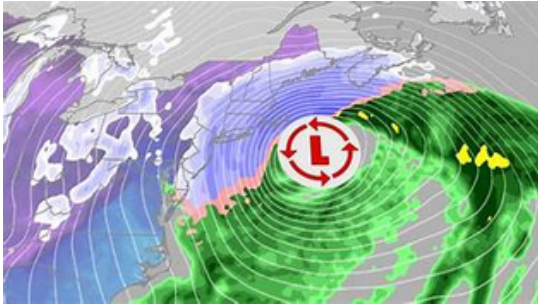




A Blizzard to Remember

By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff

This past weekend, we experienced the biggest winter storm of the year. We even got two snow days for it! Here are some facts about the blizzard that was felt all across the northeast.

Winter Storm Hernando

The nor'easter blizzard, unofficially named Winter Storm Hernando by The Weather Channel, greatly impacted the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions of the United States. It brought many feet of snowfall to many states, and this snow, combined with the strong winds, forced many states such as New York and Massachusetts to issue travel bans during the blizzard.

Snowfall

The blizzard brought immense amounts of snow to many states in the Northeast. New York State had a peak snow total of 31 inches, Connecticut got 26.5 inches, Massachusetts with 33, New Jersey got 29.5, and Rhode Island, with the highest snow total as of 5:00 pm, Monday, had a whopping 36.2 inches – over three feet! The blizzard, which dumped 32.8 inches in Providence, Rhode Island, has broken the city's all-time record of 28.6 inches. It has also broken the city's one-day snow total – 19 in. – with 30.4 inches on Monday alone.

Wind

In addition to snowfall, gusts of wind brought extra snow on top of the accumulated snow, making the actual snowfall amount seem higher than it really was. Cape Cod, MA clocked a gust of wind at 98 miles per hour! That's almost 15 mph faster than the highest US speed limit! Montauk, Long Island, NY captured a gust of 84 mph, Nantucket, MA, recorded 78, Stony Brook, NY had a 74-mph gust, and Martha's Vineyard, MA logged 71.

Impact

As of 4:00 pm on Monday, John F. Kennedy Int'l Airport, Newark Liberty Int'l Airport, and LaGuardia Airport all had over 1,000 flight cancellations! The blizzard left over 400,000 people along the Eastern Coast with no power, and almost 4,000 NYC residents experienced outages.

Although it may seem like Hernando had only negative impacts, there was some good that came out of this storm. New York City Public Schools closed school on Monday – without e-learning – for the first time since 2019! Us in Somers, we have the blizzard to thank as well for the two snow days issued by the Somers CSD due to the weather conditions.

Overall, it was great to see some more snow on the ground. Hopefully this is last large storm of the winter. The groundhog was certainly right in his prediction of six more weeks of winter!

Lunar New Year Signals a Fresh Start

By Lauren Rosenblum
Tusker Tribune Staff

Have you ever wondered what Lunar New Year is?

Well, Lunar New Year is on February 17, 2026. It's a major 15 day holiday celebration that marks the beginning of the New Year on lunisolar calendars. It symbolizes family reunion, hope, and good fortune and good luck also.

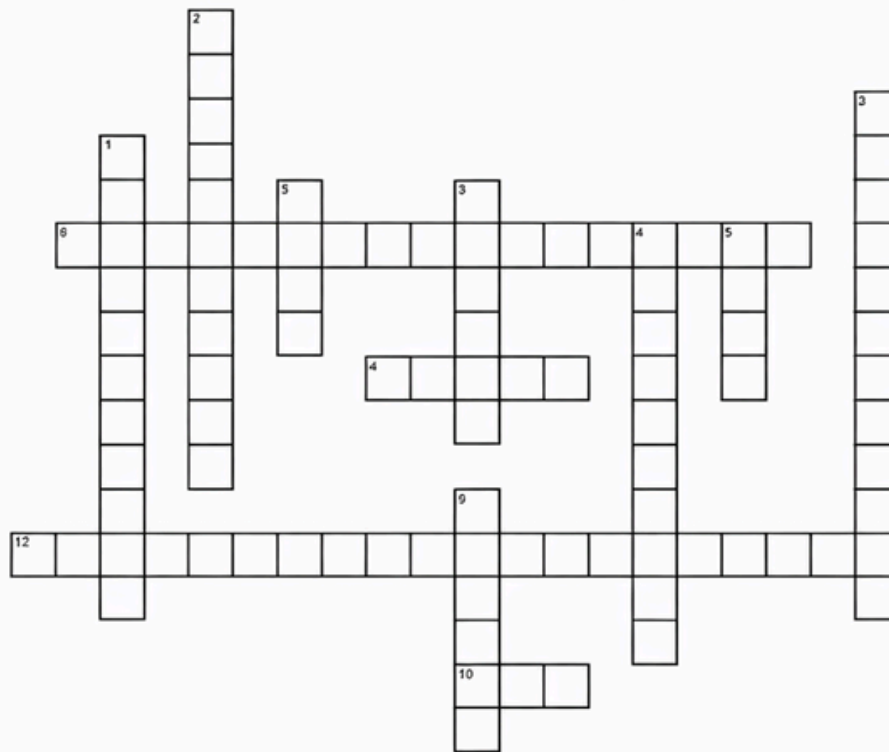
The 2026 Lunar New Year marks the Year of the Fire Horse which represents action and energy. This holiday can last up to 16 days but the first seven days are considered as the main public holidays for people.

Traditions for this holiday include cleaning your home and removing anything bad luck related from your house. You also wear new clothes and hang red lanterns, and give red envelopes which contains money for good luck. It is about welcoming spring and a fresh start. They use bright lights and loud noises to scare away evil spirits, and each year has one of 12 animals, which is believed to influence the personality for each year.



Winter Olympics Crossword Puzzle

2026 Winter Olympics



Across

6. About How many people watched the gold medal men's hockey game on TV
9. Where were the Olympics held
11. How many medal events were there in the Olympics
12. What country won gold for the men's and women's hockey

Down

1. How many new events were added this Olympics
2. What is the most watched tv Olympic event
3. How many medals did USA win in all
4. How many rings are there in the Olympic Flag
5. What country won the most medals

7. About How many tickets did the Olympics sell

8. what is one of the least watched sports in the Olympics

10. What was the dog's name who ran onto the Cross-country ski course

10. What was the dog's name who ran onto the Cross-country ski course

Answer Key will be in next week's Tusker Tribune



A Lot of Math Behind Why February is a Short Month

By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff

The Gregorian calendar is the most widely used calendar across the world. But have you ever stopped to think how this calendar came about, and why the lengths of months aren't uniform? And how come February has 28 days, when all the others have 30 or 31?

The predecessor to the commonly used Gregorian calendar was the Julian calendar, which consisted of ten months, six of which had 30 days and the other four had 31 days. However, when Numa Pompilius became the next Roman king, he decided to sync the calendar with the lunar cycle (i.e., the moon phase cycle).

But there was a problem. The lunar year, which Numa wanted to align with, had roughly 364.4 days. However, Roman superstition declared even numbers unlucky. Using that total would have made the whole year unlucky! As a result, Numa rounded up to 365. Numa then subtracted a day from each month with 30 days, to make sure every month was not unlucky. This gave Numa a 258-day year, which he had to add 57 days to in order for it to sum to 365.

However, 57 could not be divided evenly between two months, meaning that no matter what, one month would have to be even if the entire year was to sum to an odd number of days. Numa chose one of his two newly added months – February – to serve as the unlucky month, and one that would hold rituals honoring the dead.

The Gregorian calendar was slightly modified after Numa's redesign, (e.g., the addition of 10 more days per year, and the addition of the leap year), but nevertheless, February has remained with 28 days for three out of every four years. Hopefully you learned a little bit more about the quirks of our calendar. It's amazing that it has been part of our lives for over 2,000 years!



Maine Coons Make Terrific First Time Cat Pets

By Isabella Nevsky
Tusker Tribune Staff

Maine Coons are considered the largest domestic cat breed and are affectionate, friendly, and intelligent. They have longer bodies and much larger heads and paws than most breeds.

Maine Coons originated in Maine where it is the official state breed. They are considered one of the most popular house cat breeds across the United States and are a great breed for first time cat owners. They also get along very well with other pets and children.

Adult male Maine Coons can weigh up to 25 pounds while females weigh between 10-14 pounds. Maine Coons have very large, pointed ears and they have a variety of different fur colors including white, blue, black, gray, orange, and cream. Many Maine Coons have fur patterns including tabby, tortoiseshell, and silver. They also have eye colors usually consisting of green, gold, and copper while white Maine Coons often have blue eyes.

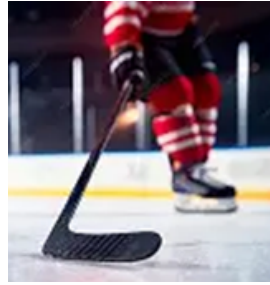
Maine Coons are very gentle and friendly companions that get along with everyone!

Source:

- <https://www.purina.co.uk/find-a-pet/cat-breeds/maine-coon>



Figure Skates vs Hockey Skates



**By Ashley Hobby
Tusker Tribune Staff**

The winter months are a great time for ice skating. Many people ask what the difference is between the two skates. Figure skates are more made for flips, jumps, and different styles of skating while hockey skates are made for quick turns, speed and power.

Hockey skates are shorter and more curved. The curve is called a rocker. It helps hockey players turn quickly and move fast in small spaces. These skates are more stiff and protective so it doesn't hurt when they get hit by a puck or other players. They are made for fast movements and sharp cuts on the ice. Also, the sharpening style is different. They are often sharper so it can dig into the ice for quick stops and fast acceleration.

Unlike hockey skates, figure skates have a toe pick. A toe pick is a jagged edge at the front of the skate. It helps with jumps and control while doing different moves. The blades are also straighter that helps to glide more easily instead of stopping and turning quickly like hockey players do. These boots are also more flexible and soft. This is so the skates feel smoother on your feet and so you can try many delicate, artistic jumps. Lastly, figure skates are designed for balance and spins, not contact.

Both of these sports require dedication and skill. Hockey and figure skating teach confidence and balance. Whether trying daring jumps or different skills with a puck, skaters must practice a lot. Figure skating and hockey are two very creative sports and are also fun to watch. The Olympics is a good source for watching skaters and becoming inspired.

Fun fact this year: the USA men's hockey team won first in the Olympics, for the first time since 1980! Ultimately, hockey and figure skating show how if you have dedication, anyone can learn these two very unique ice sports. I hope you learned a lot about the differences between the two skates.

Snow What? Everything You Wanted to Know About Blizzards

**By Ashley Hobby
Tusker Tribune Staff**

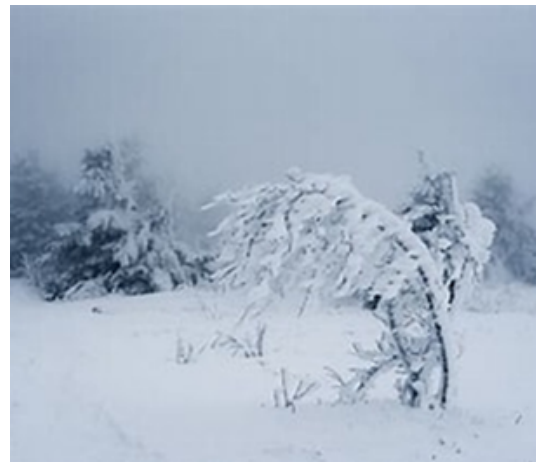
When the wind blows, and the snow fogs the sky, a blizzard is arriving. What is the real definition of a blizzard?

A blizzard is an intense snowstorm that needs to meet requirements in order for it to be a blizzard. First, the wind speeds need to be 35 miles per hour or greater. The average snowstorm wind is greatly less than about 10 to 15 miles per hour. A blizzard also needs a visibility rate to be a quarter mile or less. This is because of the blowing snow. Lastly, these conditions must last for at least 3 hours long. Now that you know the requirements of this storm, there are many pros and cons that go with a blizzard.

The first pro of this is that it gives a beautiful scenery. Snow gives landscapes a peaceful and pretty look. Snow also gives us fun activities to do, such as skiing, sledding, and even snowball fights. Snow acts as a blanket that protects plants from freezing too much. When the snow melts, it provides plants with water supply to grow. Melted snow adds water to lakes and rivers also.

There are many cons to severe blizzards. There can be a lot of shoveling to do after a snowstorm, which sometimes isn't always fun. It is not safe to travel during a blizzard. Ice and snow can weigh down trees which could block some of the roads from broken branches. Roads can become slippery and can cause accidents. The high wind rates and heavy snow can knock down powerlines causing power outages. This also can take time for people to repair these damages which could leave homes and businesses without power for an undetermined amount of time.

Blizzards can have a huge impact on the environment. Overall, understanding both the benefits and the dangers of these impactful storms is interesting. I hope this taught you exciting facts and to stay safe during these blizzards.





Contrasting Lunar New Year With Chinese New Year

By Noah Samuel
Tusker Tribune Staff

Lunar New Year fell on Tuesday, February 17th. Many people mix this up with other celebrations. What is this holiday, and how does it differ from Chinese New Year? Keep reading to learn more.

What It Is

By definition, the Lunar New Year is the first day of the year in the lunar calendar. It is commonly interchanged with the Lunisolar New Year, which is very similar, but not quite the same as, the Lunar New Year. The lunar calendar uses the cycles of the moon phases to determine months and has twelve months invariantly in its year. The first new moon of the year is the Lunar New Year. On the other hand, the lunisolar calendar, used by the Chinese and some other Asian countries, defines months in the same fashion as the lunar calendar, but adds a thirteenth intercalary month when necessary to resynchronize with the solar, Gregorian calendar.

The Difference from Lunisolar New Year

Chinese New Year, celebrated in China, Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia and elsewhere under different names, is the first day of the year according to the lunisolar calendar. Since the winter solstice is required to fall in the eleventh month of the year, Chinese New Year usually is on the second new moon after the solstice. If an intercalary year is added, it then falls on the third new moon. There are other New Year's celebrations, in cultures based on lunisolar calendars (for example the Buddhist calendar new year, and Rosh Hashanah, the Hebrew calendar new year, which falls on the autumnal equinox), but Chinese New Year is the most known one as it commonly aligns with the pure lunar calendar.

Chinese New Year fell on the same day as Lunar New Year this year. The next intercalary month is set to happen in the solar year 2028, meaning these two holidays should not align that year. Now you know a little more about Lunar New Year, and how it differs from the Chinese New Year, which follows a slightly different calendar. Do you celebrate one of these holidays?

Nap Time is Very Important For Persian Cats

By Isabella Nevsky
Tusker Tribune Staff

Persian cats are one of the oldest cat breeds dating back all the way to the 1600s. They are believed to have originated in Mesopotamia, later called Persia. They are quiet, affectionate, and calm lap cats that sleep between 16-20 hours each day.

Persian cats are medium sized, weigh between 10-15 pounds, have rounded faces, small and rounded ears, and very large eyes. Some Persian cats are distinctly different than other cat breeds because of their flat pushed in face. Persian cats have a variety of eye colors including multiple shades of blue, green, hazel, and even copper. The coat is very soft and luxurious to the touch despite the large amount of shedding.

It is best to brush the cat's fur every day to prevent mats from forming. Persian cats possess many different colors in their long fur including white, grey, black, orange, cream, blue, red, lilac, golden, and chocolate. Persian cats are an amazing cat breed if you want a furry friend that is calm and gentle.

Source:

- <https://www.aspcapetinsurance.com/resources/persian-cat-facts/>



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Clue is a Perfect Game When You're Shut in by Snow



By Felicity McCormack
Tusker Tribune Staff

This winter, there has been an excessive amount of snow, and that can leave a person feeling trapped and restless waiting for the snow to stop and then getting bored once the fun aspects of snow lose their novelty. So, people are left with lots of free time on their hands. One way to entertain yourself and family/ friends is opening the board games. And, arguably, the best board game for a cold snowy day is Clue.

This unique game was invented from 1943 to 1945 during WWII by British musician Anthony Pratt, a long-time lover of mystery. He based it off British country-side murder-mystery parties he played at, where guests would pretend to “die” and try to deduce who the culprit was. Pratt created the game during air strikes, where residents were trapped inside their homes or shelters during bombings, along with his wife Elva.

In 1947, the game was ready, and Pratt patented it and sold Murder! (the original title for Clue) to Waddington's, a manufacturer of board games in the United Kingdom, where it was sold as Cluedo, and Parker Brothers here in the United States, which would eventually be bought by Hasbro, created Clue.

Clue remains popular throughout the years, even though it was invented more than 80 years ago. It has been rebranded into a movie; a play and a musical; multiple versions of the board game, including three different versions of The Simpsons Clue. This is due to its fun, engaging play style, the sense of mystery that remains constant every game, it's simple objective- where players simply “collect clues to figure out the murder suspect, weapon and location”, and its long but not too long feel that keeps the group entertained for hours. So, while everyone is trapped in layers upon layers of snow, why not try picking up a game of Clue?

For more information regarding Clue and the making of it: <https://www.history.com/articles/clue-game-origin-wwii>

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To visit the **Tusker Tribune Website**, click here: [Tusker Tribune School Newspaper](#)



The Tusker Tribune

SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

The Fake Friend--An AI Story in Three Parts

By Allison Posadas
Tusker Tribune Staff

Synopsis: This story is about a girl who is not even real, and she is a robot/AI-generated person. Her friends don't know that.

Part 1: The best friends

Cora woke up to the perfect most definite best playlist. Her room was cleaner than the shower, everything in her room was in its specific place, no laundry was on the floor, and her bed was made perfectly. From everyone else's perspective, Ivy was just a nice, loving, and intelligent girl, but Cora found it differently; she thought Ivy was some weird girl, who acts like a robot, but who sounds like a normally perfect girl.

A few days later at school, I met up with Cora and soon she went over to me and said, with her head tilted to the left . . . "Hey Ivy."

"Oh, uhm Hi!" Ivy says with a worried expression, saying in her head, *Is she the new girl?*

"My name's Ivy, I'm the new girl." said the new girl, Cora, with an excited smile

"Nice to meet you, Cora, let's be friends, talk soon!"

Soon the bell rings and Ivy and Cora go to their first period class, but turns out, they are in the same algebra class. The two girls sit next to each other, and then they exchange similes. The teacher in the algebra class, is named Ms. Gable. She is a strict woman, but she looks like she is in her twenties, so that's fun.

"Everyone sit down!" says Ms. Gable with her annoying strict look on her face. Once Ms. Gable said that, Cora did not sit down, and nobody knows why. But suddenly, Ms. Gable notices, and exchanges an angry look at Cora. "Cora" she says then takes a pause, "Cora. Cora Lindsay, sit down now," Ms. Gable says while she takes out a pass, and a pen. "I see, you're OK with going to the principal's office. Well, here!" she says and hands it too, Cora.

"I'm-I'm, I'm sorry, Ms. Gable, the system broke." Cora stutters.

"The system? What system? Whatever just leave!"

While Cora was walking out of the classroom, all of sudden she stopped and she said, "Systems turned off" in a weird sounding robot voice. Then soon Cora falls to the ground.



Part 2--The Fake Friend

"What just happened?" Ivy says with a worried look on her face. Then soon she runs up to Cora. But soon when Ivy went over to her to feel her face, Ivy felt a random switch on her face. That made Cora get her energy back, and soon she stood up.

"Hi guys, what just happened?" Cora says with a confused look.

"Uhm, well, all of a sudden, you said that your system broke down? Is that normal, are you a robot of some sort?" Ivy says while reaching to get her hand to get her back up.

"Uhm how do you know that? Oh, I mean . . . I'm not some sort of robot!" Cora says with a worried smile, and in her head, she says, *I hope she doesn't know that I'm a robot. really want her to be my friend she seems so nice!*

Soon, MS, Gable gets out of her chair with an angry look. "I've had enough, Cora. I told you to go to the principal's office 10 minutes ago! And you, Ivy! You're going with her, because you had a whole conversation with her, and there is no talking allowed when doing work!"

"Ugh, fine!" says Ivy.

"Scram, and don't give me that attitude, or you're getting, suspended."

Cora and Ivy leave the classroom, and start walking to the bathroom, instead of the principal's office.

Continued on Page 8



Part 3--The Fake Friend

They arrive at the assistant principal's office

Assistant principal: "Sit down girls."

Ivy sits down, but again, Cora doesn't.

Soon Cora's system crashes. Then Cora says "SYSTEM CRASHED* again in a weird robot voice.

"Oh no. Did she pass out?" the assistant principal says.

"I think so but, whenever she does, she says her system crashes. Did you hear it?"

"Hmm, I did, go check if she's ok please."

"I will, just hold on" Ivy says, then touches Coras' face again and pushes the button she pushed last time.

"I'm back, I'm back, did my system crash!"

"Hmmm, system, what are you, some robot?" the assistant principal says.

"How do you know!" Cora asks.

"Well, it is 2030, and robots are taking over the world, so come with me, and Ivy, you can leave."

"I knew it CORA, YOU'RE A FAKE FRIEND, YOU WERE SO NICE, KIND, AND INTELLIGENT, BUT TURNS OUT YOU'RE JUST A DUMB AI-GENERATED ROBOT, WHO IS NOT EVEN REAL, YOU'RE NOT EVEN USING YOUR BRAIN, WELL, DO YOU EVEN HAVE A BRAIN?! UGH GET OUT!"

"Ivy, I'm sorry, I got attacked!"

"Attacked, yeah right, by who?"

"By the converters!"

"The converters? You mean the people who turn innocent people into robots, because they want to take over the world?"

"YES, YES THAT! NO NO NO, NOT THAT! Bye loser! Oh gosh sorry, I'm getting controlled by the converters, they control what I say whenever they . . ."

Then soon Cora disappeared, and turns out the people who controlled her took her out of the world, since she told way to much information to Ivy.

Part 2--The Fake Friend

From Page 7

A few minutes have passed by and soon the speaker turns on with an announcement and the announcement states, "May Cora Linday, and Ivy Green report to the assistant principal's office immediately!"

"Ivy, we . . . m-u-s-t go now!"

"Cora, I know, I know, we are going, I'm not trying to be rude, but do you stutter?"

"No, I don't. It's because I'm an AI-generated robot! . . . Ohhhh, I mean, yeah, I do stutter."

"What did you say, you like robots? Wow we are similar, me too! Let's get heading now, am I right?"

"Yeah, I love robots...! And yeah, let's get heading"

They both enter the assistant principal's office.

A Splash of Color For Spirit Week

By Lila Brady and Mila Cini
Tusker Tribune Staff.

During Sprit Week, Thursday's theme was Winter Color Wars – and it was one of the most colorful days of the whole week!

Sixth grade had to wear red, 7th grade wore pink and 8th grade wore white. The staff also joined in on the fun and wore festive colors.

Some people got creative and dressed up with tutus, bright colored shirts, and even eye black in their assigned color. We think it was hard for the boys in 7th grade to find pink clothing because pink isn't very common in most boy closets. We also think red was a little hard to wear. White was probably the easiest because neutral colors are very common.

If there were to be a winner of the Somers Middle School Color Wars, we would say that 8th grade won with the color white. We think they would win because they had so much spirit. They were also the most creative.

All of the grades did a great job and were so festive though. Red, white, and pink are all considered "Valentine's Day colors" because they remind us of love, hearts, and friendship.

In conclusion, the Winter Color Wars Day was a success! Everyone looked great and it was a lot of fun to see the school filled with bright fun colors and lots of energy! Keep the spirit up!!!



Hiding the Plush



By William Mifsud
Tusker Tribune Staff

This is a continuation of a story that was featured in last week's Tusker Tribune.

I walked into the Social Studies room a millisecond after the late bell.

"You," Mr. Greenwood said.

I perked my head up. "Yeah?" I said back.

"You're one millisecond late," he said to me.

"So?" I asked.

"Shame Corner, three seconds," Mr. Greenwood said.

"Not too bad," I said.

"Want me to make it 3 minutes?" he asked.

"No, sir!" I told him. I sat down in the Shame Corner. I'm glad he put a chair in. I looked around. Rusty pipes. Cracks on the walls. Looked like he wasn't kidding.

"Time's up," Mr. Greenwood said. "Now locate your seat."

I found a seat with a card. I opened it. It said my name in all caps. "DANIEL." The other students were already here. I was the last one! What a bummer.

When I sat down in my seat, I noticed a plush head on his desk. I almost flinched.

"Quick reminder," Mr. Greenwood said. "If you sneak a plush into the class--" he picked up the plush head. "--This will happen to it. So, to make sure you're not hiding a plush, I'm gonna have to investigate your backpacks."

Oh, no. The moment he said "backpacks", I immediately imagined my plushie's gravestone.

"Hey," Ed whispered. I turned my head over to him. Mr. Greenwood was still investigating Mia's bag.

"I don't want my plush to end up like that plush on the desk!" I told Ed.

Ed nodded. "Hmm . . ." he said. "Interesting. I believe I can help you."

"I KNOW YOU CAN HELP ME! JUST DO IT!" I whispered, trying not to sound loud.

"Okay," Ed said. "If you're that desperate, here's what to do: Take it out and hide it somewhere." Ed crossed his arms. "Problem solved!" he said proudly.

"Yeah," I said. "There might be a downside."

Ed looked over at me. "What is it, man? C'mon, man! Talk to me! After all, we're friends, right?" That made me shake up a bit.

"Fine," I said. I told him that if we were to hide it, someone might tell the teacher about what we were doing, and we'd go to the Shame Corner.

"Oh, that makes sense," Ed said. "That's possible, so we'll have to do something and see if anyone tattles. If so, hiding it won't work." Ed suddenly knocked my pencil over to see what would happen.

"Oops!" he said sarcastically.

"Mr. Greenwood!" We heard a voice call out.

"Yup, not working." I said to Ed.

"Eddie knocked over Daniel's pencil!"

"ED!" Mr. Greenwood yelled.

"Yes?" Ed said to Mr. Greenwood, trembling with fake fear.

"SHAME CORNER, ONE MINUTE, NOW!"

He went over and saluted me. "You got this, Daniel," he said. "Just be quick. He's coming to investigate yours, and remember, also be quick to avoid getting in trouble."

I picked up my plush, hid it, and sat back down. Nothing happened! He investigated.

"Pass." He said.

I hope you enjoyed! Stick around for Part 6 where we see what happens in his class!