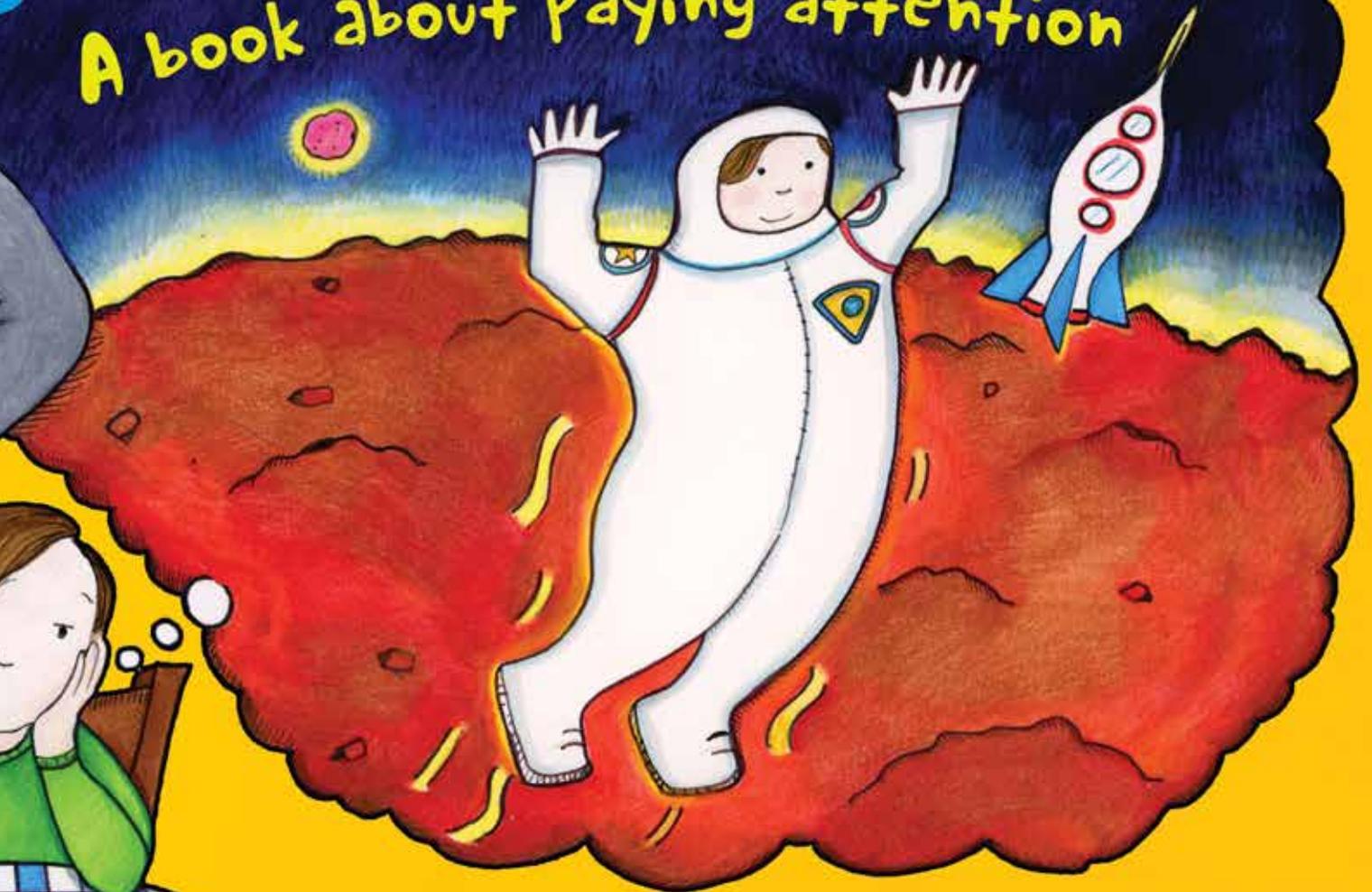
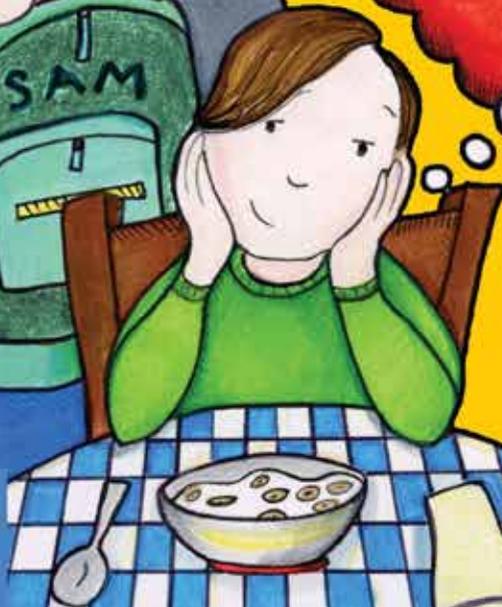
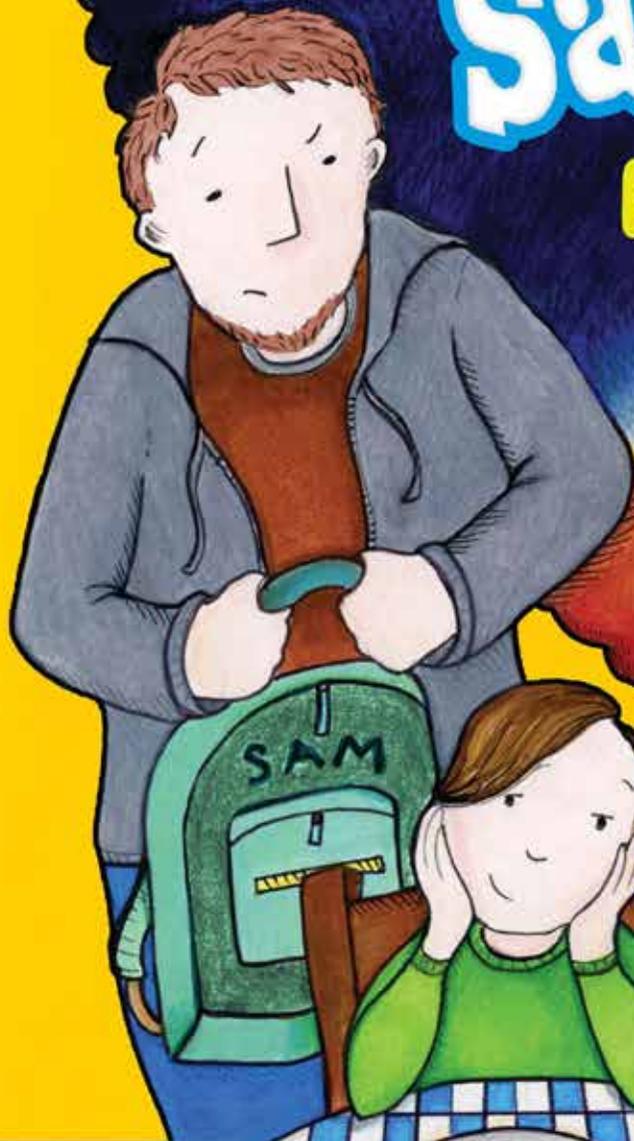


This Morning Sam Went to Mars

A book about paying attention



free spirit
PUBLISHING®

NANCY ★ CARLSON

This Morning Sam Went to Mars

A book about paying attention



Nancy Carlson

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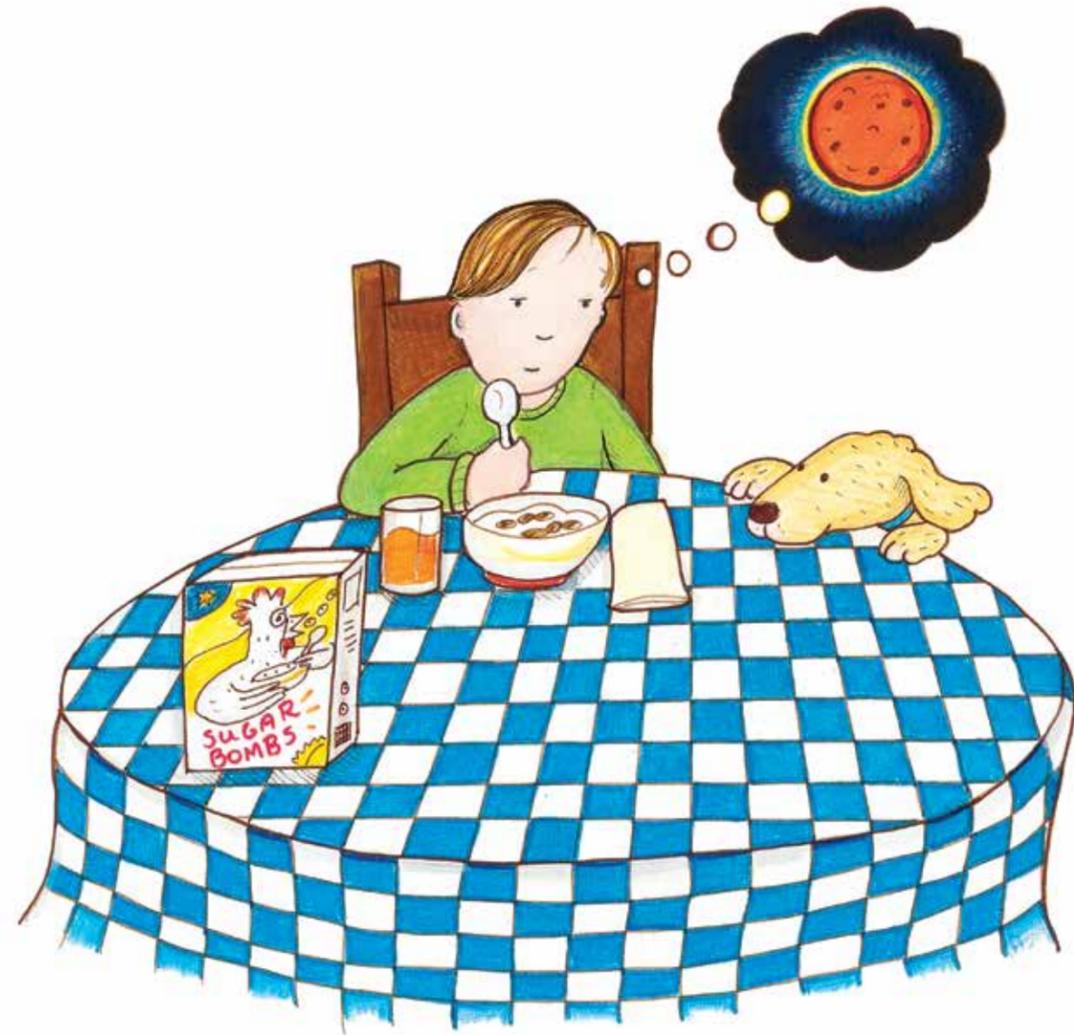
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To my pal, Talla. Thank you for all your support this year!

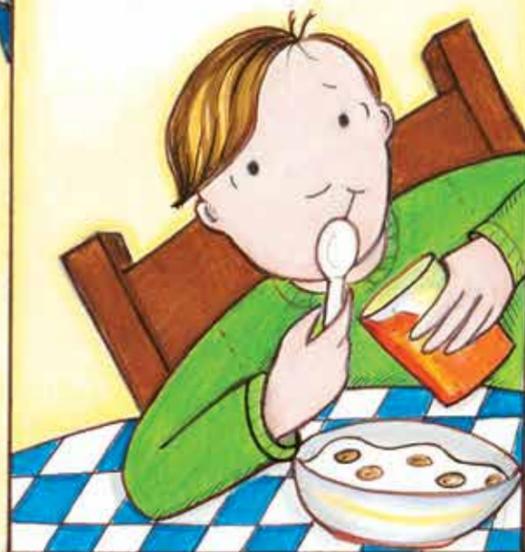


This morning, Sam went to Mars.

When he got back, he was late for school again.
He had to quickly . . .



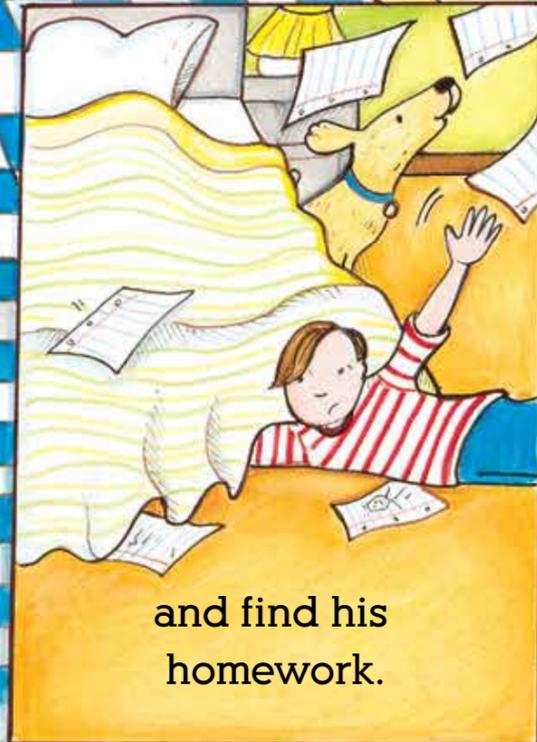
finish breakfast



get dressed



and find his homework.



He missed the bus,
and his dad said,
"Sam, you need to focus!"

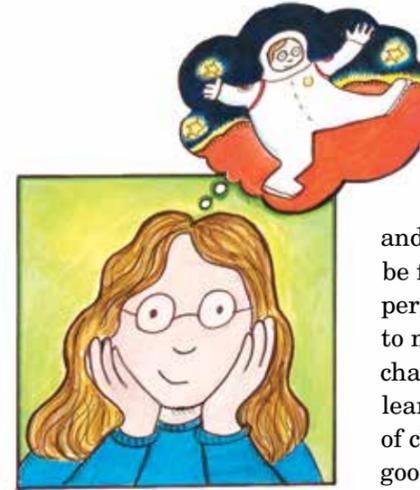
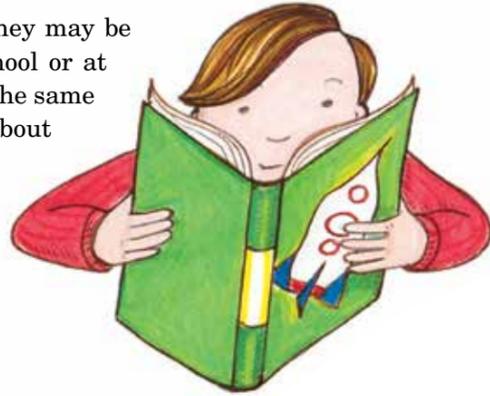
Note to Parents and Teachers: Helping Kids with Attention Challenges

Many young children, like Sam, have trouble paying attention sometimes—or a lot of the time! They may be distractible, impulsive, or hyperactive. For most of these kids, the difficulty focusing comes at school or at other times when they are expected to pay attention to things that may be hard or boring for them. The same kid who can't concentrate for 10 minutes on a math problem can often spend hours reading a book about knights, playing capture the flag with friends, or writing a story about Mars.

Whether the kids in your life are very distractible, like Sam, or could maybe just use a *little* nudge in the focus department, it's important to keep things positive. The following guidelines can help nurture these characteristics while also improving kids' focus in all areas.

- **Make sure they get enough sleep.** Most kids between the ages of 5 and 9 need 10 to 11 hours of sleep a night. Sleep improves focus and helps the brain stay healthy. To help kids get enough sleep, have them go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends.
- **Help them eat a healthy diet.** Junk foods like sweets and salty snacks are not only unhealthy for the body, they're also unhelpful for the brain. It's okay to have junk food treats every now and then, but keep them to a minimum. Healthy foods like fruits and vegetables are good for the body and brain. Some foods called super foods are especially good because they have lots of vitamins, minerals, protein, and good fats and oils. These include nuts like almonds and walnuts, seeds like pumpkin and sunflower seeds, oily fish like salmon and tuna, broccoli, blueberries, spinach, carrots, tomatoes, wheat, eggs, and milk (to name only a few). Encourage kids to drink plenty of water, too. These foods and drinks help kids feel great and help their brains run efficiently.
- **Provide structure.** Kids work best when they have predictable routines and a place to store important materials in school and at home. If possible, provide physical space at home for their homework and an unchanging place to do it.
- **Reduce distractions.** Move students with wandering eyes away from the window or door and closer to the front of the class. Clutter is a distraction, too, so help kids keep desks, lockers, and bedrooms clean and organized.
- **Make time for physical activity.** Even a short break for exercise can help refresh the brain.
- **Encourage creativity.** "Distractible" often goes hand-in-hand with "creative." Encourage creativity (at appropriate times). It makes kids happy and it's good exercise for the brain.

Most children with attention challenges are curious, creative, and energetic—positive qualities that will help them be happy and successful in life. Nurturing their creativity while helping tame their attention challenges is the best way to provide support.



About the Author and Illustrator

Nancy Carlson is an accomplished children's book author and illustrator who has published more than 60 books. A lifelong Minnesotan, Nancy graduated from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design with a major in printmaking. She believes that life should be fun for everyone, but especially for children. This optimistic message permeates her picture books and provides a positive counterpoint to much of what children are influenced by in today's society. Her characters aren't always perfect. They often have fears, anxieties, and learning differences. Through her books, kids learn to cope with a range of challenges. They can learn that they don't have to be perfect to be good people. Her characters also convey positive messages without being "preachy." They gently remind children what is right.

Nancy is also a guest author and illustrator at over 150 school classrooms each year, and has touched the lives of thousands of children across the United States. She lives in Minneapolis. Learn more about Nancy and her books—and check out her daily doodles—at her website, www.nancycarlson.com.

