

LEVELED BOOK • M

# The Best Guess



Written by Jeanne Baca Schulte  
Illustrated by David Cockcroft

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Harlan waited for Mr. Mack's ice cream truck to turn down Pine Street. Nora lived next door to Harlan. She was already in line.

“**G**uess how many bubbles I can blow in thirty seconds,” Nora said.

“Five,” replied Harlan.

“I think ten,” said Nora.

Harlan counted out thirty seconds.  
Nora blew ten big bubbles.

Nora’s guesses were always right.  
Harlan wished he knew her secret.

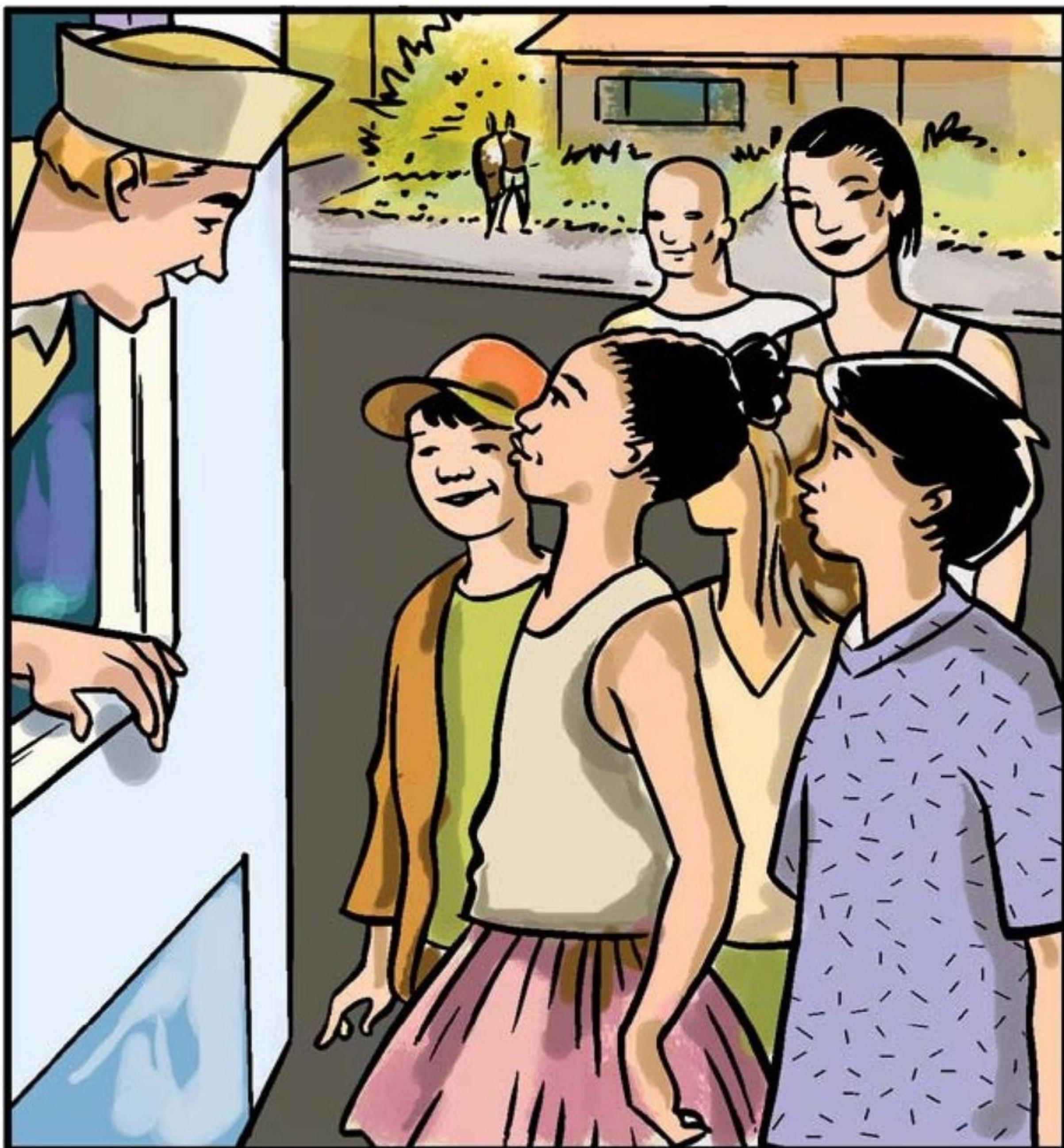




Mr. Mack turned slowly down Pine Street. A big sign on the side of his truck read:

GUESS THE FIRST 100° DAY AND  
WIN FREE SNOW CONES FOR A  
YEAR!

The only thing Harlan loved more than making guesses was eating snow cones. This was the contest for him!



“When would you like our guesses?” Nora asked Mr. Mack.

“You can tell me right now,” said Mr. Mack.

“Oh, no,” said Nora. “I need time to make a good guess.”

 “I’m ready,” said Harlan. “I think the first 100 degree day will be. . .”

“Wait!” shouted Nora. “I have an idea.”

The neighborhood kids gathered around Nora. Soon they were all nodding and smiling.

Harlan asked, “Can we guess tomorrow?”

“Tomorrow is fine,” said Mr. Mack. “Now, what kind of ice cream will you have today?”

“I’d like chocolate,” said Harlan.

“And I’ll take bubble gum,” said Nora. “But we’ll have to eat fast. We’ve got a lot of work to do!”

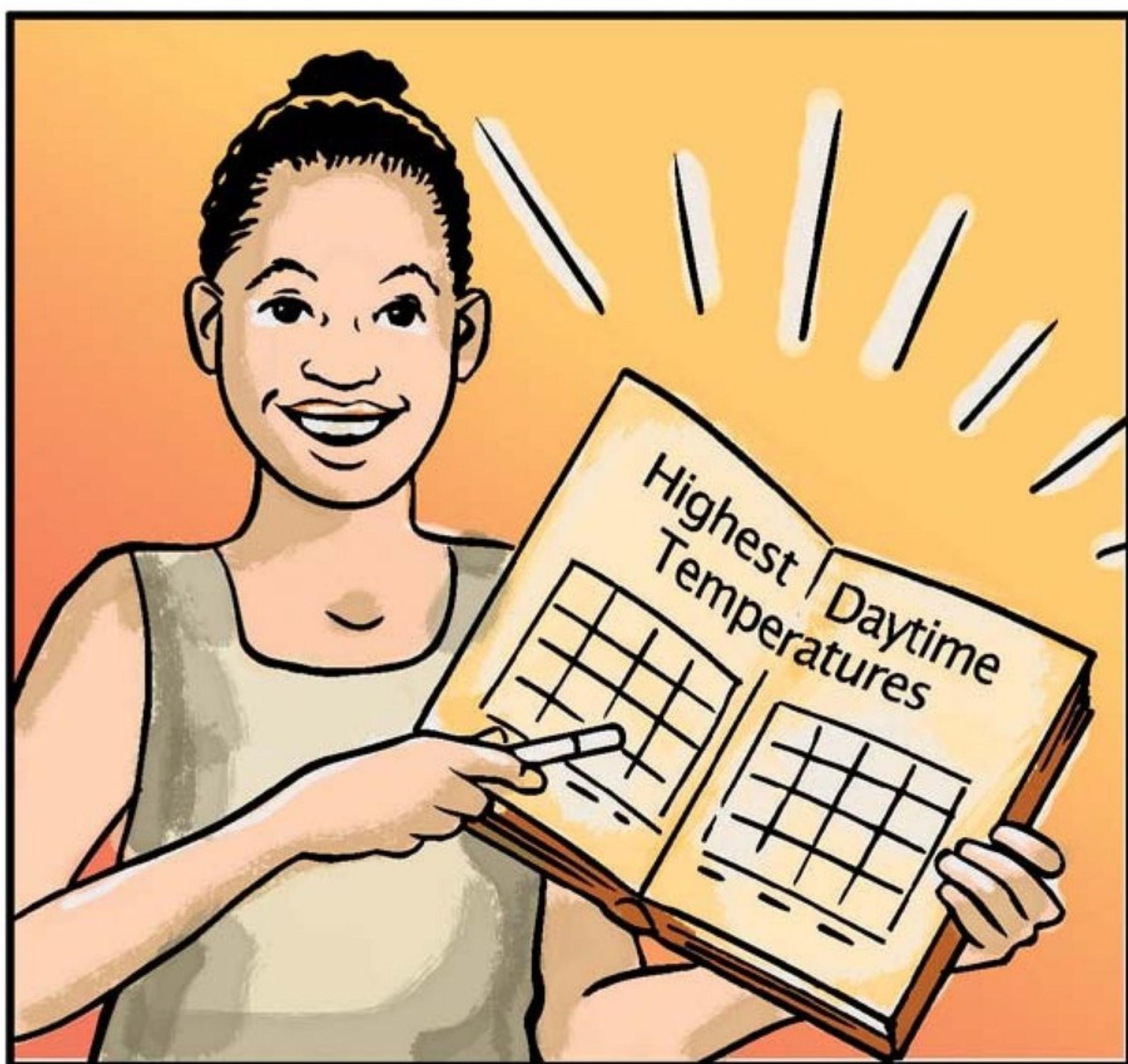


The next day Harlan and Nora shared **data** they found.

“Here are the high temperatures for our city,” Harlan said. “The weather station Web site lists the **high temperature** for each day of the year, and we have data for the past ten years! We can each look at the data from one year.”

► Nora held up her book. “Highest daytime temperatures are listed in this library book, too,” said Nora. “Now we can make a chart.”

Harlan scanned the high temperature **column** on his sheet, looking for the first 100° day. It was June 15.



🔊 Nora made a **tally mark** on the chart under June 15. Each of the kids found the first  $100^{\circ}$  day in their year. Nora marked the days on the chart.

Only June, July, and August had first  $100^{\circ}$  days.

“It’s hard to compare all these tally marks,” complained Harlan.

“A **bar graph** would show the data much better,” said Nora.

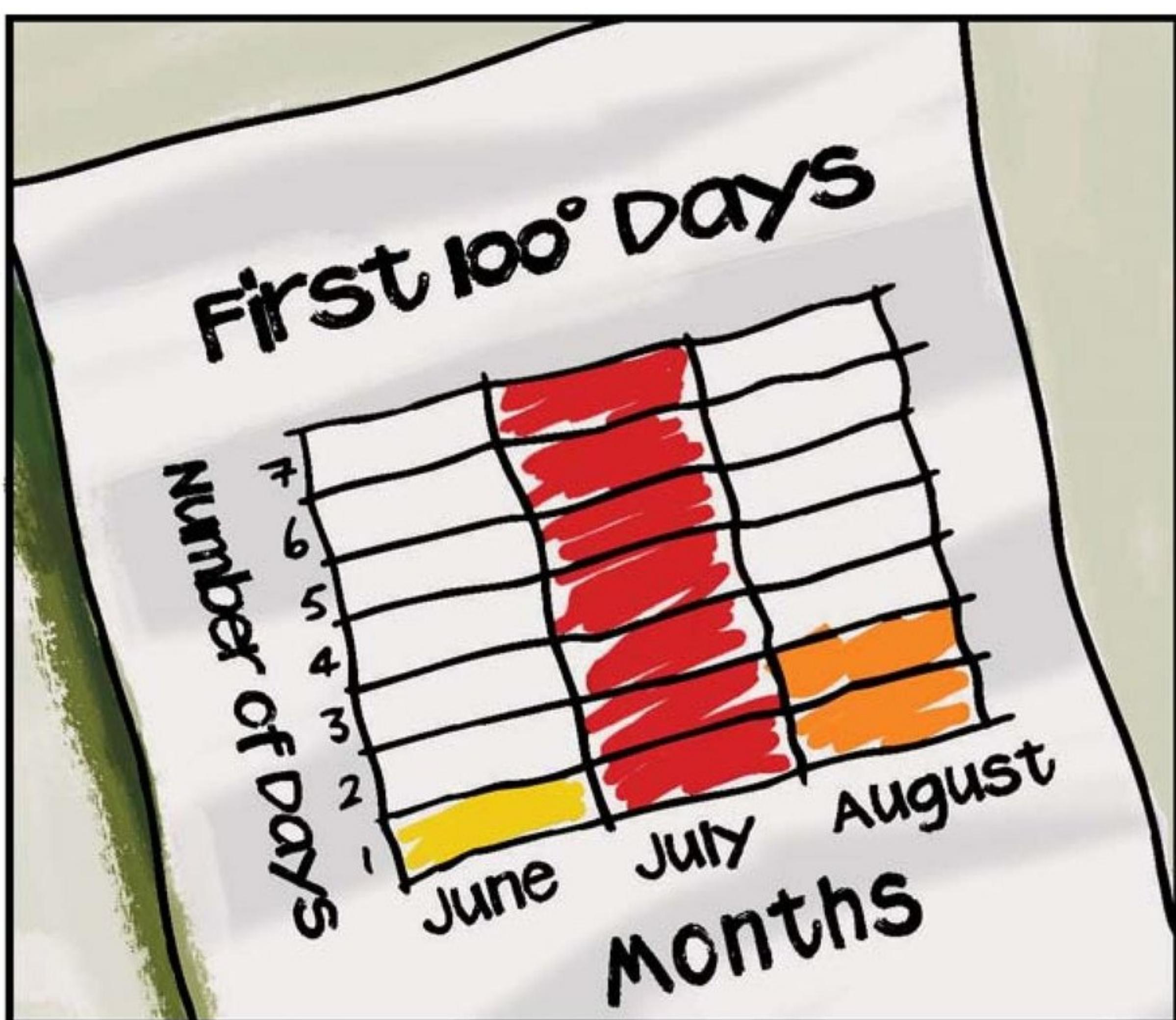
“That’s a great idea!” said Harlan.

“I’ll get some markers and a piece of paper.”

Harlan wrote “**FIRST  $100^{\circ}$  DAYS**” across the top of the paper. Next, he drew a line along the left side of the page and labeled it “**Number of Days.**”

- Then he drew a line along the bottom of the page and labeled it “Months.”

Nora looked at the chart and counted the tally marks for each month. On the bar graph, she colored in one bar for each mark. June had the fewest marks, and July had the most. The bar graph showed that the first  $100^{\circ}$  day would probably be in July.





“Well,” said Nora, “based on the graph, we can guess that the first 100 degree day is likely to be in July.”

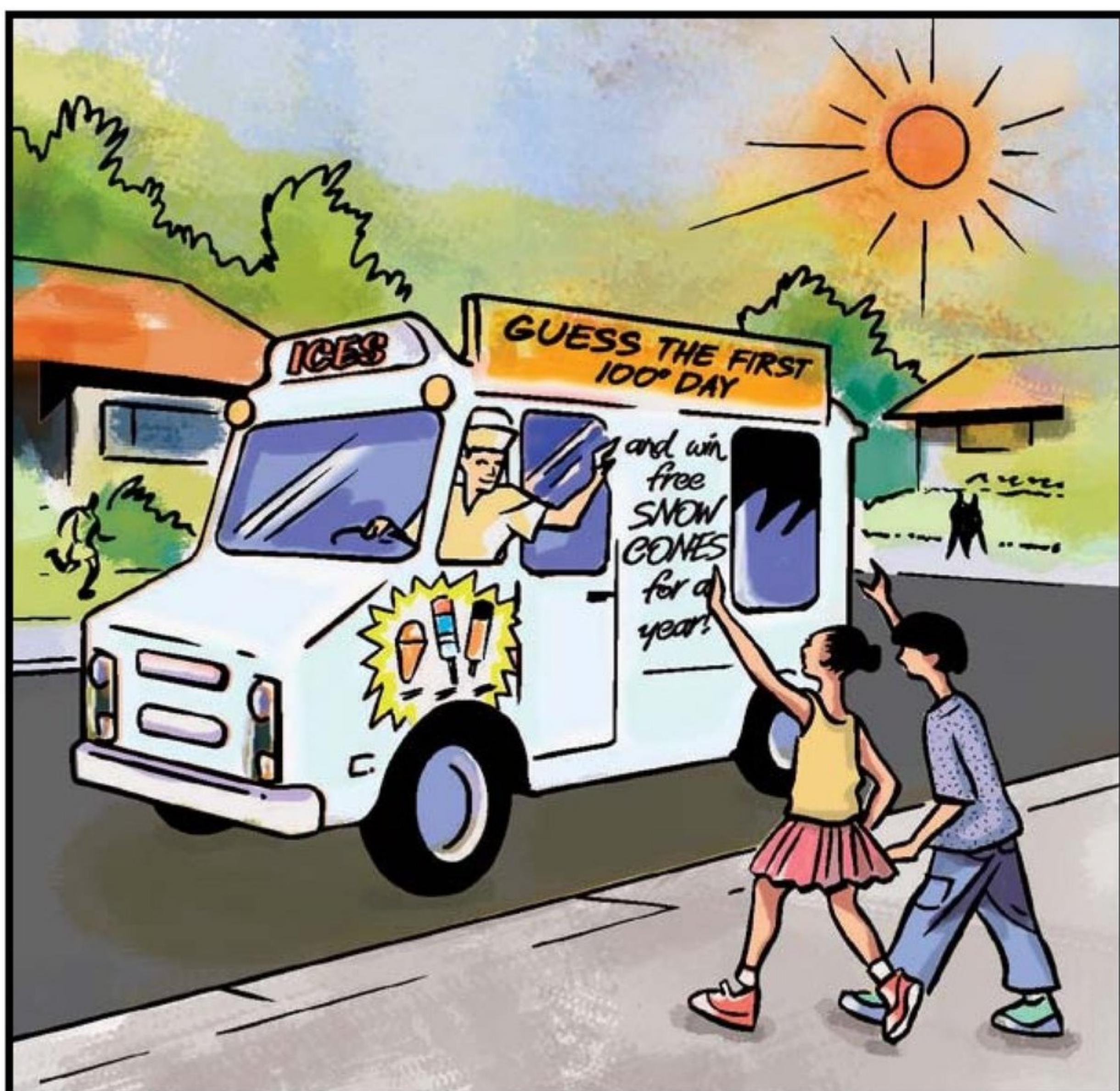
“And there are thirty-one days in July,” said Harlan.

Now they just needed to find thirty-one friends and family members. . .

► The next day, the ice cream truck turned down Pine Street. Mr. Mack stopped and opened the window.

“I’m ready for your good guesses!” said Mr. Mack.

Nora guessed July 15, and Harlan chose July 25.

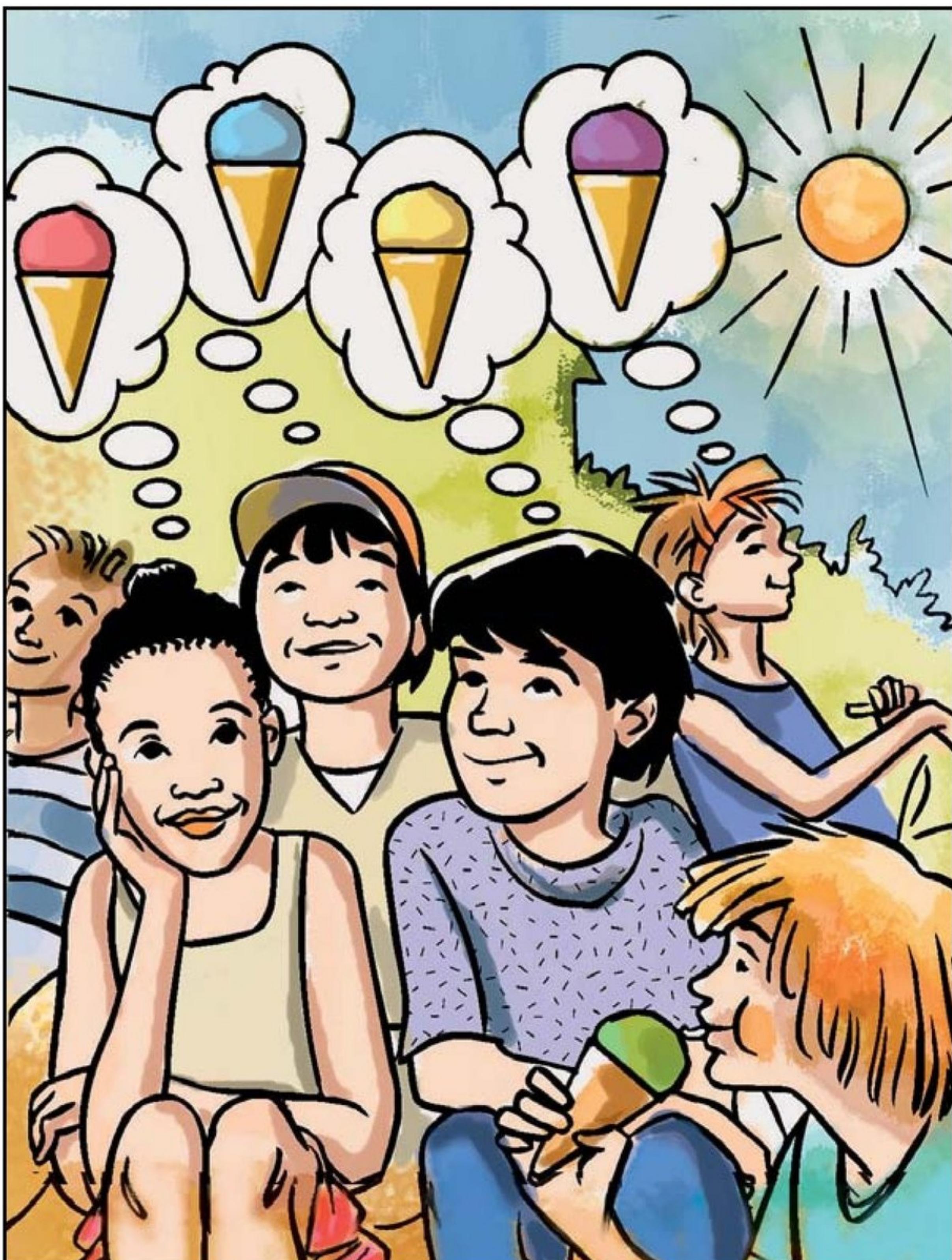




The other kids all made their guesses. Then the moms, dads, sisters, and brothers all made their guesses.

Soon Mr. Mack had thirty-one guesses. They started at July 1, and they ended at July 31.

► The kids on Pine Street were almost certain that someone on their street would soon have plenty of snow cones to share. Almost certain.



## Glossary

**100°** ←

a symbol meaning a degree of temperature (p. 5)

**bar graph**

a chart that uses bars to represent numbers (p. 10)

**column**

a list of items, written one under the other (p. 9)

**data**

facts and figures relating to a topic (p. 8)

**guess**

to suggest an answer to a question or problem without knowing whether or not it's right (p. 4)

**tally mark**

a line, or check, used to keep count (p. 10)

**temperature**

how hot or cold something is (p. 8)

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