

**SCARY KID**

Why? Why? Didn't you hear what we said?

**BIG KIDS**

JUST YOU WAIT FOR PHYS-ED  
JUST YOU WAIT FOR PHYS-ED!

**BIG & LITTLE KIDS**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ

**LITTLE KIDS**

WHY, WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY?

**ALL KIDS**

JUST YOU WAIT FOR PHYS-ZED!

*THEY scramble away, the YOUNG ONES forming a class. MISS HONEY comes on.*

**MISS HONEY**

Good morning children. My name is Miss Honey. And today is a very special day: your first day at school. Now, do any of you know any of your two times tables?

*MATILDA'S hand goes up.*

Wonderful! Matilda, isn't it? Please stand and do as much as you can.

**MATILDA**

*(standing)*

One times two is two, two times two is four, three times two is six, four times two is eight, five times two is ten, six times two is twelve, seven times two is fourteen, eight times two is sixteen, nine times two is eighteen, ten times two is twenty, eleven times two is twenty two, twelve times two is twenty four...

**MISS HONEY**

Well, my word that is very—

**MATILDA**

Thirteen times two is twenty six, fourteen times two is twenty eight, fifteen times two is thirty, sixteen times two is—

**MISS HONEY**

Stop, stop! Good heavens, how far can you go?

**MATILDA**

I don't know. Quite a long way I think.

**MISS HONEY**

*(beat)*

Do you think you could tell me what two times twenty eight is?

**MATILDA**

Fifty six.

**MISS HONEY**

Fift... well, yes that's very...

How about this: now this is much harder, so don't worry if you don't get it, but two times four hundred and eighty seven, if you took your time do you think you could—

**MATILDA**

Nine hundred and seventy four.

*MISS HONEY takes a step backward, shocked.*

**MISS HONEY**

Twelve sevens.

**MATILDA**

Eighty four.

**CHILDREN**

No way!

*The CHILDREN chatter, amazed. MISS HONEY regains control, goes to the board, underlines 'I can now read words'.*

**MISS HONEY**

Let's leave maths for the time being and look at reading. Can anyone read this?

*NIGEL, MATILDA and LAVENDER put up their hands.*

**NIGEL**

Me, me, me, ooh, ooh, me, pick me Miss, I can, mememememe—

**MISS HONEY**

Very well, Nigel.

*NIGEL tries to read the sentence. He opens his mouth to speak, but nothing comes out. He stares, screwing up his face, willing the marks on the board to make sense. He starts to hyperventilate, his face goes red and beads of sweat break out on his forehead.*

Yes, I think we'd better leave it there, Nigel, we don't want you to burst a blood vessel on your first day.

*HE collapses.*

Lavender?

**LAVENDER**

Is the first word... tomato?

**MISS HONEY**

Er, no. But tomato is a very good word.

MATILDA

LAVENDER

Yessss!

MISS HONEY

*(squeaky)*

Mat...

*(normal)*

Matilda?

MATILDA

'I can now read words'

MISS HONEY

So Matilda, you can read words?

MATILDA

Yes. Well, I needed to learn to read words so that I could read sentences because basically a sentence is just a big bunch of words. And if you can't read sentences you've got no chance with books.

MISS HONEY

And... have you read a whole book yourself, Matilda?

MATILDA

Oh yes, more than one. I love books. Last week I read quite a few.

MISS HONEY

A few? In a week? My, my, that is good. What books did you read?

MATILDA

Nicholas Nickleby, Oliver Twist, Jane Eyre,

*#4a - Matilda's Books - Pathetic Intro*

Tess of the D'Urbervilles, The Lord of the Rings, Kim, The Invisible Man, The Secret Garden, Crime and Punishment, and... and Stig of the Dump.

*But MISS HONEY is staring at her, open mouthed. Suddenly the bell goes. The KIDS leave. MISS HONEY shakes herself out of it and heads for the Trunchbull's door.*

*#5 - Pathetic*

MISS HONEY

KNOCK ON THE DOOR, JENNY  
JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR,  
DON'T BE PATHETIC,