



# STORM CLOUDS

Over Mountain View  
Middle School

DAVE POTTER

Storm  
Clouds over  
Mountain  
View Middle  
School

---

Dave Potter

 **Strategic Book Publishing**  
New York, New York

Copyright 2009

All rights reserved — Dave Potter

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the permission, in writing, from the publisher.

Strategic Book Publishing

An imprint of Writers Literary & Publishing Services, Inc.

845 Third Avenue, 6th Floor — #6016

New York, NY 10022

[www.StrategicBookPublishing.com](http://www.StrategicBookPublishing.com)

ISBN: 978-1-61204-503-0

Printed in the United States of America

*To those teachers who cared enough to make a difference in my life. To my wife, Linda, my son and daughter, Justin and Brooke, my stepson and stepdaughter, Sean and Moiria, my grandson, Kaden, and my fishing buddies, who all keep me young at heart to still enjoy life.*



# Contents

Foreword . . . . .	vii
Chapter 1—A New School, a New Beginning? . . . . .	1
Chapter 2—I Could Really Use a Friend . . . . .	5
Chapter 3—Basketball Boot Camp . . . . .	11
Chapter 4—Call for Help . . . . .	15
Chapter 5—Scientific Observations . . . . .	19
Chapter 6—Is It Goodbye Mr. Fish? . . . . .	23
Chapter 7—Welcome Home Father . . . . .	29
Chapter 8—Run Runt Run . . . . .	33
Chapter 9—I Can’t Take It Anymore . . . . .	37
Chapter 10—Finally, the Last Day of School . . . . .	43



# Foreword

Many decades ago, I struggled in school, worse than the main character in this book. I was terrible in math and couldn't read or understand what I read. I also had an awful time understanding directions that the teachers gave. I would still be trying to understand the first part of the directions when the teacher finished part four. That behavior earned me many hours on a "Dunce Stool." I was placed on that stool many times during my first two years of school. Some teachers used that stool to ridicule students who they thought weren't paying attention, weren't trying hard enough, or were fooling around in class. Whoever was sitting on the stool was fair game for the rest of the class to smirk at, laugh at, and tease, on the playground.

Eventually, I began to retaliate against some of the boys who teased me. One of those after school confrontations



resulted in me knocking out a boy's tooth. I'm sure it was a baby tooth. Nonetheless, the city police chief was quite unimpressed with my actions. To make matters worse, the police chief was my father.

Before the beginning of my third grade year, I was sent to live with my grandparents in the country. I attended a one-room school that had grades one through eight. Some of the older kids were very helpful, and the teacher had so many other students to worry about that I was able to get by without much attention.

My parents eventually purchased a house within a few miles of my grandparents, and I moved back home with them and my younger brother. He and I both attended another one room school that housed grades one through eight. I again struggled in school. The teacher thought she could pound some sense into me by banging my head against the wooden top of my desk. It didn't seem to help. I still struggled all the way to high school.

I finally began to find success in high school athletics and music.

The high school hired a part-time math teacher and part-time guidance counselor. I was fortunate enough to be in her math class, and she saw something in me that other teachers hadn't. She also understood how to teach. She began to

schedule me to teach segments of her math class. If you ever want to truly learn something, learn it well enough to teach others. She understood that concept and I, for the first time, began to understand math.

In my senior year, I took remedial reading and made the honor roll for the first time. The teacher/counselor became my mentor and started pushing me to go to college and become a teacher.

The principal said that I was not college material. In spite of his critical letter, a college accepted me as a “probationary student.”

I immediately became active in athletics and consequently became friendly with some young college professors. With their help and encouragement, I began to understand how I learned best. One key technique was to write everything down. That process allowed me to get all of the important information on paper. Later I could go over the information again and again, if necessary, to process what it meant.

I kept improving my ability to learn, process information, and apply what I had learned through college and through two graduate schools. I also learned to take meticulous notes at meetings and hearings during my forty years as a school administrator.

During my last three years in education, I was privileged to serve as superintendent of schools in the district where I attended those one-room schools and graduated from high school. Some would view that as coming full circle.

If I were in school today, I would be labeled “Dyslexic” and be on an I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan). That doesn’t mean that I’m not smart enough to learn; it means that I have some learning disabilities that make it more difficult for me to learn.

I know that there are many students who struggle in schools today as I did. There are adults and fellow students out there who can help if you have the right attitude. It is easy to let the negative experiences weigh you down so you give up on yourself or your school. Try not to walk around with a scowl or angry look all the time. People are much more approachable if you do so with a pleasant look. One of my favorite college professors wrote in my yearbook: “To Dave—the boy with the good grin, the easy going manner, and unruffled temper.” My demeanor did make a difference.

Storm Clouds  
over Mountain  
View Middle  
School



# 1

## A New School, a New Beginning?

“I hate yellow busses.” Robert looked around, hoping no one was near enough to hear what he said. They weren’t, and he added, “I really do. They take me where I don’t want to go.”

Robert wondered if his new school would be better than his last. Robert hated school because he had trouble learning and kids picked on him.

Robert hadn’t slept very well last night and didn’t eat much for breakfast. He felt cramps in his stomach as the yellow school bus stopped and the door opened. When he stepped onto the bus, the driver was yelling at another student so he just stood and waited. He made sure he smiled when the driver turned to him. He hoped the driver would

smile back and not yell at him. The driver did smile at him, and he told Robert to sit in the first seat. Robert slid into the seat as quickly as he could, and the bus moved on.

Robert stared at the road and tried to remember what he was supposed to do when he got there. He remembered that the secretary had told him and his mother that he would need to meet with the principal before school started.

The bus pulled into the yard, and he and all the other students stepped onto the sidewalk in front of the school. He stood there a minute, then took a deep breath and walked up to a woman who seemed to be in charge. He told her that he was a new student and had to meet with the principal. She must have liked his smile, because she said, "I'll walk you up the stairs and show you where to go." She pointed to the doors and said, "Turn right after you get inside, and stop at the office. Be sure you wear your smile when you meet with Mr. Fish."

Robert walked through the doorway and slowly approached the office. He told the woman behind the office window glass that he was a new student, named Robert, and he had to talk with the principal before school started. She said, "Yes, Robert, we've been expecting you," then disappeared into another room.

When the principal, Mr. Fish, stepped out and asked Robert to come in, Robert's mouth dropped open. He forgot that he was supposed to be smiling. Mr. Fish was so big that he looked like a football player instead of a principal.

Mr. Fish asked him to sit down and told Robert about the school. Next, he asked Robert what he liked to do and what he was good at. Then he asked Robert a question that Robert had never thought of before. He said, "Robert, what will you bring and give to others in this school?" Robert said that he didn't understand. Mr. Fish said, "I expect every student to help make the school better for everyone else."

Robert thought first about all the things he couldn't do and could not think of anything he did well enough to help others. Suddenly Robert smiled, looked up at Mr. Fish, and said, "Mr. Fish, I can give smiles."

Mr. Fish looked down at Robert for what seemed like forever. His look turned into a smile, and he said, "Everyone needs smiles. Smiles will be a great gift for our school. Thank you Robert. I will take you down to your classroom, and you can start giving your gift to the school."

Robert smiled as he stood up to go with Mr. Fish. His head felt light, and he felt as if his feet were bouncing off the tile when he walked. People had never been this kind to him in school before. Robert forgot to look where he was



going and stubbed his toe on a broken tile in the hallway. He stumbled and fell against the hard cinder block wall.

Mr. Fish asked, “Are you all right, Robert?”

Robert felt stupid, but he nodded his head and smiled.

Buy the B&N ePub version at:-

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/storm-clouds-over-mountain-view-middle-school-dave-potter/1019158104?ean=2940012326638>

Buy the Kindle version at:-

<http://www.amazon.com/Clouds-Mountain-Middle-School-ebook/dp/B004VS99MW/ref>