

A detailed illustration of a young boy with brown hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, leaning over a desk and writing on a piece of lined paper with a pencil. The background is a textured red wall.

Dear Mr. Henshaw

BEVERLY CLEARY

Illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky

May 12

Dear Mr. Henshaw,

My teacher read your book about the dog to our class. It was funny. We licked it.

Your freind,

Leigh Botts (boy)

December 3

Dear Mr. Henshaw,

I am the boy who wrote to you last year when I was in the second grade. Maybe you didn't get my letter. This year I read the book I wrote to you about called *Ways to Amuse a Dog*. It is the first thick book with chapters that I have read.

The boy's father said city dogs were bored so Joe could not keep the dog unless he could think up seven ways to amuse it. I have a black dog. His name is Bandit. He is a nice dog.

If you answer I get to put your letter on the bulletin board.

My teacher taught me a trick about friend. The *i* goes before *e* so that at the end it will spell *end*.

Keep in tutch.

Your friend,

Leigh (Lēē) Botts

November 13

Dear Mr. Henshaw,

I am in the fourth grade now. I made a diorama of *Ways to Amuse a Dog*, the book I wrote to you about two times before. Now our teacher is making us write to authors for Book Week. I got your answer to my letter last year, but it was only printed. Please would you write to me in your own handwriting? I am a great enjoyer of your books.

My favorite character in the book was Joe's Dad because he didn't get mad when Joe amused his dog by playing a tape of a lady singing, and his dog sat and howled like he was singing, too. Bandit does the same thing when he hears singing.

Your best reader,
Leigh Botts

Dear Mr. Henshaw,

I wish somebody would stop stealing the good stuff out of my lunchbag. I guess I wish a lot of other things, too. I wish someday Dad and Bandit would pull up in front in the rig . . . Dad would yell out of the cab, "Come on, Leigh. Hop in and I'll give you a lift to school."

Leigh Botts has been author Boyd Henshaw's number-one fan ever since he was in second grade. Now in sixth grade, Leigh lives with his mother and is the new kid at school. He's lonely, troubled by the absence of his father, a cross-country trucker, and angry because a mysterious thief steals from his lunchbag. Then Leigh's teacher assigns a letter-writing project. Naturally Leigh chooses to write to Mr. Henshaw, whose surprising answer changes Leigh's life.

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"CAPABLY AND UNOBTRUSIVELY STRUCTURED AS WELL AS VALID AND REALISTIC." *Kirkus Reviews*

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