

Practice Reading Passage

**FOUR DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS**

by Eric A. Kimmel

14 It's a terrible thing to call a cowboy a deadbeat, but in Shorty Long's  
26 case it was true. He owed everybody money, from Big Oscar the  
38 blacksmith to Widow Macrae, who ran the Silver Dollar Cafe and baked  
45 the best biscuits west of the Rockies.  
59 "Shorty ain't a bad sort. He just hates to pay for anything he thinks  
73 he can get free," Big Oscar told the widow one afternoon over coffee at  
76 the Silver Dollar.  
88 The widow brought Oscar another plate of biscuits. "How am I gonna  
101 keep this place going if folks won't pay their bills? Shorty's the worst.  
109 He owes me four dollars and fifty cents."  
121 Big Oscar shook his head. "You got as much chance of collecting  
132 that money as seeing Custer ride back from the Little Bighorn."  
143 Widow Macrae picked up her rolling pin. "That's what you think.  
157 I'm driving out to the Circle K this afternoon. If Shorty won't pay what  
170 he owes, I'll lay him out flatter 'n the bottom of a skillet."  
181 As soon as Oscar left, Widow Macrae hitched her two horses,  
193 Clementine and Evangeline, to the buckboard and drove out to the Circle  
207 K ranch. Duck Pooley saw her coming. He rode back to the corral to  
209 warn Shorty.  
222 "Widow Macrae's coming! She's got a rolling pin in her hand and an  
235 awful mean look in her eye. You better come up with that money,  
236 Shorty."  
243 "Boys, you gotta help me!" Shorty yelled.  
251 "Why don't you just pay what you owe?"  
264 "It ain't that simple. If I paid the widow back, everybody I owe  
278 money to'd expect the same. I'd end up broker 'n a mess of eggs."  
292 The Circle K boys decided to help Shorty out just for the fun of  
304 seeing what would happen. They knocked together a few boards to make  
a coffin.

Volume 3 Book 2  
Reproduced with permission from SRA Open Court  
Chicago 2000

My goal is to read with 0-2 errors. This is what I did:

	1 <sup>st</sup> reading	2 <sup>nd</sup> reading	3 <sup>rd</sup> reading	4 <sup>th</sup> reading
Errors				
wcpm				

**PLEASE: READ, SIGN AND RETURN TO SCHOOL**

**and**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(student signature)