tales from
McCurdy's Woods
"Chips & Seeds"

   Saturday morning found Glen and Gramps walking in the family **woodlot**. They paused beneath a large **oak** tree to watch a squirrel. "What are these things Gramps?" Glen said, picking up a small object from the ground, "They look like little rocks with hats on them."

   "They are **acorns**," Gramps explained, "They are nuts, or **seeds**, from the oak tree." Gramma used to recite a little poem that said, "*If your lot in life is hard and your rewards are few, remember that the mighty oak was once a nut like you.*"

   "You're not a nut Gramps," Glen laughed, "Every time we come to the woods, I learn something new."

   Gramps smiled as they walked along. "How is school going, Glen?" he asked.

   Glen paused and thought for a moment, "Well I have a project to do. It's about **computers** – how they work and how they help us." He looked up at the trees around him. "Gramps," he asked, "did all of these trees come from acorns?"

"Some did," Gramps replied, "That large oak over there came from an acorn, but the **Spruce** beside it came from a seed contained in a cone. What's really amazing is that all the **information** that the tree needed to grow came from that one tiny seed. Information like when to **sprout**, how to drink water, when to sleep and how to turn **sunlight** into food.

"That's it! That's it!" Glen exclaimed, running to find the nearest seed, **searching** in ever widening circles until he located another acorn. Rushing back to his grandfather he thrust it towards him. "That's it!" he exclaimed again.

"What Glen? What's 'it'?" Gramps asked, as Glen began to fire questions and answers non stop.

"It's my computer project," Glen said. "This seed is like a **chip**. I can use it to explain how computers work. Can I take this to school Gramps?" He held the tiny seed up for Gramps' inspection.

"It's like you said, each seed contains all the information that the tree needs to grow. A computer chip contains all the information to make the computer work." "*Wow*," Glen thought, "*we are surrounded by computer chips.*"

He pointed to a small Spruce tree. "See Gramps, this tree is running a different **program** because it has **needles** instead of **leaves**."
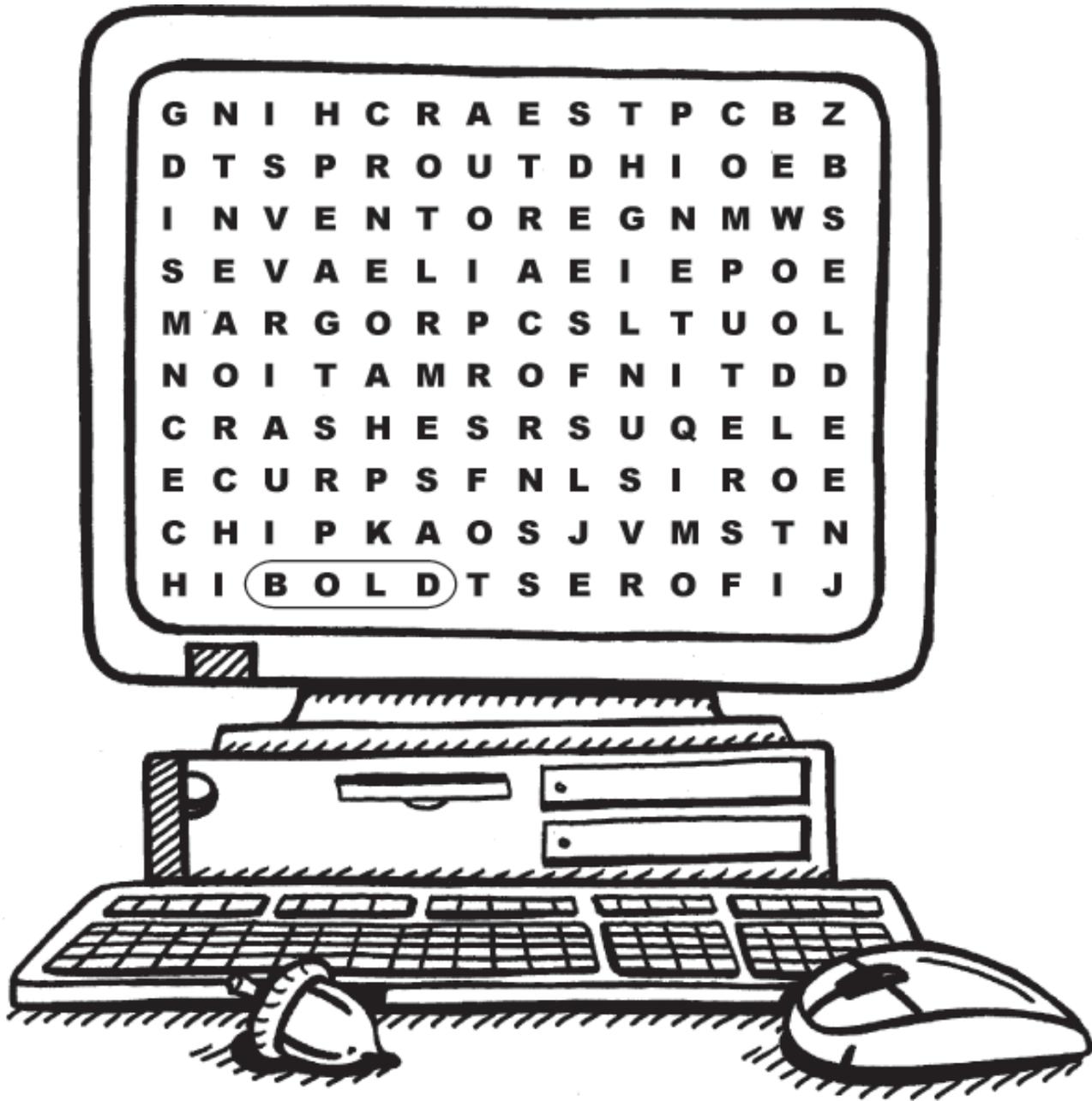
"Well Glen," Gramps replied, "the program, as you call it, is different because its parents are different. For example, you have red hair because your Mom has red hair. So each tree takes after its parents. That's why, when I am cutting trees, I like to leave behind the biggest and healthiest trees to produce seeds for a new **forest**." Gramps pointed to a large **Pine** tree, "You know what else Glen?" he said,

"All of these trees are connected, sort of like that **web** you were showing me the other day on your computer. They work together to support each other as well as the animals and plants in the forest. The soil helps the tree, the tree helps the bird, the insects eat the trees – oh, there's all kinds of ways that they work together, but that's another story!"

As they walked home through the forest, Glen was deep in thought. "Gee Gramps, I wonder if the **inventor** of the computer got the idea from a forest. But, this is one computer I hope never **crashes**!"

Locate the words <u>underlined</u> in **bold** throughout
the story to complete the word search below.

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I N V E N T O R E G N M W S
S E V A E L I A E I E P O E
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