

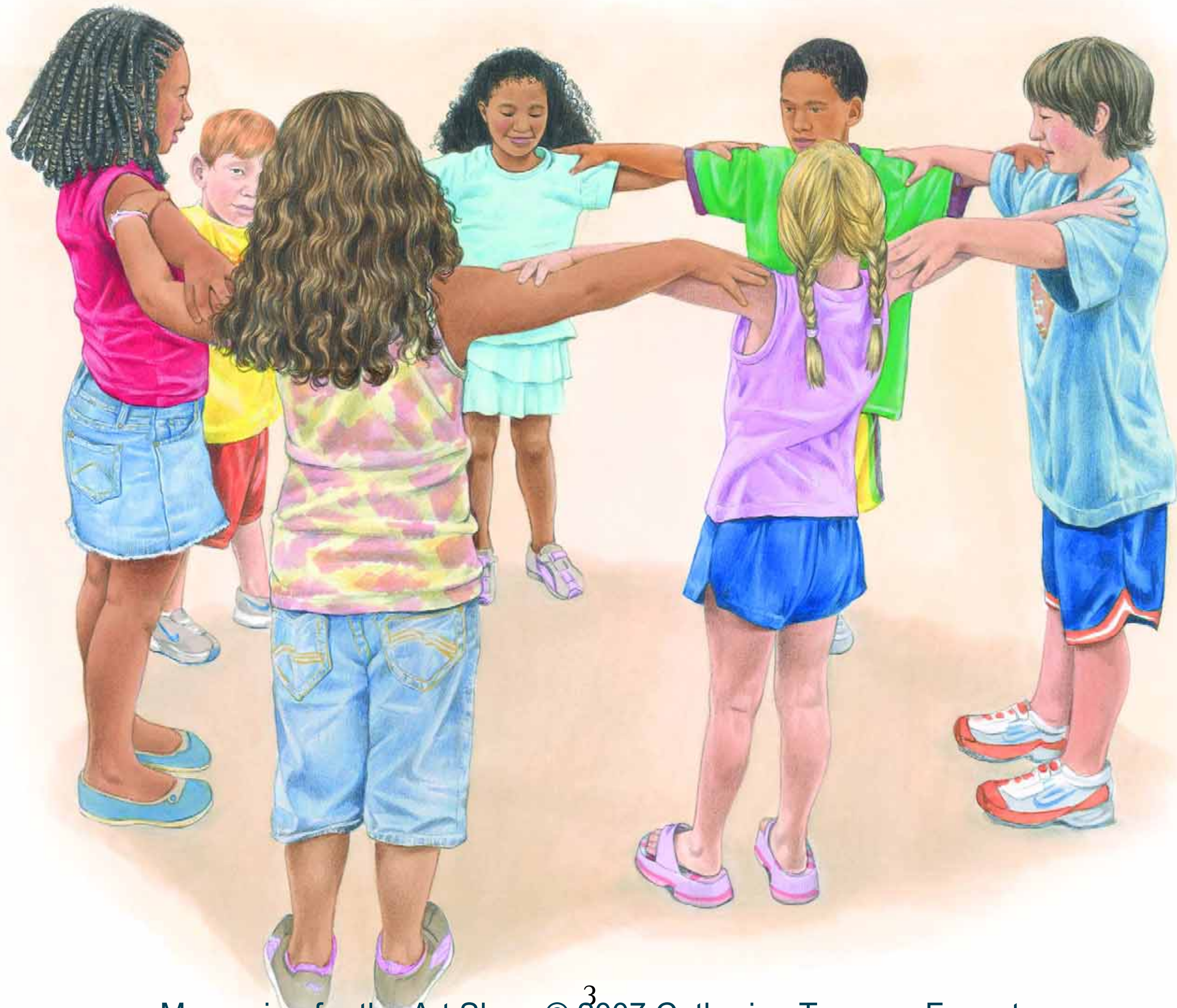


Tamika just loved school this year! She was in second grade and she loved it because she had the best teacher ever—Mrs. Washington!

Mrs. Washington loved math, just like Tamika, and she liked to organize fund-raisers for the school. “Community projects,” she would call them.

“It takes a village,” she would say. Tamika didn’t really know what Mrs. Washington meant until last year when she organized a book fair. Lots of people came and bought books, and the school made lots of money. The principal used the money to buy new books for the school library.

“We came together like a village,” Mrs. Washington had said with a satisfied smile, “and look what we accomplished.”



This year Mrs. Washington was organizing an art fair. All the kids in the school had made lots of paintings, and Mrs. Washington had asked Tamika, Shaun, and Jaleelah to stay after school to help.

“We’ll make a sign for each of the paintings,” Jaleelah said.

“And very carefully,” Tamika added as she went for the scissors. “We’ll measure every painting and cut signs just the exact size of each painting.”





Mrs. Washington opened up the closet door. Artwork was piled right up to the ceiling!

“Oh, no!” Tamika and Jaleelah groaned.

Mrs. Washington looked overwhelmed.

“We’ll never finish!” Shaun said exactly what everyone was feeling.



That night when Tamika went home, she told her mom about the big pile of art, about all the work they had to do, and about what Shaun had said.

“I have an idea,” her mom said. “Make it a class math project. Get the whole class to measure and then make a blueprint. If you do the measuring and the blueprint, I’ll call some of the families and we’ll cut out all the signs.”

“What’s a blueprint?” Tamika asked. She couldn’t imagine what her mom was talking about.

“Like a plan with measurements on it. Something that shows us where to cut,” her mom explained.

Tamika thought and thought. How could they make a blueprint? When she went to bed that night she was still thinking and then all of a sudden she had an idea.



In the morning she asked her mom, who was an accountant, for a roll of paper, the kind she used in her adding machine. Tamika put the roll of paper in her backpack and then she ran all the way to school. She couldn't wait to tell Mrs. Washington and Shaun and Jaleelah!

“My mom said the families would help if we measure and make a blueprint,” Tamika said excitedly when she got to school.

She showed the roll of paper to Mrs. Washington, Shaun, and Jaleelah. “We can use this. We’ll make a blueprint. The whole class can measure the artwork with cubes and we’ll make marks on here. It’ll be like a pattern that shows exactly how long to make the signs. My mom will call some of the families, and they will cut out the signs.”



Mrs. Washington began to smile. Soon she was grinning. “A real community project,” she said. “A village! We’ll all do it together!” And so that day when it was time for math, Mrs. Washington pulled out all the artwork from the closet.

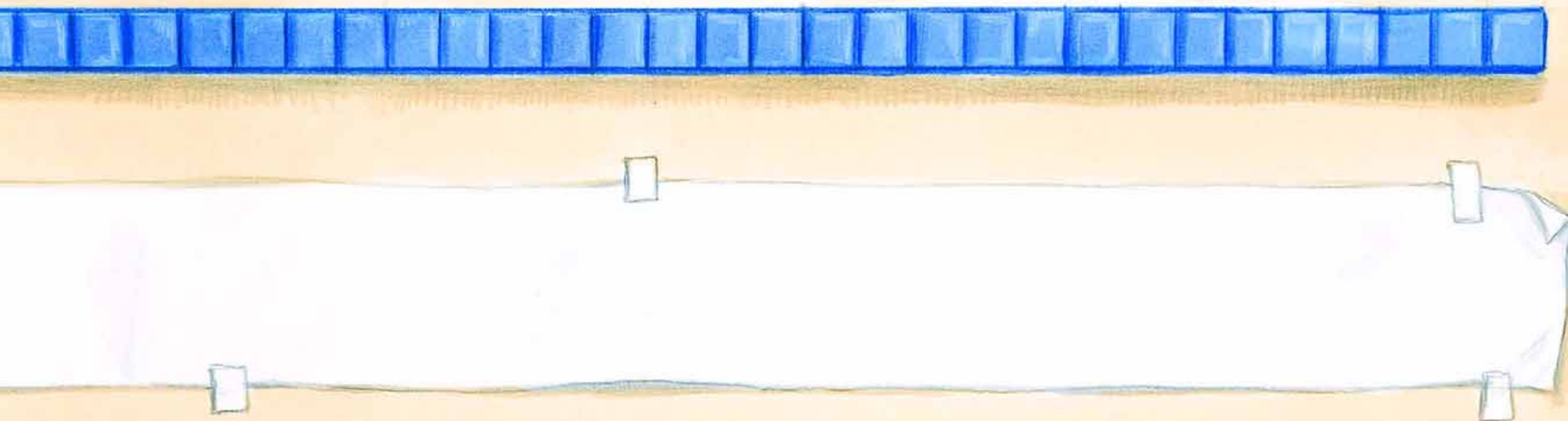
“Let’s sort them all by size,” Jaleelah said. They put the art into piles by sizes and then they measured each size with cubes to see how long they were.



Tamika rolled out the paper her mom had given her and taped it to the chalkboard. Above it she made a string of cubes so they would know where to make the marks once everything was measured.



Lee Ann did the small ones. “Ten cubes long,” she reported, and Tamika made a mark by the ten cubes.



“The poster papers are sixty-four cubes long,” Shaun announced proudly.

“I did the really big one,” Josie said. “It is eighty-four!”

“There’s lots of this size!” Jaleelah exclaimed. “Mark twenty-two.”

Cassie did all the artwork on the yellow drawing paper. “These are thirty-six cubes long,” she said, “and twenty-eight cubes wide!”

They put all the marks on the blueprint very carefully and soon it was done.

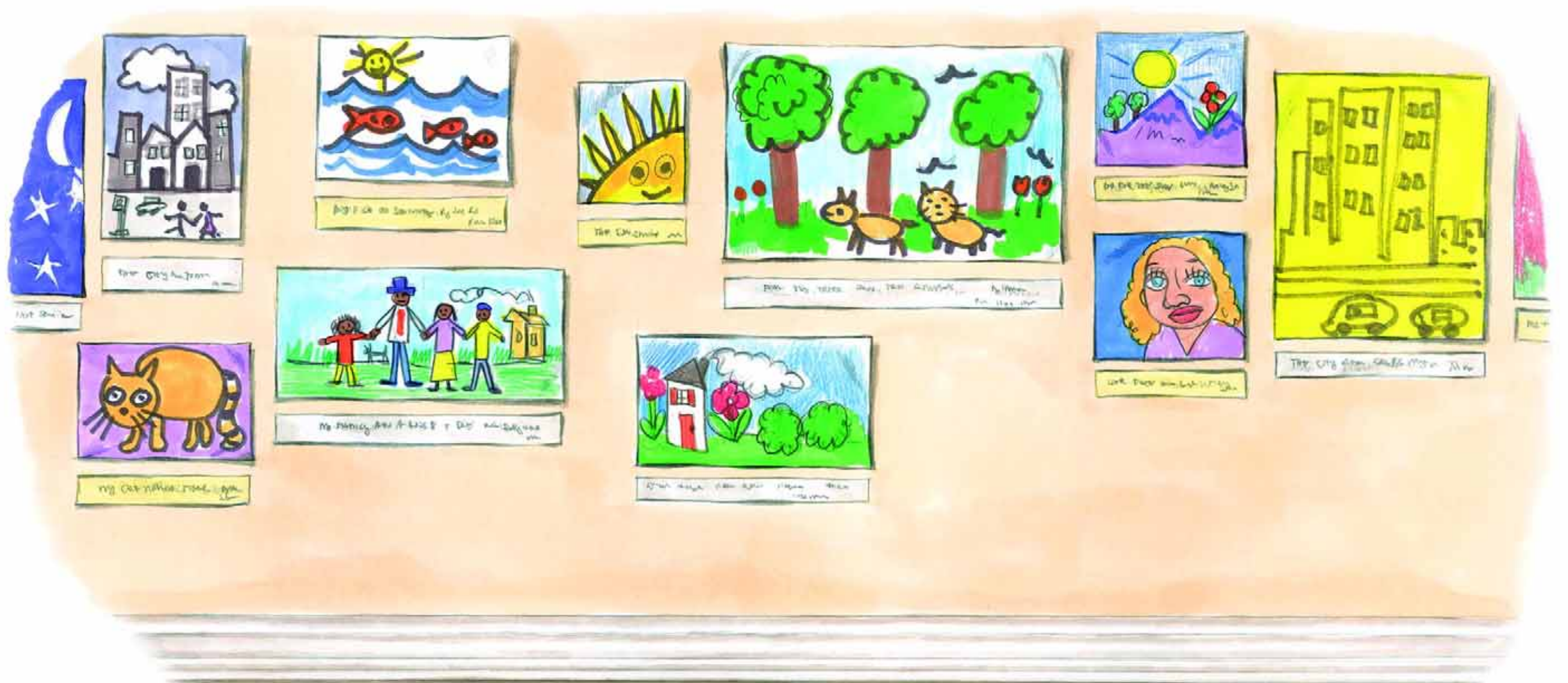




Measuring for the Art Show © 2007 Catherine Twomey Fosnot

That night, Tamika brought the blueprint home to her mom, and the next day the families used it to cut out all the signs.





When it was time for the art show, the kids wrote the title, the name of the artist, and the cost of the art on each sign. The signs were perfect! Just the right size! Everyone talked about how wonderful the art show was. Every piece sold and the principal used the money for lots of new art supplies.



Mrs. Washington was very happy. “We did it all together, a real village!” she said. “What a community of mathematicians!” And then she said, “I think next year we’ll have a math fair!”

“Yes!” Tamika exclaimed.