

He's NOT JUST TEASING!

by JENNIFER LICATE

**A book about the difference
between teasing and bullying**



BOYS  TOWN®
Press

Illustrated by SUZANNE DEAKY

He's Not Just Teasing!

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Chapter 1

SCHOOL IS HARD

I'M MALCOLM. MOST PEOPLE WOULD DESCRIBE ME AS ATHLETIC. I'm really fast, which gives me an advantage in sports (soccer's my favorite!). I play on as many soccer teams as I can – my community team and my school team. Plus, my friends and I play pick-up games during recess and on weekends. Sports is one area where I feel proud of myself because not everything comes so easily for me.



SOMETIMES I GET IN TROUBLE FOR HAVING
EXTRA ENERGY AND BECAUSE I DON'T LIKE TO SIT

STILL.

I'D RATHER BE DOING SOMETHING, ANYTHING, OTHER THAN SITTING STILL.

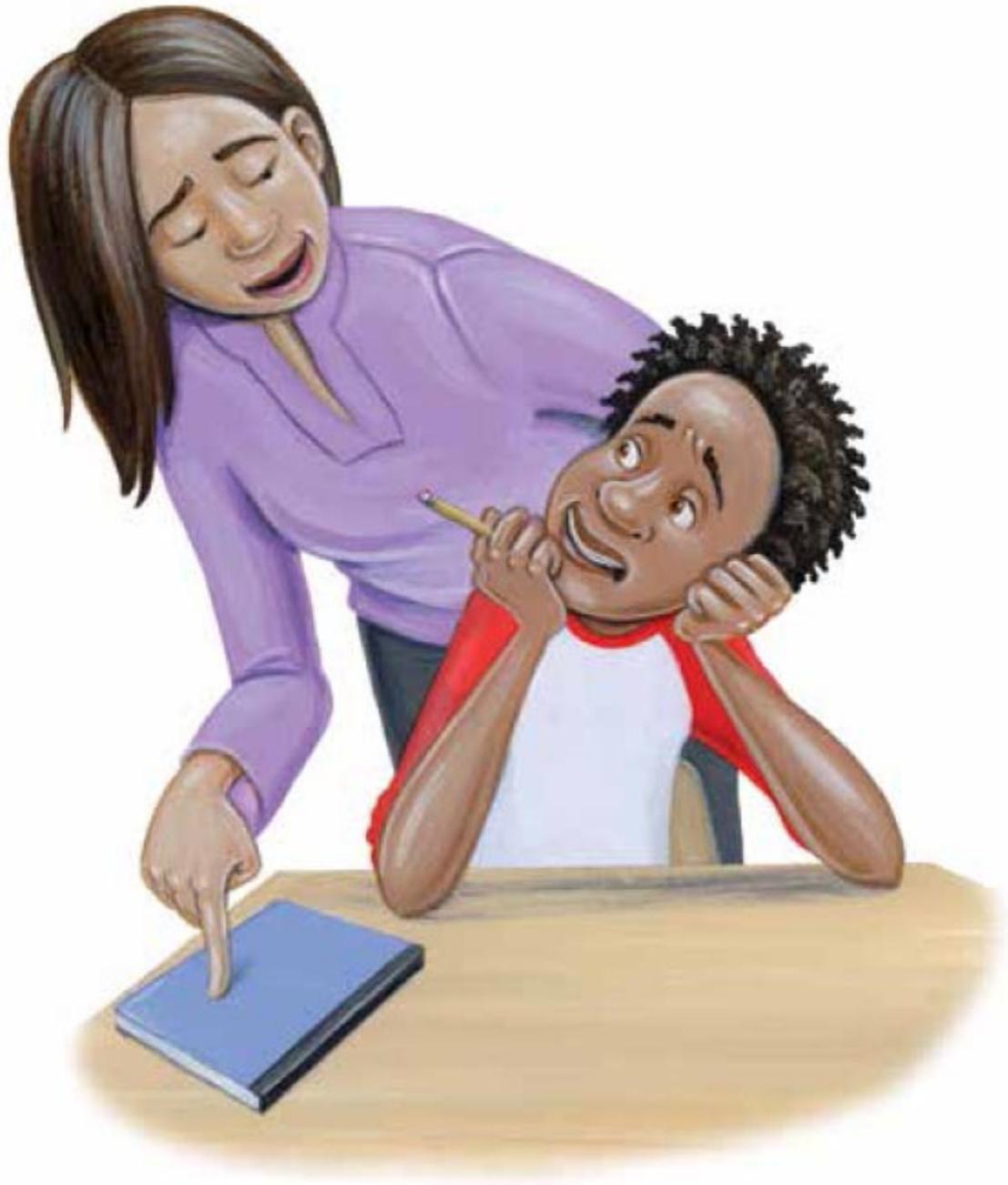
When I was little, everyone thought my high energy was cute. My mom used to say I had two speeds – fast and sleepy. I always considered that a compliment. Who wouldn't want to be fast and have a lot of energy?

My extra energy can often make school tough for me. When I've been sitting awhile, I get bored and want to chat with friends. I'm also not the kid who has all the right answers, and I'm almost always the last one to finish my schoolwork.

I've gotten used to that, but this year has been really hard. My teacher, Mrs. Armstrong, is strict. It feels like she's always calling me out.

"MALCOLM, STOP TAPPING YOUR PENCIL."

"MALCOLM, STOP TALKING." "MALCOLM, PAY ATTENTION."



Sometimes she'll tap my desk when she walks by to remind me to follow her directions. It always feels like I'm getting in trouble for something.

I know a lot of my friends feel the same way, but I definitely get in trouble more often.

I REALLY TRY TO FOLLOW ALL THE RULES.

The problem is, my extra energy sometimes makes me distracted. And when I'm distracted, I'm not paying attention to Mrs. Armstrong's rules. I know I need to be more focused on schoolwork, but it's not easy for me.

The other kids have started to notice how much I get in trouble, too. Nita sits next to me and usually has to remind me to follow Mrs. Armstrong's directions. The other day, I still had my Language Arts workbook out when the class had moved onto journal writing.

Nita giggled and said,

"HELLO, ANYONE THERE? WE'RE DOING OUR
JOURNALS NOW."



Laughing it off, I said, “Thanks, I guess I was in outer space.” Nita laughed with me. Even though I’m embarrassed when she reminds me to follow directions and stay focused, I know she’s trying to help me. Nita’s my friend and doesn’t want me to get in trouble with Mrs. Armstrong.

The friends I play soccer with sometimes tease me, too. If I miss a ball or make a bad play, they’ll imitate Mrs. Armstrong.

“MALCOLM! PAY ATTENTION!” they’ll say in their funniest “teacher voice.” We all laugh. They know how strict she is, too. Sometimes I get embarrassed when they tease me, but I know they’re having fun with me. They’re my friends, so it doesn’t hurt my feelings.

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