

The Boy Who Loved Words

Book by Roni Schotter

Literature based unit study prepared by Celia Hartmann

Bible / Character

Spreading the Word / Sharing the Word:

In our story, Selig finally realizes that his mission is to share his words. What if we take the words from the text and add two capital letters? Like this:

*"...Selig realized his mission. It was spreading the **W**ord--sharing **H**is words with others!"*

Is that not The Great Commission? Jesus commands us that our mission is to share the gospel, to share His words with others. Just as Selig found that sharing words with others brought them joy, so does sharing the gospel with others--and more than joy, it can lead to eternal life for others!

Finding Our Purpose

Our main purpose in life is to bring glory to God. Glorifying God means that we put Him first in all things; that we love Him with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind; and that we give Him the praise and worship that He alone is due.

Help your student to make a list of the specific things he can do (or that he already does) to bring glory to God. Help him see the 'everyday' things that can be done.

I Corinthians 10:31 says that "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." All of our actions--all that we do--should reflect and be for God's glory.

Also discuss with him how we can use our talents to glorify God. Each of us have things we're good at and we can use those abilities for God's work. Throughout history, God has given certain people special qualities or spiritual gifts to go about His work. Here are some of them.

Missionary

It is the special gift given by the Holy Spirit to certain members of

the body of Christ (local church) to minister whatever other spiritual gifts they have in a second culture or second community. See 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

Healing

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit employs certain Christians to restore health to the sick.

See James 5:13-16, Luke 9:1-2.

Intercession

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to pray for extended periods of time with great positive effect for the building of the Kingdom.

See 1 Thessalonian 3:10-13, 1 Timothy 2:1-2.

Craftsmanship

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit endows certain Christians to use hands and minds to build up the Kingdom through artistic, creative means.

See Exodus 28:3-4.

Hospitality

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to open their homes willingly and offer lodging, food, and fellowship cheerfully to other people.

See Genesis 18:1-15.

Faith

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit provides Christians with extraordinary confidence in God's promises, power, and presence so that they can take heroic stands for their future of God's work in the church.

See Hebrews 11.

Discernment

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit certain Christians to know with assurance whether some behavior is of God or of Satan.

See Acts 5:3-6, Acts 16:16-18.

Mercy

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to feel exceptional empathy and compassion for those who are suffering so that they devote large amounts of time and energy to alleviate it.

See Luke 10:30-37.

Giving

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to offer their material blessings for the work of the church with exceptional willingness, cheerfulness and liberality.

See 2 Corinthians 8:1-5.

Administration

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to understand the goals of a given segment of the Church's ministry and to direct that area effectively, keeping the Church on course.

See Acts 15:12-21.

Leadership

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to motivate, direct and inspire God's people in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to do the Church's work effectively.

See Hebrews 13:7, Judges 3:10, Exodus 18:13-16.

Helps

It is the spiritual gift whereby the Spirit empowers certain Christians to willingly bear the burdens of other Christians and help them in such a way that they can do their tasks more effectively.

See Acts 6:2-4.

Serving

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit empowers certain Christians to identify unmet needs of people and implement plans to meet those

needs. Serving one another, like witnessing, is a calling of all Christians, but there are some who have a special desire to find ways to serve, and get great blessing from it. There seems to be a special desire to meet physical needs in the people who have this gift. See Galatians 6:1-2.

Knowledge

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to understand in an exceptional way the great truths of God's Word and to make them relevant to specific situations in the church. See Ephesians 3:14-19.

Wisdom

James 3:13-17

See It is the special gift whereby the Spirit endows particular Christians with an understanding of God's will and work as it relates to the living of life..

Exhortation

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to stand beside fellow Christians in need and bring comfort, counsel and encouragement so they feel helped. See Acts 11:23-24, Acts 14:21-22.

Music

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to praise God through various forms of music and enhance the worship experience of the local congregation. See 1 Corinthians 14:26, Mark 14:26.

Teacher

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables particular Christians to communicate the truths of God's Word so that others can learn. See Hebrews 5:12-14.

Pastor

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to assume responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of believers.

See 1 Peter 5:1-11.

Evangelist

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables particular Christians to share the Gospel to unbelievers in such a way that the unbeliever becomes a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

See Acts 8:26-40.

Prophet

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit empowers certain Christians to interpret and apply God's revelation in a given situation.

See 1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 1 Corinthians 14:30-33, 1 Corinthians 14:37-40.

Apostle

It is the gift whereby the Spirit appoints certain Christians to lead, inspire and develop the churches of God by the proclamation and the teaching of true doctrine.

See Acts 12:1-5, Acts 14:21-23.

[Credit for Definitions](#)

Bible Verses

Choose one or two to memorize and/or use as copywork this week.

Jeremiah 15:16

*Thy words were found, and I did eat them;
and thy word was unto me the joy
and rejoicing of mine heart:
for I am called by thy name,
O LORD God of hosts.*

Proverbs 25:11

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

Proverbs 15:2

*The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright:
but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*

Proverbs 15:23

*A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth:
and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!*

Social Studies

Geography - "The Old Country" When people from various countries (particularly Europe) immigrate to America, they leave behind "their old country." When they settle, they often refer to "The Old Country" and the way things were there. They tended to settle near other families from the same country, so they could continue to speak their native language, follow the same customs, and attend a church that was similar to what they left behind. (If someone in your family immigrated to America, you may wish to discuss what it was like for them, why they left, and how they maintained a connection to the country they left.)

Our story does not tell us from where Selig's family emigrated; however, there are clues to help narrow it down. See the Art lesson below for how illustrations can give clues to the story's setting. (You may wish to create two story disks--one to represent the "Old Country" of your choosing and one to represent New York and place them on world map. Use a piece of yarn between the two to show the connection.)

Hobbies/Collections: A hobby is something that someone enjoys doing in their spare time. For some people their hobby involves collecting things (such rocks, sea shells, coins, stamps, bells, dolls, etc.), while others pursue a sports activity (golf, horseback riding, etc.) or do something artistic (painting, making crafts, play music). Does your student have a hobby or collect something?

Games: Some of the children are shown playing with balls, nets, or bats. Others are sitting and playing marbles. What games does your student like to play? If interested, have your student poll several family members to find out what their favorite game is (or was during their childhood). Graph the results, or just make a

list.

Poets: In our story, a poet was struggling to find the right words. A poet is someone who is gifted at writing prose that is beautiful, imaginative, and eloquent. Poets have been around for a very long time. They would tell stories and histories for entertainment and as a way of preserving the information before written information was readily available. The oldest surviving poem, *the Epic of Gilgamesh*, was written in cuneiform (the earliest alphabet) in ancient Sumer (Mesopotamia).

There have been many, many famous poets in history. Have your student choose one or two and help him learn more about that poet, his works, and why his poetry made him famous. Choose one of his poems for copywork or memorization. Here are just a few possibilities:

Basho

John Keats

Robert Browning

Christina Rossetti

E.E. Cummings

William Shakespeare

Emily Dickinson

Shel Silverstein

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Walt Whitman

Eugene Field

William Butler Yeats

Robert Frost

Name Calling / Being Made Fun of: Selig was called an oddball. (Again, if you have shared *Rocks in His Head*, remind your student of how people told the man that he must have rocks in his head--they were making fun of him.)

Discuss how Selig must have felt. No one likes to be called odd or strange or being made fun of. Has this ever happened to your student? Talk about it. Or perhaps your student has made fun of someone else. Discuss how the other person must have felt. Do you think Jesus would want us to call someone names? What would Jesus want us to do? I Thess. 5:11 tells us to encourage and build one another up.

Language Arts

Repetition: Repetition of words creates rhythm in the story along with anticipation. Ask your student if he can remember the phrases that are repeated throughout the story? *Upon my word! How lucky we are!* After a couple readings, your child will probably anticipate these phrases and you might pause to allow him to interject these phrases into your reading.

Alliteration: A few sentences or phrases within the story contain alliteration, the repetition of the first consonant sound. One example from the story:

Waving her arms in the air, she was a windmill of worry.

Have your student find others within the story, or make up his own. For copywork, have him copy the word alliteration along with the definition, then have him copy his favorite from the story (or one of his own).

Legends / Myths: *"And so, by word of mouth, the legend began...." "Years passed. Selig was a man now, also a myth."*

What are they? How do they get started?

According to [Wiki](#), a "*legend is a story, that is probably about someone that did exist but has been twisted to seem more interesting and fascinating. This story is passed down generation to generation.*"

Some feel that the word legend and myth are interchangeable (i.e., that they mean the same thing), but some think that they are slightly different, that a myth is not based a true story or about a real person. (Think about Greek and Roman mythology--stories of gods that were made up.)

So do these stories get started? Just like in our story, it's usually "by word of mouth." With each telling of the story, new information may be introduced and eventually the story takes on a new flavor.

If your student is particularly interested in legends and myths, he may wish to read about King Arthur, Robin Hood, William Tell, or the Greek and Roman myths.

Vocabulary: There are oodles of fun and interesting words in this book! Your child will be overwhelmed if you choose them all to learn. Instead choose a few that might be fun for him. There's a glossary in the back with a list of the words and their definitions. Also see the art lesson below for an extension of this lesson.

Glossary Skills: Explain to your student what a glossary is. A glossary is a list at the back of a book that explains the meanings of difficult or unusual words used in the text. Most picture books do not have a glossary, but because of all the fun (and probably new to the reader) words, the author provided their meanings. Help your student look up any unfamiliar word from the text in the glossary at the back of the book.

Accent: Some people talk with an accent. Has your student ever heard someone talk that sounds different from the way he talks? People all over have accents: in the southern United States, New York, Boston. People who learned English as their second language also have accents. Accents can help you guess where they come from or their nationality.

The genie in our story has an accent. Notice how the sounds that are a /wh/ to us are spoken with a /v/ by him. For example: What = vhat, wish=vish.

Those of German descent often have an accent that substitutes the /w/ sound with a /v/ sound.

Notice also that the genie's /or/ sound when he said Selig's nickname Wordsworth, instead comes out like an /oy/ ...Voidsvoith. Same with the word 'words' ('voids') and the word 'purpose' (poipose).

Looking at picture of the genie, he looks very Jewish, specifically an Orthodox Jew with the long beard, long side locks, and black hat and suit. Many older Jews-- particularly Orthodox Jews--speak what is becoming a dying language known as Yiddish, a mix of German and Hebrew. Yiddish is dying out because fewer and fewer people are speaking it on a regular basis. (In our art lesson we will/did learn how illustrations often give clues.....in this case, the picture of the genie helps to match his speech with his nationality.)

Literature Tie-in: find a story of *Aladdin* to tie in with the genie.

Copywork: Have your student use his best handwriting with one or more of the following quotes. (For more copywork ideas, see the Bible section.)

Without words, without writing, and without books there would be no history, there would be no concept of humanity. --Hermann Hesse

Good words are worth much and cost little. --George Herbert

Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless. --Josh Billings

Art

Make a Word Tree: Find a thing multi-branched twig and secure in a plastic or clay pot that has been filled with floral foam. (You may wish to use Spanish moss on top of the foam to cover it or just crumple some paper on top.) Provide your student with strips of paper and have him write down a couple of his favorite words (one per strip of paper). Next have him find some new words he likes.....have him look through a dictionary, magazine, or encyclopedia.

You may wish to start this tree the first day, so he can add to it throughout the time of your sharing. If you do, here's an extra language arts and handwriting practice lesson: have him choose two or three words from the tree and have him write one sentence in his best handwriting using those words.

If you use a vocabulary program, also have him include those words on the tree for extra practice of his vocabulary words.

Using the Illustrations to Determine Setting: Help your student use reasoning skills to determine the setting. Where might we find people who were originally from "The Old Country?" When people immigrated to America, they tended to find a place to live close to others from their native country--this was usually in larger cities. What are some larger American cities? Is there anything else in the story to help us determine the setting? How about the pictures of the buildings--do any of them give us a clue? And what about the picture of the harbor: The Statue of Liberty is there! Our story takes place in New York City!

Music

Lute: In our story, Melody plays a lute. As you can probably guess from the pictures, the lute is a stringed-instrument. It has a tear-drop shaped wooden body and a short neck. The lute was popular from the early renaissance to the late baroque eras, and was somewhat revived with the awakening of interest in historical music around 1900 and throughout the 20th century. The player of a lute is called a lutenist and a maker of lutes (or any string instrument) is called a luthier. Source: Wikipedia

Bunny Trail: Both Vivaldi and Bach composed music for the lute. Perhaps your student would enjoy learning more about one or both of these great composers.

Applied Math

Counting Syllables: There are so many neat words in the book. It might fun practice to count the syllables. Can your student categorize them? Have him make a list and place the two syllable words in one column, the three syllable in another, and so on. What word(s) has the most syllables? (tintinnabulating)

Pie Chart / Percent

On the page that talks about how Wordsworth became a legend, there is a chalkboard with a circle and a % sign. Has your student ever seen a pie chart (also called a circle graph)?

Activity: Get four M&Ms (one green, one red, one yellow, and one orange). Explain to him that he will create a pie chart that shows the percentage of color.

The pie chart on this page represents all of the M&Ms he has out. Have him color each part of the circle the corresponding color of the M&M. He has now made his pie chart and next he will determine percentages (without using any actual calculations! If you have an older student, you can discuss how percentages are really calculated and create pie charts for him to determine the percentages.)

Give your student four quarters. Remind him that four quarters is equal to one dollar. The name "quarter" came from the fact that one quarter is one-fourth of the whole dollar. So one-fourth of a dollar is a quarter or 25 cents.

Can your student see that one-fourth of the circle is colored for each M&M? Remember how one quarter is equal to 25 cents? Well, one-fourth of our pie chart is 25 percent, which we write as 25%.

If you ask your student what part of his pie chart is red and yellow, he should tell you half. You can then ask him how many cents is a half dollar worth? 50 cents....so half of our chart is 50 percent, written 50%.

Now, let's look at what part of the chart is red, yellow, and orange. Help your student to see that three of the four parts is colored. That would be like counting out three of the four quarters in a dollar. Have him count ... 25 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents. Can he guess what percent is three of the four parts? 75 percent, written 75%.

If you ask how much of the chart is colored that represents red, yellow, orange, and green, he will probably tell you "the whole thing!" Help him see that all four parts would be like counting the four quarters...25 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents, one dollar. Ask him how many cents are in one dollar? 100 cents are in one dollar, so having the entire pie chart colored is 100 percent, written 100%.

Science

Sleep and Dreams: In our story, Selig dreams of a genie. Later he dreams about his mom and macaroons. What are dreams? Why do we have them?

When we sleep, we go through 5 stages of sleep.

1st stage--a very light sleep

2nd stage--slightly deeper, brain activity is slowing down, muscles relax, heart rate slows, etc.

3rd and 4th--our deepest sleep, brain activity is slowest, muscles very relaxed, breathing slows, etc.

5th stage--REM sleep, which occurs about 1.5 hours after we go to sleep.

Throughout the night, we move in and out of these 5 stages of sleep. The first four stages are collectively known as non-REM sleep, or NREM sleep. It is during the fifth stage, REM sleep, that we experience the majority of our dreams--particularly

the ones we remember. (Although we dream every night, we do not always remember every dream we have or even whether we dreamed at all!)

REM is an acronym (an abbreviation that is pronounced as a word) for Rapid Eye Movement. During this stage, our brain activity increases and is very similar to the brain activity that occurs when we are awake. Our heart rate also increases, as does our breathing. Our eyes move around--a lot, hence the name of this stage. Despite all the activity inside our body, our body itself does not move much during dream.

For all that we know about dreams (most of which, by the way, we've only learned in the last 50-60 years!), we still don't really know why we dream!

You may also wish to explore dreams from the Bible. Here are a few:

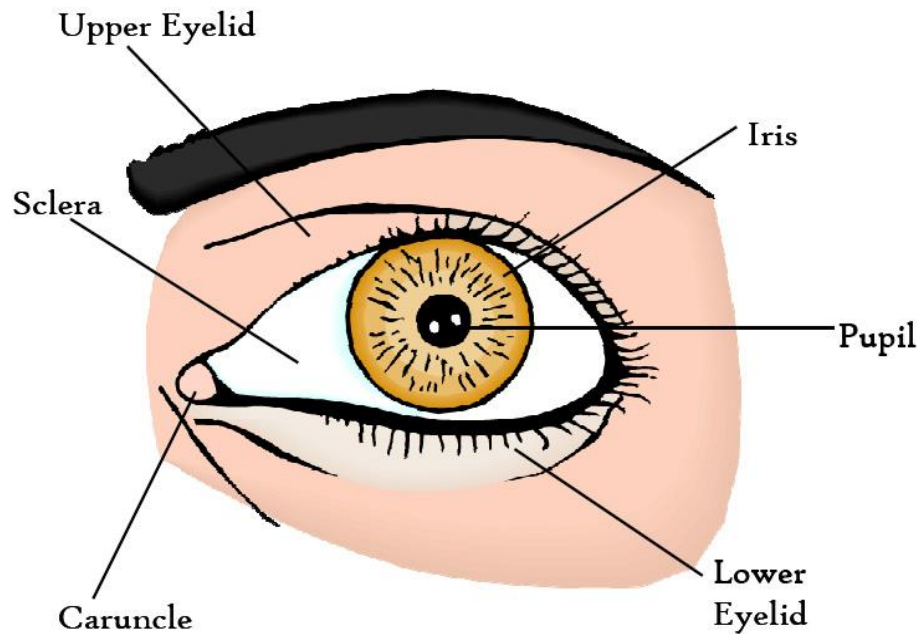
- Jacob dreamed of angels going up and down a ladder to heaven
- Joseph interpreted dreams
- Daniel and King Nebuchadnezzar's dream
- Joseph was told in a dream to not be afraid to take Mary as his wife and he was later warned in a dream to flee Bethlehem
- The Magi (wise men) were warned in a dream to take a different way home

Eye -- Sleep Crumbs: *"Wiping the sleep crumbs from his eyes, Selig scrambled down the tree....."* Do you ever wake up in the mornings and there's gunk in your eyes? There is no official name for it, but some people call it 'sand' in the eyes or sleepies or goop.

When you are awake, your eyelids blink and work like windshield wipers, wiping away tears, sweat, and oil and other things that get in the eyes. Tears constantly drip down the eyes from more than a dozen tubes above our eyes. (Crying produces a flood of these tears.) Tears keep the eye moist, clean, and clear of anything that might irritate your eyes (this is why more tears form when something is in your eye, they are trying to wash it out!).

But we have a problem at night...the eyelids are no longer blinking away the tears, sweat, and oil. So it collects near the caruncle in the commissure. A commissure is just a word for a place where things meet or join, in this case, where the upper

eyelid meets the bottom eyelid. The caruncle is the small, reddish bump at the inner corner of your eye. When you wake in the morning, often the mixture of tears, sweat, and oil have collected in the corner of your eye and that is the sleep crumbs mentioned in our story. Complete eye diagram.



Anatomy of the Eye

Cooking

Many foods are mentioned in this story. Choose several to share with your student this week. For example, one day you could serve apples with honey to dip them in, another you could allow your student to drink cream soda, another serve macaroons, etc. To complete your sharing of the unit, consider serving a supper of brisket with dumplings, plum crumble, strudel, and macaroons.

Here is a recipe for Easy Macaroons.

Easy Coconut 'Macaroons'

According to legend, macaroons were invented in an Italian monastery over 200 years ago. Later, during the French Revolution, two nuns (who became known as

the "Macaroon Sisters") baked and sold the cookies. The recipe was given to a Jewish community in France, who then made it a staple of Passover of baking. It remains a common recipe used during Passover since they are unleavened.

Macaroons are not an easy cookie to make correctly, so I'll list a simpler, but not quite a true macaroon recipe.

Easy Coconut 'Macaroons'

Ingredients:

2 eggs whites

1 c. white sugar (decrease to .5 cup if desired)

1 c. flaked coconut

2 to 2.5 c. crushed cornflakes cereal (not the sweetened/frosted kind)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease the cookie sheets generously.

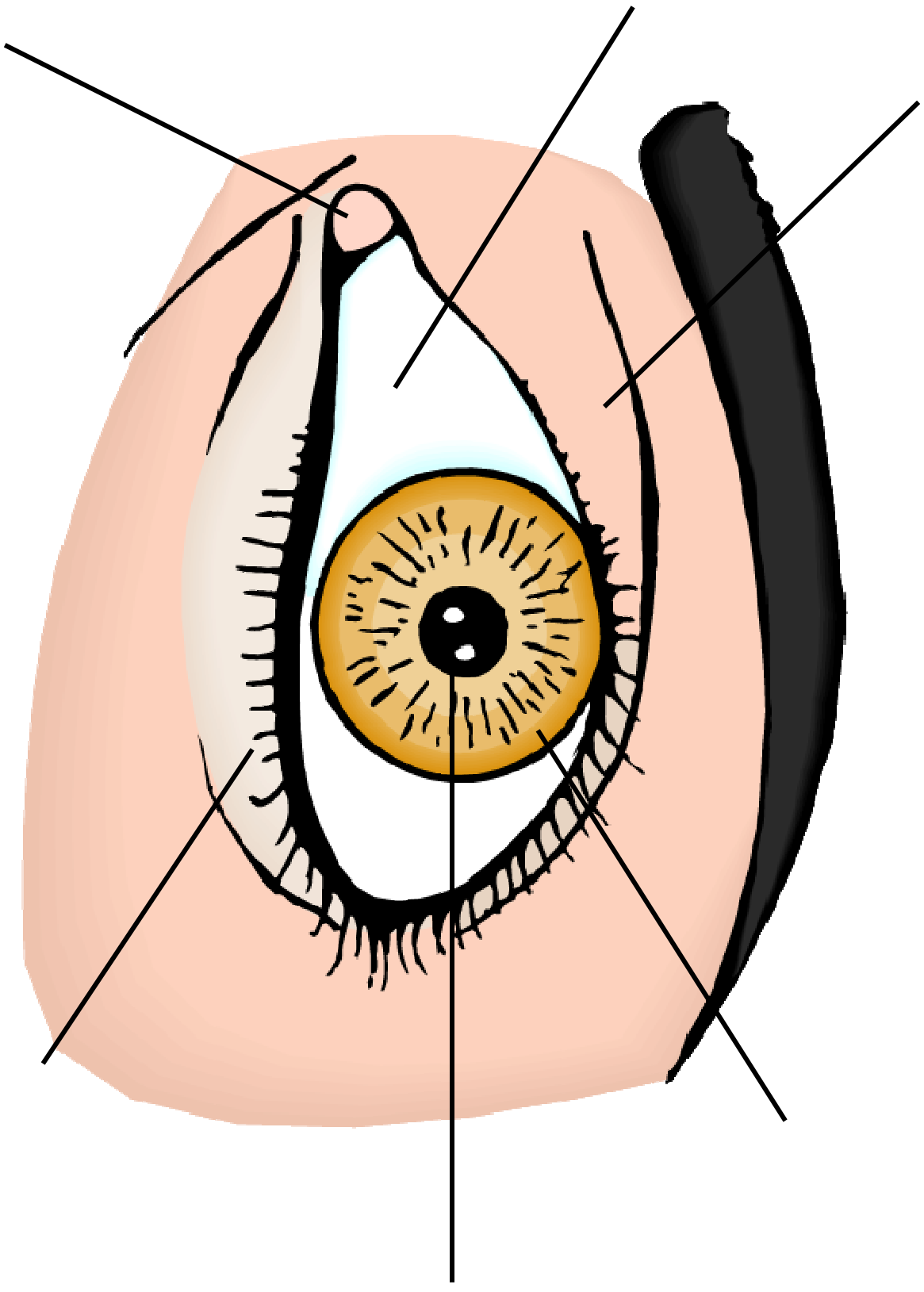
In a large glass or metal bowl, whip the egg white until stiff, glossy peaks are formed. Stir in the sugar. Fold in the coconut and cornflakes.

Drop the mixture by rounded mounds the size of a teaspoon onto the well-greased cookie sheet.

Bake for about 10 to 18 minutes. They are done when the coconut is golden in color. Remove from pan immediately using a thin metal spatula. Makes about 2.5 dozen.

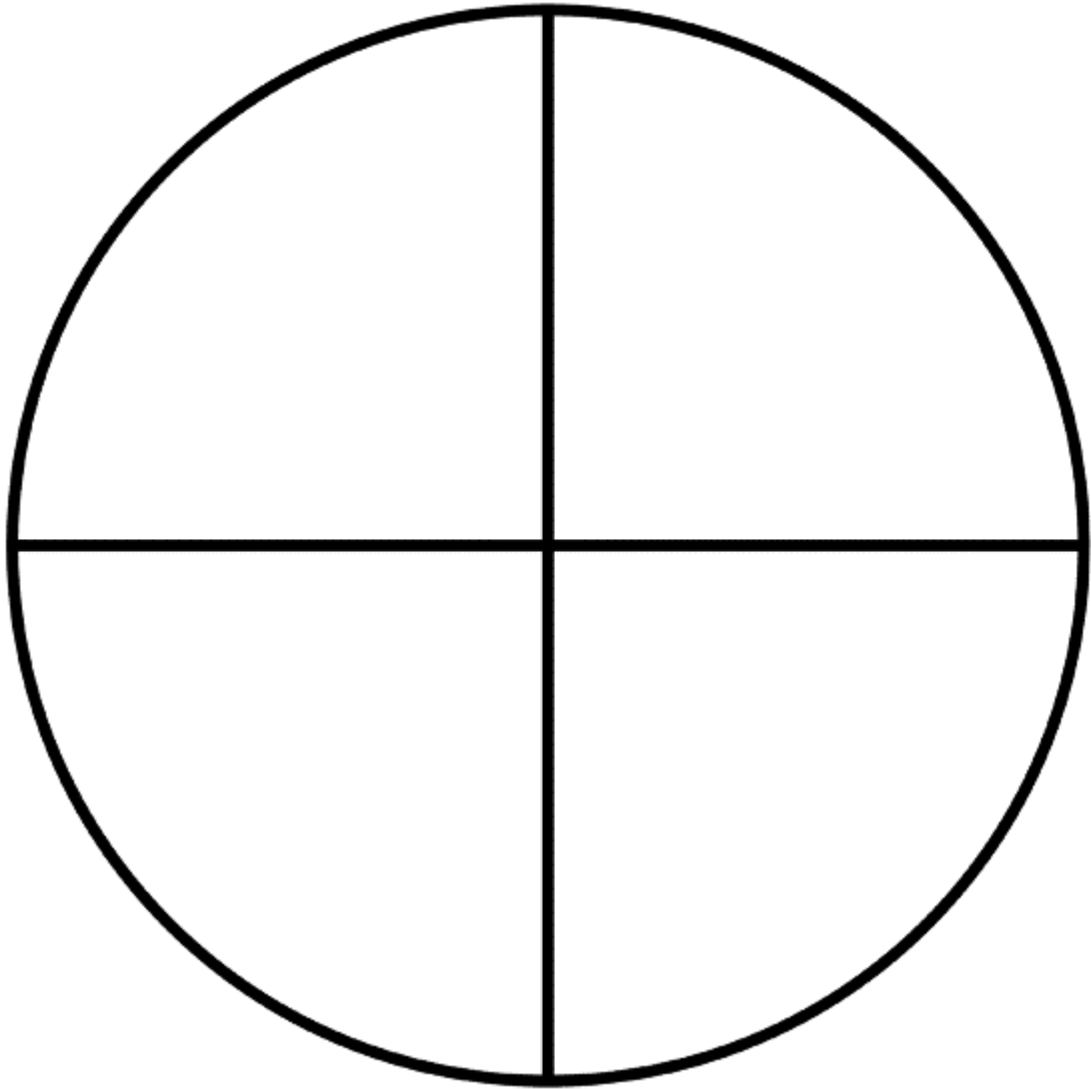
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Anatomy of the Eye

PIE GRAPHS AND PERCENTAGES



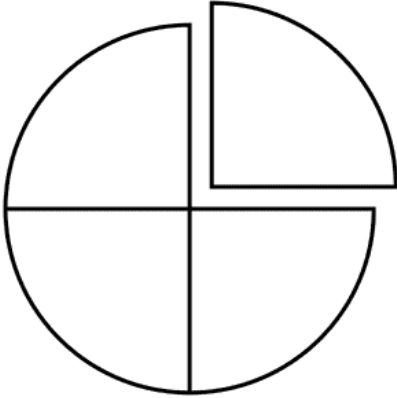
Get four M&Ms, one green, one red, one yellow, and one orange.
You will create a pie chart that shows the percentage of color.

This pie graph represents your M&Ms.
Color each part of the circle the corresponding color of M&M.

Think about each section as a quarter. Remember, four quarters equals one dollar.
The name "quarter" came from the fact that one quarter is one-fourth of the
whole dollar. So one-fourth of a dollar is a quarter or 25 cents.

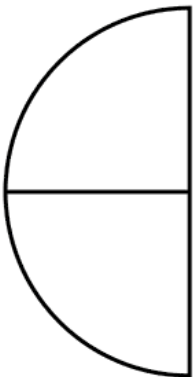
Write 25 on each of the quarters.

PIE GRAPHS AND PERCENTAGES



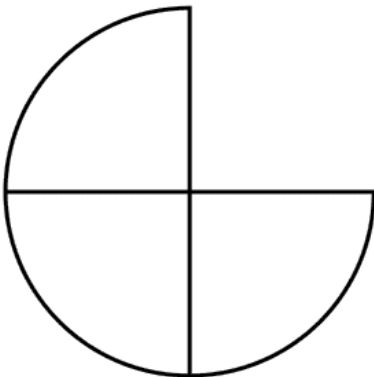
Can you see that one-fourth of the circle is colored for each M&M? Remember how one quarter is equal to 25 cents? Well, one-fourth of our pie chart is 25 percent, which we write as 25%.

$$\underline{\quad\quad} \text{ quarter} = \underline{\quad\quad} \text{¢} = \underline{\quad\quad} \%$$



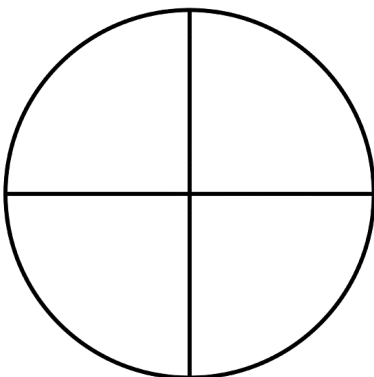
What part of your pie chart is red and yellow? How many cents is a half dollar worth? 50 cents...so half of our chart is 50 percent, written 50%.

$$\underline{\quad\quad} \text{ quarters} = \underline{\quad\quad} \text{¢} = \underline{\quad\quad} \%$$



What part of the chart is red, yellow, and orange? Three of the four parts is colored. That would be like counting out three of the four quarters in a dollar. Count... 25 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents. Can you guess what percent is three of the four parts? 75 percent, written 75%.

$$\underline{\quad\quad} \text{ quarters} = \underline{\quad\quad} \text{¢} = \underline{\quad\quad} \%$$



How much of the chart is colored that represents red, yellow, orange, and green? It is like counting the four quarters...25 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents, one dollar. How many cents are in one dollar? 100 cents are in one dollar, so having the entire pie chart colored is 100 percent, written 100%.

$$\underline{\quad\quad} \text{ quarters} = \underline{\quad\quad} \text{¢} = \underline{\quad\quad} \%$$