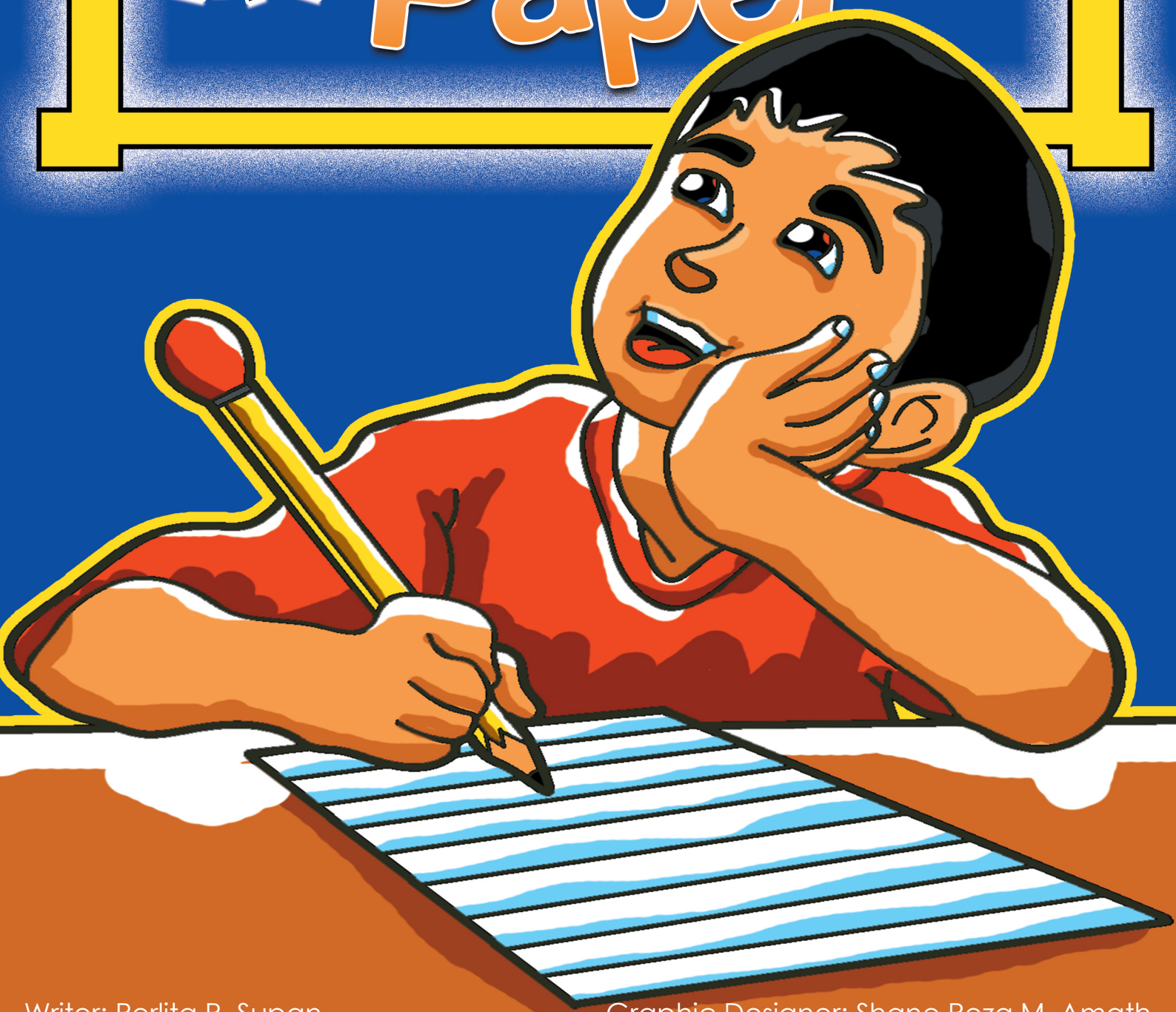


OPENING and Paper



Writer: Perlita P. Supan

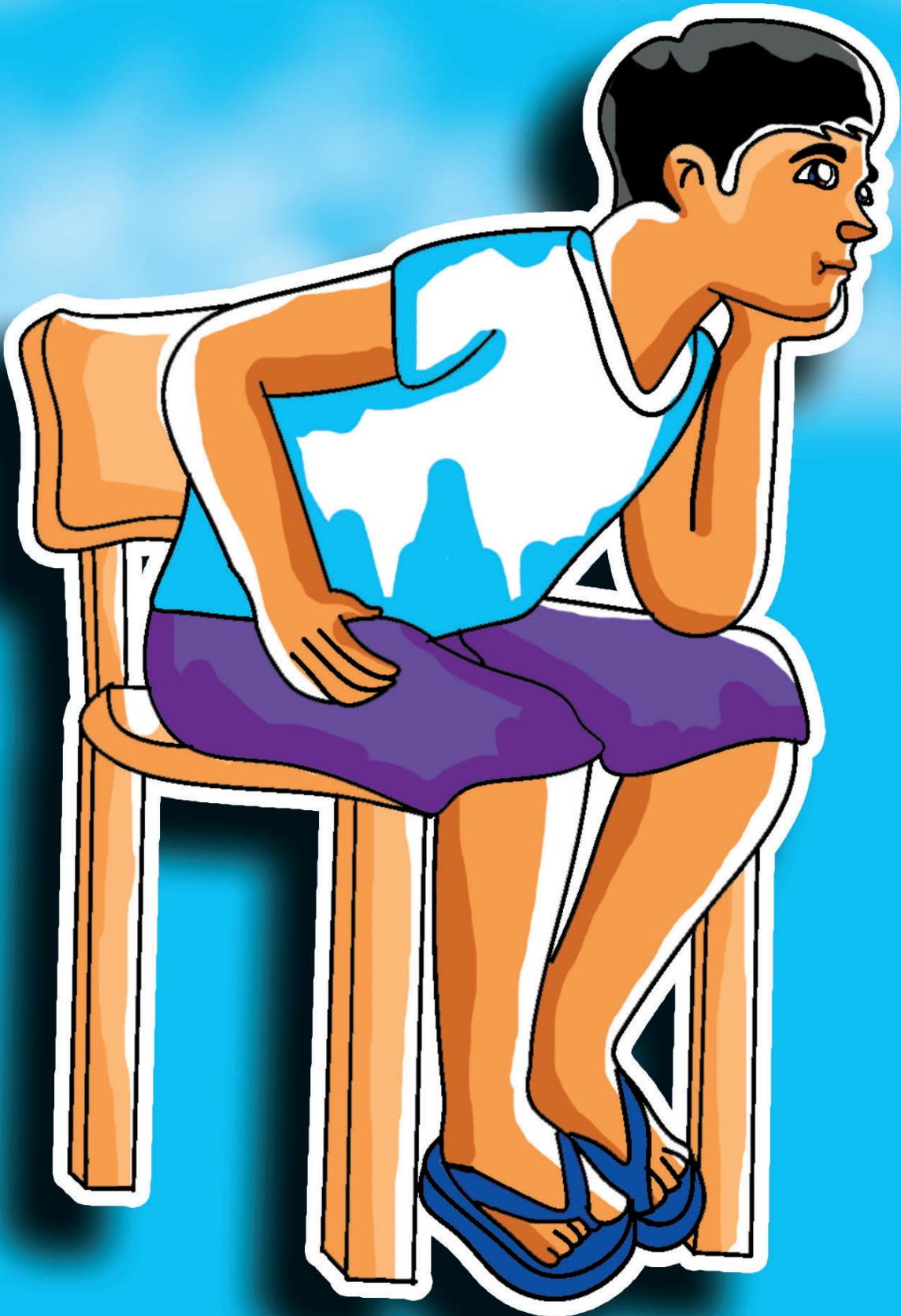
Translator: Marietta L. Manayag

Language Reviewers: June D. Cunanan

Ruby M. Jimenez PhD

Graphic Designer: Shane Reza M. Amath

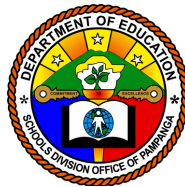
Layout Artist: Erwin H. Iruma





Learning Standard

- *Demonstrates love for all God's creation and His grace through showing the importance of hope to achieve success ESP3PD-IVc-i-9*
- *Answers questions about the text read (story) F3PB-Id-3.1*
- *Uses nouns in narrating about people, places, and things around F3WG-Ia-d-2*



DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Writer: Perlita P. Supan

Translator: Marietta L. Manayag

Language Reviewers: June D. Cunanan

Ruby M. Jimenez PhD

Graphic Designer: Shane Reza M. Amath

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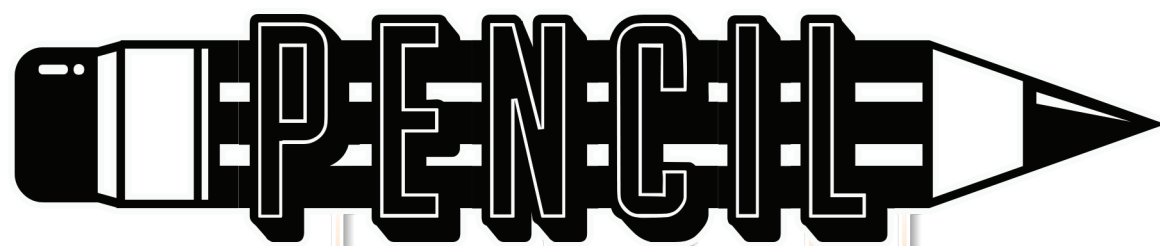
Learning Resource Manager:

Ruby M. Jimenez PhD

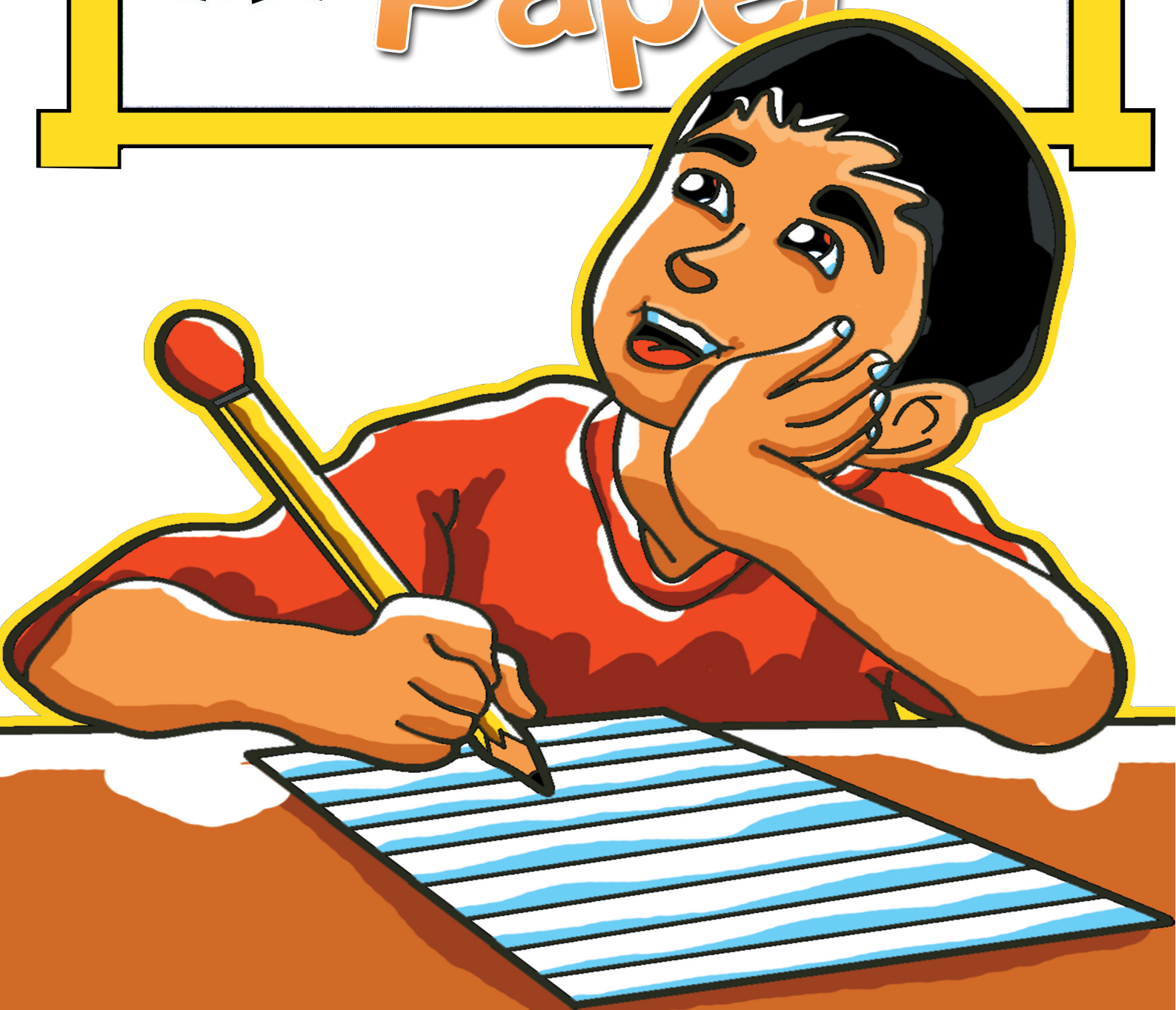
Education Program Supervisor

Learning Resources Management and Development Section

PAMPANGA

PENCIL

and Paper





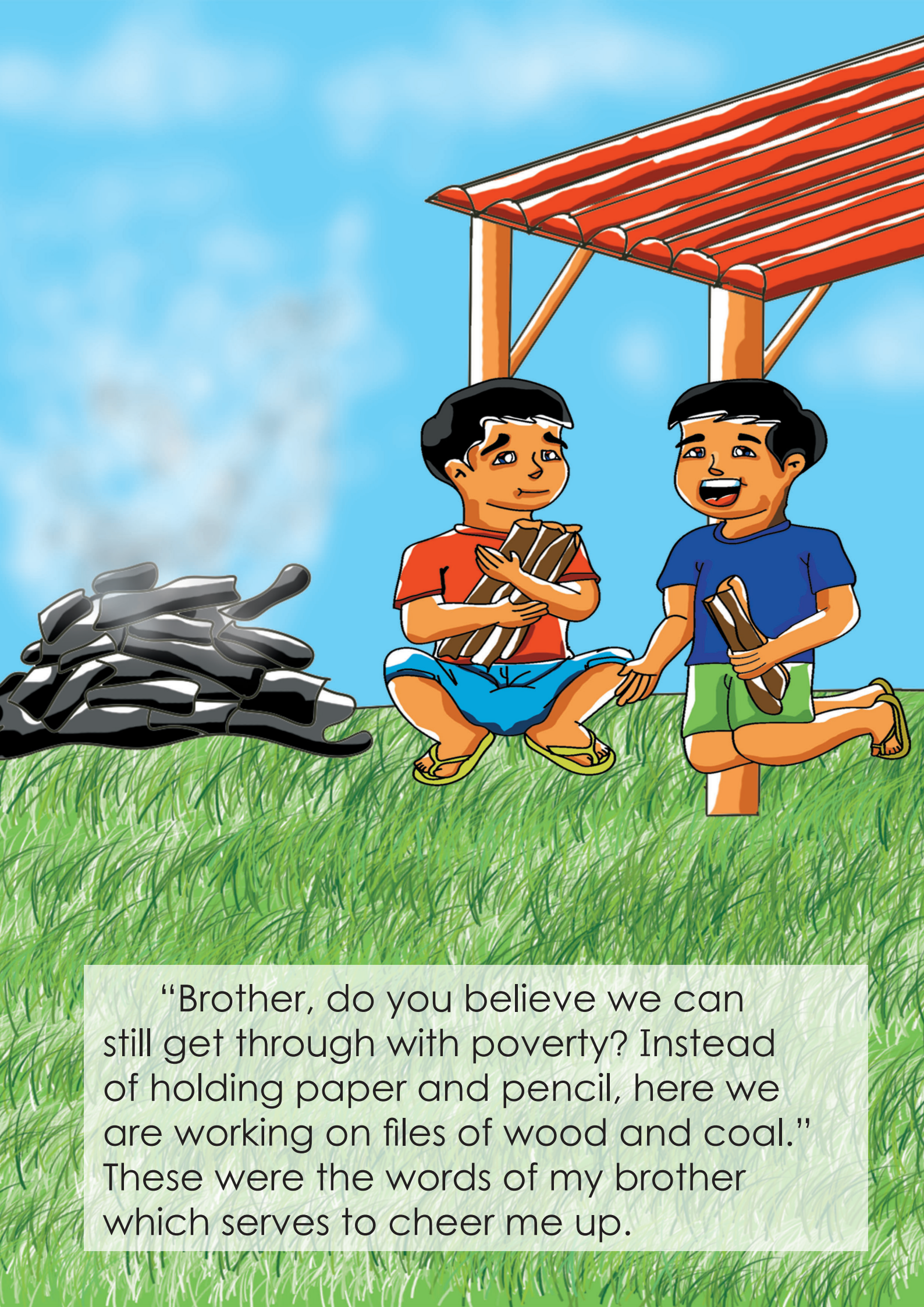
I am Pepe, from Pampanga and I come from a poor family. We live in the mountain with no well-built roads and no electricity. My parents did not even finish their schooling. Farming and gathering of woods are our only means of livelihood.



At a young age, I dreamed of attending school even though I know it is difficult to happen. As my father often says, "Choose between education and food." I am just a child. What could I possibly do? Despite this, I promised my parents that I will try achieving all of my dreams.



It was dawn, signaling that Pepe needs to start working. “Kuya Pepe, I’m hungry,” Lando said. I have always felt sorry for him every time he would say this. We have brought a few pieces of sweet potato and corn for our snacks to satisfy our hunger while facing the foul smoke and smell of the coal. However, can do nothing but endure hardships and its bad smell.

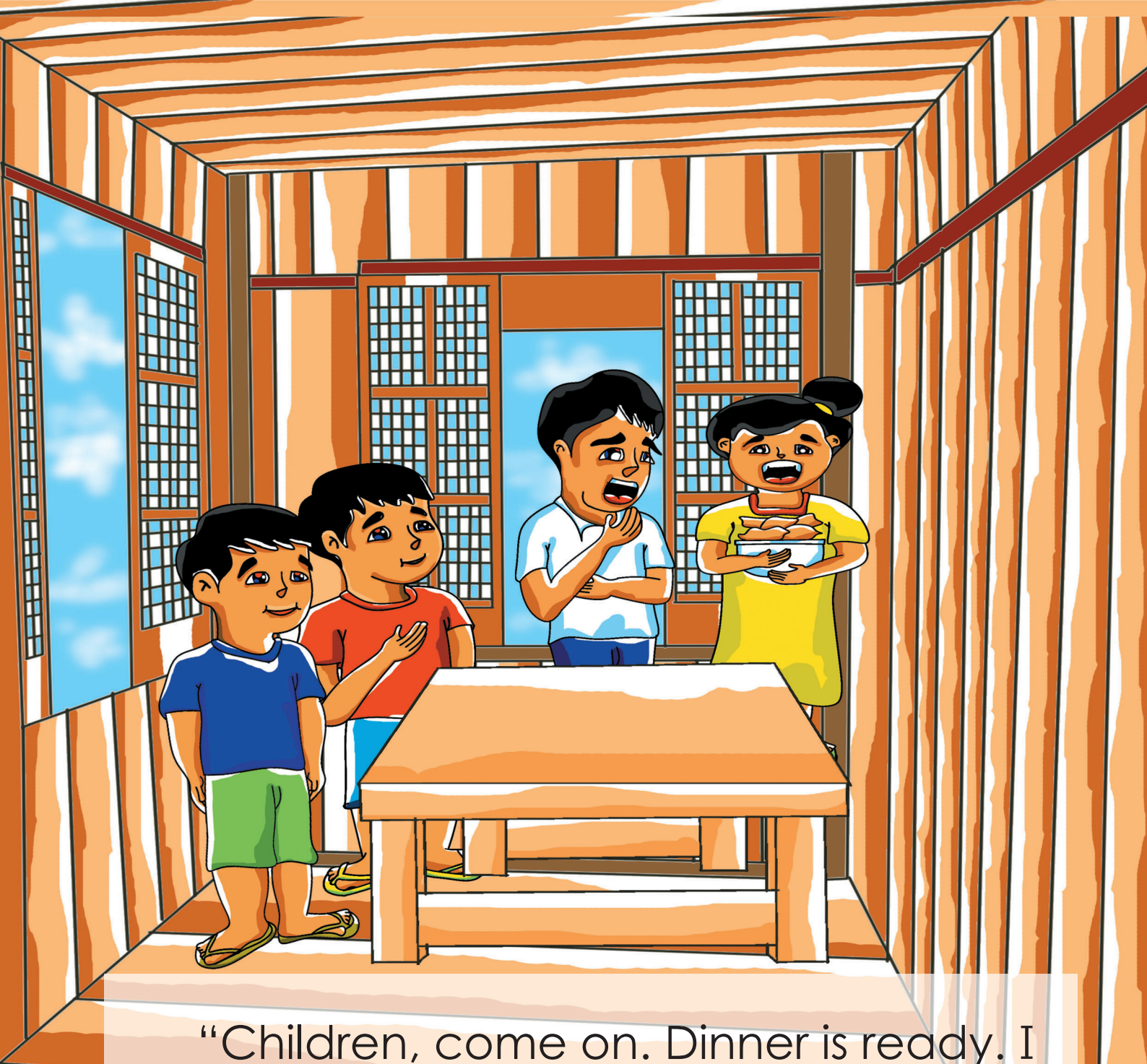


“Brother, do you believe we can still get through with poverty? Instead of holding paper and pencil, here we are working on files of wood and coal.” These were the words of my brother which serves to cheer me up.

LITA'S COAL SHOP



After a full day of work, it was time to go home. "Pepe, I have nothing to give now, you still have debts," said Aling Lita, the owner of the coal shop. "Brother Pepe, have we not earned today?" "Yes, we will just make it up tomorrow," I said. We made four sacks of coal but because father still owe Aling Lita much, we earned nothing. We will be going home tired and hopeless.



“Children, come on. Dinner is ready. I am sorry for we have only sweet potato and coffee for dinner. Your father has been unemployed for a few weeks. I also have nowhere to go willing to share us for our food. I even experienced being shouted with bad words while your father had chest pain. If only I could do something, but I was too hopeless.”



“Mother, you can do something,” I replied. “What can I do Pepe?” my mother asked. “Is there anything I can do?” she added. “Mother, father, please allow me to study in town,” I asked my parents with courage.



Father shared his feelings over my request. "Son, how are you going to study when we do not have money? You are the only one I expect to help me. Can you bear seeing your family with nothing to eat? Can education fill in your hungry stomach?" All I could say was, "Father, education is the answer to our growling stomach."



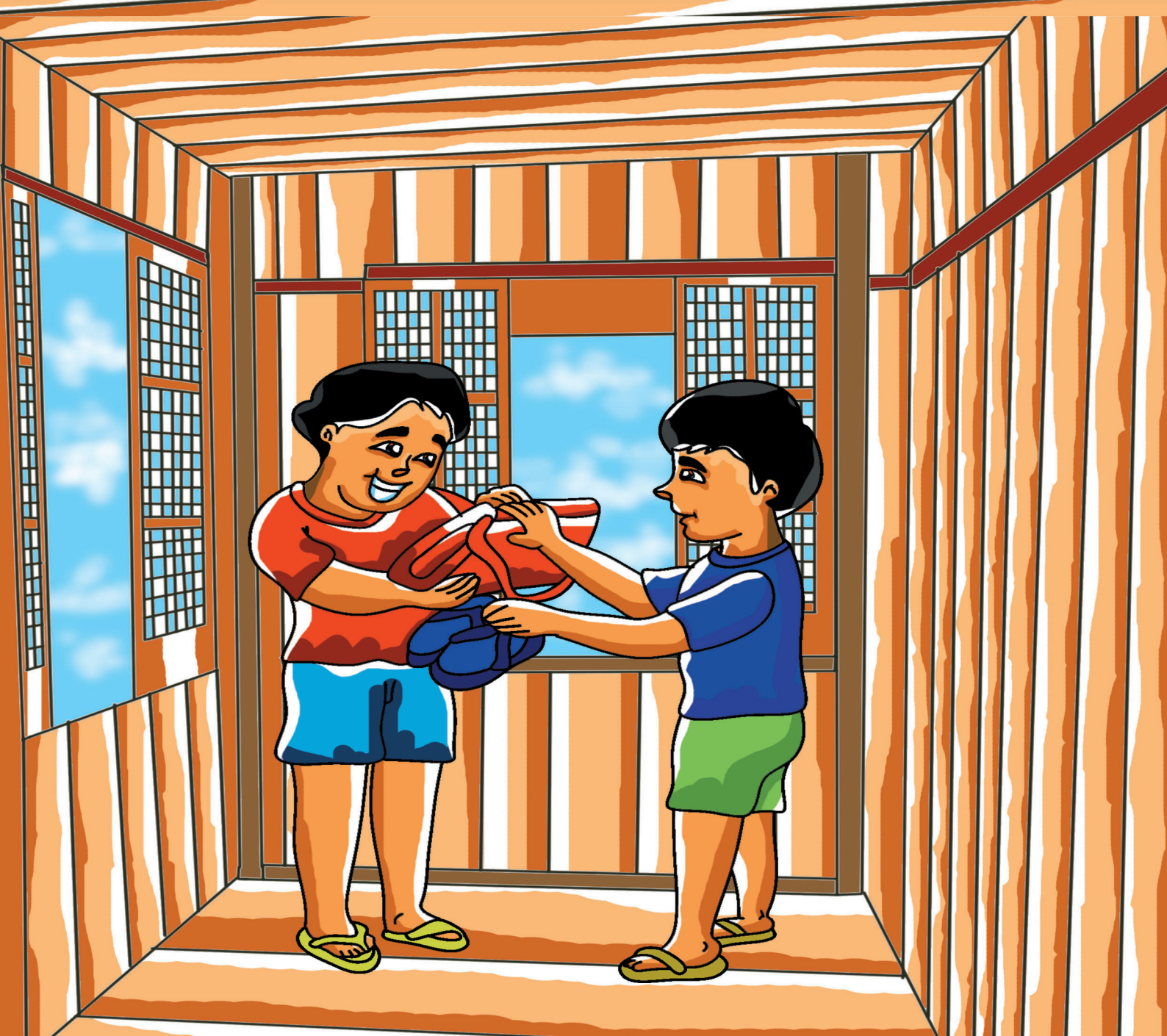
Father sighed and felt angry but I remained with my thinking and the desire to fulfill my dream. "We were born ignorant and we will remain like this till we grow old. Are we not going to find a way to break it? Will we give up our remaining hope, to finish a degree?"



“If I will not be brave and study hard, all of us will be victims of ignorance which will forever chain us with poverty.” These words seemed to naturally come out of my mouth, dictated by my heart. The lamplight was a silent witness to all that we have talked about.



The next day, father suddenly approached me. He was holding a pencil and paper. "My son, here is a pencil and paper." Tears of gratitude started to fall. "Father, are you allowing me to study?" "I am sorry son if we became cowards. We were not brave enough to study because we were afraid that we will not be able to provide you with your needs." I hugged my father tightly. "Father, I will study hard."



Lando approached me. He handed over the old bag and slippers. "Brother, these are for you, Aunt Josie gave me these gifts. I know you need them more than I do. I know you waited too long to have this." Now, the right time and opportunity have come. I only thought of one thing then. "Thank you, Lord. You are my strength and my armor."



No matter how difficult my situation in life was, I did not lose hope. Not just for personal gain, but for my family. Most of all, I thank God with all my heart. "You know me, I have been through a lot of trial and You never turned your back on me. Instead, You touched my heart and my being," my plea and prayers to our Almighty God.



By next school year, I will be fourteen years old when I start first grade. Whatever they think of me, that will never be a hindrance. Just like what my childhood friend Boyong did. "Pepe, I heard that you will study this coming school year. You will be on your first grade. Believe me. They will laugh at you and tease you." I did not mind Boyong. His words even made me more courageous.



The day I was waiting for finally came, the day of school enrollment. A parent spoke to us saying, “Ma’am, it looks like you are on the wrong line. The enrollment for high school is on the other side.” At that moment, I felt pity for mother. “I am Pepe’s parent, he is in the first grade. We are in the right line, thank you very much for the reminder.”



After a long day spent at school, we walked our way home for two hours. While passing through the stores, I felt my stomach growled. But since we have no money, I just closed my eyes. I promised myself that I will be able to buy those someday. Along with my hunger, my slippers were worn out. They may be broken off, but I will continue to study.



When we got home, we were greeted by the loud shout of Aling Marta, a vendor in our place. “Hey, Maria! pay your debt! Be ashamed of yourselves! You send Pepe to school, yet you have nothing to eat!” I could not hold back so I answered, “Aling Marta, we feel sorry for our debt, but we will soon be able to pay them.”



After dinner, I sat down my favorite chair where I could see the full moon. Father said that God lives on the moon. He gives light to the dark surroundings. “Dear moon, why are there poor and rich people? Can everyone just be equal so everybody could be happy, so there will be no fighting and hardship in life?”



The first day of school came. I was fourteen when I started schooling. It took me two hours before reaching my first class in school. I had to cross the rushing river and walk on a long bamboo bridge. All these I need to endure for my education. There is really no hard road for a man with many dreams.



By God's grace, I was able to catch up with my first class. When my name was called, I confidently stood up and introduced myself. "Good day to all of you, I am Pepe Dela Cruz, fourteen years old, from barangay Pulong Gubat. I am happy to meet you, dear teacher and classmates."



As soon as I got home, I quickly changed my clothes and went to the forest to get some woods. "Good afternoon Mang Kanor, I will go and find woods today." Mang Kanor warned me saying, "The weather is bad Pepe, it is too dangerous to find woods in the forest." "I will be careful in getting woods Mang Kanor," I said.



Mang Kanor was right. The weather was bad. The rain was heavy and the wind blew so hard. Tall trees were falling gradually. My only hope is to pray to God. "Mother, father, please help, my hand is bleeding!" I cried as I was trying to endure the pain. Unfortunately, I got hit by a big tree and my bolo was crushed. My right hand was totally cut.



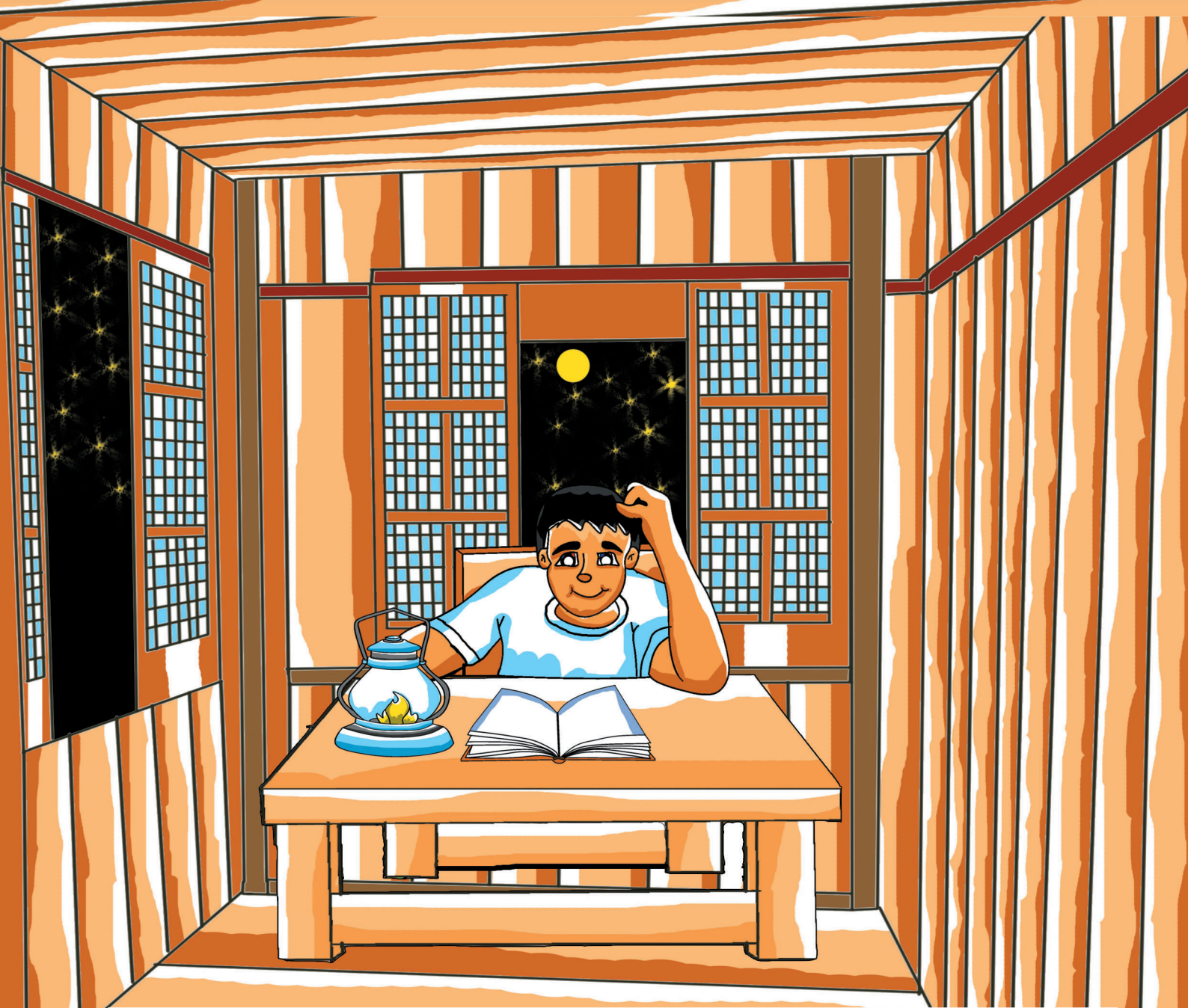
I lost my consciousness while Mang Kanor was carrying me, using the sack wrapped around my body. He took me to the town hospital. He immediately reported to my family what had happened. As I lied down, I heard a familiar voice. “Pepe, my dear child, what happened?” mother asked. I did not answer. I just closed my eyes due to extreme pain.



Behind each tragedy is a lesson learned. I thought that there is nothing more to suffer from the pain of ignorance, seeing your family even poorer than rats. But there is more, and that is seeing my right hand being cut. "Son, even if you do not speak, I feel your sorrow. We feel sorry for you." "God, why did you let this happen?" pleaded his mother filled with grief over what happened.



Father hugged me tightly when he came. "Oh God, why does it have to be my child? Why him? If only I could take his pain. We have gone through all trials and challenges. Is there anything more? Why did You not help us? Why did You leave me? He was our only hope, the only person who can help us achieve our dreams."



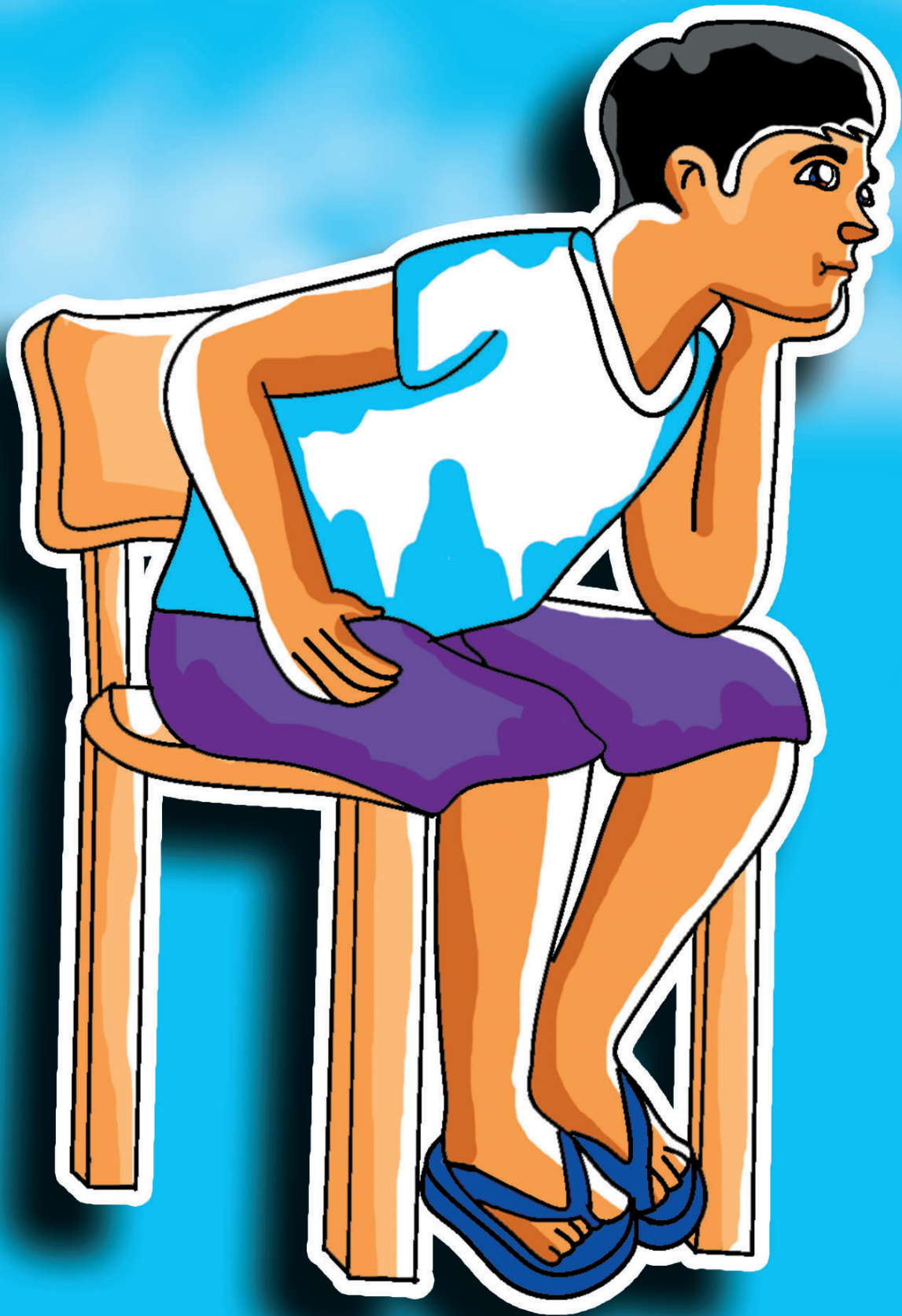
It took a month before my hand got healed. Even while at home, I continued my studies. Only the lamp serves as my light during the night. No tragedy will hinder me from studying and pursuing my dreams. Though I lost a part of my body, I still have my faith and I will work harder in my studies. Our life is like a bright lamp that continuously gives off light in moment of darkness.



It was the day of examination. I woke up early so I can attend to my classes. When I reached our classroom, everyone was looking at my right hand. "What happened to Pepe's hand, why was it cut off?" whispered my classmates to one another. I did not feel sorry for myself though but thanked the Almighty God. My right hand may have been cut but I am very much determined to finish my studies.



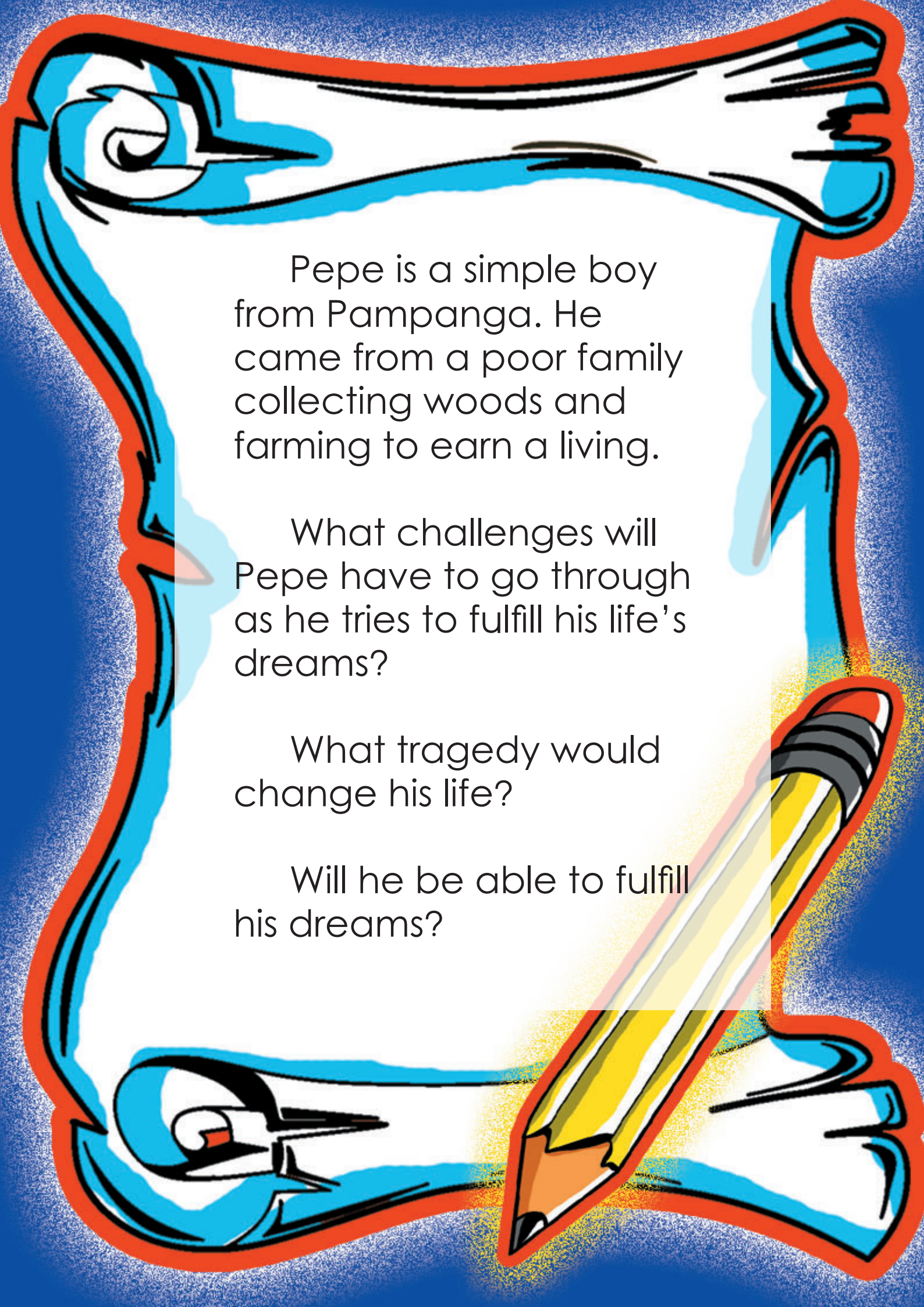
Everyone felt nervous when our teacher arrived. We were made to write our names on the board. I was called last. As I walked towards the blackboard, I suddenly remembered father. When my brother and I were young, I used to ask, "When can I write my full name on the paper?" For the first time, I was able to write my name. "Pepe Dela Cruz," I finally read with much pride.



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- SHANE REZA M. AMATH: Currently teaching at
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San Basilio, Santa Rita, Pampanga
as Teacher III





Pepe is a simple boy from Pampanga. He came from a poor family collecting woods and farming to earn a living.

What challenges will Pepe have to go through as he tries to fulfill his life's dreams?

What tragedy would change his life?

Will he be able to fulfill his dreams?