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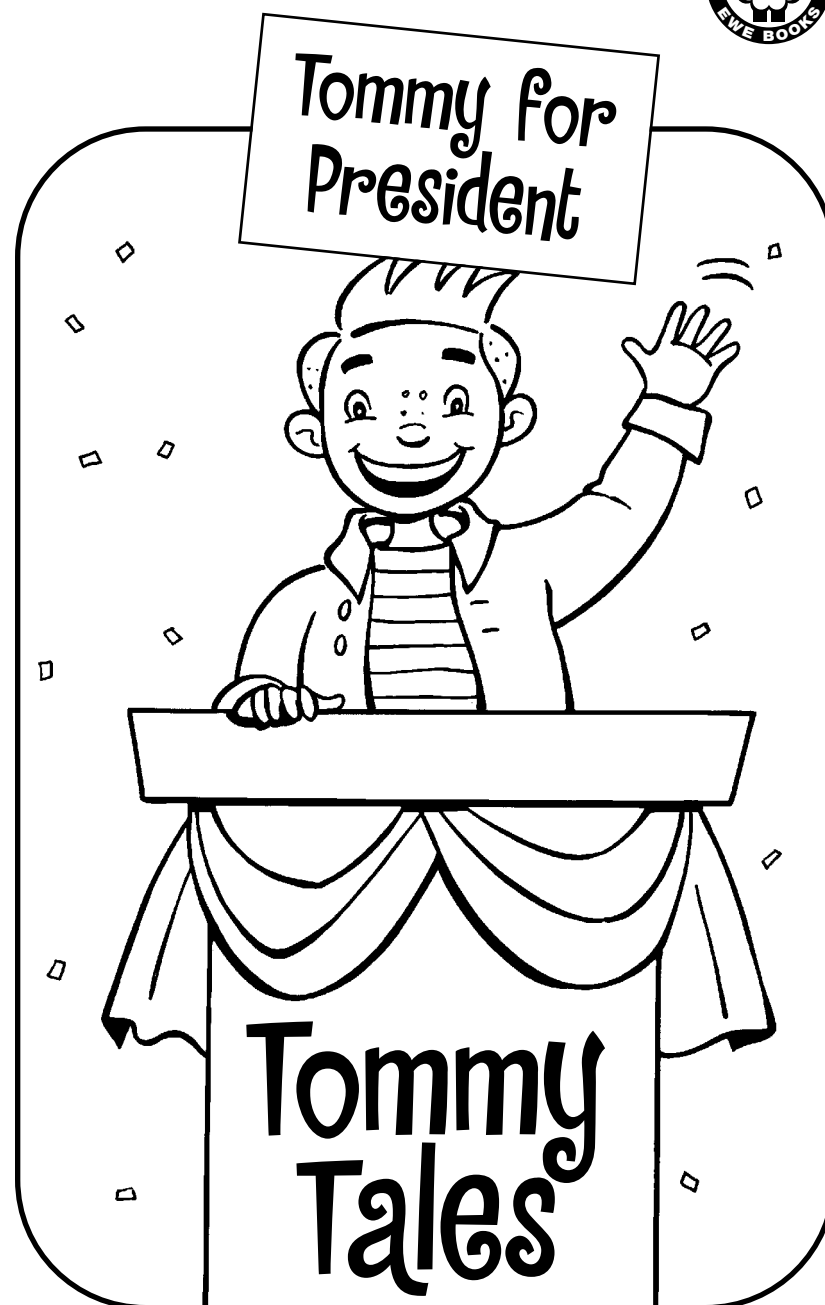
**Tommy Tales feature the lovable rascal Tommy
Tompkins and his friends.**

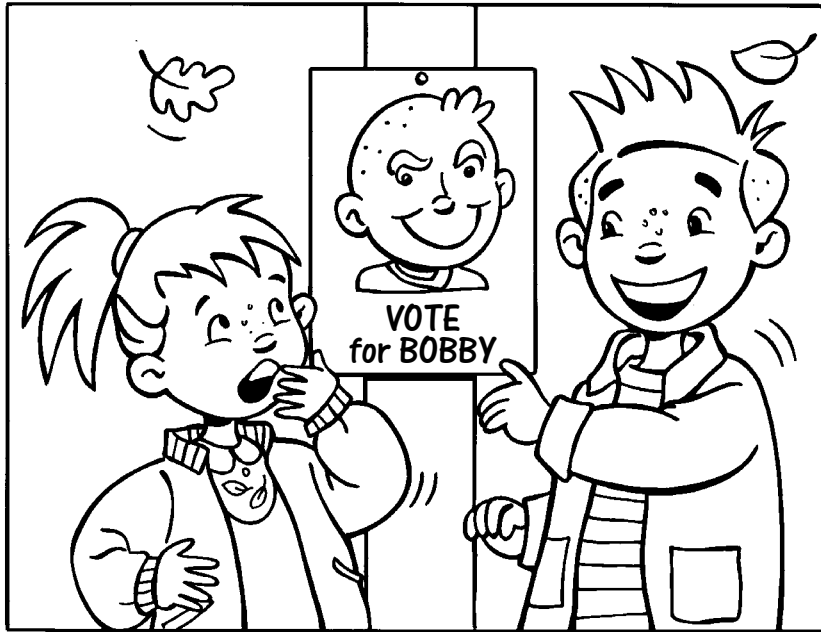
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BOOK 24





Tommy and his sister, Sam, were walking to school one morning when they saw a poster stuck on a lamppost.

“Look,” said Sam, “It’s a picture of Bobby Williams. I wonder what he’s done now.”

“He hasn’t done anything,” said Tommy.

“The poster says ‘Vote for Bobby’. He wants to be student president.”

“But Bobby’s the biggest bully in the school. Who’d want to vote for him?” Sam asked.



They walked into the schoolyard and saw Bobby standing on a wooden box. He was talking to a large crowd of students who were in a big circle around him.

Tommy saw Lucy and Andy among the crowd.

“What’s going on?” asked Tommy.

“Bobby’s making a speech. He is telling us what he’ll do for us when he’s student president. But we know all his promises are lies,” answered Andy.

"Yes," said Lucy. "He said that he would abolish all homework. And he said he'd have an ice-cream machine in every classroom."

"That's silly," said Tommy. "The teachers will never agree. Can we vote for anyone instead of Bobby?"

"That's the problem," answered Lucy.

"Everyone else is afraid to run for student president."

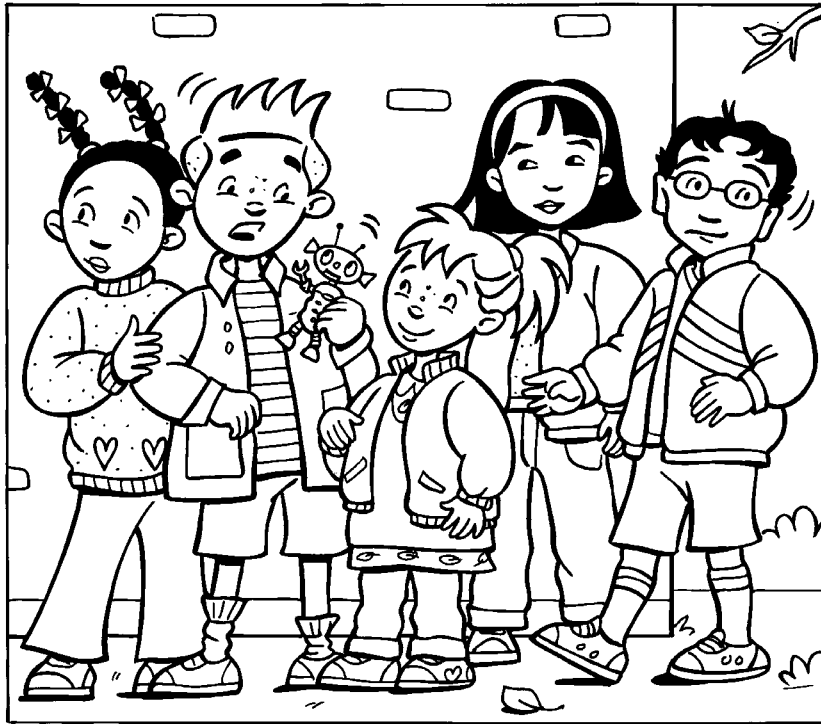


Tommy saw Kim talking to three or four students. He waved to her and she walked over to him.

Kim was very excited and whispered quickly, "Tommy, some of the students want you to run against Bobby. Nobody wants Bobby Williams for student president, but they are all afraid of him."

"I'm not afraid of Bobby," said Tommy, "but I don't know anything about being a president."

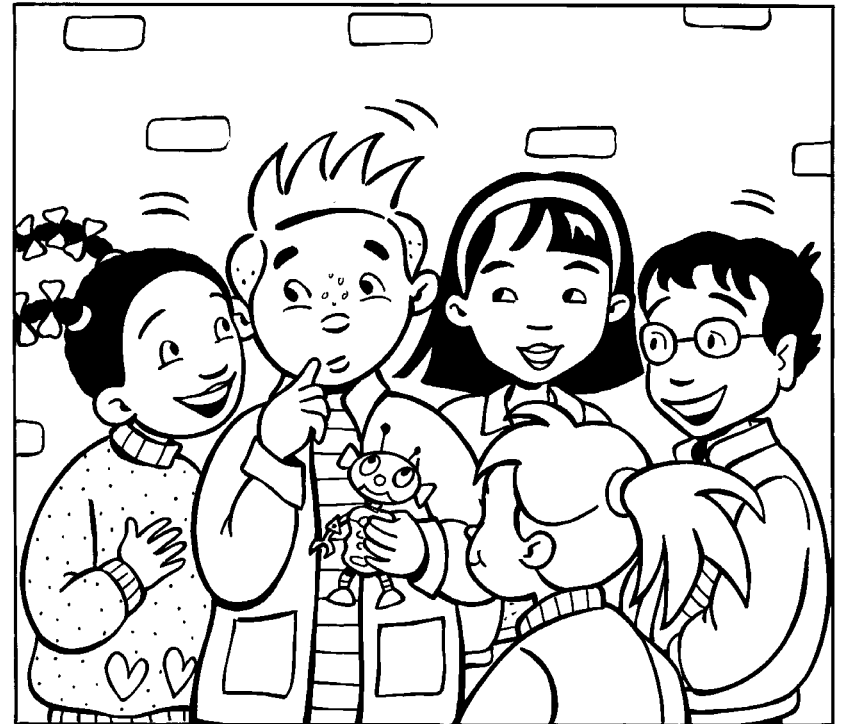




"I can help you," said a little voice from Tommy's pocket.

Tommy walked with his friends to a quiet corner of the school playground, where he pulled his little robot friend, RK-5, from his pocket.

"Now, how do you think you can help me find out about being a president?" asked Tommy.



"I will take you to meet the first president of the United States of America. He will tell you how to be a good president," said RK-5.

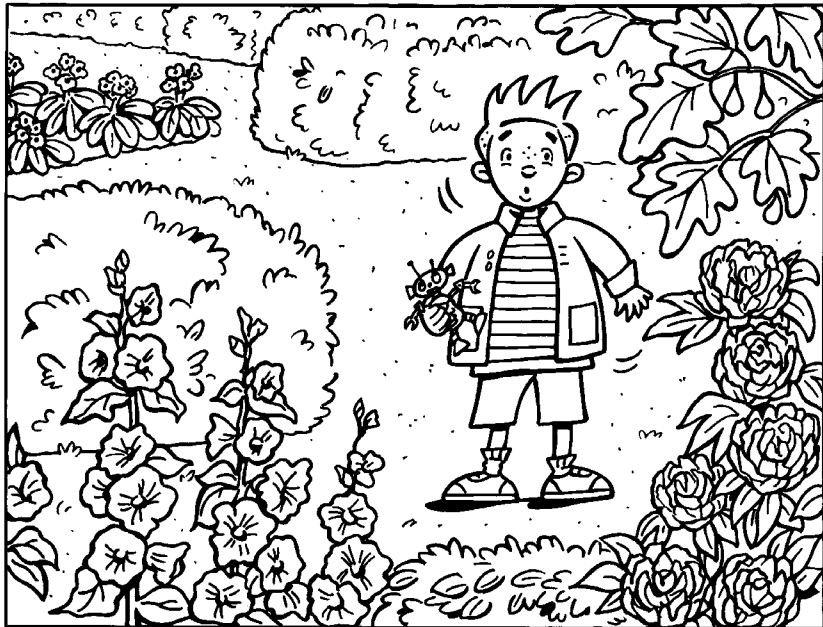
"Yes, yes," said Lucy. "You must go and meet George Washington. He will give you good advice. While you are away, we'll ask the school secretary to put your name down to run against Bobby."

"Okay," said Tommy. "I'll do it."

RK-5 gave Tommy the code that would take him back to the time of George Washington. The other four children closed the circle around Tommy. He punched in the numbers on RK-5's number pad.

There was a flash of light and a cloud of blue smoke. When the smoke had cleared, Tommy and RK-5 had disappeared.

When Tommy opened his eyes, he saw he was in a beautiful garden. He heard footsteps coming toward him.



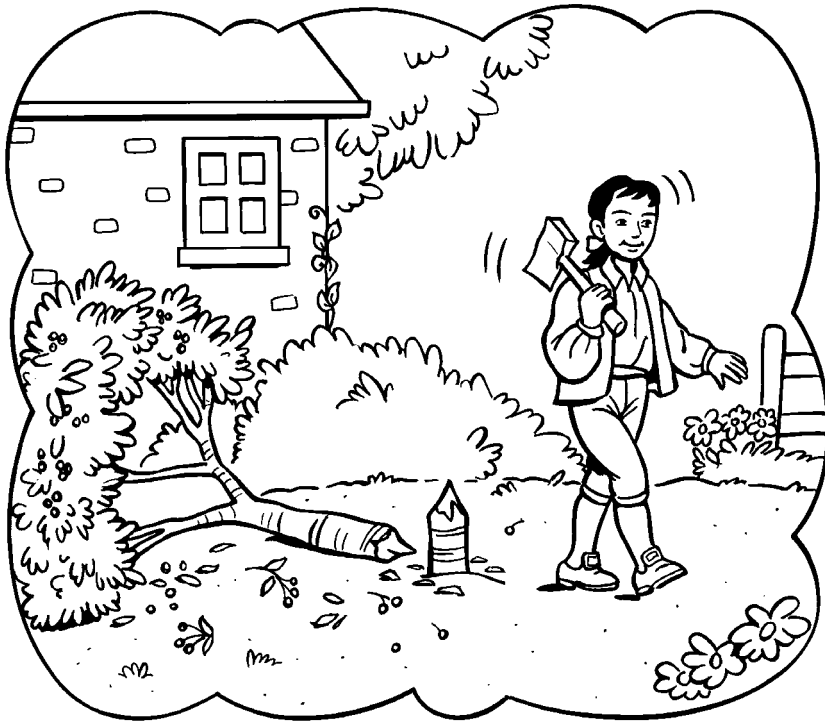
"My word, what do we have here?" said the voice above him. "What are you doing here, young man?"

Tommy looked up. He saw the man whose face is on the United States' one-dollar bill. It was George Washington.

"Hello, sir. My name is Tommy. I have come to ask your advice about being a president."

"I will tell you one thing," said President Washington. "It is something presidents must do. It is also something all people must always do, even children like you."





"You must always tell the truth," he said.

"Never tell a lie. Let me tell you a story."

When I was about your age, my father gave me an axe. I went to the forest, but all the trees were too big for me to chop down. So I went to our garden and found a tree just the right size. I chopped it down in less than 10 minutes.

My father was so angry when he came home. I had chopped down his beautiful cherry tree.

"Who has chopped down my beautiful cherry tree?" yelled my father.

Nobody knew that I had done it. I could have said nothing. But I knew I had to tell the truth. I said "It was I, father."

I expected to be punished. But my father did not punish me. He said that he forgave me because I had told him the truth. He said he would always trust me.

"Always tell the truth," President George Washington said. "That is my advice to you, young man. I must go now. Goodbye."





Tommy punched a new code into RK-5's number pad. Within seconds, he was back with his friends in the school playground.

"You are now an official candidate for school president," said Kim.

"And guess what?" said Sam. "Because you were so brave, two other kids put their names down to run for school president."

Andy took a photo of Tommy with his digital camera. "This will be for your poster," Andy said.

"You have to make a speech," said Lucy.

Tommy stood on a little wall and began his speech.

"If I become your president," he said, "I will always tell you the truth. I will not tell you lies just to get elected. There will be no ice-cream machines in the classrooms. We will continue to get homework. But I will fight for better meals in the lunchroom. I will . . ."

Tommy had to stop talking because of all the cheering.





Bobby was still on his box. He was shouting, but nobody was listening. "If I am president, we'll all start school one hour later," yelled Bobby.

Nobody took any notice of him. They were listening to Tommy, Carlene Washington, and Aiden Chan, two new candidates for student president.

At dinner that evening, Tommy told his parents that he was running for school president. They asked him if he was excited.

Tommy said, "I cannot tell a lie. I don't really want to be president. I just entered so Bobby the bully wouldn't be president. There are two other kids who would be better than me, and they really want the job."

"Well, what are you going to do?" asked Dad.

"I'll have to tell the truth, Dad," said Tommy.

"I'll tell the kids that I don't really want the job, but if they elect me, I'll do my best."

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