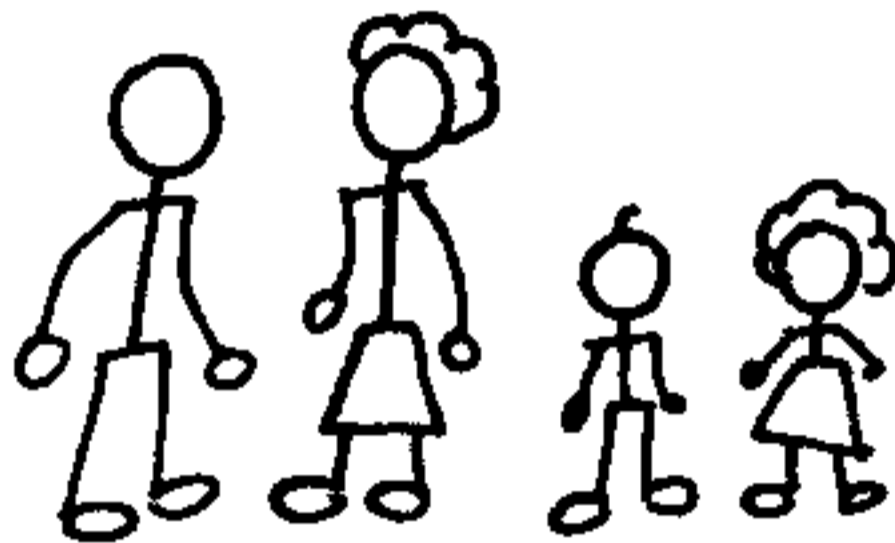


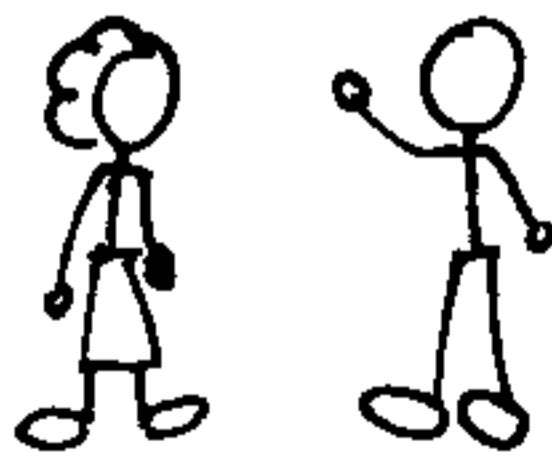
# THE USE OF STICK FIGURES IN THE TESL CLASSROOM

by Alice C. Pack

Any teacher can learn to draw simple stick figures for illustrating many grammatical points in English, making the teaching more effective. These illustrations should be kept simple with circles and lines indicating the characters and action. A boy and a girl may be represented as shown below with facial figures such as eyes, mouth, etc. optional. Men and women are drawn the same as boys and girls only the figures are large (particularly when used together).



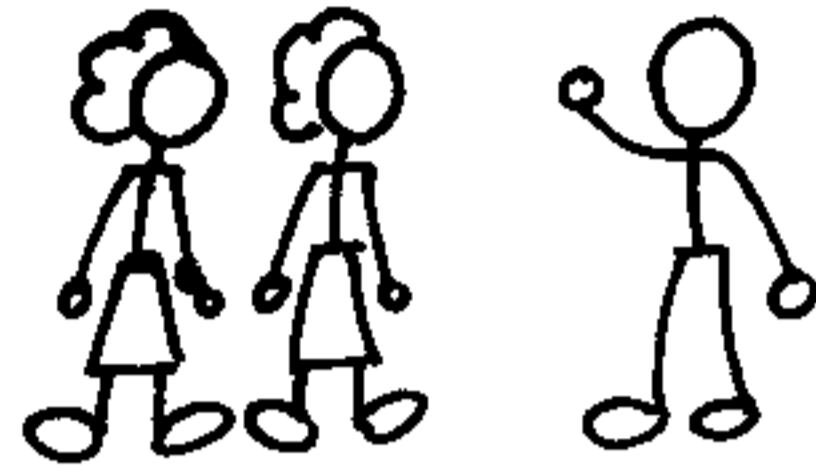
Dialogues and conversation can be simply demonstrated by drawing large stick figures—representing the participants in the dialogue or conversation—on the blackboard. The instructor can stand on the side of the character speaking as the dialogue is illustrated. (If more than two speakers are involved, a simple pointer may be used to distinguish the speaker.)  
Example:



Good morning, John.  
How are you?

Good morning, Mary.  
I'm fine, thank you.  
How are you?

Fine, thank you.

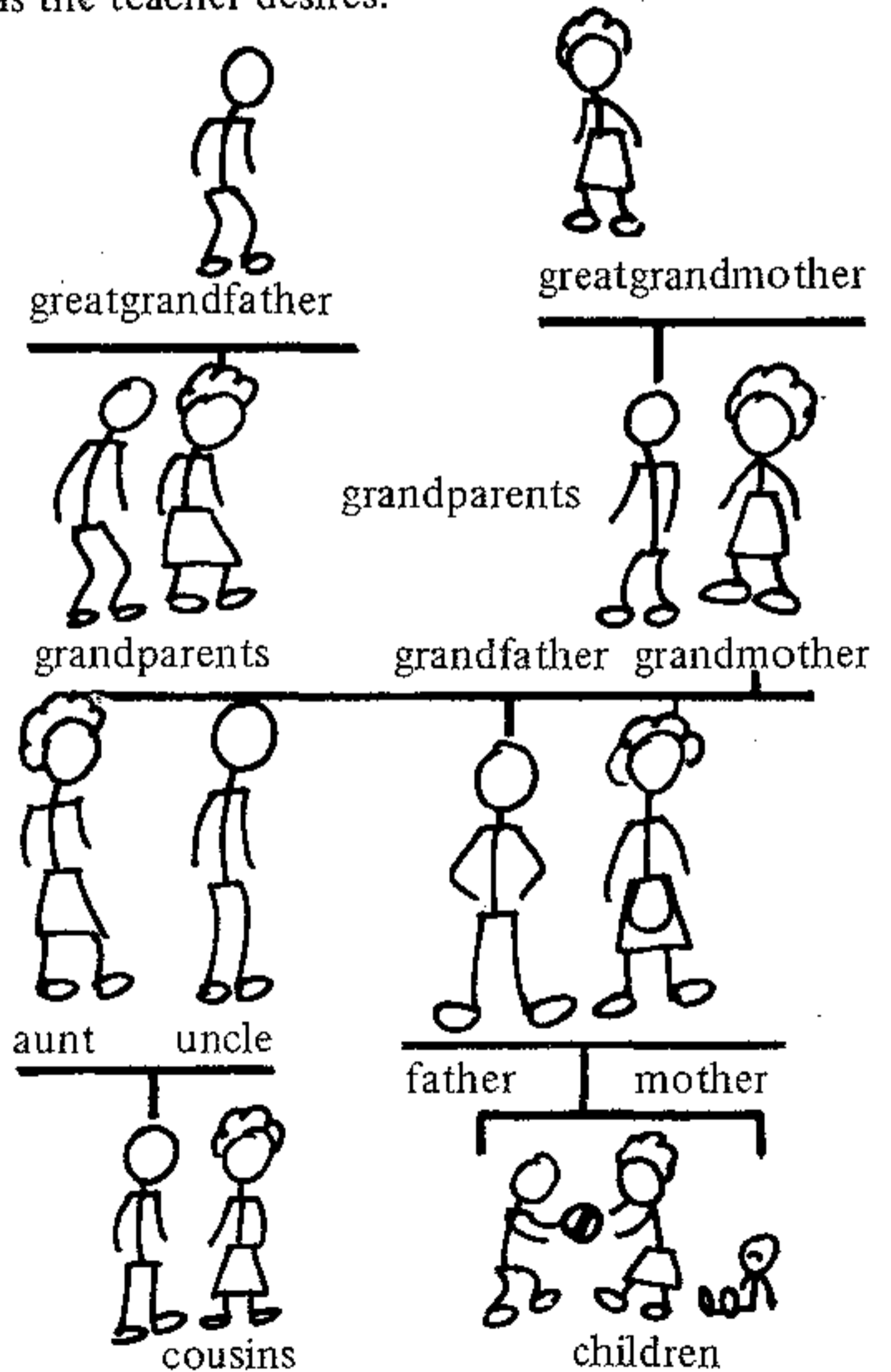


Good morning, John.  
This is my friend, Jane.

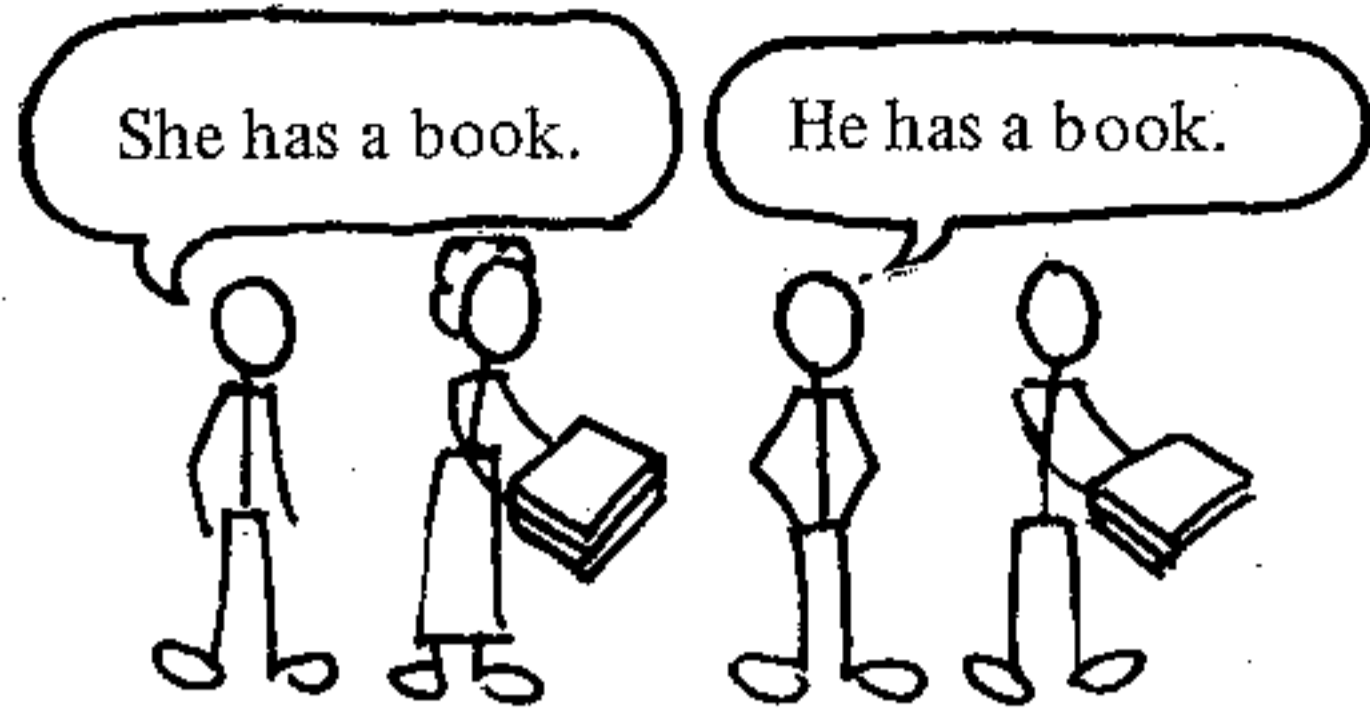
How do you do Jane.  
I'm happy to know you.

Thank you.  
I'm glad to know you too.

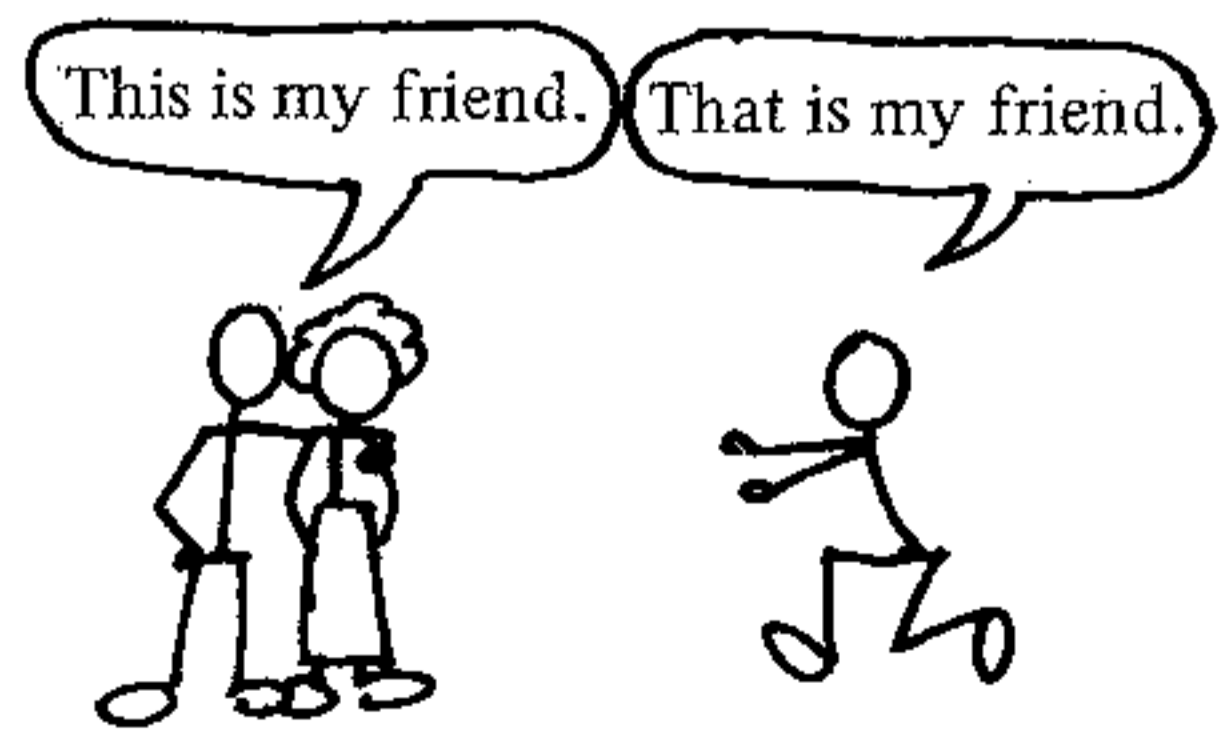
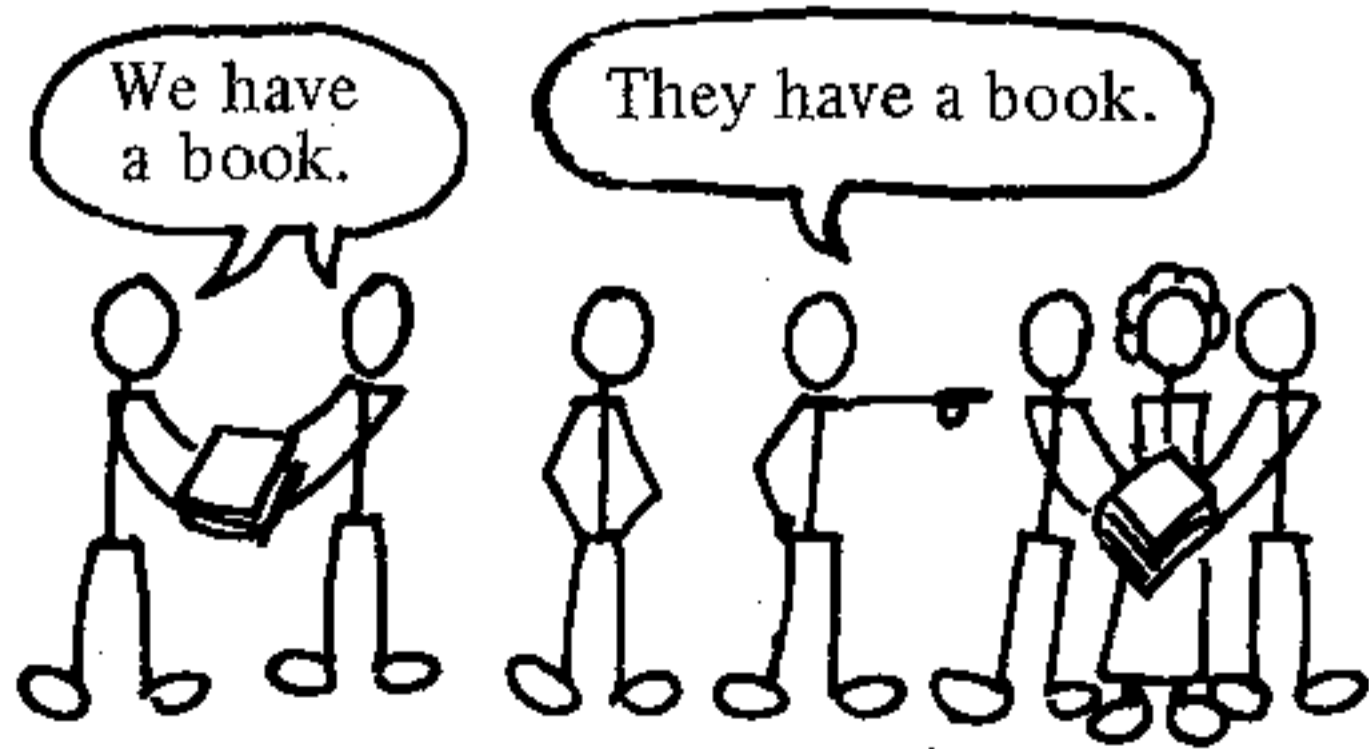
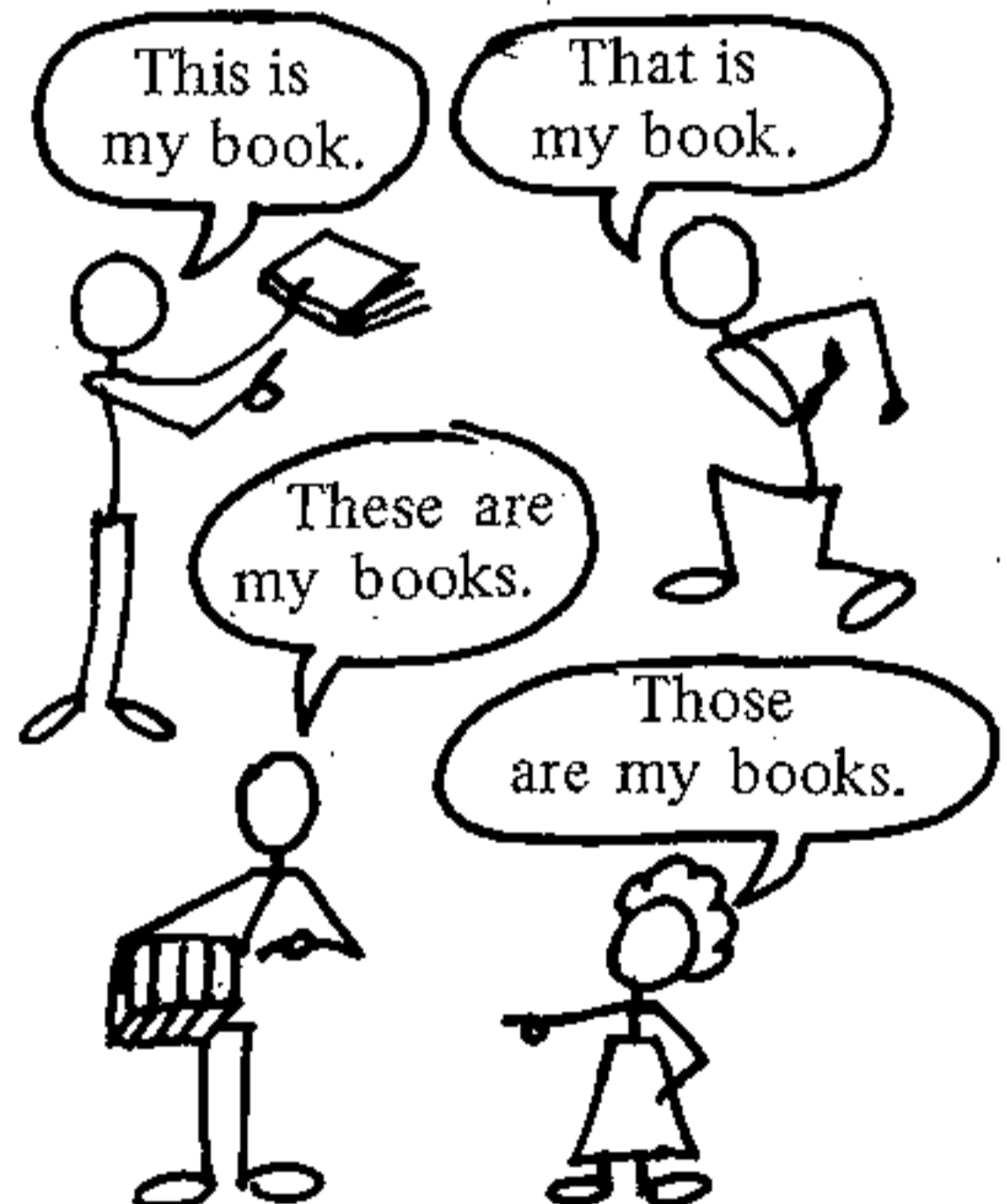
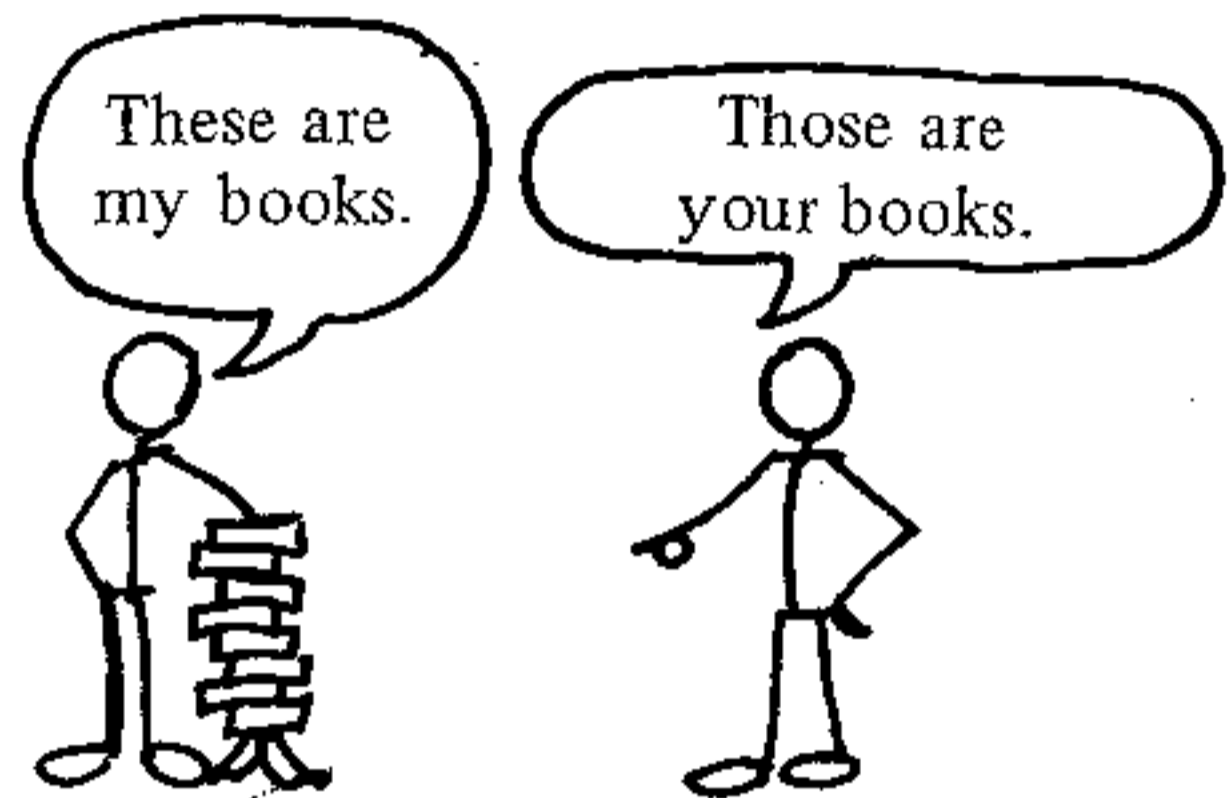
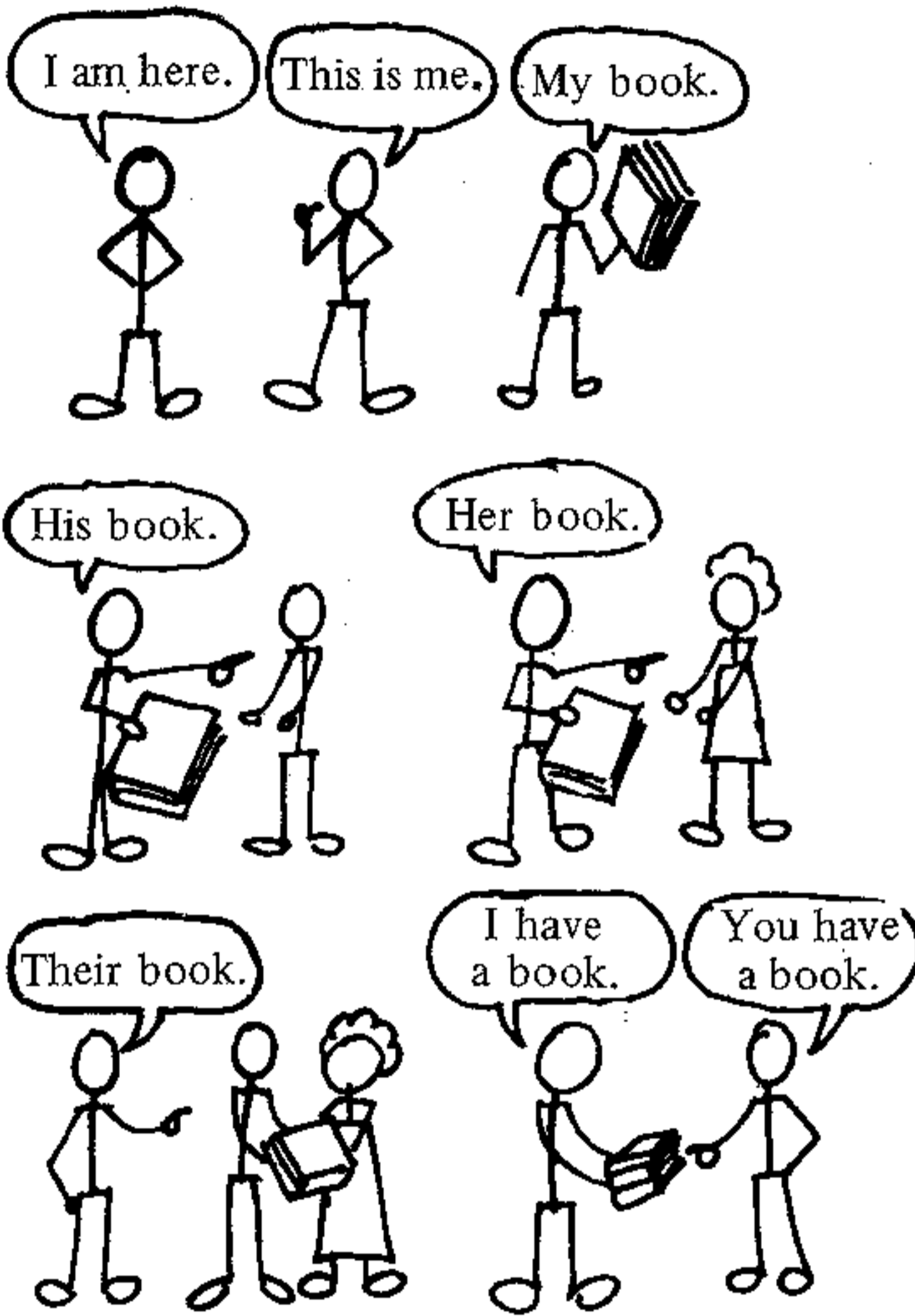
The vocabulary of family relationships can be shown advantageously with stick figures. The diagrams can be as simple or as complex as the teacher desires.



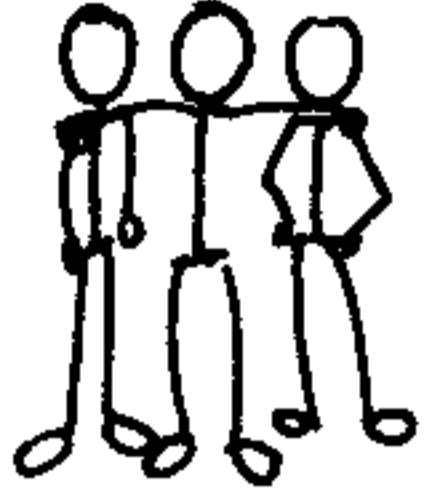
Although European languages make pronoun feminine-masculine distinctions, Polynesian (and most Asian) languages do not. Stick figures can help students picture these distinctions as they practice the forms orally. Most students are familiar with the balloon issuing from a mouth to indicate the speaker so this can be used to indicate the speaker as he refers to other figures. The words may either be inserted in the balloons or printed below with just an empty balloon indicating the speaker.



This and that with the plurals these and those (relative to position) are also demonstrable with stick figures.



These are my friends.



Those are my friends.



He is running.



She is singing.



The use of the present continuous tense (be + -ing) for present action can be indicated with stick figure drawings.

Prepositions of place, motion, and time can be clearly indicated (and practiced orally) with the use of stick figures.

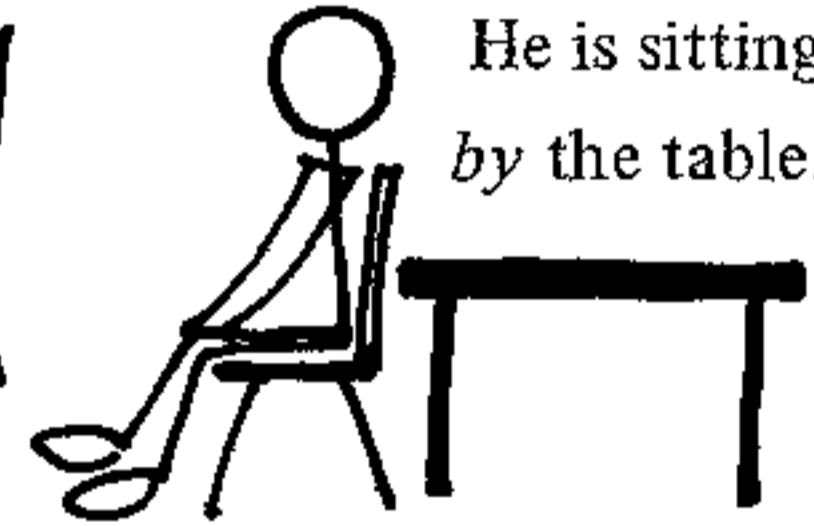
Example:

Examples:

He is sitting *in* the chair.



He is sitting *by* the table.



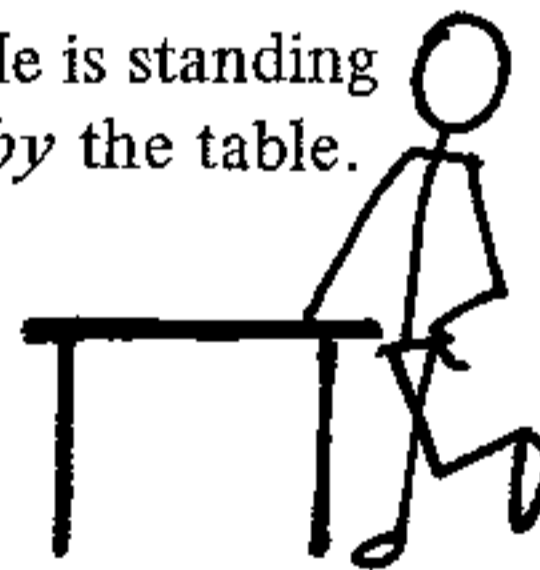
They are dancing.



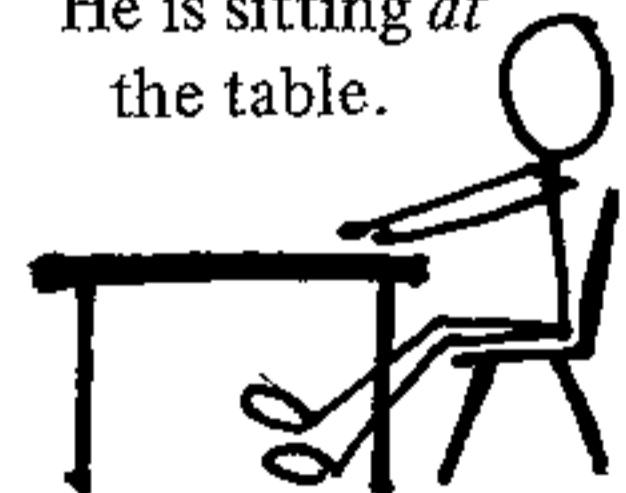
We are jumping.



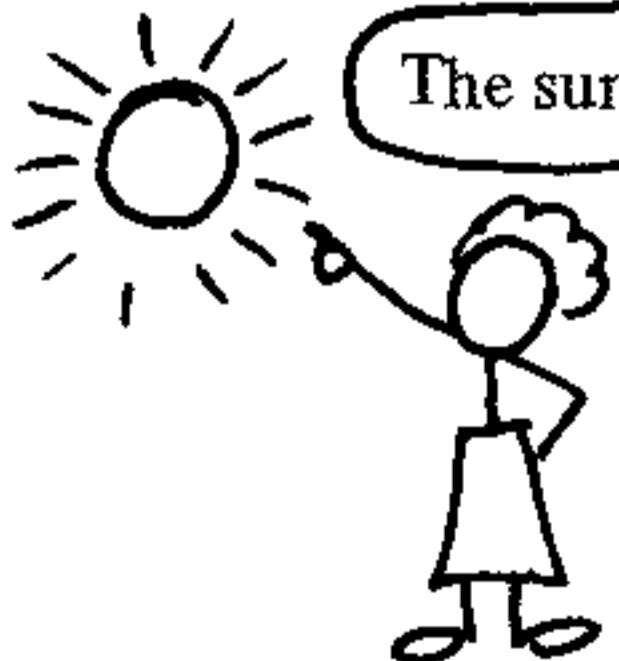
He is standing *by* the table.



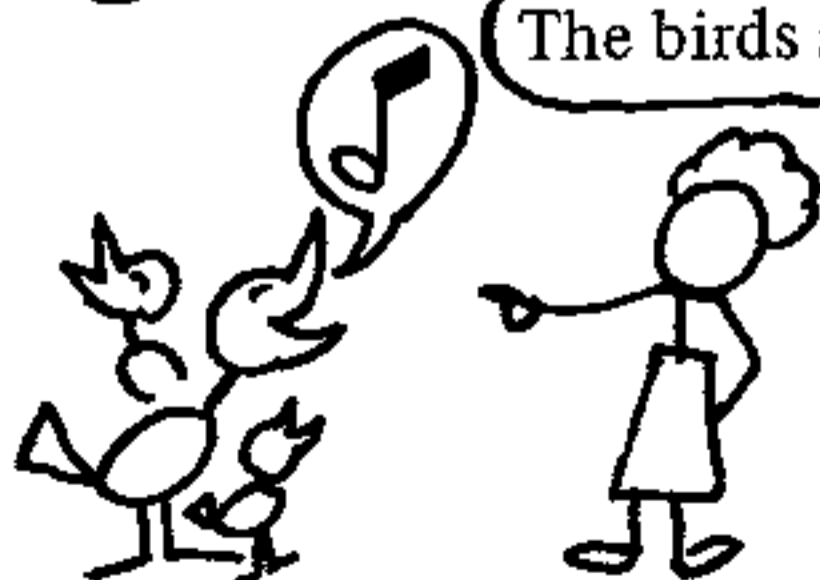
He is sitting *at* the table.



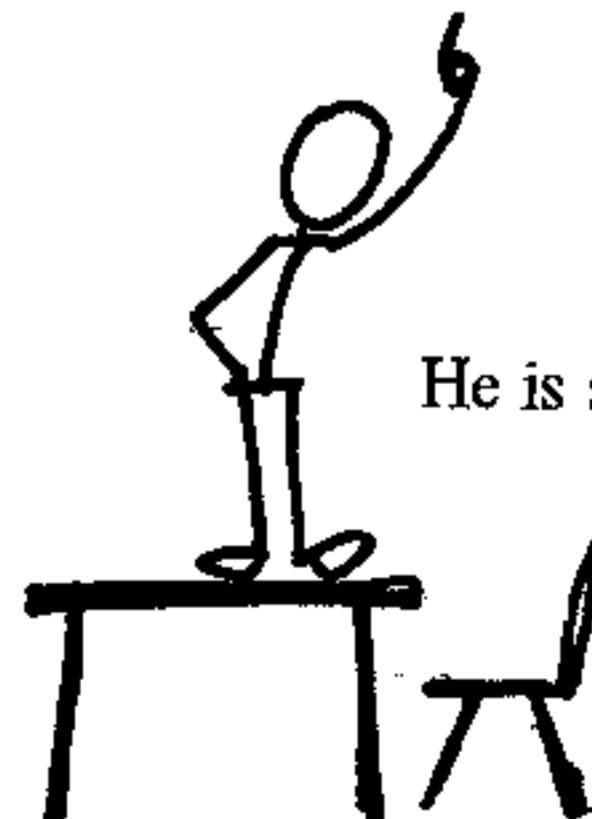
The sun is shining.



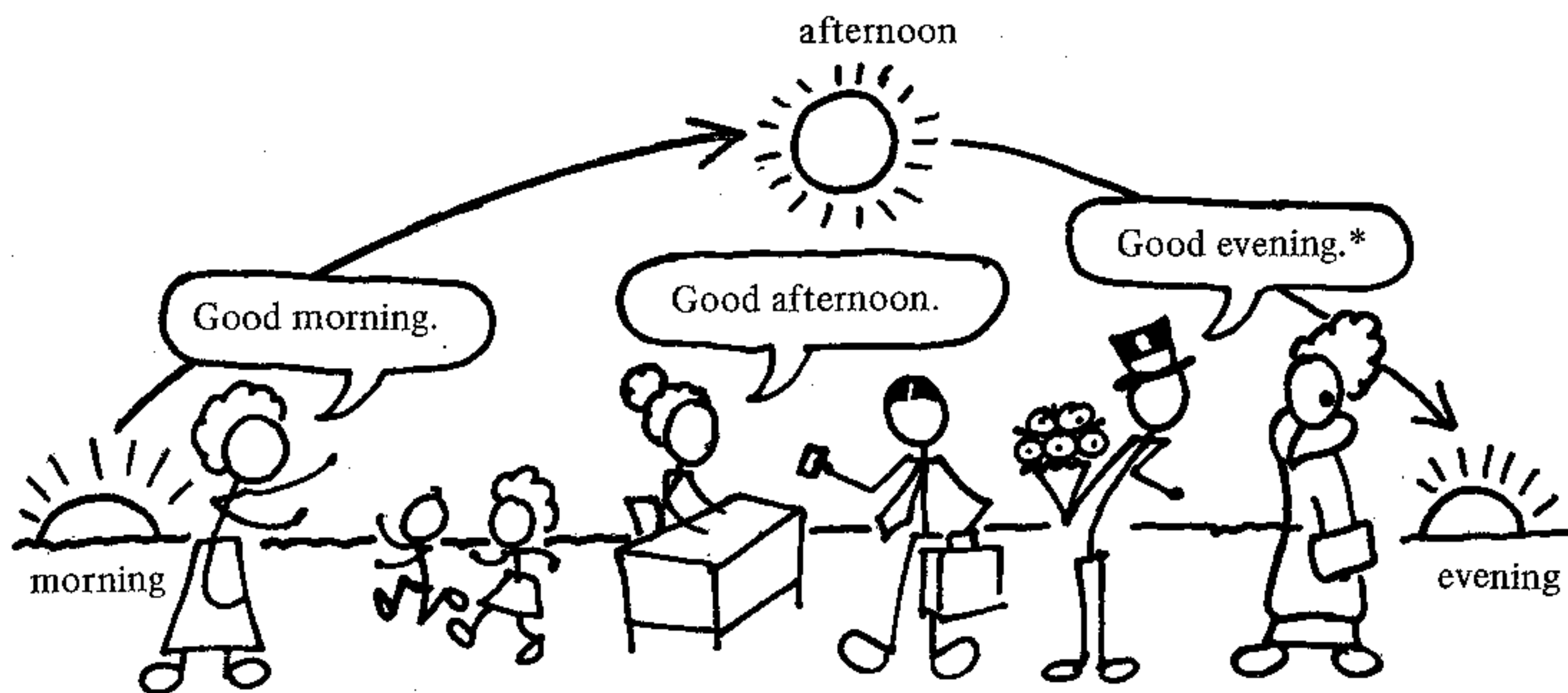
The birds are singing.



He is standing *on* the table.



Greetings in relation to the time of day can be indicated (and practiced as the leader indicates the time of day) with stick figures.



*\*Not "goodnight," which indicates goodbye.*

Stick figures are often more effective than photographs or elaborate pictures as there are few or no distractors and students can focus more readily on the relationships indicated. So pick up some chalk and have fun!

