

HOWARD AND THE AMAZING EYE EXAM



WRITTEN BY
MICHELLE WEED WITH
DR. CATHERINE McDANIEL



ART DIRECTION BY / JENI BRENDEMUEHL

ILLUSTRATED BY / ANDREW BANNECKER



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A NOTE TO PARENTS

Children often don't realize they have a vision problem because they think everyone sees the same way they do. In fact, approximately 30 million children in the U.S. have undetected vision problems, which may interfere with their learning development.¹


That's why Alcon and The Eye Solution™ family of brands want to spread the word about the importance of eye exams for children. We hope that reading this book with your child will inspire you to schedule an appointment, and help you prepare your child for their visit to the eye doctor.



ENJOY!

The American Optometric Association recommends that children should have a comprehensive eye exam by an eye doctor at the ages of six months, three years, age six, and every two years to age eighteen*.² Despite this, only 14% of children in the United States have had an eye exam by the age of six.³

Parents should be aware that vision screenings don't substitute for a comprehensive eye exam, performed by an eye doctor. And, that children may be more responsive to treatment when a vision problem is detected early.⁴



Howard gave his glasses one final polish and held them up like a trophy in front of the class. It was his turn to be Star Student, and all eyes were on him.

“Today I’m going to tell you about how I got my new glasses,” Howard announced with pride.

“It all started when my mom took me to see the eye doctor.”

“Hi Howard, I’m Dr. Iris,” she said with a friendly smile. “Are you ready to have some fun today?”

He wasn’t sure if she was being serious. *Fun* was not a word he ever thought he’d hear in a doctor’s office.

Seeing the confused look on his face, Dr. Iris explained, “We’re going to start out with a game!”

Howard liked games. He followed her into the exam room.

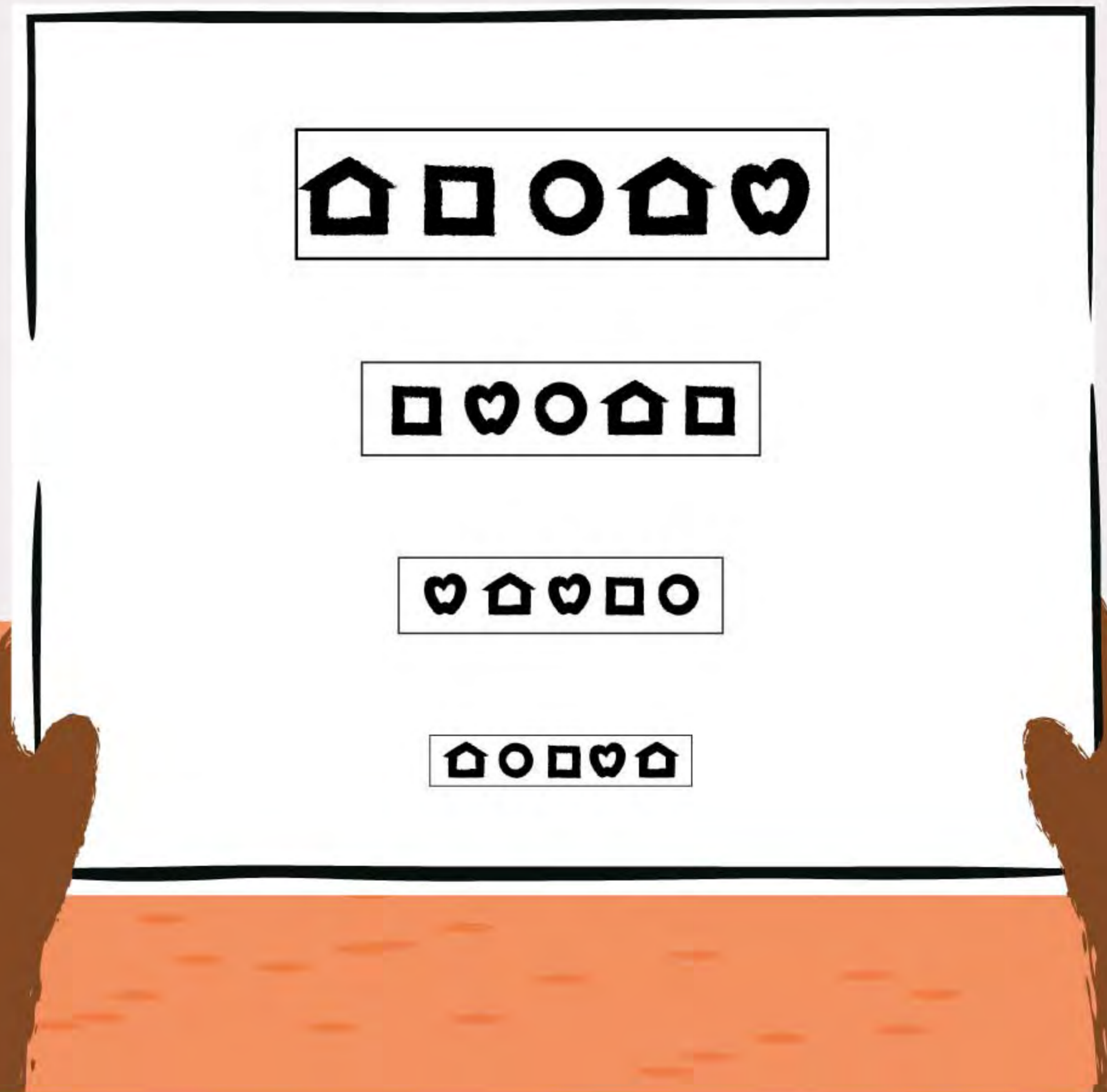




First, Dr. Iris pulled out a card with rows of shapes on it and asked Howard to name each shape.

He thought it sounded easy. But as he went down the rows, the shapes got smaller and smaller. The game ended when the shapes got so small he couldn't guess which was which anymore.

“This shows me how well you can see up close,” she said.





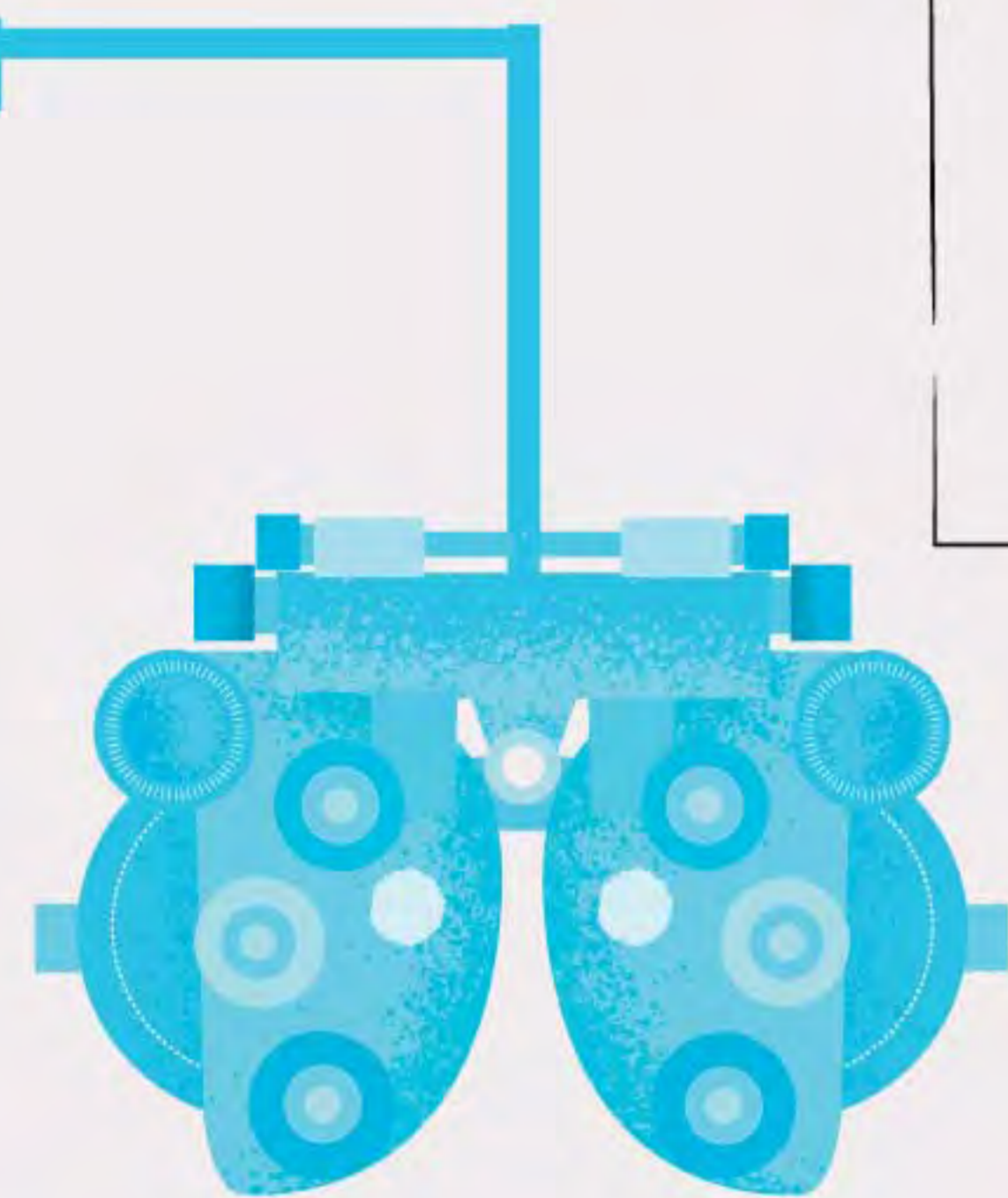
“Next, Dr. Iris showed me some cool art. I liked how the little colored circles created different shapes.”

“It’s like those pictures we made in art class using only little dots!” Violet chimed in, nodding toward their art on the board.

“Yes, except not everyone can see the shape in this art. You have to have color vision,” Howard said.

“Sounds like a superpower,” said Charlie.

“It’s a *useful* power,” Howard agreed, “because if you don’t have color vision, you can’t see the difference between colors like red and green. That could make schoolwork and other things harder.”



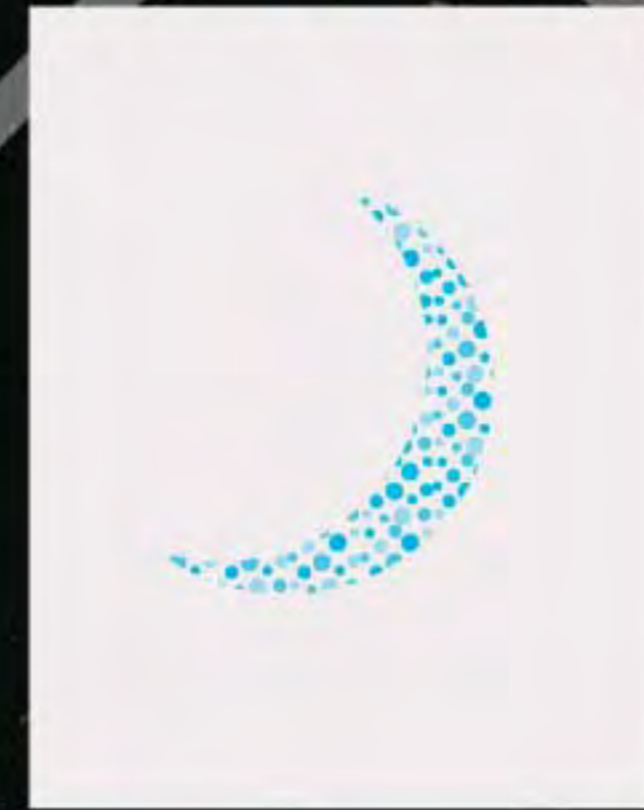
Then, Dr. Iris said it was time for a puppet show.

“My name is Bandit, and I love shiny things,” the puppet said. “Dr. Iris has a shiny light, and guess what?” he said, lowering his voice, “I took it!”

She raised her eyebrows. “I need that light, Howard! See if you can catch him with your eyes.”

Bandit ran this way and that, up and down, near and far. While Howard did his best to chase Bandit with his eyes, Dr. Iris watched Howard’s eyes to see how well they could keep up.





“While I was looking at the shapes, Dr. Iris explained that seeing in 3-D happens when your eyes work together as a team.”

“Like in T-ball?” Teddy and Tanner asked at once. Teddy and Tanner were twins. They did everything as a team.

“A lot like T-ball,” Howard said. “If one eye isn’t seeing correctly it can throw off your 3-D vision, just like if one player isn’t playing their position it can throw off the whole team.”

The twins nodded, knowingly.





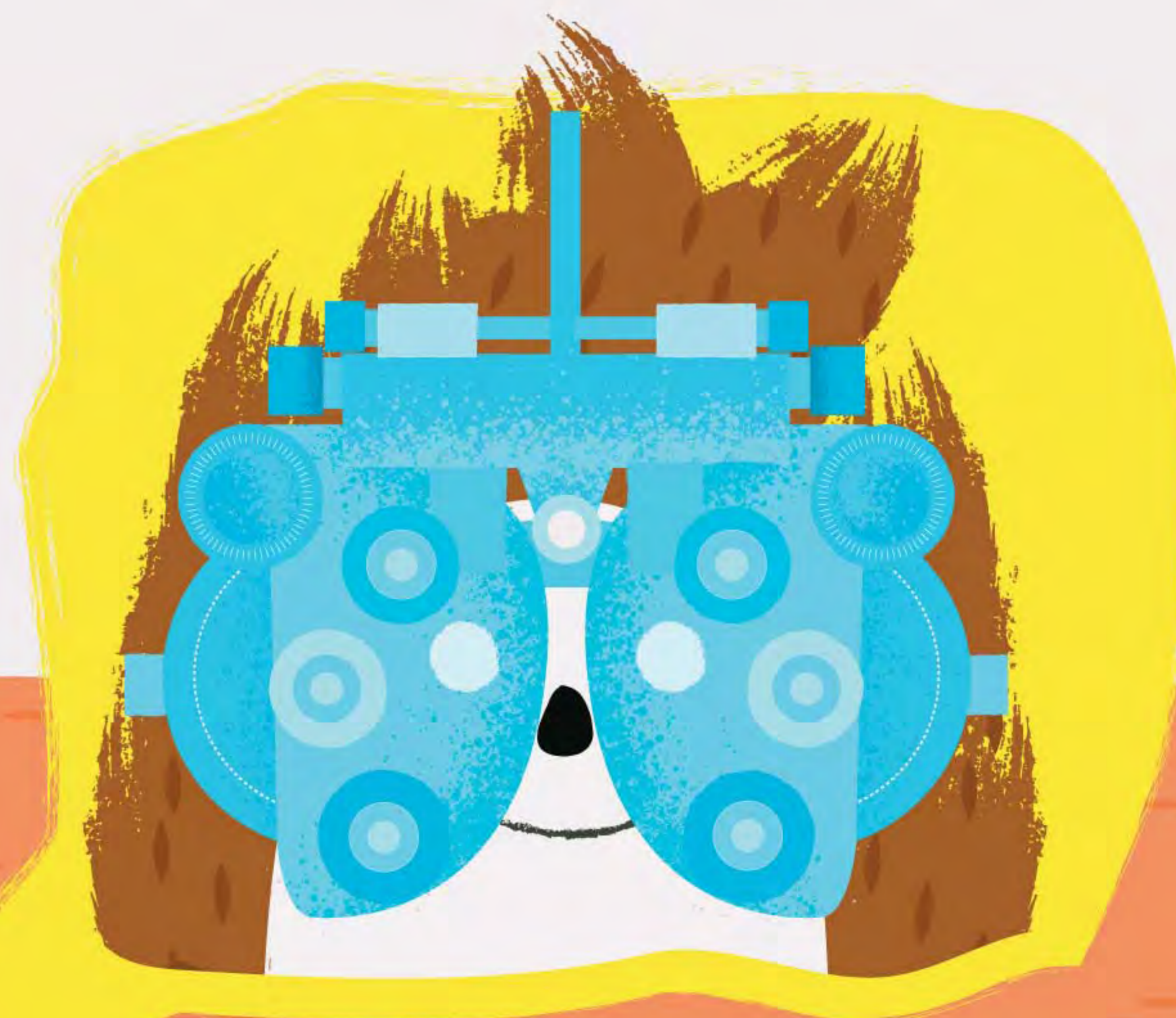
After that, Dr. Iris had Howard look through the biggest pair of glasses he'd ever seen.

"Take a look through these and tell me what you see," she said.

"I'm not sure," Howard admitted. "Everything looks fuzzy."

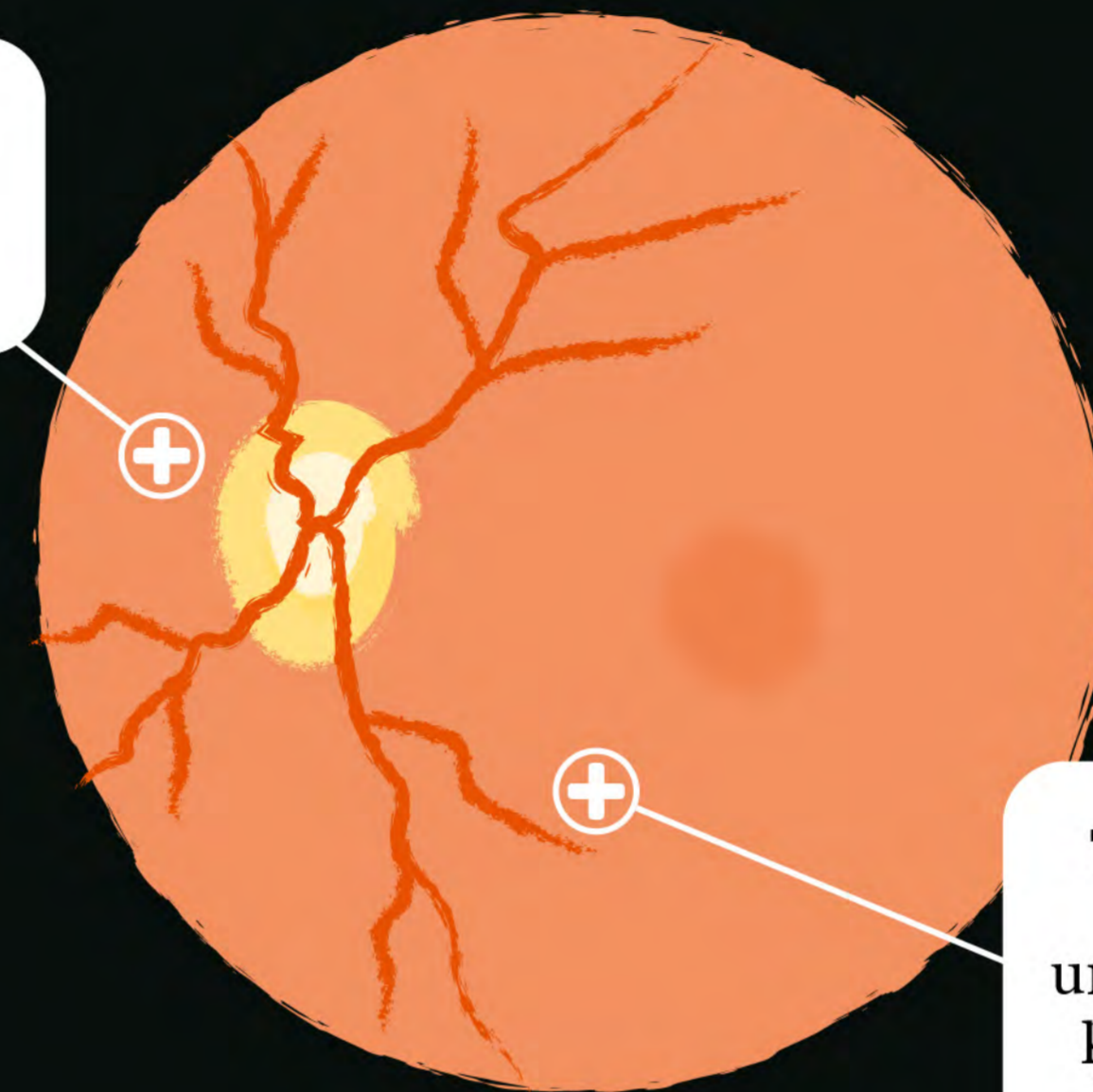
"Let's see if we can fix that," Dr. Iris said. Howard heard *click, click*, and suddenly the eye chart came into focus.

"I can see the shapes clearly!" Howard beamed.





The Optic Nerve
connects the eye
to the brain



The blood vessels
in the eye form a
unique pattern in every
person, just like each
person has a unique
thumbprint

“The last part of the exam reminded me of my favorite subject in school, Science,” Howard grinned. “Dr. Iris put drops in my eyes and looked at the inside of each eye with her light. Best of all, she took a picture and gave me a copy to keep as a souvenir!”

“Eewww,” Drew howled.

“Grossss,” whined Dylan, rolling her eyes.

“AWESOME,” shouted Molly.

“That is fascinating, Howard!” said Ms. Owl.



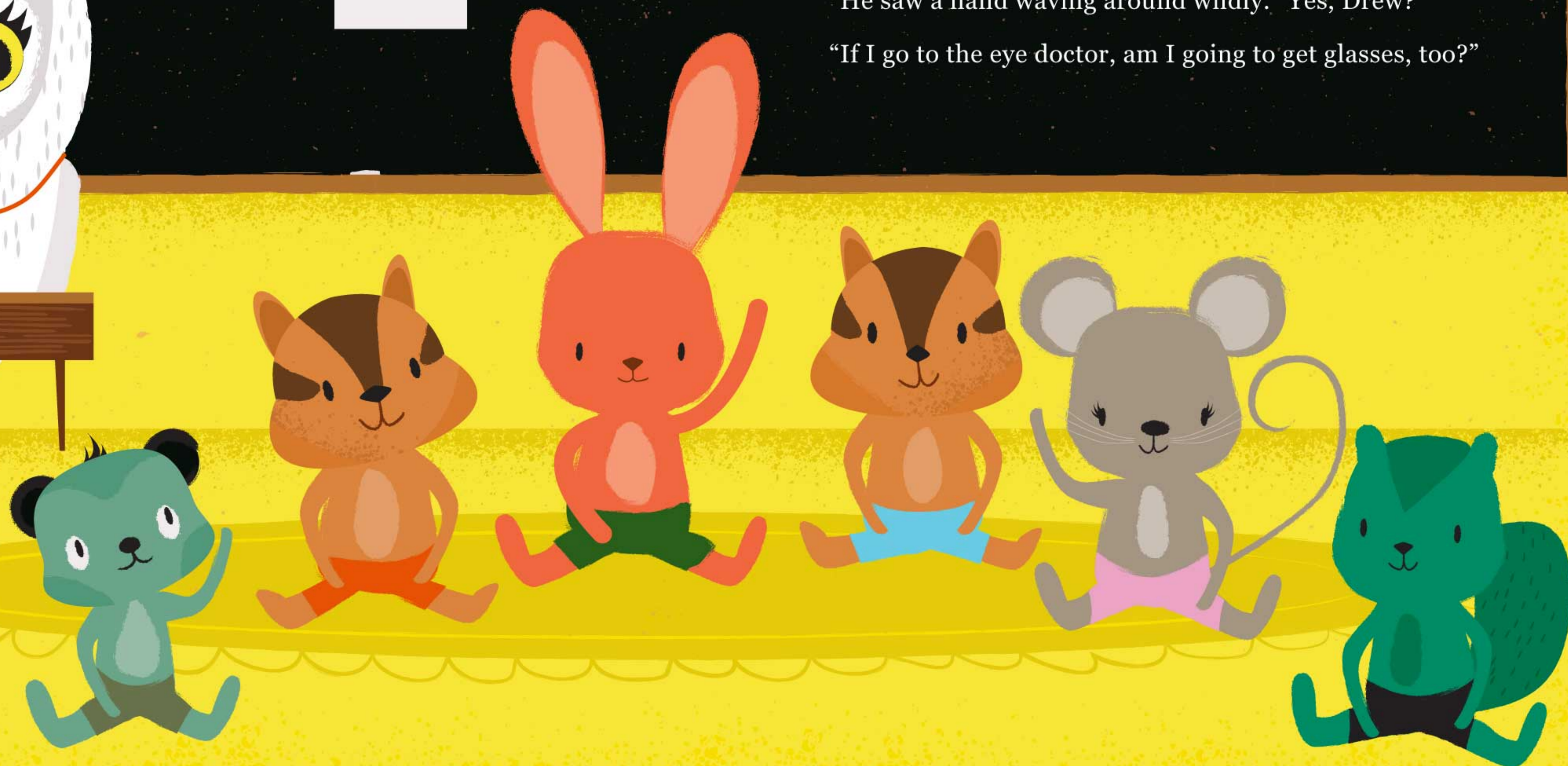
“Does anyone have any questions for Howard?”
Ms. Owl asked.

Molly raised her hand. “How did you
know you needed to go to the eye doctor?”

“My mom took me before school started. She said
we needed to make sure my eyes were ready to learn,”
Howard replied.

He saw a hand waving around wildly. “Yes, Drew?”

“If I go to the eye doctor, am I going to get glasses, too?”



“Not everyone needs glasses,” said Howard.
“Dr. Iris told me that kids with certain vision problems get to do exercises instead.”

“Exercises?” Tanner asked. “Like in gym class?”

“Right,” said Howard, “but for your eyes.”

“I wonder who has the strongest eyes in the world?!” said Teddy.

“I don’t know,” Howard laughed. He imagined an eyeball lifting weights and chuckled to himself.



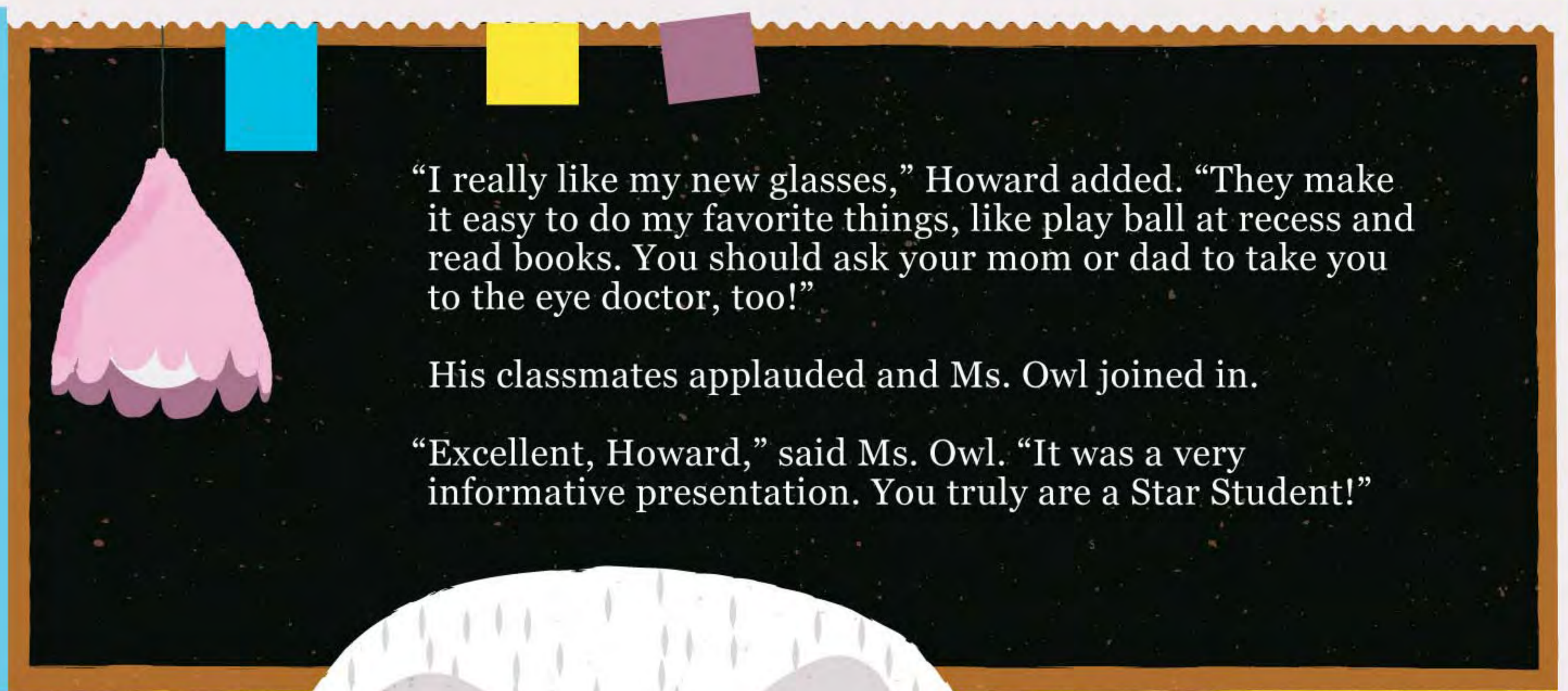
Lucy piped up. "Was going to the eye doctor scary?"

Howard thought for a minute.

"We played a game, saw some art, had a puppet show, watched 3-D shapes pop off a page, looked through a big pair of glasses, and got a picture of the inside of my eyes.

No, I don't think it was scary at all!"





THE END



DON'T FORGET!

Schedule your child's eye exam today.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We offer our sincerest thanks to the many people who helped make Howard and the Amazing Eye Exam a reality, including Aarra, and Bernstein & Andriulli. A very special thanks to Lea Hyvärinen, MD, PhD, FAAP, LEA Test Intl, LLC and GOOD-LITE® for their permission to use the likeness of their Lea SYMBOLS®, and ColorCheck™ Color Vision Screening respectively.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



*Asymptomatic/Risk-free patients 1. National Institutes of Health The Multi-Ethnic Pediatric Eye Disease and Baltimore Pediatric Eye Disease Studies (NEI.2011) 2. Rein D, Wittenborn J, Zhang X, Song M, Saaddine J. for Vision Cost-effectiveness Study Group. The potential cost-effectiveness of amblyopia screening programs. J Pediatr Ophthalmol Strabismus. 2012; 49:146-156. 3. Resources for teachers. American Optometric Association website: <http://www.aoa.org>. Accessed March 24, 2015. 4. Holmes J, Lazar E, Melia M, et al. Effect of age on response to amblyopia treatment in children. Arch Ophthalmol. 2011;129(11):1451-1457. Dr. McDaniel has received modest compensation for her work with Alcori. © 2015 Novartis 5/15 TRD15065MS