

Royal Fireworks Language Arts by Michael Clay Thompson

# Sentence Island

*Second Edition*

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*Royal Fireworks Press*  
UNIONVILLE, NEW YORK

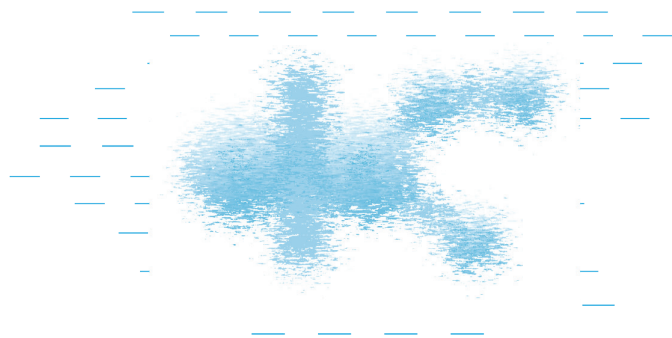
## CHAPTER ONE

### Mud's Two Sides

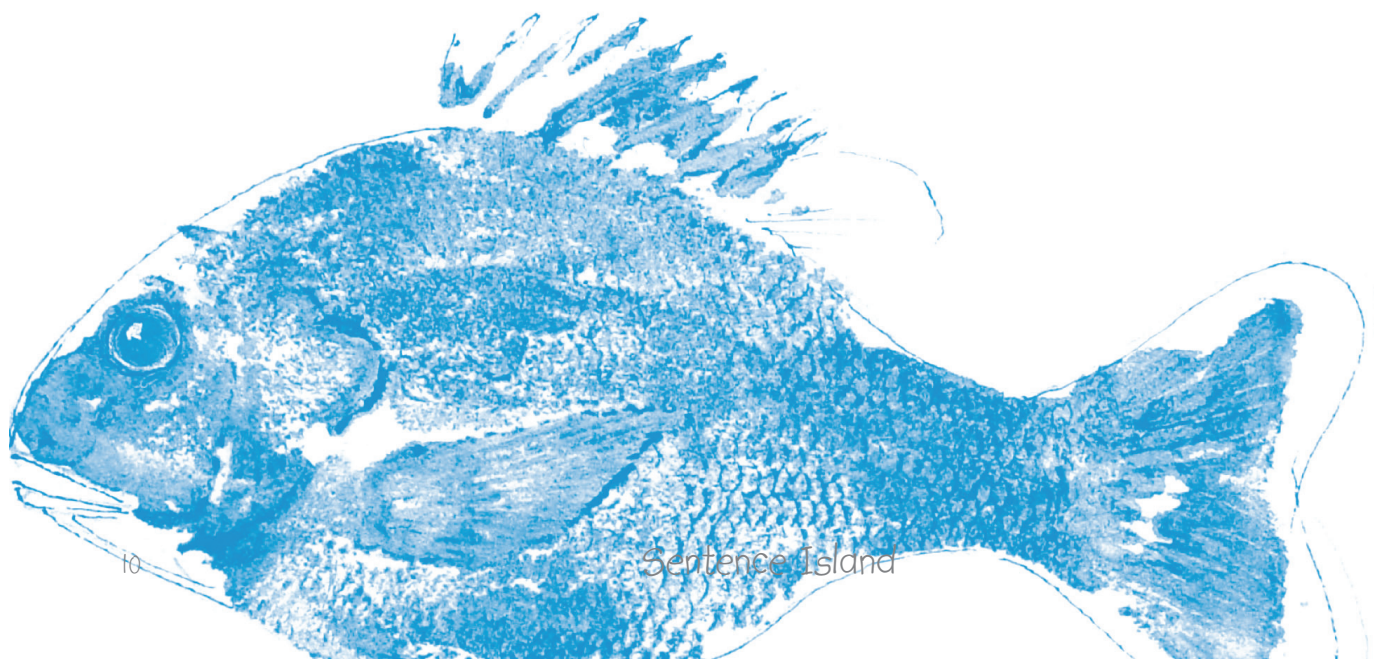
Once upon a time—  
not so long ago—  
in a busy, blue sea not far from  
Grammar Island...

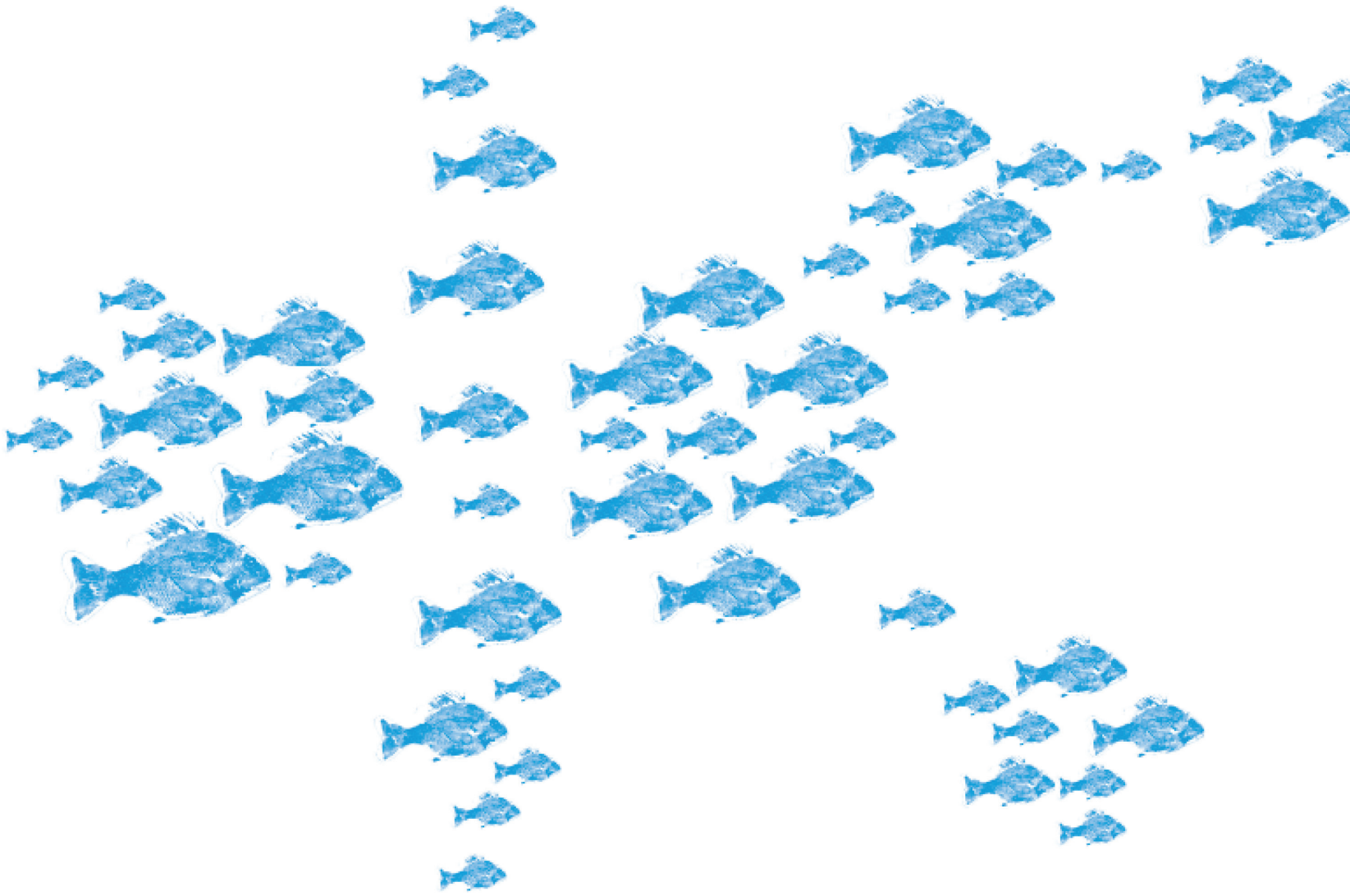
...was Sentence Island,  
a blue island filled with ideas.

High in the wind,  
a gray bird could just discern  
the shape of the island,  
shimmering in the ocean light.



In the ocean,  
schools of blue fish  
swam under the waves  
that splashed on the beach.  
Shells filled the sand  
like chocolate chips.





Of all the fish in the school,  
one was different.

His name was *Mud*.

The others swam around him.

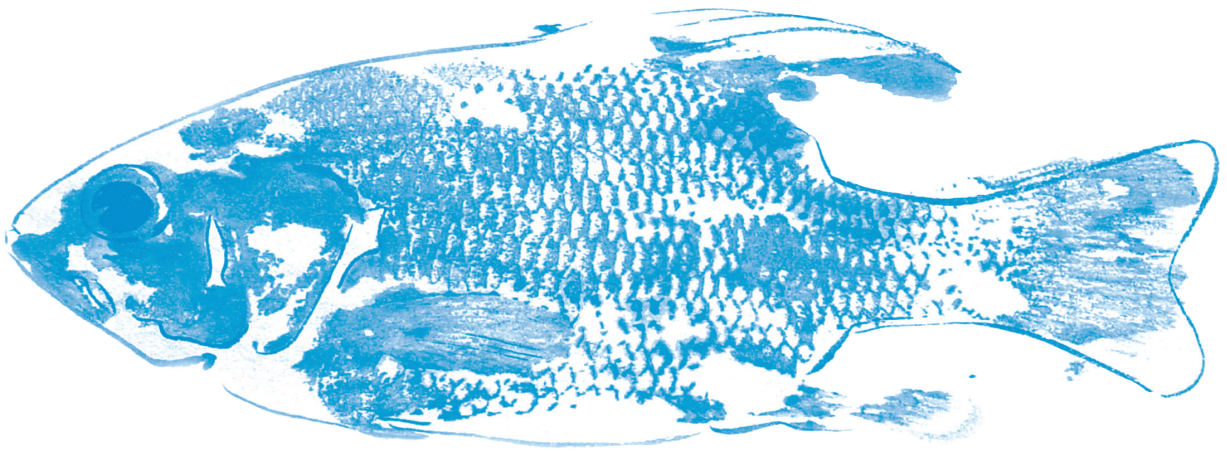
“Are you a mudfish?” they asked.

“No,” said *Mud*.

“Are you a muddy fish?” they asked.

“No,” said *Mud*.

“My name is *Mud*.”

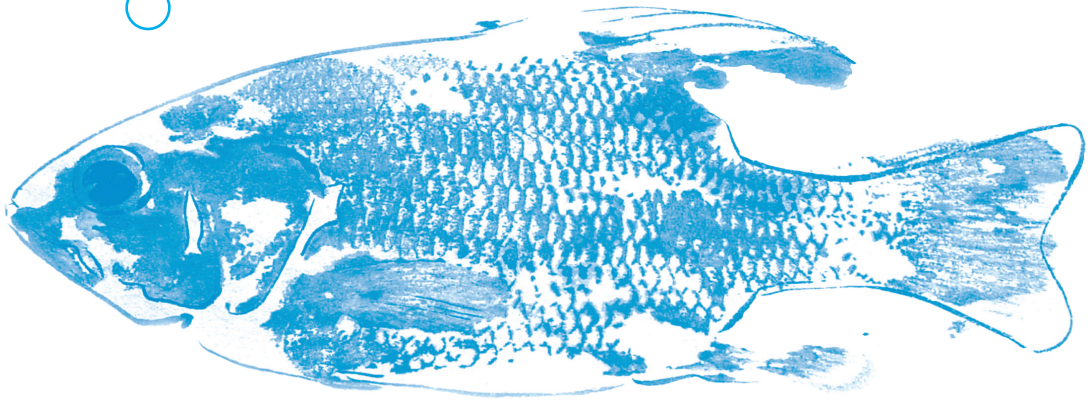
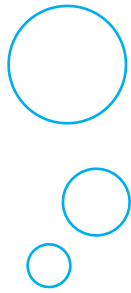




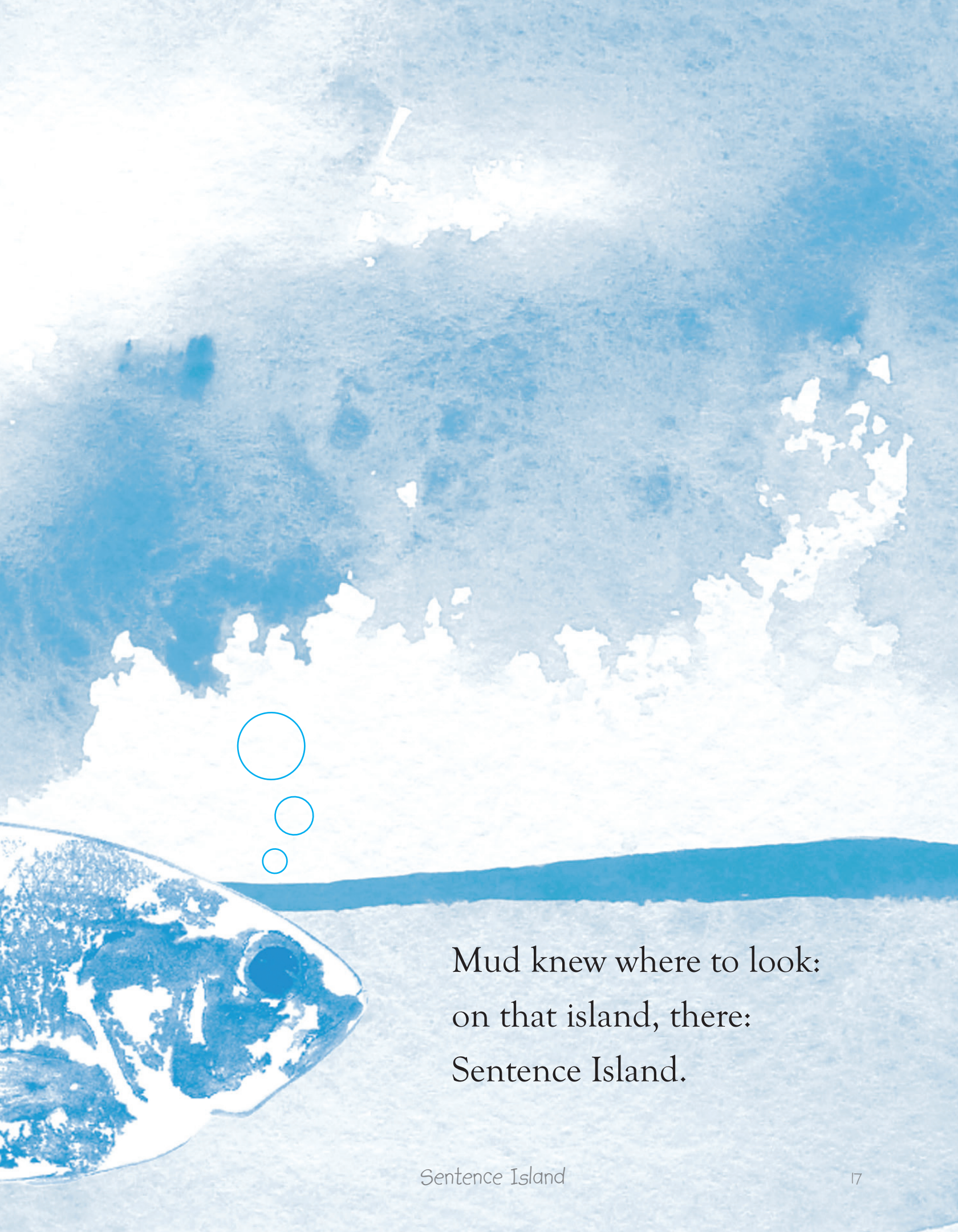
Mud was different;  
he didn't care who knew it,  
so no one bothered him.

In fact, Mud was different  
from the other fish in two ways.  
(Yes, he could talk, but *all* fish can talk.)

First, Mud could walk on land.  
Second, Mud was obsessed;  
ideas rose from his head  
like bubbles.



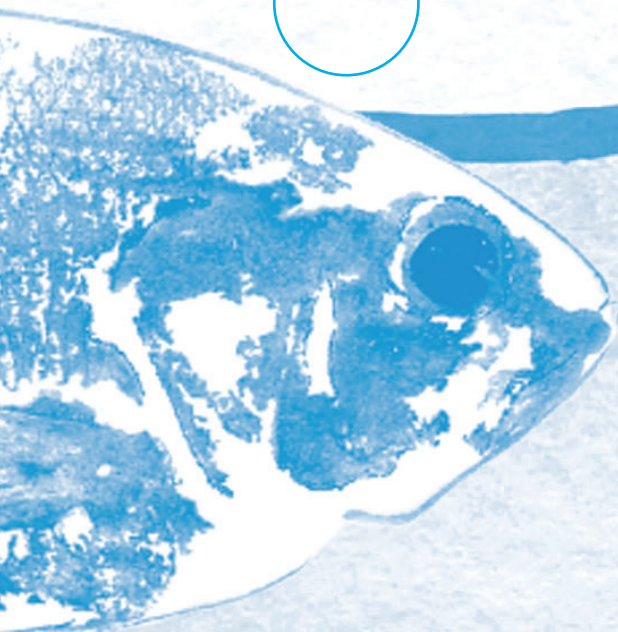
Mud was obsessed.  
He could not stop thinking about it.  
About what?  
Oh, the sentence.  
Mud had overheard a learned fish saying  
wonderful things about the sentence,  
and he just *had* to find  
a sentence, to see one for himself,  
to see a real one,  
to learn how to write one.  
It was Mud's mission.



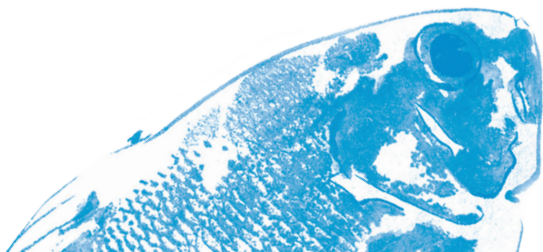
Mud knew where to look:  
on that island, there:  
Sentence Island.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Mud Thinks about Doing and Being



Mud was deep in thought.  
“More?” thought Mud. “Much more to learn?”  
But suddenly he heard  
a splash, and then a sploosh,  
and two pelicans, who were circling  
for some breakfast, glided right  
over his head. Being a fish, Mud  
eyed the pelicans suspiciously,  
but they appeared to wish him no harm.  
“Who are you?” they called.



“My name is *Mud*,” called Mud. “Who are you?”

“I’m Oopsy, and that’s my flappy friend Daisy,”  
called Oopsy. “We’re very fancy flyers!”

Oopsy almost flew into Daisy.

“I’m looking for sentences!” called Mud.

“Cow Loon said I could learn  
all about sentences!”

“Cow Loon?” said Oopsy.

“He’s a fine fiddler! *We’ll* inform you  
about the facts! *We’re* familiar with the flight path!”

Laughing like a couple of pelicans,  
they flapped in for a floppy landing,





and both of them hopped and almost  
flipped on their noses.



“I flunked Flap School,” said Oopsy.

“Your flipper was flat!” said Daisy.

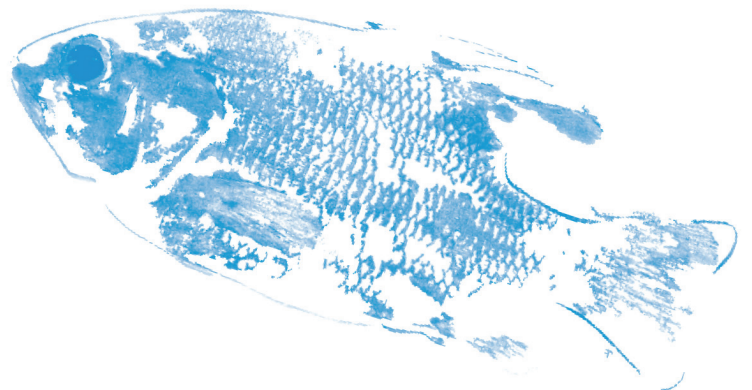
“Don’t be foolish,” said Oopsy,  
and they laughed like pelicans.

Mud stared, open-mouthed.

Oopsy-Daisy stopped laughing.

“Sentences,” said Mud.

“Tell me about sentences.”



“Follow, Fred,” said Oopsy, “and I’ll give it a fling,”  
and this is what he said:

“Daisy is a doozy, but  
Oopsy *flew* loops, see?”

“No,” said Mud, “and my name’s not *Fred*.”

“Daisy **IS**, but Oopsy **FLEW**,” said Oopsy,  
“Follow, Fred?”

“No,” said Mud, “and my name is *Mud*.”

They glared at each other.

“Fine,” said Oopsy, “follow this, Fred,”  
and this is what he said:

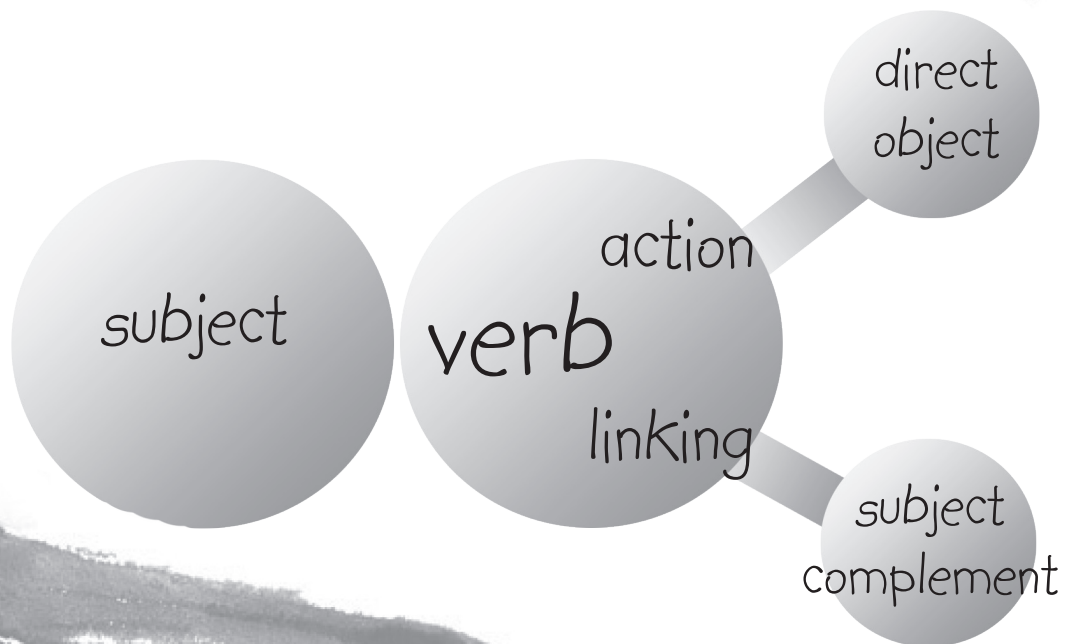
“Daisy *was* hazy, but  
Oopsy *sipped* soup, see?”

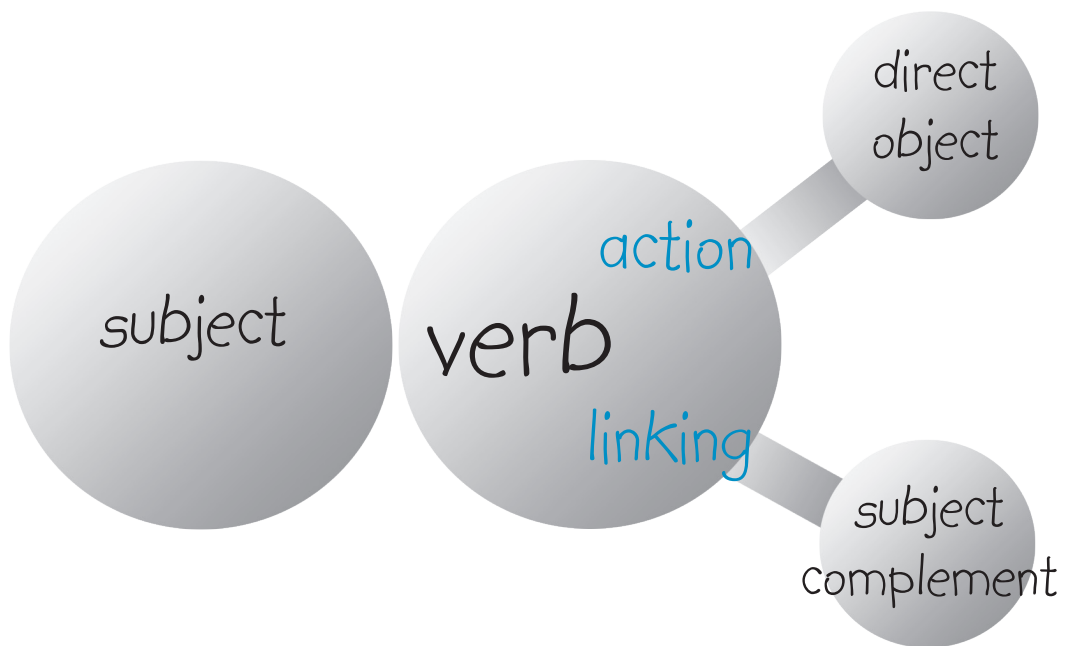
“No,” said Mud, whose name was *Mud*.

“Fine, Fred,” said Oopsy, “follow further,”  
and this is what he said, very slowly:

“Daisy *eats* fish, and  
Mud *is* a fish. See?”

Mud raised a scaly eyebrow.  
“No,” he said, “and I don’t like that sentence!”  
Daisy flopped and flapped and said,  
“The figure, Oopsy, show him the figure.”  
Oopsy looked dubiously at Mud but said,  
“Fine, Fred. Follow this,”  
and he drew in the sand with his bill.





“These are called the **parts of the sentence**,”  
said Oopsy, “and there is more to follow, Fred,  
but we’ll fly with this fact: a sentence  
has a **structure**, with **parts** that are connected,  
just like other structures.

Every sentence features a subject,  
made of a noun or pronoun,  
and every sentence has a verb. Follow:  
the verb might be an **action** verb,  
like *see*, *ran*, *ate*, or *flew*,  
or the verb might be a **linking** verb, like *is*.  
There are flocks of action verbs  
but only a few linking verbs.”

