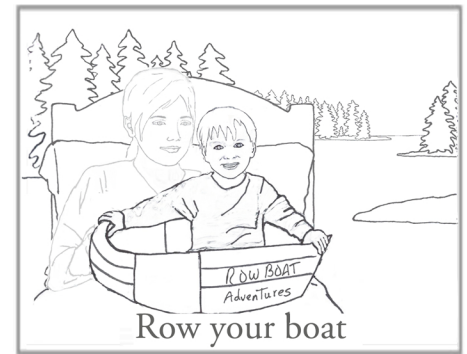


Row row

Row...
NOT FAIR! She was stuck babysitting for NO MONEY! In return her mom got rides to work and once a week to the grocery store from their neighbour, Susan. Through the window she could see other kids her age - going places - having fun.

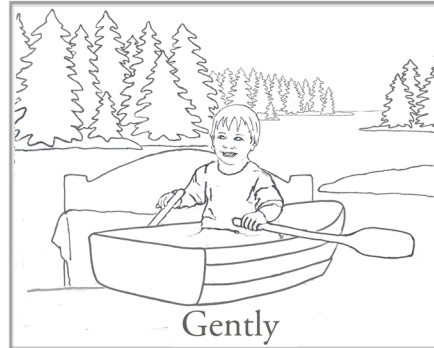
... row.
THIS SUCKS! Same time, same place, night after night, the same story, over and over again, until she wanted to scream from sheer boredom and frustration. It was driving her CRAZY! She longed to read something - anything different.



Row your boat

Row ...
She tried changing the story - once.
Let's pretend this book changes into a boat floating on your bed. It will take you anywhere you want to go - ANYWHERE. But he started to cry.

... your boat.
The kid was so upset she had to call his mother to calm him down. Susan was really nice about it and told her that it was just a phase every kid goes through. Because so many things are new to them; they need to know a few things will stay the same.



Gently

Gently ...
He really was a sweet kid. And it was nice to be curled up in bed - warm and cosy next to someone who listened so intently to every word you said. Nobody else had time to listen to her.

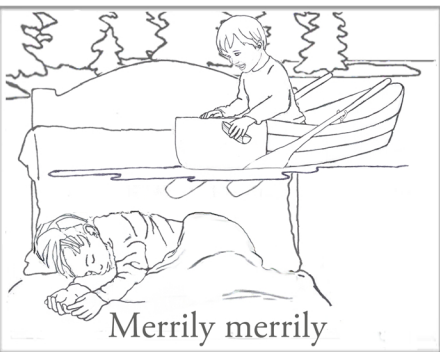
All the grownups she saw were busy. And because she was always babysitting she really didn't have any friends. When her dad left, she and her mom moved across town and none of the kids she grew up with were at her new school.



Down the stream

... down ...
It would be so easy. Hop into a boat and let it carry you away. You wouldn't have to row very hard if you were going downstream. Her mother wouldn't approve. She didn't like people who took the easy way out - like Dad - drifting away.

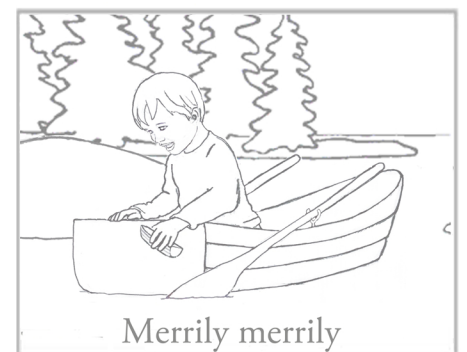
... the stream.
Her dad was fun. Since he left her mom rarely laughed anymore. He used to make her laugh all the time. He made her aunt laugh too but that made her mom mad. Then her dad was gone and they moved away from her grandmother and her aunt. Now everyone she knew was gone.



Merrily merrily

Merrily ...
And she wanted to go too - anywhere but here. Yesterday her teacher told the class that people used to travel all over this country by boat because there were no roads, no railroads before there were even horses. They did it so it was possible.

... merrily,
She imagined rowing past fields and forests; towns and cities. Rowing down rivers then across lakes. Animals all around her, birds in the sky, fish in the water. Maybe a friendly dog to keep her company. She'd row until she reached the sea.



Merrily merrily