“My young child the prince is ready to reign, because he’s begun to think with his brain...”
This book is dedicated to the many teachers of the past who taught the Grandmas and Grandpas of the world how to think for themselves, the many teachers of today who are teaching children to think for themselves and the many teachers of the future who will continue to teach their students to think for themselves.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book would never have made it to fruition without the kind interest and energy of the principal of Virginia Lake School, Mr. Michael Carmody, its two dedicated and talented art teachers, Mr. Christopher Fischer and Mrs. Bethany Wec and of course the wonderful artists from the 4th, 5th and 6th grades.
The young prince liked games,
the story begins.

He would play for hours
with all of his friends.
Big friends, little friends, and none were the same.
One friend was an elf and Bruce was his name.
I have a problem, 
he told his friend Bruce.

When I run real fast 
my shoes get too loose.
Bruce gave him some gum to stick in his shoe.

This gooey green gum is just right for you.
The prince took the gum and stuck it inside.

But then he found out his shoes were too wide.
A hotdog, said Bruce, will take up the slack.

Wow! you're so clever, the prince answered back.
Bruce said, it's perfect, it's just the right size.

The prince was impressed his friend was so wise.
Then Bruce carried on, just do as I say
your shoes will fit fine, you can play all day.
But, the prince thought as he stared at his shoe, does Bruce really know much more than I do?
How 'bout in the park when I'm playing ball?

The mustard might squish and then I might fall.
And it could be worse if it starts to rain, the prince now began to use his young brain.
Perhaps my friend Bruce is not a smart elf.

Maybe it’s better to think for myself.
Instead of green gum
and a hotdog too,
I think what I need
is a smaller shoe.
He told his mother
and she was so proud.

She summoned her court
and announced out loud.
My young child the prince is ready to reign,
because he’s begun to think with his brain.
Today he has learned a lesson so true:
To think for yourself is what you should do.
The Illustrators of pages 3-17
Showing the page number of their illustration

Back Row (from the left)
America Larios, Evelyn Barrios, Aidan Haftl,
Nathalie Bermudez

Front Row (from the left)
Amelia Perez, Itzel Barrios, Beatrice Cuellar,
Jessica Blanco
The Illustrators of pages 19-33

Back Row (from the left)
Darnell Hanson, Daine Hanson, Ariana Kerr

Front Row (from the left)
Elisabet Mena, Megan Stoffel, Sarah Holdeman, Athziri Colin

Not Pictured: Priscilla Perez, 27
The Illustrators of the front cover and dedication page

Andrew Vitale and Victoria Simons
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Being the grandfather of six I have never been accused of not having plenty of advice for my grandchildren or hesitant in providing it. I sometimes express my advice in phrases such as "My motto is ..." This prompted my grandson Billy when he was seven to say, "Grandpa, you sure have a lot of mottos". I guess I do.

I believe this book contains a very useful motto or piece of advice. A piece of advice that I think is in far too short supply in the world today. It's not too early to begin teaching your children and grandchildren to think for themselves. To explore this point ask the child that you are reading this book to (or with) if they understand what the prince is saying. Have them explain it to you.