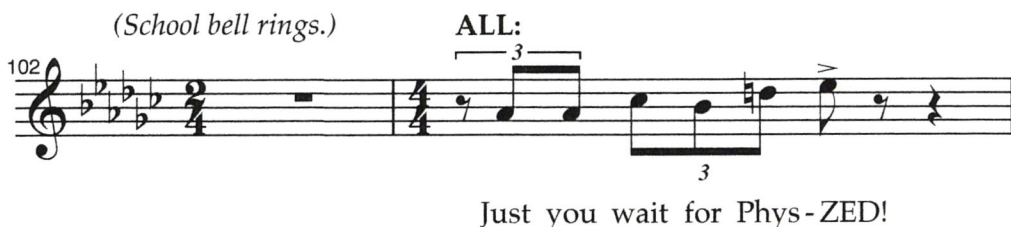


BIG KID 1: Why? Why?
Didn't you hear what we said?

BIG KIDS:



Scene Changes
to Classroom

(The BIG KIDS exit. The LITTLE KIDS form a classroom. MISS HONEY enters. At the front of the room is a chalkboard, with "I can now read words" written on it.)

MISS HONEY

Good morning children. My name is Miss Honey. And today is a very special day: your first day at school. Now, can anyone read this?

(MISS HONEY underlines "I can now read words.")



(NIGEL, MATILDA, and LAVENDER raise their hands.)

NIGEL

Me, me, me, oooh, oooh, me, pick me miss, I can, mememememe—

MISS HONEY

Very well, Nigel.

(NIGEL opens his mouth to speak, but nothing comes out.)

Yes, I think we'd better leave it there, Nigel, we don't want you to burst a blood vessel on your first day.

(NIGEL droops on his desk.)

Lavender?

LAVENDER

Is the first word... tomato?

MISS HONEY

Um, no. But tomato is a very good word.

LAVENDER

Yessss!

MISS HONEY

Matilda?

MATILDA

"I can now read words."

MISS HONEY

So Matilda, you can read words?

MATILDA

Well, I needed to learn to read words so that I could read sentences because basically a sentence is just a big bunch of words. And if you can't read sentences you've got no chance with books.

MISS HONEY

And... have you read a whole book yourself?

MATILDA

More than one. I love books. Last week I read quite a few.

MISS HONEY

A few? What books did you read?

