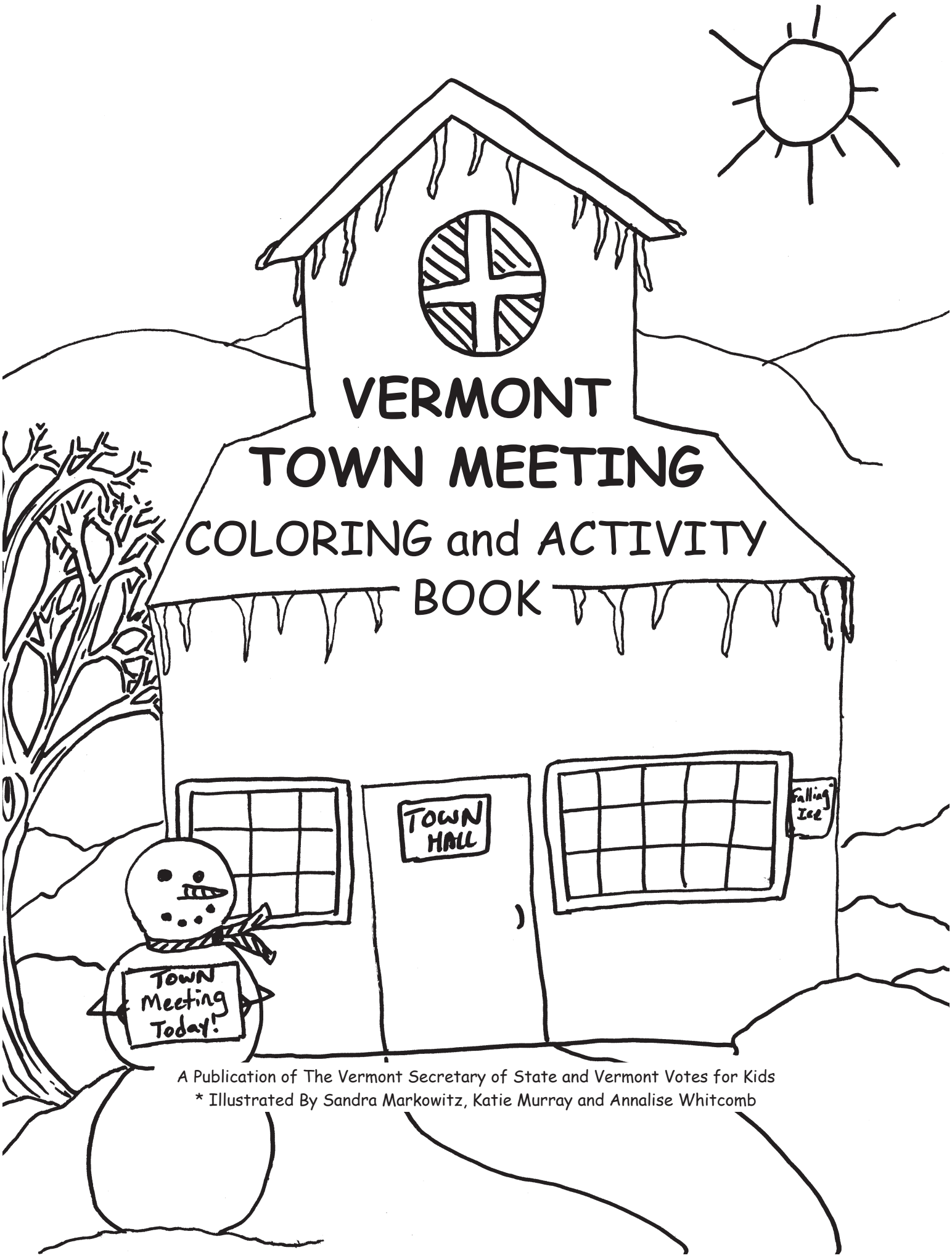

VERMONT TOWN MEETING

COLORING and ACTIVITY BOOK

A Publication of The Vermont Secretary of State and Vermont Votes for Kids
* Illustrated By Sandra Markowitz, Katie Murray and Annalise Whitcomb

Vermont Town Meeting Coloring And Activity Book

I hope you enjoy this "Vermont Town Meeting Coloring and Activity Book". The "Vermont Town Meeting Coloring and Activity Book" was designed to provide our younger students with some basic information about Vermont's Tradition of Town Meeting. The booklet also includes some suggestions for classroom activities to help our children learn the value of participatory democracy and experience the concepts addressed in the Coloring Book.

"The Vermont Town Meeting Coloring and Activity Book" was first published in 2002 as a joint project of the Office of the Secretary of State and Kids Voting Vermont with support from the Vermont Institute for Government and the Center for Civics Education. We are pleased to issue this second edition. I would like to thank student intern Aleah Starr who created some of the activities in the booklet and 6th graders Sandra Markowitz, Annalise Whitcomb and Katie Murray for their great art work.

For more information about our "Vermont Town Meeting Coloring and Activity Book" or to order copies please call my office at 802-828-2148.

Deborah Markowitz
Secretary of State
June 2005

For Additional Copies Or For More Information Contact:
Office of the Secretary of State, 26 Terrace Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05609-1101
(802) 828-2363, (802) 828-2496 (fax), **www.sec.state.vt.us**

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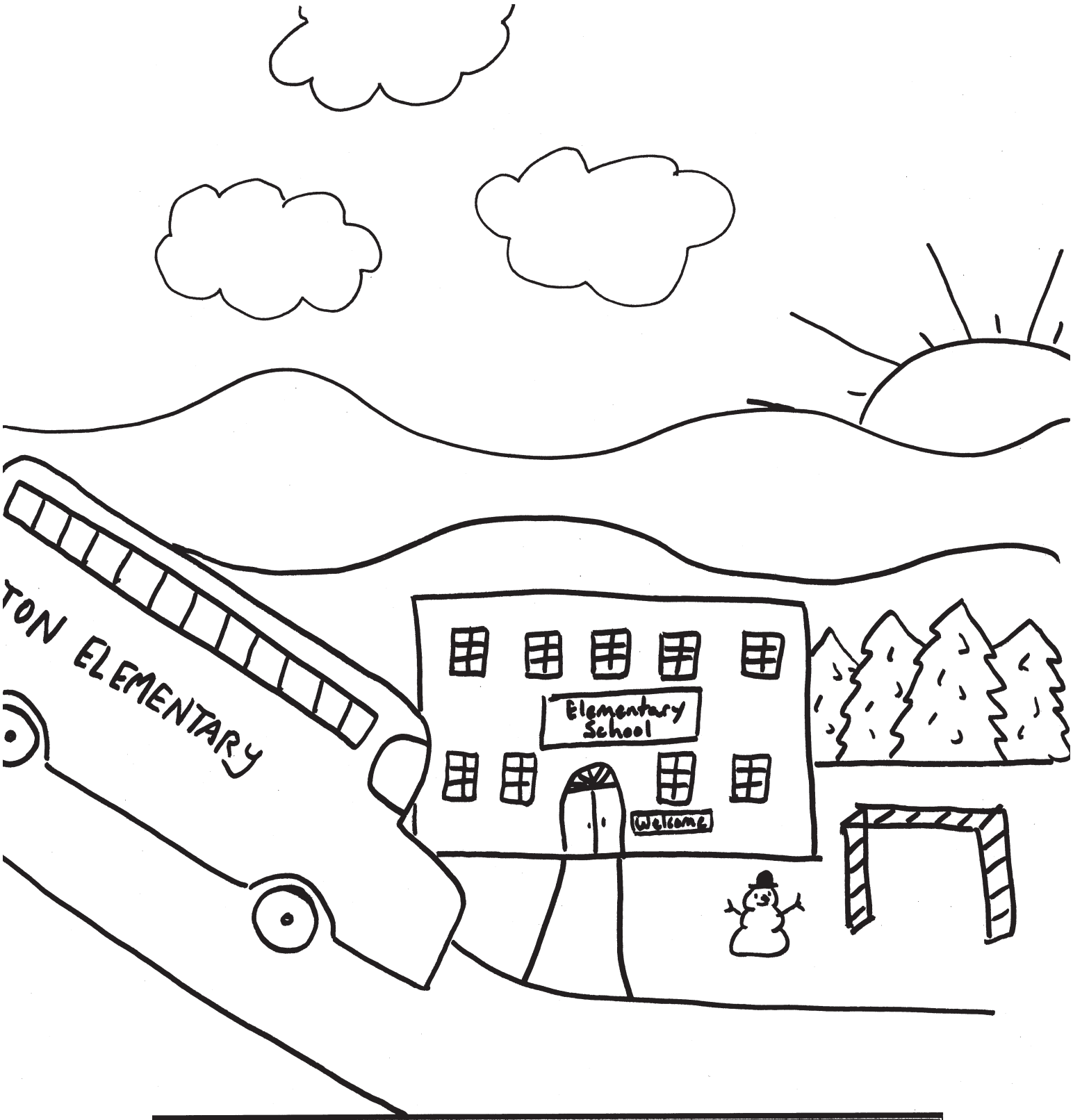
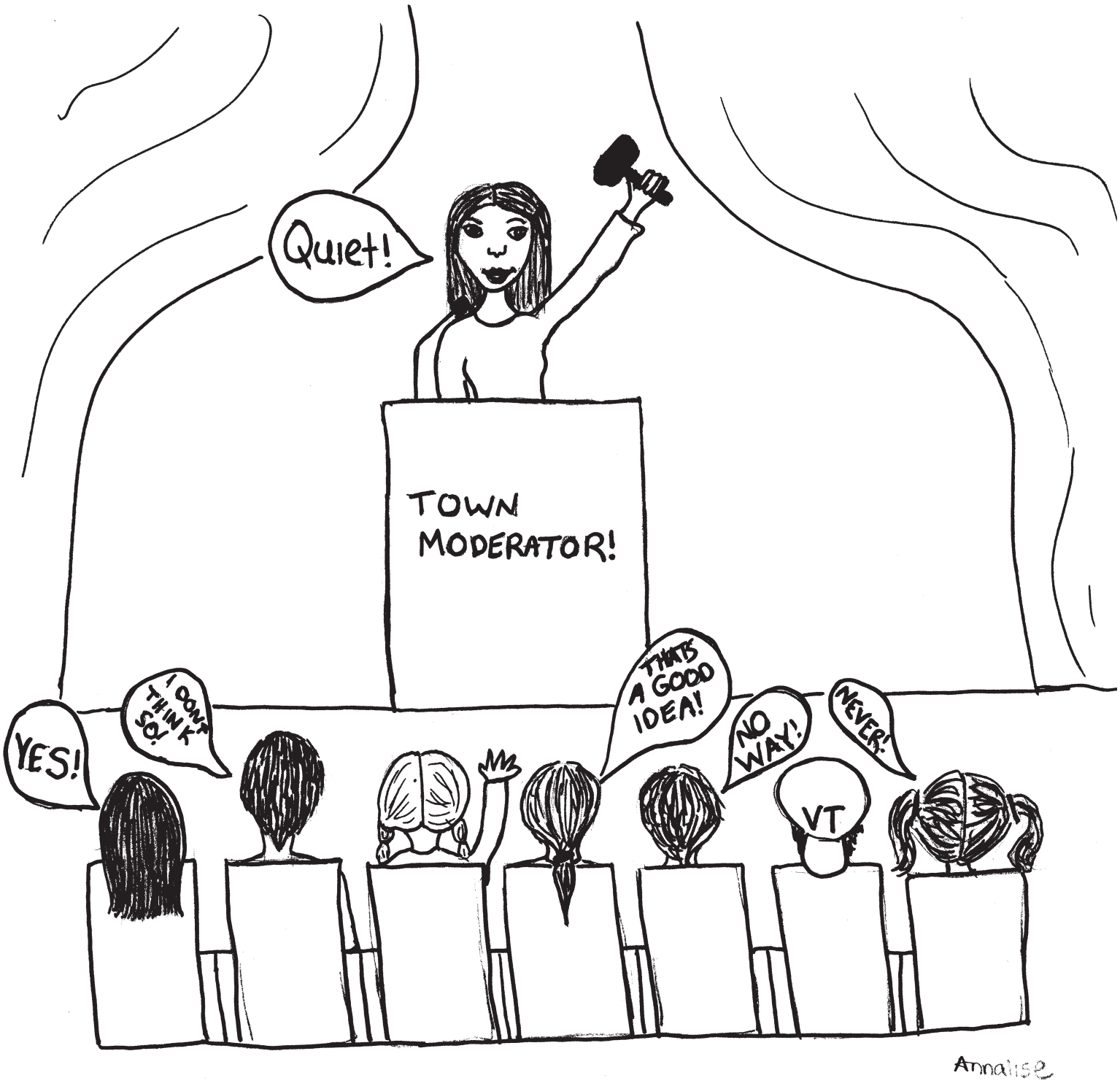
Every March most Vermont towns hold their
Annual Town and School Meetings

At Town Meeting people get together to talk about the town. They decide how much money to spend to fix the roads and how much to spend on the fire department.

The voters at town meeting elect the people who run the town. The selectboard, the town clerk and the tax collector are all elected at town meeting.

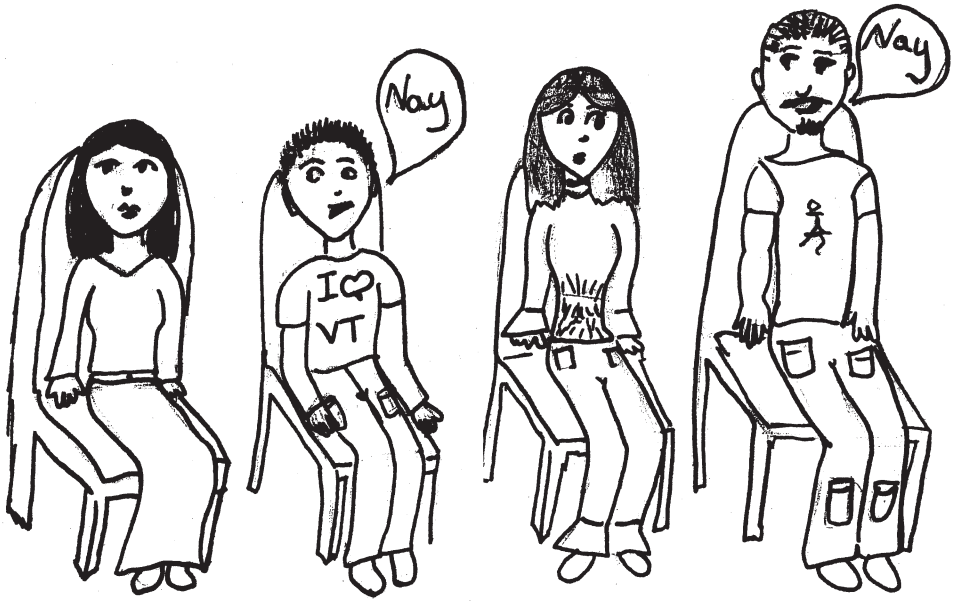


At the School Meeting the people vote on whether to buy more school busses and they decide how much money to spend for a new playground.

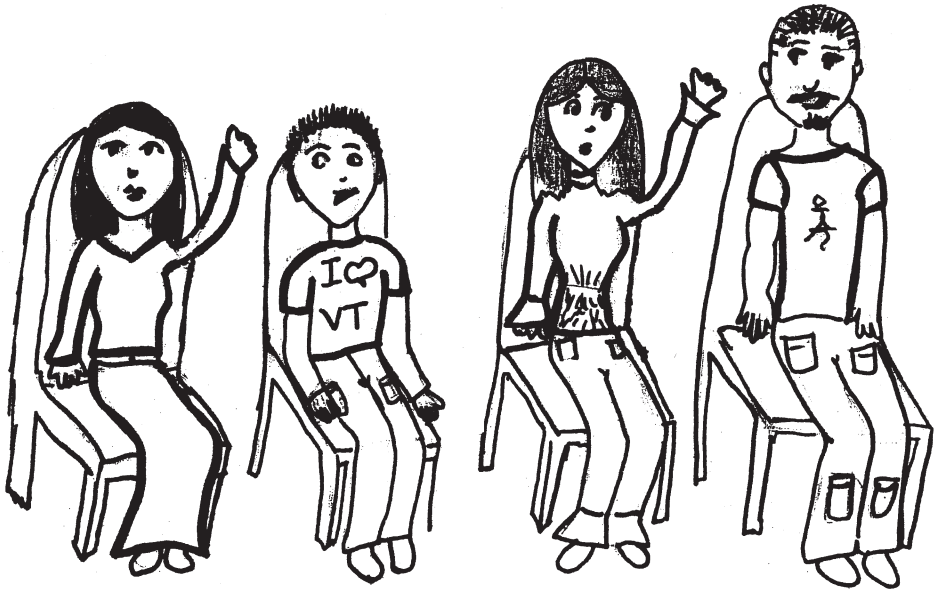


The Moderator runs the meeting. The Moderator makes sure that everyone gets a chance to speak and that the voting is fair.

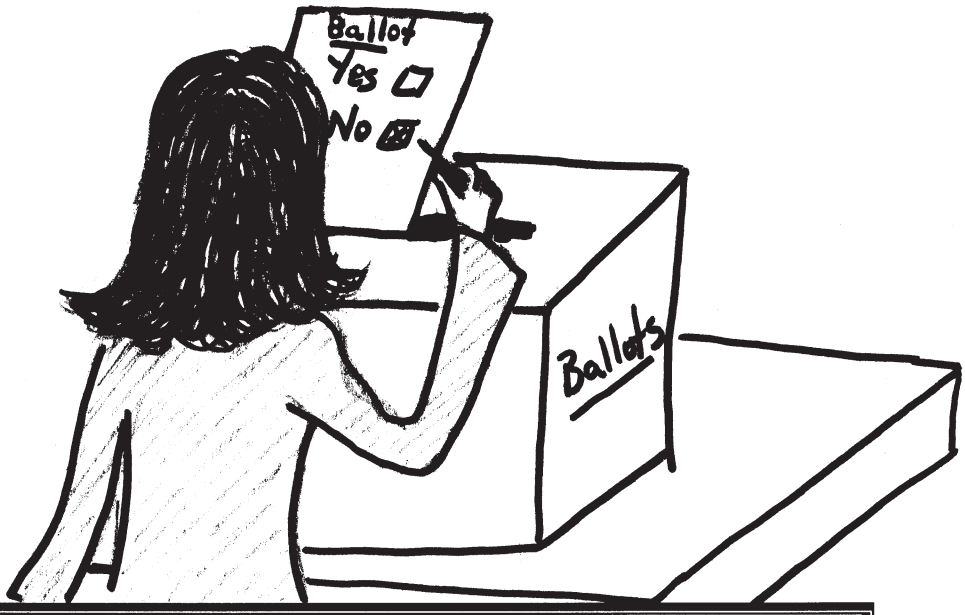
There are four ways to vote at Town Meeting:



Voice Vote – everyone says yea or nay
("all in favor say yea")



Hand Count – everyone raises their hands
("all in favor please raise your hand")



Paper Ballot - everyone writes their vote on a piece of paper and puts it in a box

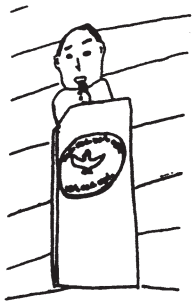
Australian Ballot - people can come anytime during the day to vote secretly in a voting booth. People who are sick or at work can send an "absentee ballot."

In most towns, town questions are decided in the morning and school questions in the afternoon.

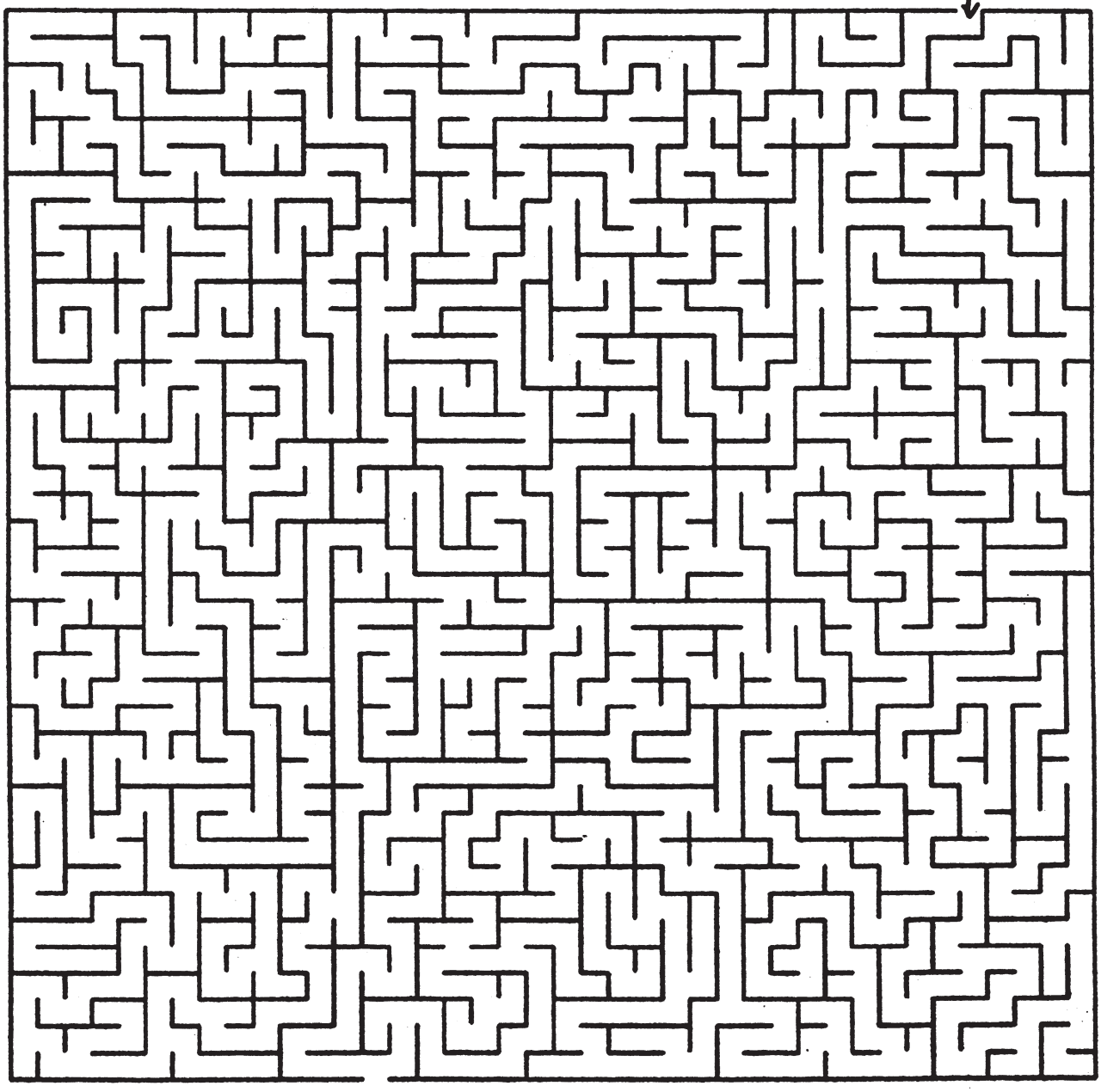
At noon the whole town gets together for lunch. Sometimes it is a big potluck where everyone brings something to share. Sometimes a group sells lunch to make money for a charity. No matter how it is done, the lunch is a fun part of town meeting. It is good to see your neighbors and eat together.

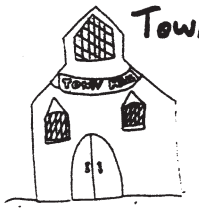
Connect The Dots To See Who Is Reading The Town Report

Help The Moderator Get To The Meeting



Start

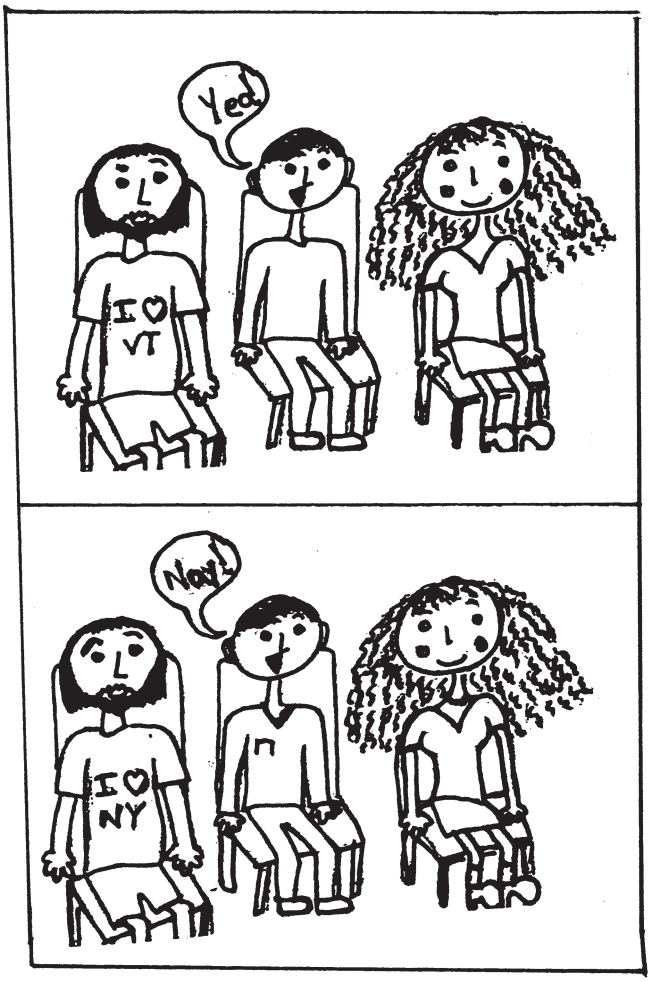




Town Hall

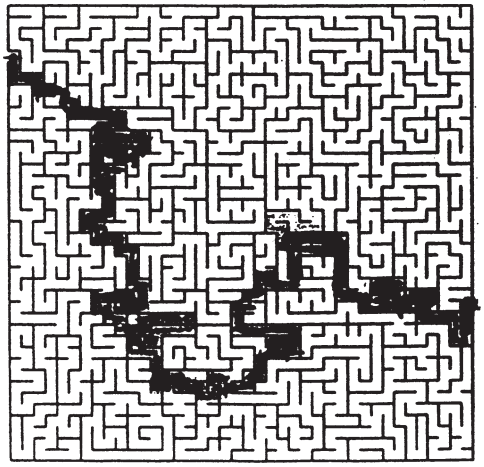
For solution see key on page 13

See If You Can Find the 8 Differences

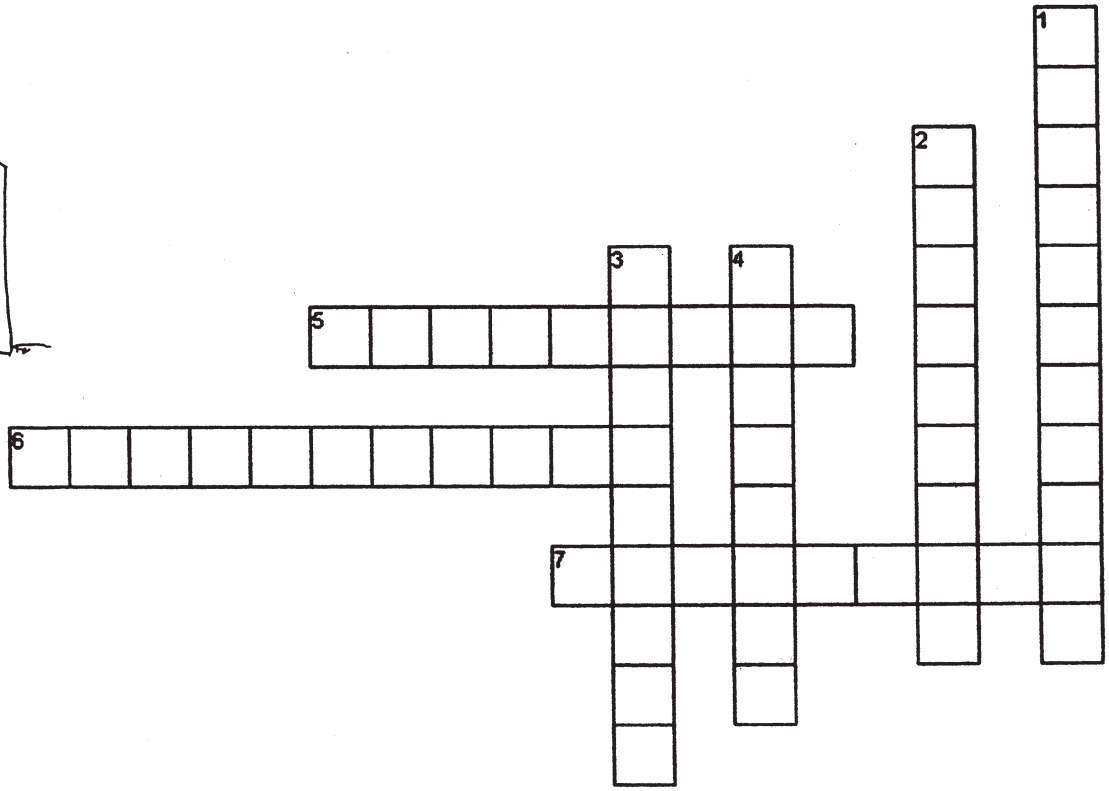


Answer: eyebrow, necklace, socks, Nay, NY, neckline, pocket, chairleg

Maze Key



Town Meeting Criss-Cross Puzzle



Across
5. The country a way of voting is named after
6. the people who run the town
7. The person who runs town meeting

Down
1. the people who run the school
2. voting by saying aye or nay
3. voting by raising your hand
4. The people who vote at town meeting

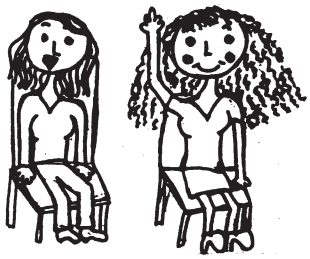
Answers:

Across:
5. Australia
6. Selectboard
7. Moderator

Down:
1. Schoolboard
2. Voice vote
3. Handcount
4. Citizens

Town Meeting Word Search

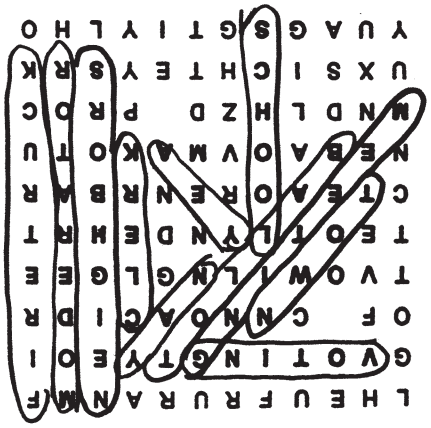
L H E U F R U R A N M F
G V O T I N G T Y E O I
O F D C N N O A C I D R
T V O W I L N G L G E E
T E O T L Y N D E H R T
C T E A O R E N R B A R
N E B A O V M A K O T U
M N D L H Z D N P R O C
U X S I C H T E Y S R K
Y U A G S G T I Y L H O



WORD LIST

MODERATOR	TOWN	YEA
NAY	SCHOOL	MEETING
CLERK	NEIGHBORS	BALLOT
VOTING	FIRETRUCK	

Answer:



Vermont Town Meeting

Unscramble the words by placing one letter on each line. Then use the numbered lines to complete the answer to the riddle at the end of the sheet.

OVET ___ ___ ___ ___

WONT ___ ___ ___ ___
5 1

UBCIPL ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
7 4

YNEOM ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
11 2

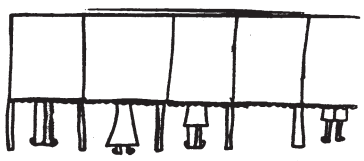
RTEXA ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

AHRMC ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
9 6

TSBDEEA ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

NFU ___ ___ ___
10

LTLBAO ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
3 8



Riddle: What do we do at Town Meeting?
Answer:

__ __
1 2 2 3 2 4 5 5 6 2 7 2 8 7 3 2 1 6 8 9 10 11 8 10 9 5 8 1 11

ANSWERS:

V O T E

T O W N
5 1

P U B L I C
7 4

M O N E Y
11 2

E X T R A

M A R C H
9 6

D E B A T E S

F U N
10

B A L L O T
3 8

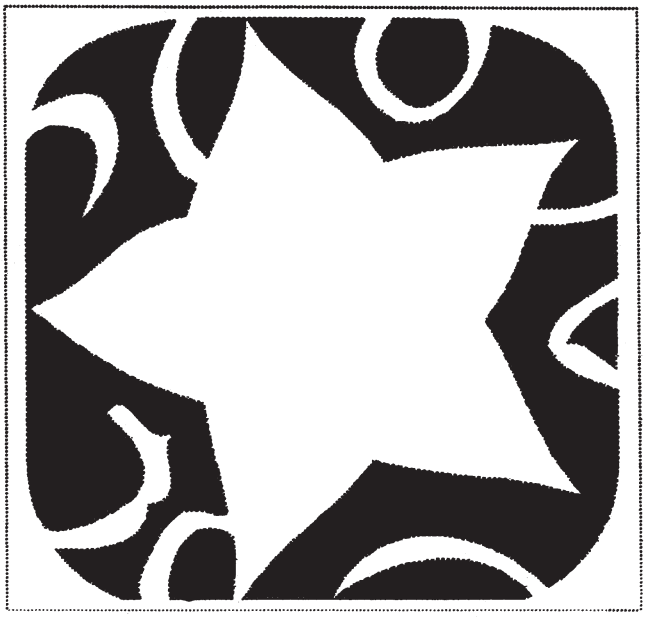
W E E L E C T H E
1 2 2 3 4 5 6 2

R U N O U R O W N
9 10 11 8 9 10 5 8 1 11

P E O P L E W H O
7 2 8 7 3 2 1 6 8

Town Meeting
Classroom Activities
< For Educators >

Wishing Stars



At Town Meeting every community member has an opportunity to participate, and in doing so, share his or her ideas about how to make the town a better place for everyone to live. We can do this in the classroom as well. Decide what community you want the children to focus on (i.e. The world, our country, our state, your town or your classroom.)

- Ask the children to think about what they would wish for to make this community a better place.
- Cut out a star for each child to decorate and write out their wish.
- Pin or tape the stars to the bulletin board and ask each child to describe their wish to the class.

The teacher can ask the children whether they think wishes can come true, and to think about ways that they (or the class) can help make their own wishes come true. You can also ask the children whether they can think of anyone who had a wish or dream for our country or state and then helped make it come true. Martin Luther King, George Washington, Governor Howard Dean (making sure that every Vermont child has adequate medical care) and Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield of Ice Cream fame (having a business that helped people) are all examples of people who had wishes for our nation or state and made them come true.

Mini Town Meeting

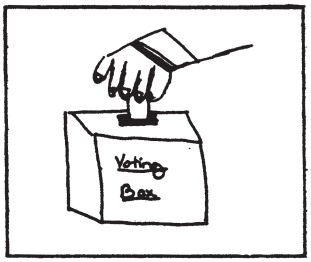
Children can learn about how town meeting works by holding a classroom town meeting. Start by asking students to list some of the rules in your classroom. Ask for ideas of other rules that perhaps the class should consider adopting. (One class discussed whether to allow gum in the classroom on Fridays. Another discussed whether to rotate the person who gets to be at the head of the line each day.) Once you settle on the issue, ask each student to give an argument for or against (or both) the idea. (Older students can be

split into two groups with one asked to make the arguments in favor of the proposal and the others to make the arguments against.) Then have a vote and adopt a new rule for your classroom community!

In the alternative, if you have resources, (ie, money that you are raising for classroom activities) you can discuss all of the possible ways you could use that money for the class. Narrow the choices to two or three choices that are acceptable to you (the teacher). Ask the children to first discuss the pros and cons of each choice and then vote for their favorite. It is important to actually follow through and use the money for the purpose voted on so the children learn that their vote really does have power!

Experiencing the Difference Between Australian Ballot and Floor Voting

Students can experience the difference between Australian Ballot voting and floor voting by picking a classroom (or school or town) issue to vote on. After the issue is determined the teacher should explain the issue – but no arguments should be made either for or against it. The students then vote on the proposal.



Before the votes are counted the class convenes a "Town Meeting." At the meeting a moderator is appointed (perhaps the teacher or a student) and a group of students are picked to play the role of the selectboard. The moderator asks the "selectboard" to explain the proposal and tell the class why they recommend that the citizens vote for the proposal. The moderator then asks the "assembly if there is any discussion on the proposal." The other students should be directed to ask questions about what the proposal means or to make arguments for or against the proposal. (Groups could prepare these questions and explanations in advance or the teacher could step in to clarify the proposal and to help students to think of questions on the spot.) After there has been adequate discussion the Moderator could call for a vote by a show of hands. Compare this vote to the "Australian Ballot" vote on the proposal. See if the discussion changed anyone's mind.

Issue ideas: "Should the school require students to wear uniforms?" "Should the school have a dress code?" "Should there be more school busses so all students can take the bus?" "Should we have school year round?" "Should we have soda at school?" "Should the town build a hockey rink?" "Should pets be able to come to school?" "Should students be allowed to chew gum at school?"

These activities are aligned with
Vermont' Communication and Language Arts Standards
1.3, 2.1, 2.3, and
Vermont's History and Social Sciences Standards
6.9, 6.10, 6.11, 6.12, 6.13 and 6.17
(Grades PreK-4)

This Town Meeting Coloring and Activity Book Has Been Brought to You By:

Deb Markowitz
Secretary of State
and Vermont Votes for Kids
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