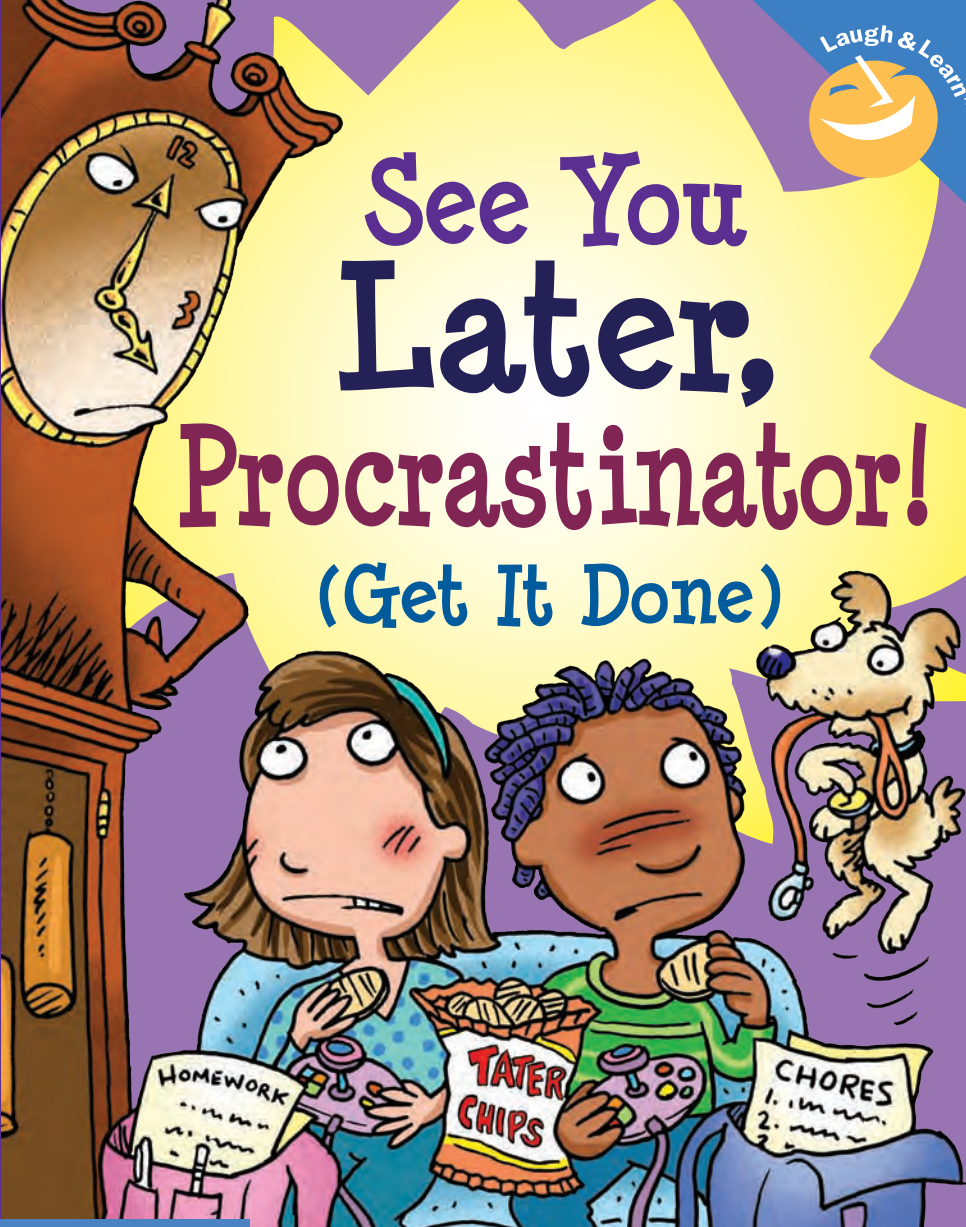


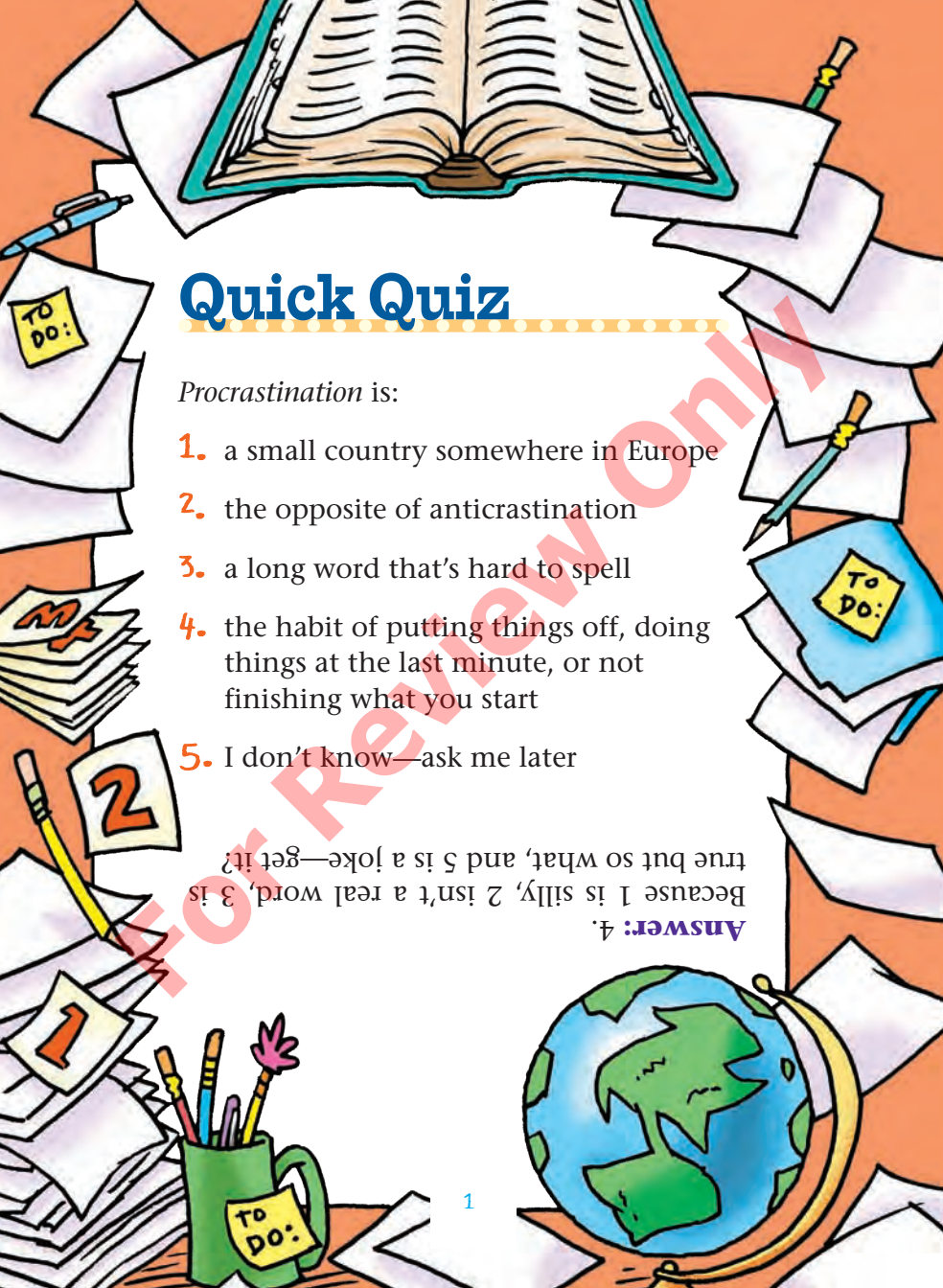
See You Later, Procrastinator! (Get It Done)



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The background of the page is a vibrant orange. At the top center is an open book with blank pages. Below it, the title 'Quick Quiz' is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The page is decorated with various school-related items: a blue pen and a yellow 'To Do' sticky note on the left; a stack of papers with a red 'M' and a yellow '2' on the bottom left; a green pencil holder with four colored pencils and a yellow 'To Do' sticky note at the bottom center; a globe on the bottom right; and a blue pen and a blue 'To Do' sticky note on the right. A large, diagonal, semi-transparent watermark reading 'For Review Only' is overlaid across the center of the page.

Quick Quiz

Procrastination is:

1. a small country somewhere in Europe
2. the opposite of anticrastination
3. a long word that's hard to spell
4. the habit of putting things off, doing things at the last minute, or not finishing what you start
5. I don't know—ask me later

Because 1 is silly, 2 isn't a real word, 3 is true but so what, and 5 is a joke—get it?

Answer: 4.

Procrasti-Nation



Are people always
after you to get
stuff done?



Do you often
have that freaky
time-is-running-
out feeling?



Have you ever told a
teacher "The dog ate
my homework"
when you don't
even *have* a dog?

Do you usually wait until the
last minute to start things, then
panic, melt down, and blow up
at everyone around you?



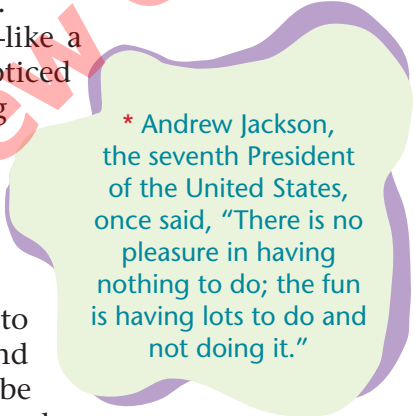
Do you, in a word, *procrastinate*?

Hey, join the crowd. More than **1** in every **4** Americans thinks he or she is a total procrastinator. When it comes to college students, that number rises to **3** out of **4**. Young people are more likely to procrastinate than older people.

So, does it really matter if you put things off? Only if you want to live a happy, healthy life. People who procrastinate tend to be *less* happy, *less* healthy...and also less wealthy, if you care.

Chances are, someone—like a teacher or parent—has noticed that you have trouble getting things done. Perhaps that person gave you this book. Maybe you don't think you need it and you don't want to read it.

That's okay. It's not easy to admit you procrastinate and could use a little help. Maybe you *do* put stuff off now and then, or you wait and wait and wait and wait and then end up doing a pretty decent job. Is that so wrong? Of course not. Everyone procrastinates sometimes—even presidents.*



* Andrew Jackson, the seventh President of the United States, once said, "There is no pleasure in having nothing to do; the fun is having lots to do and not doing it."

But procrastination can become a habit that's hard to break. You may get so used to it that you hardly notice when you've put stuff off—until you get that awful feeling of dread as the due date gets closer. You probably feel bad when you avoid your chores or work, think you've let someone down, or know you're going to be in trouble. It all adds up to extra stress, and who needs that?

You're growing and changing, and if you're not in middle school already, you will be soon. And middle school (or junior high) means **MORE**. More responsibility, more teachers, more subjects, more classrooms, more chores at home, more pressure in your after-school activities, more complicated friendships.

When you have more to stay on top of, you need habits that work *for* you, not *against* you.

That's what this book is about. It doesn't nag you, scold you, or try to make you feel bad. Instead, it tells you ways to get stuff done quickly, get organized, get control of your schedule, and most of all, get started.

For now, the only thing you need to do is keep reading.

The Pitiful Tale of Peter Procrastinator

"Great dinner, Ma," said Peter Procrastinator as he jumped up to clear the table. He made sure he was speedy so no one could get the chance to ask him about homework. The big math test was tomorrow, and he didn't want his parents to start bugging him about studying.

Soon he was parked in front of the TV, game controller in hand, thinking "Life is good."

Just as he reached new levels of play, his dad appeared and said, "Pardon me, Peter, but shouldn't you be doing your homework?"

"I'll get to it soon," Peter replied, not mentioning the test.



When his dad returned a half hour later, Peter was still playing. His dad held out his palm, which meant “Hand it over.” Peter gave up the controller and headed to his room, but not before nabbing the phone and hiding it under his sweatshirt. He shut his bedroom door to fool his dad into thinking he was hard at work.

Peter decided to phone a few friends. They were all studying for the test and couldn’t talk long. So he called his friends from another school. Then he called his cousin. “Who else can I call?” Peter wondered. Then he started dialing. “Hi, Granny, it’s me! What’s new?”

After all that talking, he needed a snack and went to the kitchen to make a sundae. He pulled out every ingredient he could find and built a mini-mountain of a dessert. It only took 30 minutes. Then he sat down with his parents and little sister to watch some TV.



"I really need to relax," he announced. Everyone assumed he'd finished his work, and that was just what Peter wanted them to think.

Peter watched one sitcom, then stayed seated for another. The whole family was laughing—Peter a little *too* hard. He had a weird feeling, like he was supposed to be doing something...oh, yeah, the *test*.

"I'll study in ten minutes," Peter promised himself.



"Just five more minutes, then I'll hit the books."



"I'll go when the commercials come on."



"Just a few more minutes." He glanced at the clock uneasily. It was close to bedtime.



"If a commercial for dog food comes on, *that* will be my sign to go upstairs and study."

"Your dog will LOVE new Bag O'Chow!"

"Fine! I'm going!"

Peter said goodnight to his family and dragged himself up to his room. He climbed into bed with his math book and a flashlight. Suddenly the math problems seemed a lot harder than he remembered. His stomach felt like a lump of cement. "Must be the ice cream," he mumbled. "Does ice cream make people sleepy...?"



Not-so-secret secret: Procrastination sure is *tiring*.

Procrastination in Action

Procrastination is a habit, which means you behave in a way that's automatic. You don't think about it, you just do it, like biting your fingernails or cracking your knuckles. You say or think things like:

“I’ll do it later.”

“I’ll get to it tomorrow.”

“It can wait.”

In other words, you get in the habit of *not doing*. You may dawdle, or stall, or worry, or whine, and time ticks by. Before you know it, time has run out and you're in the hot seat. Ouch.

What happens next? You might make excuses. And making excuses—to other people or yourself—can leave you feeling like a **rat**.



**START**

"I was sick."

"I didn't know I had to."

"No one told me how."

"I lost it."

"I forgot."

"It wasn't my turn to do it."

"I got busy."

"I never heard you ask me."

"My cat
barfed
on it."

"I did most of it."

"I left it
on the
bus."

"I wasn't in
the mood."

"I thought
it was due
another
day."

"I didn't
have
time."

So, why do people procrastinate?

Good question. Can we get back to you?

Kidding.

People procrastinate for all kinds of reasons. What matters most to you (and the people around you) is why *you* procrastinate.

Time to ask yourself why.