

Noodle Soup for Mincompoops

Ellen Wirtlinger

Everybody else in seventh-grade honors English had groaned at the assignment, "I Am a Camera," but I thought it would be fun—three pages about anything your invisible "camera" noticed over the weekend. After spending most of Saturday at David Segal's bar mitzvah and Sunday afternoon at the mall with Liza and Harper, it didn't take me long to write "How to Flirt Without Showing Your Braces." Even Liza thought it was funny, and it was mostly about her. Actually, that's probably why she liked it; Liza is her own favorite subject these days.

I guess I notice things other kids don't. I like watching people. Most kids I know don't shut up long enough to notice anybody else; they're constantly yelling and wiggling around so *they* get noticed. David Segal's bar mitzvah party was so loud, I saw three grown-ups popping ibuprofen before they even served lunch. Liza, who's been my

