

RONA

Miss Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre is head of the Gay-Straight Alliance at her elementary school.

PANCH

STRABISMUS

SCHWARZY

Strabismus. May I please have the definition of that word?

PANCH

"The inability of one eye to obtain binocular vision with the other because of an imbalance of the muscles of the eyeball."

SCHWARZY

And use in a sentence please?

PANCH

"In the schoolyard Billy protested that he wasn't cockeyed. 'I suffer from *strabismus*,' he said, whereupon the bullies beat him harder."

(As PANCH looks to RONA for approval, SCHWARZY is tracing the word on her arm with her finger.)

RONA

Notice how she writes on her forearm. This is her way to see the word before she speaks it out loud.

SCHWARZY

Strabismus. S-T-R-A-B-I-S-M-U-S. Strabismus.

PANCH

That is correct.
Mr. Coneybear.

RONA

Mr. Coneybear was second runner up in the Putnam Basin district.

(Phone rings. A flashback to the moment when he found out he's in. Actors rise as they assume roles.)

SCHWARZY as LEAF'S MOM

Brook, will you tell Leaf he has a phone call, please?

MARCY as LEAF'S SISTER

Leaf! Phone!

CONEYBEAR

Thanks! I got it!

Hello, Leaf speaking. Uh, huh. Uh, huh. Uh, huh.

You're kidding? I'm gonna represent the Basin in the bee? Wow. I can't believe it

(As he calls his family members, kids rise taking on these roles. They also pull up the spellers to be Paul and other siblings. One audience volunteer is left seated. When this volunteer rises, she/he is told to sit back down again, providing a visual punchline to the sequence.)

Mom, Dad, Marigold, Brook, Pinecone, Raisin, Landscape, Paul, - you're not going to believe this!

BARFEE as LEAF'S DAD

What's up, Leaf?

LEAF

I made the county finals in the spelling bee!

(LEAF'S FAMILY laughs.)

SCHWARZY as MOM

Oh sweetheart, no, you came in third honey.

LEAF

I know! but they just called and said the person who came in first has to go to their bat mitzvah, and the person who came in second... has to attend the bat mitzvah, so they want me to do it!

SCHWARZY as MOM

You understand the other kids will have all won their district bees?

(FAMILY laughs.)

LEAF

Yeah but well but

PANCH

(calling Leaf's attention back)

CAPYBARA

CONEYBEAR

What?

PANCH

Your word is Capybara.

CONEYBEAR

Is that a word?

PANCH

That's a word, yes.

CONEYBEAR

No way - what does it mean?

PANCH

"a tailless largely aquatic South American rodent often exceeding four feet in length"

CONEYBEAR

Awesome. What else can I ask?

PANCH

You're allowed to ask for the word's language of origin or to have the word used in a sentence...

CONEYBEAR

Oh— can you use it in a sentence?

PANCH

Yes. "Don't look now Pedro but I think that tailless, largely aquatic four-and a half foot rodent swimming next to you may be a *capybara*."

CONEYBEAR

Wow, that didn't help at all!

PANCH

Are you ready to spell the word Mr. Coneybear?

CONEYBEAR

No, but it was fun to come here—

(to family in audience)

Hi guys— my whole family's here which is really...

(trance suddenly takes him)

C-A-P-Y-B-A-R-A Capybara.

PANCH

That is correct.

CONEYBEAR

It is?

I can't believe it.

PANCH

Miss Ostrovsky

CONEYBEAR

(as he returns to his seat)

It's unbelievable, I just said the first letters that came into my head, and that "y" was really...

ALL

Shhh.