confused. He was told to pick up a famous college professor from KITTENS University. He was also told that Fred Gauss had been teaching there for five years and had won many teaching awards.

Mack said, “You mention being small. Looking at you, some people might think that you were just a child rather than a man who is very short. You are about a meter tall.”

“Not quite,” Fred said. “A meter is about 39 inches. I’m 36 inches tall, which is one yard.”

Mack said, “I like your bow tie. That makes you look older. Have you ever thought of growing a beard? Then people wouldn’t mistake you for a child.”



Mack didn’t know that he was talking to a five-year-old.

They arrived. Mack got out of the car. Fred reached down to unfasten (silent *t*) his seatbelt and then realized he hadn’t been wearing one. Fred realized that if Mack had crashed the car, he might have been thrown through the windshield.\*

---

\* Have you ever noticed that there are no seatbelts on motorcycles?

Fred had imagined that the Wagga Wagga office building of the Board of Missions would look very fancy.

He knew they were doing important work: helping people in trouble, digging wells to get clean water, teaching, and killing mosquitos. What he didn't realize was that the work was the important thing—not making a big name for itself.



How Fred pictured it

Every member of the Board had received this memo:

**Notice**  
**to All Board Members**

**Our job is to love people. It's that simple.  
Do that without showing off. Don't go around  
bragging. No special titles for any of you.**

**Give them h's:**

- Hold the hand of those who are crying.**
- Help the poor.**
- Heal the sick.**

**Wait a minute! I, your reader, have a question.\***

What did you have in mind?

**There's an English error in that notice. In the previous book you told us the eight ways to make something plural.**

- |                                       |                   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. one cat → two cats                 | – → s             |
| 2. one calf → two calves              | f → ves           |
| 3. one foot → two feet                | irregular plurals |
| 4. one deer → two deer                | no change         |
| 5. one toss → two tosses              | s → es            |
| 6. one mystery → two mysteries        | y → ies           |
| 7. one hippopotamus → two hippopotami | us → i            |
| 8. one alumna → two alumnae           | a → ae            |



**In this “Notice to All Board Members,” the plural of h was h’s. That’s not any of the eight ways to make a plural.**

You are right. That’s the ninth way to make a plural. Lower case (uncapitalized) letters are special. There are seven e’s in the previous sentence.

### Your Turn to Play

**Write your answers down before looking at my answers.**

If you don’t remember the spelling, turn to earlier pages to find it.

- (Fill in the blank) “This Your Turn to Play is not very long” is an example of \_\_\_\_\_.
- (Fill in the blank) A, B, C, D, . . . , X, Y, Z uses an \_\_\_\_\_.

---

\* Life of Fred books are the only books in the world in which the reader can talk back to the author.

.....ANSWERS.....

1. “This Your Turn to Play is not very long” is an example of litotes .

Instead of saying it was not very long, you could have said that it was short.

2. A, B, C, D, . . . . , X, Y, Z uses an ellipsis .

small essay

### Sometimes English Makes Sense

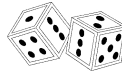
I can't tell you why yacht is spelled y-a-c-h-t.



I can't tell you why the plural of die is dice.



die



dice

But I do have a guess as to why we use an apostrophe to make the plurals of lower case letters. If we didn't use an apostrophe, then I might write, “There are eight as you can see in the previous sentence.”

If we use the apostrophe, the sentence becomes clear: “There are eight a's you can see in the previous sentence.”

end of small essay

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