

The Crazy Bus

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

The public school nearby has a terrible secret: The Crazy Bus! All the kids dreaded bus assignments at the beginning of each year, fearing they'd get put on the Crazy Bus. From the outside, it looked like any old yellow school bus, but once you climbed aboard, all bets were off!

There was barbed wire over the windows to keep kids from trying to escape. The seat belts had been replaced with bungee cords. Then there were speakers that were always turned up to their loudest to play some sort of weird old-fashioned music that only the cackling granny who drove loved.

She was half deaf and mostly blind, so every ride was a gut-wrenching, pulse-pounding adventure you weren't sure you'd survive! She laughed evilly and sped up every time someone's pet dog or cat walked across the street while she drove. There were black outline stickers on the side of the bus for all the animals she'd run over, probably twenty or thirty of them in all.

The seats had been carved up by previous generations of students, making it hard to sit down comfortably. You were usually lucky if only one spring from the seat poked you when you sat down. If you were really unlucky, you'd fall through the seat and get scratched up and stuck to all the gum that seemed to hold the seats together!

In the back of the bus, the kids had found a way to remove the half-seat near the emergency exit. Instead, there was a hole they'd painstakingly cut through the floor. They'd take the new kids and dangle them down by their armpits, making them run along as the wheels turned. One kid's shoes actually caught fire because he had to run so fast for so long!

If that seemed bad, the worst thing was getting off or on the bus before and after school. You never knew where the bus driver would stop. You had to be ready to sprint two or three blocks in any direction of your expected stop in the morning, or you'd miss the bus. One kid was known to carry a grappling hook to throw at the bus, so he could get towed on his skateboard and climb aboard a few blocks later. Getting off the bus usually required you to dive out the door and roll to a stop. Hopefully you didn't land on anything dangerous.

The Crazy Bus was everyone's fear, but how much was reality and how much was myth? I guess you'll just have to wait until you get your bus number this year!



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What is the terrible secret at the nearby school?
 - A. a Crazy Janitor
 - B. a Crazy Teacher
 - C. a Crazy Lunch Lady
 - D. a Crazy Bus

2. Who is the driver?
 - A. an escaped lunatic
 - B. a meek old retired postman
 - C. an old lady who can hardly hear and see
 - D. a terrifying man fresh out of the military

3. Which of the following was NOT mentioned about the Crazy Bus?
 - A. gas to put the students to sleep
 - B. barbed wire over the windows
 - C. stickers on the side of the bus that showed how many animals had been run over
 - D. a hole in the back where the half-seat used to be

4. According to the writer, what's the worst thing about the bus?
 - A. the seats
 - B. the music
 - C. getting off or on the bus
 - D. the driver

5. How would you best describe this story?
 - A. completely factual
 - B. silly fiction
 - C. poetry
 - D. none of the above

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