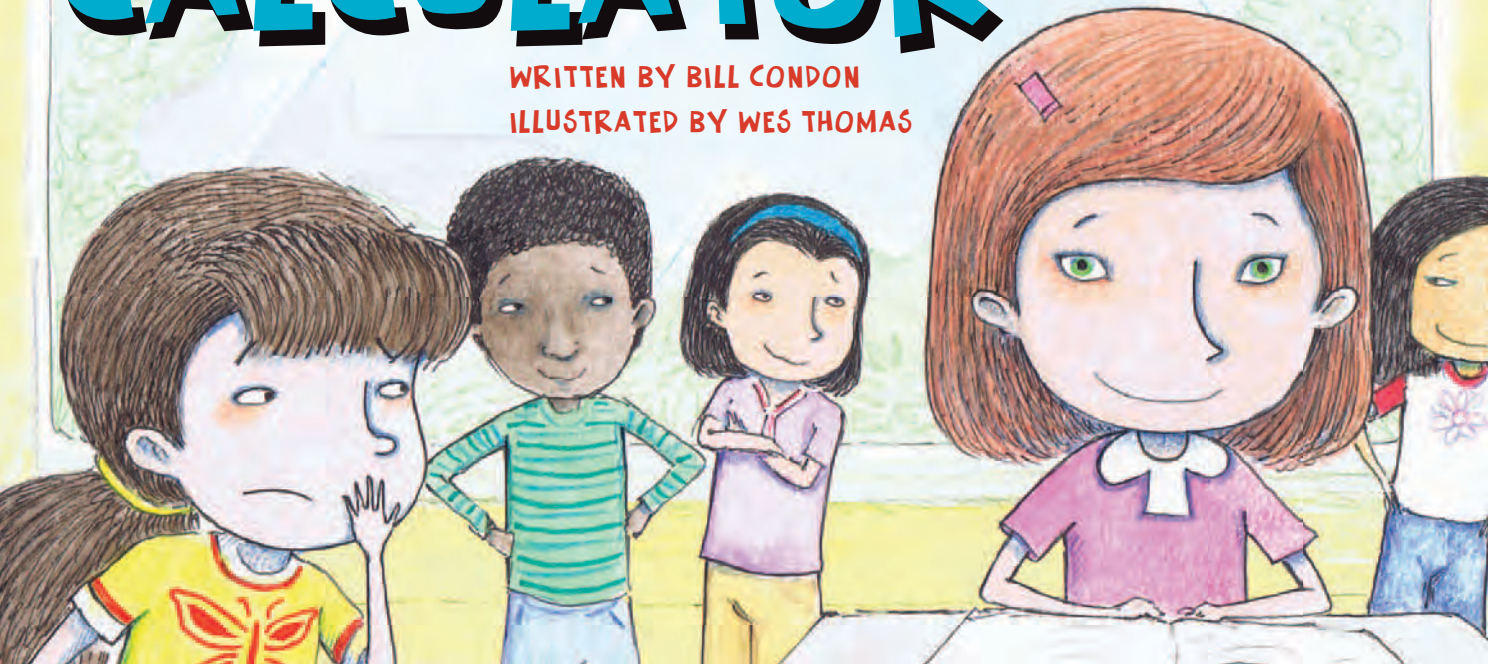
THE HUMAN CALCULATOR

WRITTEN BY BILL CONDON
ILLUSTRATED BY WES THOMAS





Madison is a friendly girl. Everyone likes her.
She looks much the same as everyone else in our school.
But there is something strange about Madison.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

It all began Monday morning in math class. Our teacher, Ms. Palk, started the lesson with a question.

"Amelia walked for half an hour," Ms. Palk said. "Then, she swam for ten minutes, before running for nearly fifteen minutes. How many minutes did she walk?"



For teachers' inspection ONLY



All year, I've been top of the class in math. I'm used to Ms. Palk saying, "Well done, Ashley! Very good!" I thought it would always be like that. But on this day, Madison's hand went up before mine.

"She walked for thirty minutes," Madison answered.

"Correct!" said Ms. Palk. "Well done! Now for the next question . . . "



For teachers' inspection ONLY



I leaned forward in my seat and listened very closely. This time I was sure I would be the first one to answer the question.

"Farmer Brown has four oranges," Ms. Palk said. "He eats one. He gives one to his pet goat. He buys two more. Then, he gives his children one each. How many children does Farmer Brown have?"

For teachers' inspection ONLY

I was confused. I thought it was about oranges, not children!

