

# IT'S NOT A GOOD DAY FOR SCHOOL TODAY

By Alan Haehnel

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## CHARACTERS

1-20	Narrators
SICK 1-5	Claiming to be sick
SCOURGE 1-10	A horrible disease that will infect school kids
MINDY	A student pleading to stay home because life is too busy
MINDY'S MOTHER	Listening to Mindy's plea
WEATHER 1-4	Forecasters
WEATHER SMART 1-4	Kids with various body ailments foretelling bad weather
FED UP GUY	Claiming we should all be grateful for school
POLITICIANS ONE-FOUR	Stumping for no school to save on the budget
BART	Experiencing severe stomach issues
DWIGHT	Bart's story-telling assistant
NANCY	Too busy with technology to attend school
DAWN	Troubled by a prophetic dream
ROB	A pathologically mischievous student
MISS DUTCH	Rob's fed-up teacher
JOHNY	Falls victim to Rob's mischief
CINDY	Has a reason why every day is bad for school
GROUP OF PARENTS	Insisting kids go to school

ENEMIES 1-4	Wanting to put kids to work instead of send them to school
LEADERS 1 and 2	Convinced by enemies
SAL	The hero who fights the enemies
KID ARMY	March to Sal's defense
BLANKET	Warm and inviting elements that sometimes keep kids home

### **PRODUCTION NOTE**

This should be a very active, fast-paced, fluid play. Take every opportunity to add in movement, to act out what is being narrated, to provide the cast and audience with a strong sense of fun. All genders are flexible. Lines can be doubled or tripled, particularly those spoken by numbered characters.

## **IT'S NOT A GOOD DAY FOR SCHOOL TODAY**

by  
**Alan Haehnel**

***(Lights up to an abstract set of multi-colored platforms. The full cast is scattered about.)***

FULL CAST: It's not a good day for school today.

- 1: We're really quite sorry...
- 2: But what can say?
- 3: A whole slew of reasons have reared up their heads.
- 4: And many compel us to stay in our beds.
- 5: We do recognize this might cause inconvenience.
- 6: We apologize but please trust in our genius.
- 7: We know of what we're speaking here...
- 8: And our reasons we'll make crystal clear.
- 9: So sit back, parents, teachers, friends...
- 10: Principals, uncles and distant relations.
- 11: Sit back, all, just rest on your ends.
- 12: And tune in your dials to pick up our stations.
- 13: Now, the world's oldest claim, that we're coming down sick...
- 14: With sniffles or aches or coughs...

FULL CAST: Take your pick!

SICK 1: It hurts like I swallowed an enormous toad.

SICK 2: My head's all stuffed up with a really bad cold.

SICK 3: My eyes just can't focus.

SICK 4: My ears, they keep ringing.

SICK 5: My throat! I've got chorus. I'm no good for singing.

15: Those sorts of excuses are run of the mill.

16: A thousand and one little ways to be ill.

17: Our claim about sickness isn't tiny like those.

18: Some tickle or tingle or sniff of the nose.

19: No, no! We've got trouble! We have to stay home!

20: There's disease on the way sure as Ethan is Frome!

1: Pestilence!

2: Scourge!

3: Epidemic past conceiving!

4: A microbial beast that's just oozing and heaving!

5: It lives to consume...

6: It's after us all!

7: It views every student like a scrumptious cheese ball.

***(A GROUP of ACTORS enter, slithering and ugly, comprising The SCOURGE.)***

ALL SCOURGE MEMBERS: I want 'em! I want 'em!

SCOURGE 1: I want every kid!

SCOURGE 2: I want every part—every bottom and lid!

SCOURGE 3: They won't give a cough; they won't give a sneeze.

SCOURGE 4: When I've got a hold, they won't even wheeze.

SCOURGE 5: They'll just expire.

SCOURGE 6: They'll give up their ghosts.

SCOURGE 7: I'm the big parasite devouring my hosts.

ALL SCOURGE MEMBERS: Give 'em to me!

SCOURGE 8: Send 'em off to the schools!

ALL SCOURGE MEMBERS: Don't keep 'em at home!

SCOURGE 9: I want 'em, you fools!

SCOURGE 10: I have to grow! I must multiply!

SCOURGE 1: I'll take all that is decent and spit in its eye!

SCOURGE 2: I'm sick beyond sickness.

SCOURGE 3: I'm disease past disease.

SCOURGE 4: I'm the bug that gives itches to fleas on your fleas!

ALL SCOURGE MEMBERS: Send me your kids!

SCOURGE 5: This is the last time I'll say it!

SCOURGE 6: My bill has come due and you'd better pay it!

SCOURGE 7: Put 'em on buses!

SCOURGE 8: In carpools!

SCOURGE 9: On bikes!

SCOURGE 10: I just want them here, those delicious tykes.

8: Are you getting a clue?

9: Do you see what we mean?

10: This is nothing like small little pains in the spleen.

11: This is the big one—the massive kahuna!

12: If this thing were a fish, it could eat up a tuna!

13: We have to say home.

14: Just today.

15: That'll kill it.

16: If this creature had blood, that would be what would spill it.

17: Without any students, with nothing to devour...

18: This massive microbe will be dead in an hour.

ALL SCOURGE MEMBERS: Where is my food?!

SCOURGE 1: Now I'm just starving!

SCOURGE 2: Where are my Thanksgiving turkeys for carving?

ALL SCOURGE MEMBERS: Feed me! Feed me! Feed me right now!

SCOURGE 3: Give me a student as fat as a cow.

SCOURGE 4: Give me a kid. Give me something. Something breathing.

SCOURGE 5: I need to have food or I'll cease to be seething.

ALL SCOURGE MEMBERS: I'm falling! I'm dying!

SCOURGE 6: Can't I nibble just a finger?

SCOURGE 7: I'm seeing the light!

SCOURGE 8: No more will I linger.

ALL SCOURGE MEMBERS: I'm dying! I'm dying! I'm dying! I'm dead.

SCOURGE 9: Ow. Mommy, that hurt. I just bumped my head.

19: If we all stay home, just one day, on this date...

20: That terrible sickness will fall to its fate.

1: Now, to tell you the truth, not all things are that dire.

2: Not every reason is about life or death.

3: And sometimes it's only just one who'll require...

4: An absence from school—a one-day deep breath.

MINDY: For instance, there's me. I'm Mindy McGoo.

And if you should come up and say...

MINDY'S MOM: Now let's go!

MINDY: I'll have to say, Mom, let's try something new.

MINDY'S MOM: Mindy, I'm late, now get with the flow.

MINDY: That's just the point, Mom. We're rushing too much.

I feel that we need to slow down and smell roses.

We're running like hamsters inside of a hutch.

Our schedules are forcing uncomfortable poses.

MINDY'S MOM: Mindy, you're cute, you're my darling, but listen:

You've got just three minutes to shower and dress.

Now brush up your teeth to their usual glisten

and don't push it now—I'm under duress!

MINDY: Mother, I'm worried. In just a few years

I'll be gone and our time will be over together.

Oh, sure, I can visit, but, please Mom, no tears,

the good times will have faded like flowers off the heather.

We'll look back and wonder, oh, where did it go?

Why were we always so busy and distracted?

Why didn't we frolic in sunshine and snow?

Why was our existence so matter-of-facted?

MINDY'S MOM: Mindy...

MINDY: So Mom, I urge you, my parental

to pause in this onrushing push of our life

to ask if this schedule that makes us all mental...

MINDY'S MOM: Mindy...

MINDY: Is cutting us off like the blade of a knife!

MINDY'S MOM: Are you done?

MINDY: Not quite. Just one last big pitch.

I fear that I'll gaze back upon these school days,

these days when with youth I was filled up and rich,

and I'll see all of them through a grayish-black haze.

A haze grayish-black, Mom! A horrible view!

When these days should be glowing in my recollection.

Would I see them so dark because of you?

And how you withheld your deepest affection?

Oh, Mother, do not! Do not rush us along  
this path full of chances to stop and be glad.

Oh, Mother, make time to sing a sweet song  
so Mindy, your daughter, won't grow up to be sad.

MINDY'S MOM: Mindy, I'll admit it, I admired your spiel.

On the scale of excuses, I give it a four.

MINDY: It's not an excuse. It's just how I feel.

And is that out of five? That's a pretty good score.

MINDY'S MOM: It is out of five. I've got to get going.

The schedule you speak of is still calling me.

But for that performance, and how you've lately been doing,  
I'll give you a card: Get out of school free.

MINDY: Whee!

MINDY'S MOM: But only this once! Don't push it tomorrow!

MINDY: Tomorrow I'll be up and ready to rock.

MINDY'S MOM: And oh, by the way, I think I might borrow

a line of yours to get rid of that clock

my boss is always holding over my head.

All right, that's enough—I just have to run.

I suppose that you're going right back to bed?

MINDY: Your supposing is right. Thanks a lot, Mom. Have fun!

5: And that, as they say, is how it is done.

6: That is, if you're Mindy and your mother's a pushover  
who's convinced by cornball and mentions of clover.

7: I thought it was heather.

6: Some flower—whatether.

8: The scheme of your rhymes reminds me... of weather!

ALL: Weather!

9: Oh, yes, our sometimes best buddy!

10: We get the day off for sufficiently cruddy!

11: No excuse needed. No pleadings, no whines...

12: Just tune to the stations and watch for the signs.

WEATHER 1: Because of the increasing snow swirling down...

WEATHER 2: The high chance of flooding approaching the town...

WEATHER 3: The heat wave that's causing the juice to black out...

WEATHER 4: High winds that are coming without any doubt...

WEATHER 1-4: All of the schools are shut down for the day!

13: Let's hear it for weather!

ALL: Hip, hip, hooray!

14: But sometimes the weather may seem to be ducky.

15: Not a chance for a student to get snow-day lucky.

16: But nature is tricky!

17: Unpredictable!

18: Fickle!

19: One second you're fine; the next, in a pickle!

20: Certain kids have a talent for knowing...

1: What radars and maps just might not be showing.

WEATHER SMART 1: It's my big toe. It quivers when bad stuff's on the way.

WEATHER SMART 2: My nose hairs curl under and bug me, okay?

WEATHER SMART 3: I get a bad twitch in my right pointing finger.

WEATHER SMART 4: There's an ache in my elbow that just wants to linger.

WEATHER SMARTS 1-4: I can't go to school! It's too risky, you see!

WEATHER SMART 1: With my big toe like this, I'll never be free to think about math or science or English;

I'll be too darned worried; I'll be drowned like a fish.

2: Drowned like a fish?

WEATHER SMART 1: Try rhyming with English—just give it a shot; It doesn't make sense but it's all that I've got.

I'll be drowned like a fish! Or snowed in 'til next week-ish!

My forecasting toe is acting too freakish.

WEATHER SMART 2: My nose itches up, itches up a storm!

I don't care if it's sunny and pleasant and warm.

I know something's coming. My schnoz never misses.

And it gets in the way when I'm trying for kisses.

But that's not the point! I won't go to school

When my nose hairs are saying, "Don't be a fool!"

WEATHER SMART 3: See my finger? It's a-twitching! It's a-jerking around!

I don't need a siren; I don't need a sound.

I don't need some drivel about which cold fronts are patterning.

When my finger's a-going, that's all that's a-mattering.

"Stay home!" it's saying! "Get under that covering

'cause weather right foul is soon to be hovering."

WEATHER SMART 4: It's not tennis elbow. It's not from some sport.

It's not from some tendon that's coming up short.

No, no, this darned elbow aches only when squalls

and other big storms will shake down the walls.

When aching is coming to this bony knob,

look out, everybody! And that means you, Bob.

2: Is that Bob out there?

WEATHER SMART 4: Don't know and don't care.

3: So while most will still tune in or get it on line to find out if the weather is nasty or fine...

4: A certain choice number will check with their toes...

5: Their fingers, their elbows, the hairs in their nose...

6: To see what they get from these bodily shows.

7: And if what they get doesn't seem all that right...

WEATHER SMART 1: It quivers!

WEATHER SMART 2: They curl!

WEATHER SMART 3 and 4: It's been bugging all night!

8: Then they'll take a weather day, all predictions aside...

WEATHER SMART 1-4: You do what you want—I'm staying inside!

9: And now, moving on to another department.

That's what I would say if this were a store.

FED UP GUY: Enough! These excuses! They rot to the core!

Oh, cease and desist! I can't hear any more.

School is a privilege, a blessing, a gift.

Betwixt me and my fellows I don't wish a rift,  
yet, yes, I must stop all this vain caterwauling,  
this griping and groaning and incessant bawling.

Instead, my friends, today and this instant—  
on this point I'm afraid I will be quite insistent—  
we must stop and declare this a day to show thanks!

A day to stand tall like proud soldiers in ranks  
and shout hallelujah to schools everywhere!

ALL: Hallelujah!

FED UP GUY: That's right! Without school we'd be dumbies!

ALL: Hallelujah!

FED UP GUY: Sing it out! We'd be zombie-eyed numbies!

*(ALL hum the "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" behind FED UP GUY's following speech.)*

FED UP GUY: School! We pledge our allegiance to your dedication to us!

ALL: School!

FED UP GUY: Your heart is true-blue and yellow is your bus!

Oh, school, we'd be nothing without your attention  
we must even thank you for giving detention.

10: I'm seeing it now! It's all coming clear!

We're sorry that once we were pains in the rear.

11: It's all for our good! It's all to our aid!

12: We wish that the teachers could much more be paid.

13: We're sorry and ashamed for our ingratitude.

FED UP GUY: I'm happy to see your new attitude.

14: But what can we do to atone for this sin?

15: How can we climb out of this guilt that we're in?

FED UP GUY: We must erect a monument! We must build a great statue!

You must stop and say thanks for all that's come at you!

Let's get on this project! It needs our devotion.

That's my idea, and that is my motion!

Do I hear a second?

16: I second that thought!

17: I third it and fourth it for all we've been taught!

FED UP GUY: All in favor, say aye!

ALL: Aye!

FED UP GUY: None opposed, I presume?

Just as I thought. Now, we just need room and time to decide the form of our tribute.

18: I've got some ideas to make it a beaut!

FED UP GUY: We need a day off, else it just won't get done.

A day off to decide...and to sit in the sun.

To soak in inspiration.

19: To plan!

20: To decide!

FED UP GUY: A day off during which we can talk and confide all the hopes that we have for the great thing we'll make to show that our schools...

1: Gee, they just take the cake!

FED UP GUY: So call us all in!

2: Call school all off.

3: Not for a sniffle, a sneeze or a cough...

4: But because school provides us such wonder and lift...

FED UP GUY: We just need a day to decide on our gift. Amen.

ALL: Amen!

*(The rhythm of the following section changes. The bold syllables indicate where the stresses should fall.)*

5: Now, be that as it **may**...

6: And be that as it **might**...

7: We **do** not want in **any** way to seem...

8: Unpatriotic.

9: We know that school is **grand**...

10: We know it's super-**great**...

11: To **just** dismiss it **out** of hand would be just...

12: Idiotic.

*(And so on until the rhythm shifts again.)*

13: Yet while we still have time...

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14: And while you're still all here...

15: We'd like to tell you more with rhyme both average and...

*(15 pauses, looking worried.)*

15: Both average and...?

*(15 turns to 16 for help. 16 shrugs.)*

16: Patriotic, idiotic...uh...

15: I got ick! It. We'd like to tell you more with rhyme...

15 and 16: Both average and exotic!

16: All right! Nice job! We nailed that one, didn't we?

15: You got that right. Now we rhyming like P-Diddy!

*(15 and 16 get caught up in their success, start dancing and prancing.)*

15 and 16: Patriotic, idiotic, exotic!

15: Oh, yeah!

15 and 16: Patriotic, idiotic, exotic!

16: In your face!

*(By now, the rest of the CAST has gathered around, looking dubiously at the dancing pair. 15 notices and stops, mid-word. 16 keeps going.)*

15: Patriotic, idioti...

16: Patriotic, idiotic, exotic, sing it, Mama! Patriotic, idiotic, exotic, got that right! Patriot...

*(15 taps 16 on the shoulder. SHE looks around, suddenly chagrined.)*

15 and 16: Hi.

*(The rhythm from this point on takes a more typical beat.)*

17: Now, some may think us completely oblivious to the current events in the news.

18: But how can we help but notice the obvious? The economy is singing the blues.

19: People are jobless, people are broke, people are at their wits' end.

20: Investments and savings have gone up in smoke and nobody's willing to lend.

1: We're here to help; we're here to help now. We've decided we'll go on school furlough!

2: By staying at home we'll help out the Dow and add to the USA's cash flow.

- 3: We're that patriotic; we're that deeply caring;  
Don't look at us like we were strange.
- 4: We're so full of energy, verve and do-daring  
That we'll stay home to save some spare change!
- 5: The cost of the lights, the heat and the teachers  
the lunch preparation and all of that jazz...
- 6: Why, just having janitors clean off the bleachers  
can send all the budgets clear into a spaz.
- 7: Home in our beds, we're cheaper than cheap.  
With heads on our pillows, we don't cost a thing.
- 8: We're saving big money, right in our sleep.  
You know what we're saying?

ALL: We're saying cha-ching!

POLITICIAN ONE: One day a week! Just one! Only one!  
From every daughter and every son!  
Just one day a week is their sacrifice  
To drain down the deficit, tidy and nice.

POLITICIAN TWO: It'll be hard to stay in their beds,  
to keep all those pillows firm under their heads.  
But it'll help out, it'll help out a lot  
To put back that chicken in every pot!

POLITICIAN THREE: Give them a chance, a chance to assist us!  
If we give them the cause, why, they won't resist us!  
One day a week to aid the economy--  
They'll catch up later and learn trigonometry.

POLITICIAN FOUR: Put them behind? Come on—they're Americans!  
They'll catch up faster than fish-munching pelicans!  
They're resilient! They're tough! They're intelligence personified!  
They'll gallop right back like Ted Roosevelt on a ride!

9: Today is our day to help out with finances.  
By staying at home...

16: And doing some dances! (*going back to her previous routine*)  
Patriotic, idiotic, exotic, uh-huh! Patriotic, idiotic, exo... (*looking around at the disapproving faces*) Or not. (*to the audience*)  
One day off of school-a  
will save you some moola.

(*BART comes out, looking uncomfortable.*)

BART: Uh, for my excuse, I've asked my friend Dwight  
to act out my part. I'm not feeling quite right.  
So he'll do the actions and I'll say the words.  
All set for that, Dwight?

DWIGHT: 10-4, Bart.

BART: We're nerds.

*(DWIGHT acts out BART's story as BART narrates. The REST of the CAST slowly backs away as the point of the tale gets clear.)*

BART: Last night I had pizza, with pepperoni on it.  
And sausage and peppers. I shouldn't have done it.  
I only had one slice... then two or three more,  
and one for the road as I went out the door.  
Then when I got home, I had Mountain Dew.  
Not much, though, you see—just a liter... or two.  
I also had Cheetos. Just one bag of those.  
And Twinkies and ice cream with crushed Oreos.  
Last night was a bad night for eating, I guess.  
I kept thinking more when I should have thought less.  
So this morning, you'd better just leave me here, please,  
alone in my room, with the fan on for breeze.  
You see, 'cause last night, I had warning signs  
that my belly was plotting some grand designs.  
There was movement and rumbling and shots 'cross the bow;  
Several times I woke up and had to say...

DWIGHT: Ow!

BART: When nights go like that, and mornings feel like this,  
The day up ahead will be lacking its bliss.  
I'll be all right. I'll find comfort somehow,  
but anyone near me... the school won't allow  
me to hand out enough masks to save everyone.  
Some might be dead by the time I am done.  
I love school, I do, and it just breaks my heart  
to miss even a day, but if I should start  
to release the pressure, well, it wouldn't be smart  
to be around people. It would drive them apart  
as they ran for the exits like poisonous darts  
shot with a velocity way off the charts!  
Now some claim my emissions are an odd form of art,  
but nothing you can buy on aisle five of Walmart.  
Oh, I'd better leave now, now I've finished my part--  
Excuse me, and thank-you, but I just have to...

*(DWIGHT and BART both run off.)*

10: Bart?

11: I'm sure he's all right. He'll be back in a while.  
Just giving us space—at least a good mile.

12: All right, then, to Nancy, whose excuse is next.

NANCY: Hold on just a second—let me finish this text. (*SHE finishes typing and puts away the phone.*)

There. School today? No.

If you knew my life, I know that you'd see that I need a day off. You'd definitely agree that my sitch is a bi... bad one, in need of attention. The complications I'm facing—too many to mention. I need to have time, some time all alone.

Just me in my room, with myself... and my phone.

And my laptop, of course, and my Ipod Touch--the basics, of course. I'm not asking for much.

Excuse me. (*looking at her phone*) Oh, great, that's perfect, isn't it?

Facebook is calling—my status is shi... is a bit too old! It's ancient! Fifteen minutes have gone by.

My five thousand fifty-two friends will just die if I don't add an update. (*typing*) Talking on stage.

I'll tweet that one, too, then add a new page to my website. My blog! Where's my last post?

The world thinks I'm dead. This is the most annoying and frantic and crazy of mornings!

I've had fifty-eight e-mails and five virus warnings, two hundred texts, seven hundred tweets, and fifty-three IMs, though twelve were repeats.

School for the day? I can't squeeze it in.

The teachers will tell me it's some sort of sin that I have out my phone, but what are they, crazy?

I can't help it if they're technologically lazy.

I am plugged in to what's happening on earth.

(*looking at phone*) OMG! My fave rock star's about to give birth to twins and she's having a contest for names!

(*typing*) Ashleigh and Godiva. No! Rupert and James.

Can you see? Do you get it? My life is so full

I can't go to school and all of that bu... pull on all of the things in the real world that matter.

If I have to add school in, my brain would just... scatter!

DAWN: Now, listen up, guys—I have something real serious.

This issue involves each and every last one of us.

The school is unsafe. You just must not go there!

Tell whoever, whatever you have to—I don't care!

14: What's the issue?

15: Disease? We already did that one.

DAWN: This is bigger than that. It's the biggest, my son.

16: So spill it!

17: What is it?

18: No fair keeping quiet.

DAWN: I know what I know and I just can't deny it.

19: Deny what? Deny who? Just what are you saying?

DAWN: I have reason to think we all should be praying.

Last night I had a horrible dream.

And it was so real—you know what I mean?

And nobody give me that darned lame suggestion  
that the source of it just was bad indigestion.

I'll leave that to Bart and his big pizza blast.

BART: I'm over that now. I'm finished. At last.

DAWN: The thing is, my dreams—they're often prophetic.

20: Oh, come on, I won't listen. This is pathetic.

DAWN: Won't listen? Won't listen? Well, that is your choice

But remember that time that you lost your voice  
the day of the big oral history test?

20: Don't remind me, okay? Just give it a rest.

DAWN: I dreamt that! I did! Remember how I said?

20: Okay, yes you did.

1: (to 20) Your face is all red.

DAWN: I've dreamt many a thing and haven't let on!

It weighs on my mind like a virtual ton.

2: So tell us, already—the school is dangerous?

3: What did you dream?

4: You're beginning to anger us!

DAWN: The roof will cave in. Right down on our heads.

That's right! I saw it! You were all in your beds  
having visions of sugarplums behind your closed eyes  
while I saw our plastered and dusty demise.

The structure is faulty! Some bad engineering  
combined with a fork-lift with too clumsy steering...

5: I saw this last night.

6: You had the same dream?

5: It was on channel 12.

7: The late movie, you mean?

5: Yeah, that was the one—with Jansen di Bono.

He digs all these tunnels and comes out the hero.

8: That was a turkey. A box-office bomb.

DAWN: Oh. Sorry about that—my bad, false alarm.

I fell asleep watching it, so my dream was the movie.  
Isn't that funny?

9: Hilarious.

10: Groovy.

DAWN: But I did dream the time that he lost his voice!

11: Big whoop. Tell you what, if I had the choice

between laryngitis and a roof on my head--  
which one is bigger?

DAWN: Okay, so I misled.

ROB: I can't go today, if you know what I mean,  
because of the time bomb that's waiting for me.

12: Time bomb? Come on.

13: A whole other dream?

14: I bet that you saw this one on Channel 3.

ROB: Uh-uh. No way. This isn't a show.

The time-bomb's a teacher by the name of Miss Dutch.

15: Ooh, sixth period science—he's not kidding. We know.

Miss Dutch doesn't like you, Rob, not very much.

ROB: You think? She's a time-bomb! And I'm the burning fuse!

16: To the rest of us she's really cool. She's chipper and says...

MISS DUTCH: Hi!

17: But when she looks at you, Rob, it's like she says...

MISS DUTCH: You lose!

ROB: The moment that I say "Hello" she's ready with...

MISS DUTCH: Good-bye!

18: What did you do to make her mad? To us, she's super nice.

MISS DUTCH: You all look fresh and happy and ready for some  
learning.

ROB: I just don't know. She looks at me like I'm a pile of lice.

That's why I say that I'm the fuse. There's something in her  
burning!

19: I mean, okay, there was that time you "accidentally" put  
those hundreds of ball bearings in that pail.

20: And then you dumped them underfoot...

ROB: Did Johnny Thompson sail!

JOHNY: (*sailing*) Whoa!

MISS DUTCH: Rob!

1: That made her mad. She wasn't pleased.

2: But really, can you blame her?

3: And then that time you went and teased...

4: Our mouse—we'd almost tamed her!

MISS DUTCH: Rob!

5: That's right—you turned that little creature  
into a safety hazard.

6: Can't blame Miss Dutch—she is the teacher.

By now she's surely gathered  
evidence enough about you  
to have you tossed from class.

MISS DUTCH: Rob Miller, next thing that you do  
will earn a one-way pass

straight to the principal's lair  
and not just for the day.

You'll have a permanent spot there.

You'll pay and pay and pay!

ROB: She's itching for my hide.

She's going to blow a gasket.

If her anger won't subside

She'll put me in a casket.

7: So, Rob, why not behave? Why keep on being a jerk?

8: Try acting like a regular student, not a vandal and a crook.

ROB: I don't think that will happen. I don't think that will work.

You mean, like, pay attention and go just by the book?

ALL: Yeah!

ROB: I don't think I can do it. There's something about her room  
That brings out the very worst in me.

9: And then Miss Dutch brings out her broom.

ROB: So we need the day off from each other, you see?

She's right on the edge, Miss Dutch is, you know?

You can see how she narrows her eyes.

There's a fireball she's getting all ready to throw

and the target she hits—well, he dies.

I've watched her over the last couple days.

I've watched her getting more tense.

She hated it when I messed up on that maze

and told her it didn't make sense.

MISS DUTCH: Oh, it would make sense, Rob, if you would focus.  
Nobody else has had trouble.

And I'm guessing your talking and making your ruckus  
hasn't helped you—get done on the double!

10: She's tenser than I've ever seen her, that's true.

11: She's tapping her foot a whole bunch.

ROB: Her body just quivers with ticks that are new.

And I'm thinking that I have a hunch

if I get out of line, even just half an inch,

and I'm likely to do more than that,

she'll blow! She'll explode! She'll become the Grinch!

Pull a tiger right out of her hat!

I can just hear it now. When the Dutch blows her spout

I'll be sailing way faster than Johny.

MISS DUTCH: Robert, get out! Get out, out, out, out!

The principal won't think you're so funny!

I've had it! I'm done! You've piled on the last straw

so now you'll be paying the piper.

You're going to feel the claws in my paw

and my poison—you've made me a viper!  
Your school days are ruined! Your record is finished!  
I'll make sure you never get hired!  
Your chances in life are severely diminished  
You've crossed me too much—you're fired!

ROB: It'll be bad. The whole place will suffer.  
Miss Dutch needs a break from my style.  
Things will cool down in a day with my offer  
to leave my chair empty a while.

*(EVERYONE nods in agreement, ad-libbing assent.)*

CINDY: I've got a reason why every day won't work for school-like things.

12: Let's listen to this birdie here—I like the way she sings.

CINDY: Mondays are no good, of course—you need time to discover how from the busy week-end you ever will recover.

Tuesdays, too, will never work; they're Monday's close first cousins.

Tuesday school makes no more sense than bakers without dozens.

Wednesday? Oh, come on! It's hump day—what a drag!

You need a break to get beyond that mid-week awful lag.

Now Thursday comes along with what? A sense the end is near.

That great anticipation won't allow your mind to clear.

Friday—well, what can I say? The week-end has begun

And students in the school that day are focused just on fun.

So, what day does that leave us for attending to the school?

I give up. Can't think of one. I'll see you at the pool!

ALL: Cool!

13: Our final excuse requires some good coordination.

14: Everyone must know the drill and man their battle station.

15: You'll need to learn the story.

16: You'll need to know the date.

17: So everyone will get up...

18: And say, together...

ALL: Wait!

19: No classes for the day!

20: The whole shebang is off!

1: To getting up and going in, we all will have to scoff.

2: When parents come into our rooms across this whole great nation...

3: And say...

GROUP OF TEN PARENTS: Get up!

4: We'll all reply with deepest indignation...

ALL: This is a holiday! A holy day for kids!

5: And when the 'rents say...

GROUP OF TEN PARENTS: What?

6: We'll all reply...

ALL: MacGrid's!

GROUP OF TEN PARENTS: MacGrid's?

7: They'll echo back...

ALL: MacGrid's!

8: We'll all retort.

9: And then we'll have the legend to sleepily report.

10: You see, my mother, father, and whom it may concern...

11: There is a tale that's been revealed, forever may it burn...

12: Inside the inner fireplace of all our students' soul...

13: Of Sal MacGrid, that noble kid...

14: Long may his great bell toll.

15: You see, way back in '09...

16: Which century's unknown...

17: A plot was hatched by enemies...

18: Upon some distant throne.

ENEMY 1: We'll infiltrate the governments and change up all the laws...

ENEMY 2: And get them to abolish schools! We'll outlaw them because...

ENEMY 3: We'll convince everyone that children should be working...

ENEMY 4: Pounding rocks, falling in, no kindergarten shirking!

ENEMY 1: Work, work, work!

ENEMY 2: Pound, pound, pound!

ENEMY 3: Then work 'em even more!

ENEMY 4: These youngsters should be building stuff and adding to the store!

ENEMY 1: School is over-rated!

ENEMY 2: Education?

ALL ENEMIES: Bah!

ENEMY 3: Give them shovels, give them picks...

ENEMY 4: And if they complain...

ALL ENEMIES: Ha!

ENEMY 1: Laugh and tell them...

ALL ENEMIES: Back to work!

ENEMY 2: Laugh and tell them...

ALL ENEMIES: Faster!

ENEMY 3: Laugh and warn them if they don't, they're headed for...

ALL ENEMIES: Disaster!

19: But all the while, these creeps, these evil-plotting thugs...

20: They knew that getting rid of schools would pull out all the rugs...

1: From underneath our countries...

2: From underneath our brains...

3: And slowly swirl our futures...

4: Down into toilet drains.

5: Yet they were making head-way!

6: Things were getting tense.

7: They were getting certain folk...

8: To see their crooked sense.

ENEMY 1: Can't you see the wisdom?

ENEMY 2: Turn schools to factories!

ENEMY 3: The kids give more by working...

ENEMY 4: Than by doing spelling bees!

LEADER 1: Well, I can see your point.

LEADER 2: Kids have good energy.

LEADER 1: Why don't we farm them out?

LEADER 2: Why not get work for free?

ENEMY 1: That's right—they eat up food!

ENEMY 2: And take up space and shelter.

ENEMY 3: So why not make them earn their keep...

ENEMY 4: Pour iron in a smelter!

LEADER 1: I say, I need a pen.

LEADER 2: I say, let's make a law.

LEADER 1: I say, we sign it, then...

LEADER 2: We get those kids a saw!

LEADER 1: A saw, a hammer, and some chains...

LEADER 2: That'll do trick.

9: How those villains loved to see their plan was working...

ALL: Sick!

10: It would have come to pass, too, if not for one cool dude...

11: With foresight and attention and one strong attitude.

SAL: The name is Sal MacGrid, and I might yet be young,  
but I have knowledge of this world that's deep and quite far-flung.

I've learned of a conspiracy—an awful, ugly plot—  
that's aimed to rob our country of scholarship and thought.

Our enemies are hoping to keep kids out of classes,  
and make us all like donkeys—the Bible calls them asses.

Yes, that's their hope and that's their scheme and if they do  
succeed

our stupid nation will be lost and enemies will lead.

12: So Sal, that sneaky guy...

13: So Sal, that skillful spy...

14: He broke into the bad-guys' place and simply told them...

SAL: Hi.

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