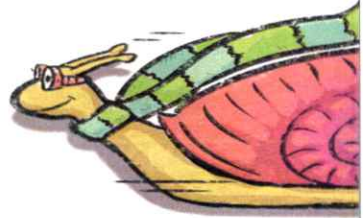
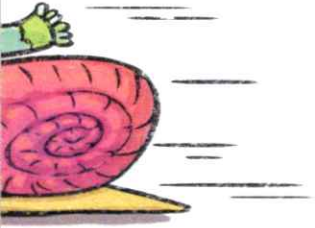




“You’re a snail,” Poodle said.
“You’re supposed to be SLOW.”

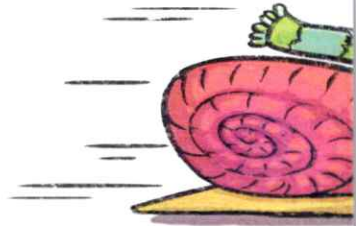


“Not me,” said snail Sidney.
“I’m in training, you know.”

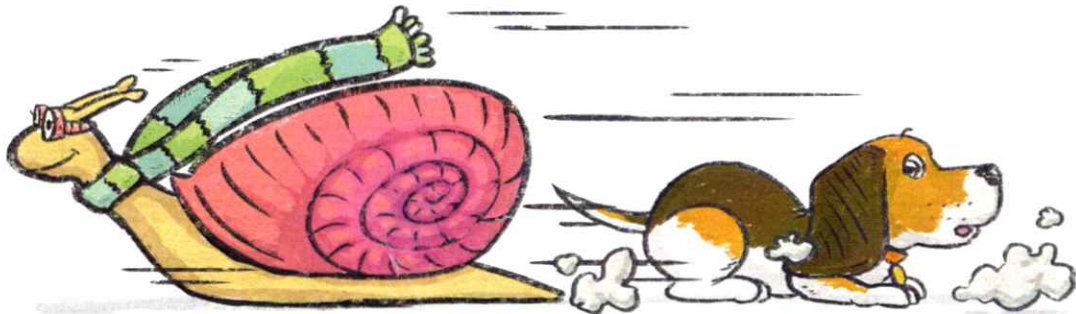
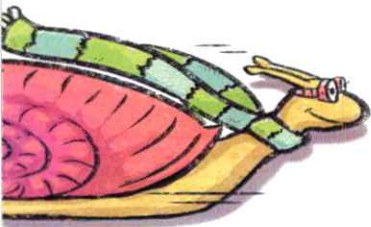


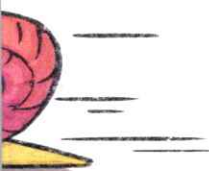
And *zoom!*, off shot Sidney,
without even straining,
not even complaining,
around the tree, under
the paragraph like thunder,
down to the creek with a scream,
past the next thought.
Sentences, they’re called.

Zoom! Sidney screeched to a halt
again, right at their feet.
“I’m in training,” she said,
“to be a verb. It’s so sweet!”



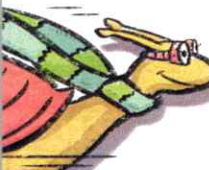
What? said, “What?”





“Stop,” said Poodle.
“You can’t be a verb.
You’re a snail—a snail!—and
snails can’t be verbs!”

“An action verb!” cried Sidney,
and *zoom!* went the snail
all over the page—
zip to the right margin,
zap to the edge,
back and forth ’cross the stage,
screeching to barge in
beside Poodle and What?.



“An action verb!” Sidney cried.
“I’m in training for that!”
What? barked, “What-what-what-what-what?”
Poodle blinked and looked wide-eyed.

“Sidney,” he said,
“snails just can’t be verbs.
They’re words.”

