

Excited to Learn

BY LENA M. HARPER

Based on a true story

“Seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118).

Russell carefully packed his two pencils and his notebook in his schoolbag. He combed his hair and checked to make sure his clothes looked nice. After giving his mom a hug good-bye, he ran to the bus stop. He felt like he would burst if the bus didn't come soon. He was excited to start school for the first time.

Every year, Russell had watched his older brothers and sisters walk to the bus stop, where they got on the bus for school. He wanted to ride the bus with them. Even more, he wanted to learn the things they did. He wanted to learn more about dinosaurs. He wanted to know how trains worked. He wanted to learn to read. He just knew he was going to like school.

Russell's teacher, Mrs. Wilson, smiled when he walked into the classroom. She showed Russell where his desk was. She also showed him where to hang his schoolbag.

“Maybe we'll learn about dinosaurs first,” Russell thought.

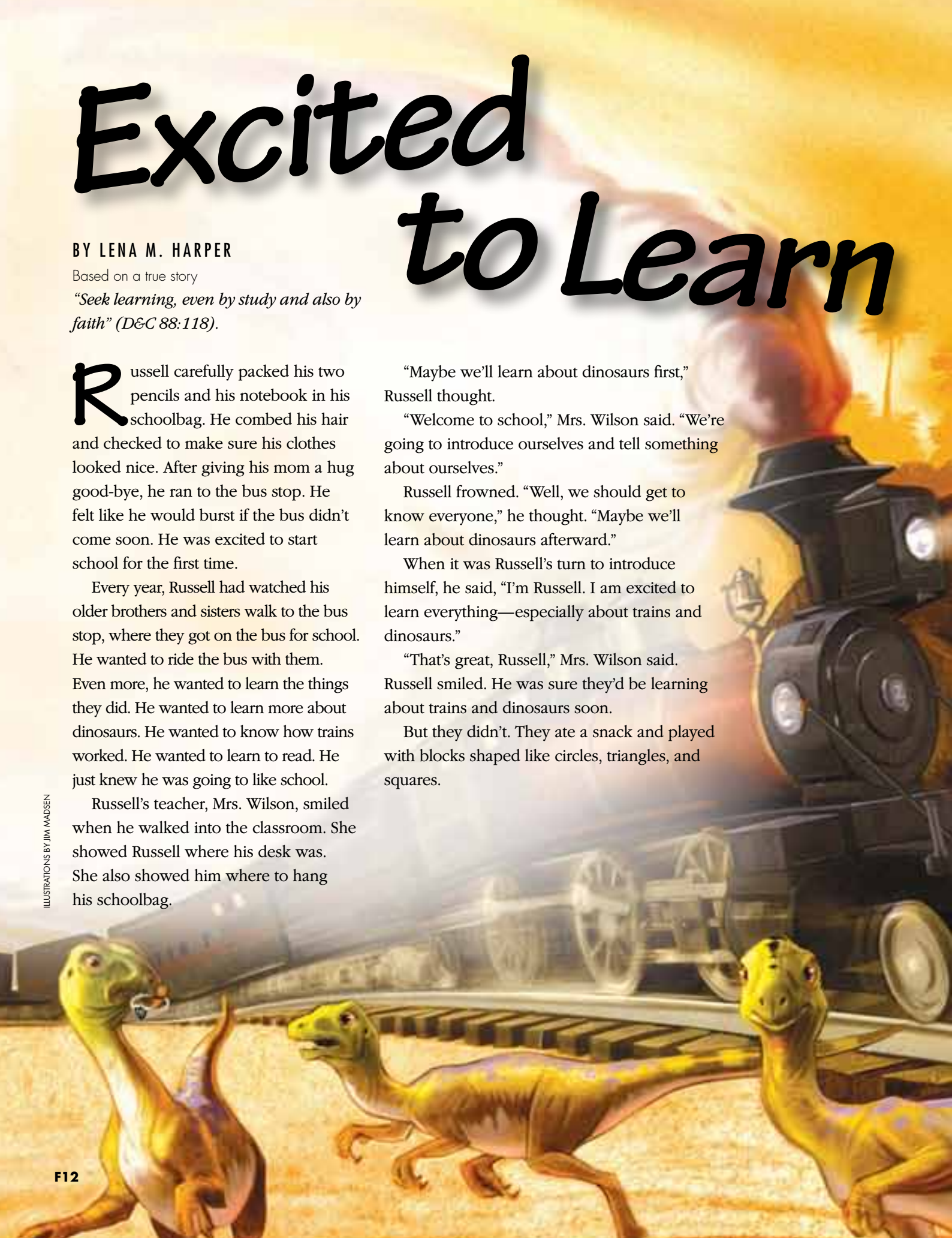
“Welcome to school,” Mrs. Wilson said. “We're going to introduce ourselves and tell something about ourselves.”

Russell frowned. “Well, we should get to know everyone,” he thought. “Maybe we'll learn about dinosaurs afterward.”

When it was Russell's turn to introduce himself, he said, “I'm Russell. I am excited to learn everything—especially about trains and dinosaurs.”

“That's great, Russell,” Mrs. Wilson said. Russell smiled. He was sure they'd be learning about trains and dinosaurs soon.

But they didn't. They ate a snack and played with blocks shaped like circles, triangles, and squares.







"There is no limit to your potential learning as a child of God."
President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Do What They Think You Can't Do," *New Era*, Oct. 1989, 6.

"Mrs. Wilson, when are we going to learn about dinosaurs and trains?" Russell asked.

"Not right now, Russell," she said. "Now it's time to read a story."

"Is it about dinosaurs?"

"No, Russell."

After the story they learned about the alphabet. Then it was time to go home.

Russell was mad.

He frowned out the window on the bus. He ran home from the bus stop and stormed through the front door. He ran into his room and buried his head in a blanket.

Mom came in and put her hand on Russell's head. "How was your first day?" she asked.

"Terrible. I'm never going to learn anything, and I'm not going back. All we did today was play with blocks and read stories."

"Well, Russell, it's just your first day," Mom said.

Russell sat up and looked at Mom. "I want to learn about dinosaurs and trains and reading—now."

Mom sat next to Russell on the bed. "You can't learn everything at once. Learning takes time. And the more you learn now, the more you'll be able to learn later."

"What do you mean?" Russell asked.

"Well, you need to learn the alphabet before you can learn to read. And you need to learn to read before you can read about the things you're interested in," she said.

Russell thought about it. Maybe there were other things to learn about than only dinosaurs and trains. "Well, I guess I'll try school again tomorrow," he said.

Mom smiled at him.

"But, Mom, do you think we could get a book from the library about dinosaurs?"

"I definitely think we can do that." ●

