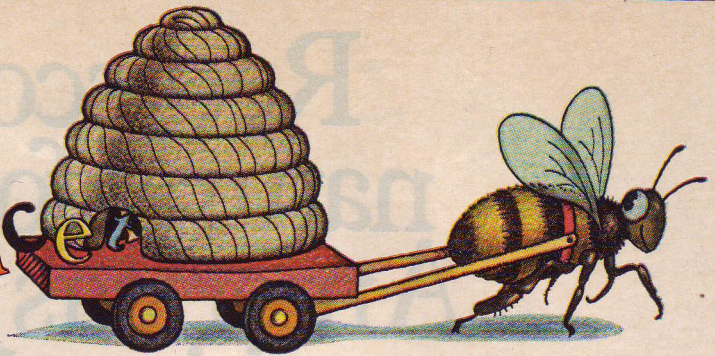


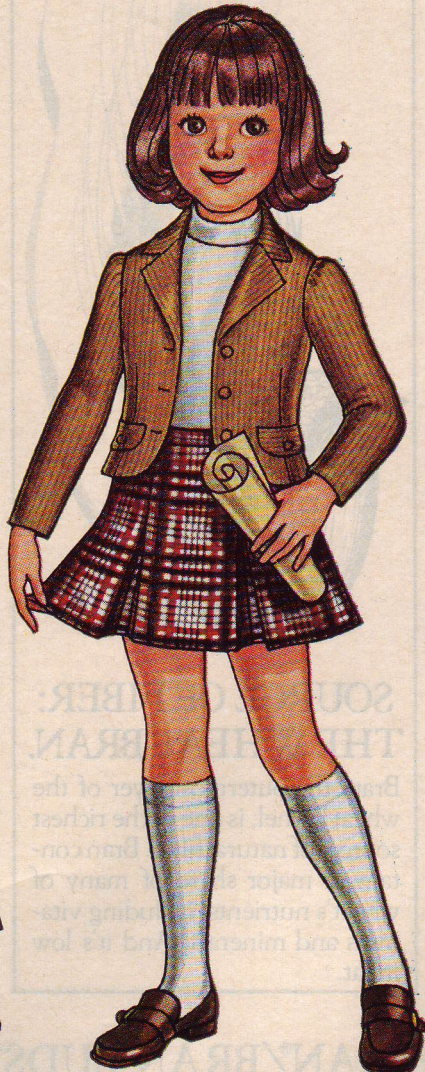
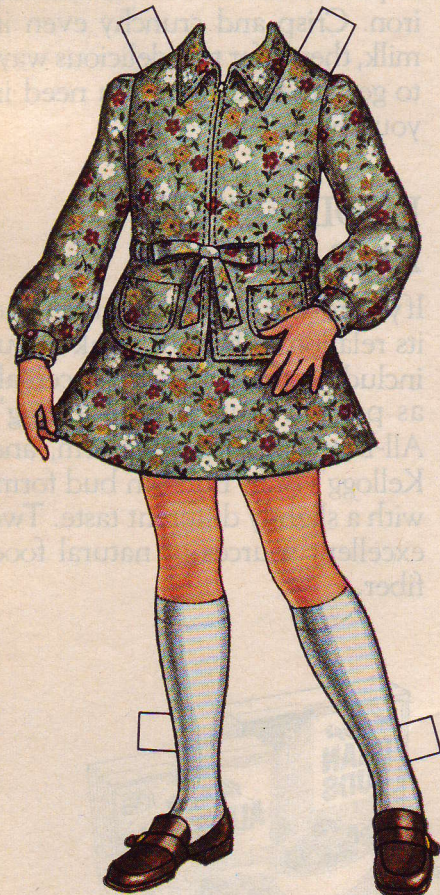
ot a J sh a. n e i c e t



All week long Sukey, Dru and I practiced the meanies on each other—possible . . . passable . . . receive. Daddy teased us: “A *talking* dog or a *dancing* flea is strange. But what’s so strange about a *spelling* bee?” But he found out, as we did, how strange it was—a guessing, pronouncing *and* spelling bee! My first word was “a three-syllable word meaning loyalty.” I got it: ALLEGIANCE. Sukey’s first was “a two-syllable word for ancient Roman footwear.” She got that: SANDAL. Dru missed a spooky word of one syllable: She pronounced it right but spelled it WIERD, which was a weird

BETSY AND THE SPELLING BEE

way to spell it, and o-u-t went s-h-e. After a while it got quite exciting, with applause when we guessed the word; applause when we spelled it right; groans when we didn’t. At last just Tim Blake and I were left. He got “well-mannered, in three syllables”—COURTEOUS. Next, me—“A pet bird, three syllables, as popular as the canary.” I could see the bird; I could hear the pronunciation, but I could not see the word, the way I always do. PARAKET? PARAKEET? PAROKEET? I began to spell: PARAKETE, and I groaned before anyone else did: “It’s PARAKEET, isn’t it?” I asked. And it was!



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