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Math Town

Chapter Book

Synopsis: Characters in Math Town live behind the white board in Room 212 at Willamalarkie Elementary school. Dr. Plus, Minus Man, Cap'n Times and Cyclops Divider help Emmeline and her friends solve equations and deal with the chaos of first grade.

Math Town Characters:

**Dr. Plus:** She puts things together.

**Minus Man:** Makes things smaller and smaller.

**Cap'n Times:** Greedy pirate who grabs coins and bounty fast as he can.

**Cyclops Divider:** With one eye above and one below she divides with her laser gaze.

**Zero the Hero:** So powerful he can make any number 10 times bigger - or smaller - by tossing or taking away a zero.

Chapter 1: Meet Dr. Plus

“Take it,” said Monroe throwing a broken bit of an eraser toward Emmeline’s wavy hair. She dodged. Monroe stuck out his tongue.

She gave him the side-eye. “Stinky Baby,” Emmeline whispered so he could read her lips.

“Ms. Diondra. Emmeline called me a baby,” cried Monroe.

“No blurting, you know the rules” Ms. Diondra growled. She scribbled “ $4 + 1 = 2 + 3$ ” on the board.

“What? No fair!” said Monroe.

“Zero talking or lunch detention,” Ms. Diondra warned looking said over her shoulder. “I have two eyes in the back of my head. One is for you Monroe Davidson.”

Monroe was the Loud Mouth of Room 212. A pesky gnat. (Emmeline learned how to spell gnat playing Scrabble with her cousin yesterday.) He’d bumped her elbow in art. In line he cut and stick his tongue out. Today, the gnat would get a swat Emmeline decided.

Sure enough turned toward her.

“I said *stinky* baby,” she said. Franky snorted. Washington opened his mouth wide. Jade snickered and Miabella giggled. “Ewww. Something smells,” said Miabella holding her nose.

“What is the matter Room 212?” A yellow slip of paper landed on Monroe’s desk. “Lunch detention for disrupting my lesson.”

“What?” “Snap!” “Ooooh!”

Emmeline wished it wasn’t a typical Tuesday in Room 212. But it was.

Stolen pencils. Crumpled notes. Line skips. Foot fights under the table. The big hand on the clock was ten minutes away from recess pranks and the smell of cafeteria lunch except –

A small hole jiggled on the white board above the calendar. Emmeline blinked. A smidge bigger than a dime, the spot shape-shifted into a puddle of spilled ink. Emmeline squinted her eyes.

Repeated Ms. Diondra: “Is four plus one the same as two plus three?” She walked toward Emmeline. A red plus sign with googly eyes popped out of the hole. “Ahh!” Emmeline shrieked. Dr. Plus’s eyelashes fluttered. “Yes. It is.”

“Huh?” said Emmeline. She dropped her pencil. For an instant heads turned to stare at Emmeline. Then they went back to talking and passing notes. That was Class 212.

Chelsea and Marla compared answers with each other. George scooted his chair toward the window to see a squirrel.

“Wake up,” said Ms. Diondra leaning over Emmeline’s desk. Like a scientist inspecting a beetle she squinted. Then she said, “Is four plus one the same as two plus three?” Emmeline counted out groups of fingers on both hands.

“Yes.” blurted Dr. Plus from the hole.

“Um, yes. ” said Emmeline.

Noticing her nostrils, Ms. Diondra’s breath smelled like cherry cough drops. “Is something the matter?” the teacher asked. Behind her square shoulders Dr. Plus took a curtsy and waved. Emmeline Jordan Wilkins, first grader at Willamalarkie Elementary, had officially met Dr. Plus.

“My pointer finger got pinched,” Emmeline made-up. She showed Ms. Diondra.

“Looks fine to me. If it bleeds see the nurse.”

At the front of the class Ms. Diondra announced, “You’ll need a pencil for this part.” She passed scratch paper to each table. High up on the ledge of the white board Dr. Plus swung like an acrobat from hook to hook. She winked at Emmeline.

Sahara and Weston took out their pencils. They didn’t notice Dr. Plus.

Neither did George, who passed a sharpener to Monroe.

Or Chelsea who started copying the problem on her paper.

Dr. Plus tap-danced a few steps away on the metal tray that held markers.

“Attention class!” shouted Ms. Diondra. Several children put their hands over their ears. Monroe dropped the paperclip he’d been fidgeting with.

“Listen up: Jeremy and Jen went fishing. Jeremy caught 6 fish. Jen caught 1. Then they went home. How many fish did they catch?” asked Ms. Diondra.

“Is this addition?” blurted Monroe. “What if they drop the fish on the way home?” asked Weston. “No talking,” said Ms. Diondra.

Emmeline carefully watched Dr. Plus reach in her doctor bag and unroll first aid bandages. She roped them around Jeremy’s six fish.

“1-2, 3-4, 5-6” Emmeline counted.

Next, Dr. Plus cast a fishing pole over Jen’s fish. It bit!

“Plus one more is – ” Emmeline counted. Jen’s fish landed next to Jeremy’s group of six fish.

“Seven,” said Emmeline calmly. She raised her hand. “Yes?” said the teacher.

“One!” “Six!” “Five” “Twelve!” shouted the other children even though it wasn’t their turn.

Ms. Diondra tapped her marker on the corner of her desk. “How do you know that?”

“Six plus one more is seven.” Emmeline hiccupped. “Altogether.”

“Yes!” exclaimed Ms. Diondra frantically pointing at the board and circling the fish. “Six fish plus the one Jen caught makes seven.” With flippers, Dr. Plus swam around the school of seven fish.

“Any number plus one is – ?” Ms. Diondra asked the class. They shouted, “The next number!” Dr. Plus waved good-bye and dove into the hole that led to Math Town. Emmeline smiled. She was sure going to miss Dr. Plus.

At recess, Emmeline and her friends Chelsea and Marla joined a four-square game on the blacktop. She kept thinking about Dr. Plus. “Chelsea, did you see anything unusual during math today?”

“Who? A what?”

“Never mind,” said Emmeline. It was her turn to serve. She smacked the rubber ball into Weston’s square. “It was probably my imagination.”

“Your math-imagination,” joked Chelsea. Emmeline missed the ball. “What did you say?” she asked.

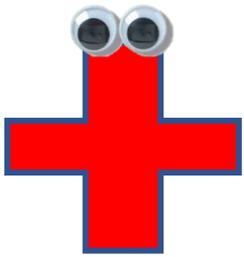
“Mathimagination. It was all in your math-imagination.”

Standing in line, Marla said, “You know Dr. Plus.”

“I do. She puts things together. Adding. Plussing” said Emmeline.

Emmeline smiled. It was her turn. She bounced the red ball to her opponent's corner.

“Yes. Dr. Plus puts things together.”



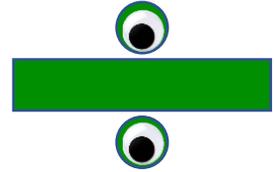
Dr. Plus



Minus Man



Cap'n Times



Cyclops Divider