

WALT DISNEY
By Carole L. Cooney

Walt Disney lived most of his childhood in Missouri. At a very early age, Walt was interested in drawing and art. When he was 5 years old, he began drawing every day, so by age 7 he began to sell his drawings to his neighbors. Instead of doing his homework, Walt would doodle pictures of animals and nature. Once he asked his sister, Ruth, to help him paint the side of the family's house with tar!

Settings: In the backyard of his house; the classroom; the side of the house

Characters:

Narrator

Walt

Jimmy, a friend

Mrs. Bradley, a teacher

Ruth

Mother

Narrator: Walt Disney was one of five children, four boys and a girl. His family moved to Missouri where he lived most of his childhood. At the early age of five, Walt showed he could draw pictures very well. By the age of seven, he was drawing animals and nature pictures so well that he even sold them to his neighbors. When it was time for school work, Walt would skip it and doodle pictures. Once when Walt wanted to draw something huge, Walt with his baby sister, Ruth, painted the side of the house with black tar.

Walt: I think I'll just sit here and draw some pictures of our dog and that tree. Hey, Jimmy. What are you doing?

Jimmy: I'm watering Mrs. Eagleton's flowers. This is so easy and she's paying me five cents, too!

Walt: Five cents just to sprinkle a little water around? Well, hold still a while and I'll draw you watering the garden.

Narrator: Walt draws Jimmy with the hose in his hand. The water is falling onto the flower and it makes a pretty picture.

Walt: Done! Do you want to see yourself working?

Jimmy: Sure!

Narrator: Jimmy turns off the water and rushes over to Walt's side. A huge grin covers his face.

Jimmy: Gee, Walt. That's just like me. Do you think I could buy it and give it to my mother?

Walt: Sure. I'd only charge you a penny. How about that?

Jimmy: Okay. I'll ask Mrs. Eagleton to pay me five pennies and then I can buy your picture.

Narrator: Walt started a little business selling his drawings to the kids and neighbors. He was really proud of his work except when it came to *school* work. One day in his classroom, his teacher, Mrs. Bradley, stood by his desk.

Mrs. Bradley: Walter Disney, what are you doing? That is NOT the assignment!

Walt: (flustered) Excuse me, Mrs. Bradley. I was just sharpening my pencil and it slipped onto the page. Here are the marks it made.

Mrs. Bradley: Walter, please stop making excuses for not doing your class work. What are those marks anyway?

Walt: I was just drawing some of the kids in the class. I'll stop and get back to the mathematics assignment.

Mrs. Bradley: Well, Walter, I must say that does look like Alex and Cathy. You certainly draw very well but you'll have to draw during your free time outside of the classroom.

Walt: Yes, Mrs. Bradley.

Narrator: But, Walt just couldn't stop drawing. One day he wanted to paint something huge. He got a great idea. There were men tarring the road up the street. If he could sneak up to their truck and take a can of black tar, he could use the side of his house like a big piece of paper and paint it! Since his baby sister, Ruth, was home, he asked her to help.

Walt: Now Ruthie, just put the brush in the can and paint the wall at the bottom. I'll paint the top. Okay?

Ruth: This stuff is smelly. Walt...Does Mommy know you're doing this?

Walt: Aw...she won't mind. She knows I love to draw and paint. Come on, let's start!

Narrator: Walt and Ruthie worked very hard painting the white side of the house with the black tar. The sun beat down and the day grew hot. Soon, Mother opened the front door to let in some cool air. BUT, she smelled tar.

Mother: (smelling the tar) Where is that tar smell coming from?

Narrator: Mother walked down the front steps and turned the corner of the house where she saw Walt and Ruthie painting.

Mother: (screaming) What are you children doing? Stop this instant!

Narrator: Walt and Ruthie dropped their paint brushes and stood with their heads hanging down.

Mother: Walter, what have you to say about this mess?

Walt: I'm sorry, Mother. I was only trying to paint something really huge. My paint box doesn't have a lot of paint in it, so I thought the black tar would cover a lot of the wall.

Mother: It certainly did. Now, when your father comes home, he'll have to figure out how to remove your work of art. Until then, Ruthie, please come with me so that I can get that tar off of your hands. Walter, you come too and see how it's done.

Walt: Mother, I won't do this again. (very excited) But I just got an idea from the big black tar circles I was painting. They looked like great big mouse ears. I wonder what a mouse would look like with two big round ears?