Way Back Then...

A long time ago, elevators were much more difficult to operate. The door had to be pulled shut and locked by hand. Some elevators had hard-to-operate buttons and levers. Most people couldn’t work an elevator by themselves.

Elevator operators were people that were hired to run the elevators in buildings. They would greet passengers, close and lock the door, and run the elevator. After a person entered the elevator, he or she would ask, “What floor would you like?”

Elevator operators were found in tall, city buildings. They were found in apartment buildings, hotels, and office buildings. If you lived or worked in a building with an elevator operator, you probably got to know him or her very well.

In Chapter 1 of Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing, we read about Henry Bevelheimer. He’s the elevator operator of the apartment building that Peter lives in.

The story was written in the 1970s. By that time, modern elevators were used in most buildings. However, some older buildings (like the one Peter lives in) still had old elevators with elevator operators.

Discussion:

What are some buildings you know of that have elevators in them?

Describe how you would operate a modern elevator.
Elevator Operator

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