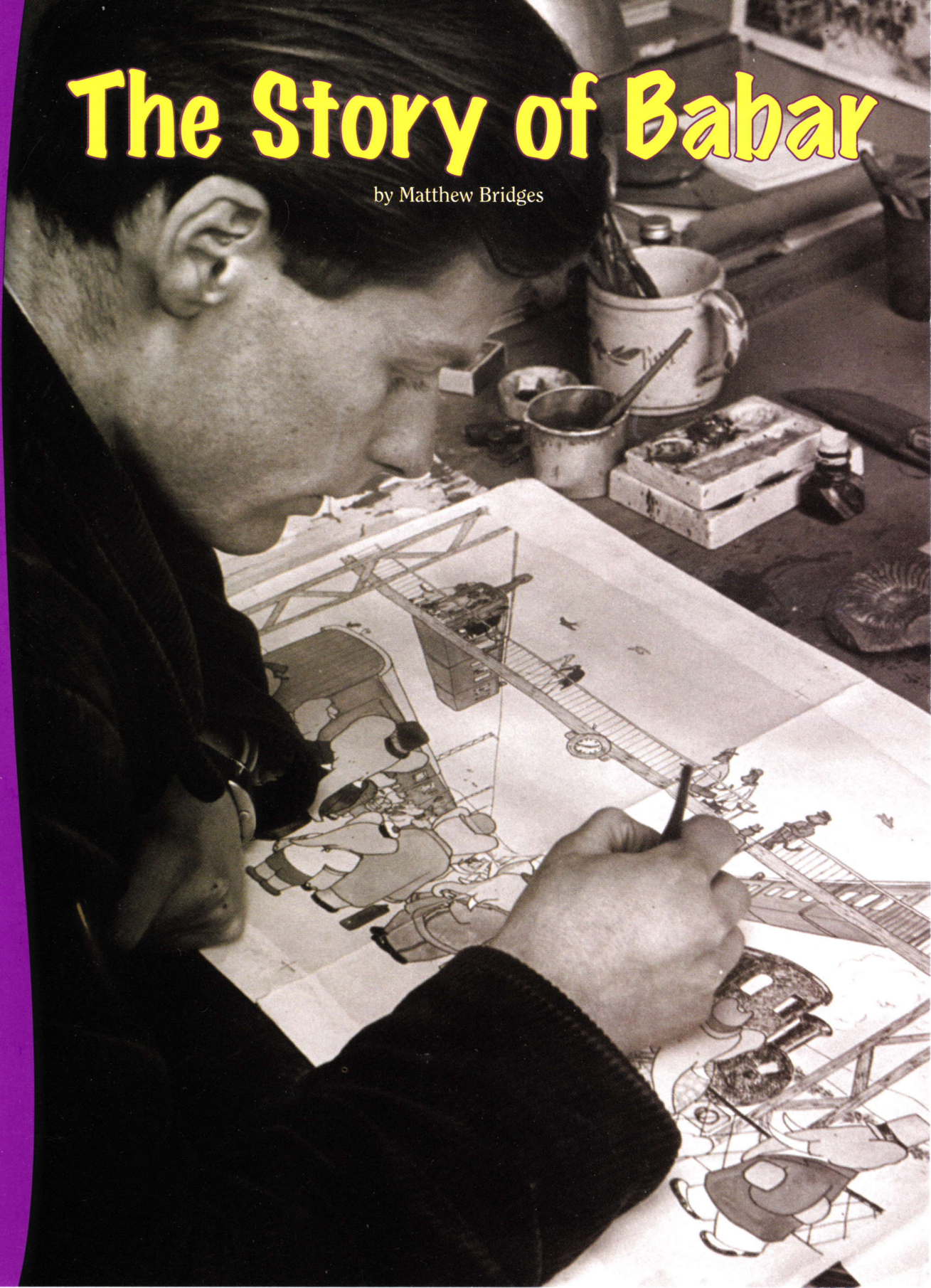


The Story of Babar

by Matthew Bridges

Purple Ic
Power Builder

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- 1 Babar the Elephant is one of the most popular children's characters in the world. However, he might never have existed if a young boy had not gotten a stomachache.
- 2 The year was 1930. Jean de Brunhoff lived in France with his wife and two small sons. He worked as a painter of portraits, flowers, and animals. One day, his son Matthieu told his mother that his stomach hurt. She put him to bed. At first it was easy to keep him in bed. Soon Matthieu started feeling better. He wanted to get out of bed and play. However, his mother wanted him to stay in bed and rest.
- 3 Matthieu's mother tried to entertain her son. She sang him songs, read him stories, and played games with him. However, after many hours, she ran out of things to do with Matthieu. So she decided to come up with her own story to entertain her son.
- 4 Once Matthieu had climbed back into bed, she began telling him a story about a baby elephant. It was not a story about the type of elephant that lives in the jungle. This elephant was the kind that goes to a store to buy new clothes.
- 5 Matthieu loved the story and asked his mother to repeat it. Soon his brother, Laurent, came into the room. He wanted to hear the story as well. So their mother repeated the story about the elephant that went to a store to buy new clothes.
- 6 By the time Jean de Brunhoff came home from work, the two boys were fast asleep. The mother told her husband the story she told to keep the two boys in bed. Jean de Brunhoff listened to the story about the little elephant that his wife had made up.
- 7 He loved the story. He thought the story about an elephant that goes shopping for clothes would make a delightful book for children.
- 8 Jean de Brunhoff decided to draw the elephant himself with watercolors. He worked on the sketches for many days. Then he showed his wife and sons his drawings. The family loved his drawings. The boys asked their father to draw more pictures of the baby elephant.
- 9 Jean de Brunhoff worked on the drawings every day and showed the drawings to his family at night. He worked on the artwork for many days and nights. When the artwork was finally done, he wrote the story his wife had told the two boys. He named the baby elephant Babar.
- 10 Finally Jean de Brunhoff took the story to some French publishers. They loved it. The publishers thought a story about an elephant would make an excellent book for children. The *Story of Babar* was published in France in 1932. It was published in English the following year. Soon children all over the world fell in love with Babar the Elephant.
- 11 Jean de Brunhoff and his son, Laurent, wrote many stories about Babar the Elephant. These stories have been printed in many different languages. These stories tell about Babar, his friend the Old Lady, Queen Celeste, and many other wonderful characters. Children everywhere love the stories and the rich, colorful drawings.
- 12 However, if it had not been for a stomachache, the story about Babar the Elephant might never have been written.

COMPREHENSION

A Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a*, *b*, or *c*.

- 1 This story was written to show
 - a** how an elephant got a stomachache.
 - b** how the Babar books got started.
 - c** that parents can write books.
- 2 You know Matthieu liked his mother's story because
 - a** he thought the pictures were lovely.
 - b** he could not keep still.
 - c** Neither **a** nor **b**
- 3 Mrs. de Brunhoff told the story of Babar because
 - a** she wanted her child to stay in bed.

b she had run out of things to do.

c Both **a** and **b**

- 4 American children had to wait until 1933
 - a** to be able to read *The Story of Babar*.
 - b** to be able to print *The Story of Babar*.
 - c** Both **a** and **b**
- 5 The writer of this story thinks Babar would never have been written if
 - a** Jean de Brunhoff was not an artist.
 - b** a young boy did not have a stomachache.
 - c** the publisher did not like the story.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

B Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.) Write the word.

- 1 people in a story (1)
- 2 to keep interested and amused (3)
- 3 told again (5)
- 4 full of great pleasure (7)
- 5 paint that is made by mixing pigment with water (8)
- 6 made into a book (10)
- 7 sketches; pieces of art (11)

C **too** = also

two = the number after *one*

Words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings are called homophones. *Too* and *two* are homophones.

Look at each word in **bold type** below. Note the paragraph number. Look at the paragraph and find the homophone. Which of the two words fits in the blank in the sentence? Write the word.

8 **sun** (3)

Jean de Brunhoff's _____ felt better the next day.

9 **here** (5)

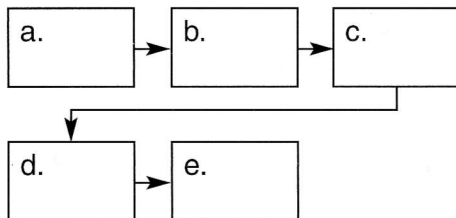
I can _____ the radio from the next room.

10 **too** (6)

My birthday is _____ days after Presidents' Day.

THINK ABOUT IT

- D** Look at the story map below. Complete the story map by writing the letter that tells in what order each event happened.



- 1 To keep him in bed, his mother made up a story about an elephant.
- 2 The Babar books became loved by children everywhere.
- 3 His father liked the story, so he made sketches to go with it.
- 4 Once a little French boy had a stomachache.
- 5 The father got the book printed by French publishers.

E *Matthieu's* family is famous.

You add an 's to a noun to show that someone or something owns something. There are also special pronouns that show the same thing.

His family is famous.

Read the sentences. Which word or words does each underlined pronoun stand for? Write *a* or *b*.

- 6 Mrs. de Brunhoff wanted to help Matthieu. Her son was not feeling well.
 - a Matthieu's
 - b Mrs. de Brunhoff's
- 7 Mrs. de Brunhoff made up a story for Matthieu. His mother told great stories.
 - a Matthieu's
 - b Mrs. de Brunhoff's

- 8 Mrs. de Brunhoff told Matthieu, "I think Laurent, your brother, would like it."

- a Laurent's
- b Matthieu's

- 9 The boys were happy when they saw the pictures their father had drawn.

- a The pictures'
- b The boys'

- 10 Jean told his family, "Someday our book will be read by children everywhere."

- a The family's
- b Jean's

- F** Words with similar or nearly similar meanings are called synonyms. *Sick* is a synonym of *ill*.

Read each sentence. Which word in parentheses () is a synonym of the word in **bold type**? Write the word.

- 11 Matthieu didn't stay **quiet** for long. (loud, still)
- 12 Mother thought a **funny** story would help. (amusing, sorry)
- 13 Matthieu **enjoyed** the story. (liked, hated)
- 14 It was **hard** for them to be quiet. (easy, difficult)
- 15 The publishers thought it would be an **excellent** book for children. (great, poor)