

Laying Solid Foundations
for Learning

The

Big



Storybook

Twenty
Big Book stories
for little children

English

NCS and Foundations for Learning approved



basic education

Department of Basic Education
Republic of South Africa

Contents

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Big Book



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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A note for teachers and parents

Children love listening to stories. This Laying Solid Foundations for Learning Big Book contains 20 beautifully written and illustrated stories to engage them.

Here are some tips to make story time a special time.

Where should you read?

A comfortable space is best. Try having the children sit on a carpet or on small cushions. The most important thing is to maintain a relaxed atmosphere. Make sure that you are seated on a small chair so that you can maintain eye contact with them.

Expression:

Use your voice. Tell the story with expression. This means you should vary the tone, pitch, pace and volume of your voice.

- Tone is what your voice sounds like – for example, old or young.
- Pitch is how high or low your voice is.
- Volume is how loud or soft your voice is – for example, a shout or whisper.
- Pace is how fast or slowly you use your voice.

Make the characters come alive by creating voices for them and using your voice to show the emotions they are feeling.

Picture analysis:

Look at the pictures before reading the text on the page and let the children discuss what they can see. This will help them anticipate and predict what the story is about. Ask open-ended questions so that they are encouraged to think critically about the pictures in the story. For instance, don't ask: "Is the boy sad?" Rather say: "How do you think the boy is feeling? Why do you say that?"

After the story:

- Ask questions to make sure that the children have understood the story. You should do this at the end of each page and at the end of the story.
- Ask them whether they enjoyed the story or not and let them give their reasons. This will help you choose books that they will enjoy listening to.
- Let the children do follow-up activities based on the story. They can draw a picture, retell the story in their own words or dramatise it. You can also help them to make their own versions of the stories with themselves as the main character.
- See pages 61 - 62 for more ideas.

Book conventions:

Teach your children that books have a front, back, top and bottom. Point to words as you read so that they begin to understand that sentences are strings of words that make meaning.

Book care:

Teach your children how to care for books. Make sure that they always wash their hands before using a book. They need to learn how to turn pages correctly so that they don't tear them.

More books:

Make sure that you have a variety of books for your children to read. Include fiction and non-fiction varieties. Children of this age enjoy pop-up books, comic-style books, fantasy and poetry books.

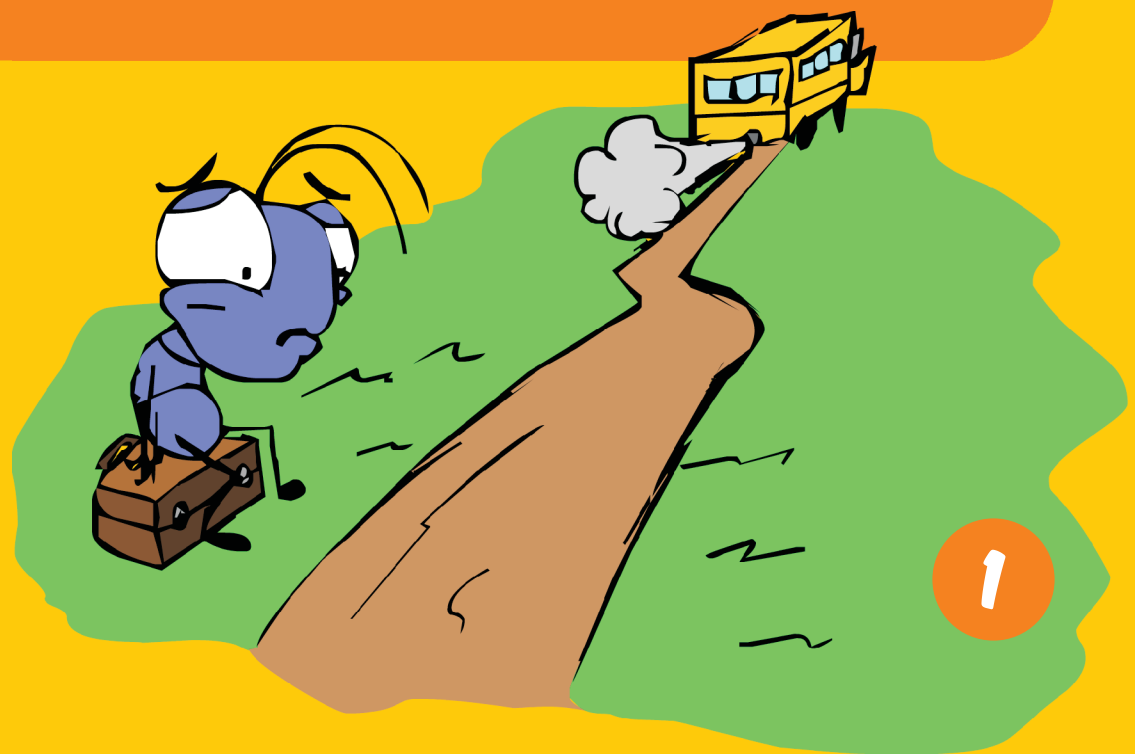
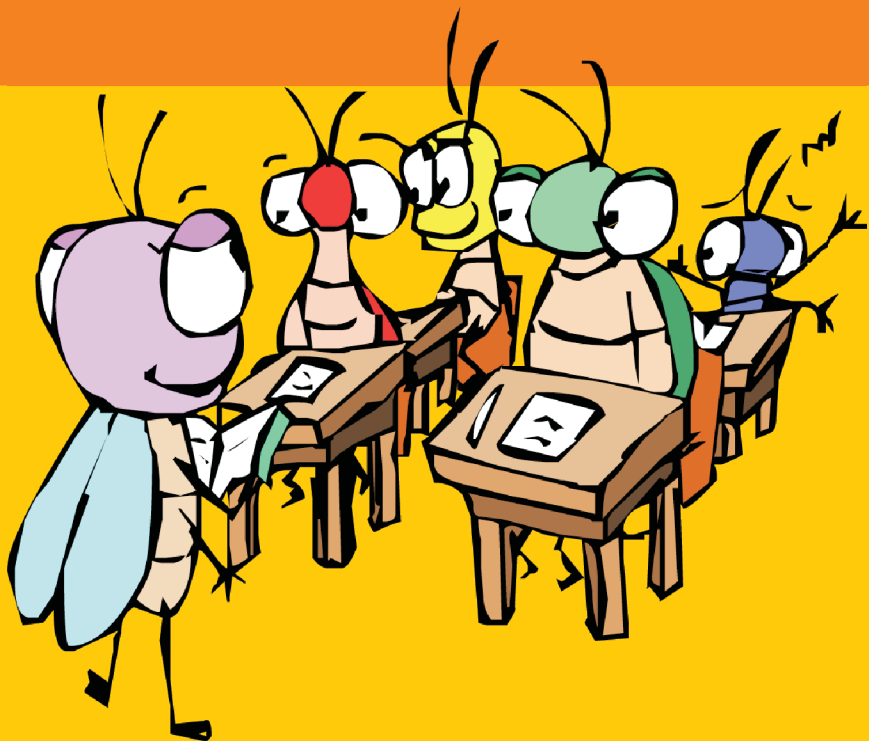


Afro Ant's adventure

My body

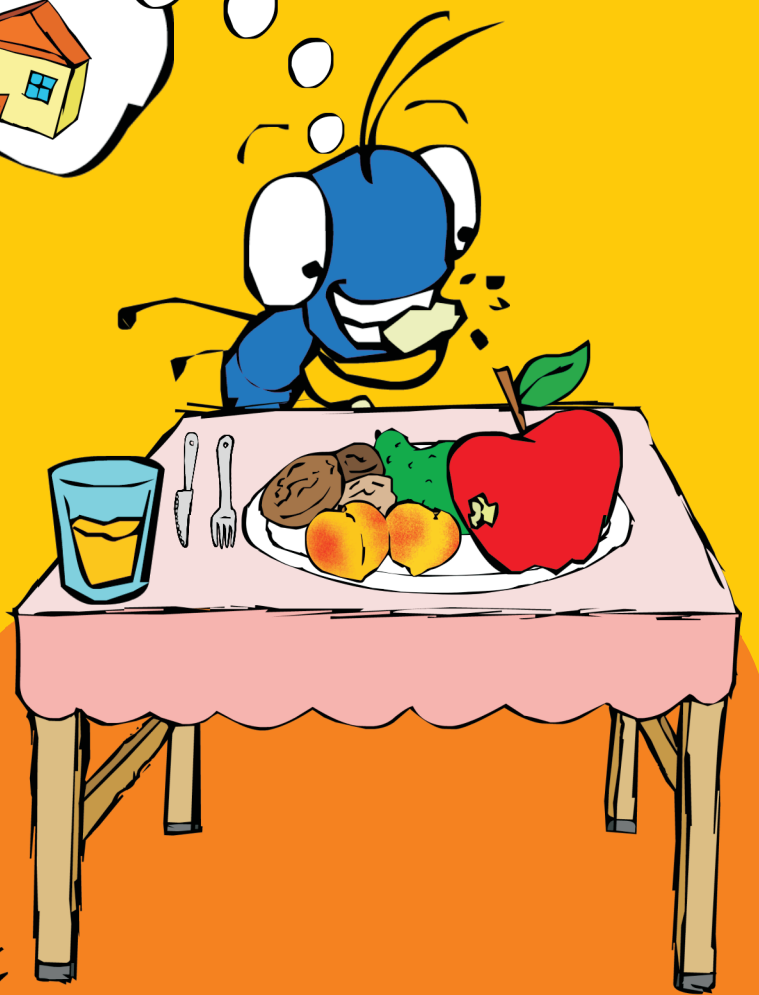


Afro Ant stood at the tuck shop counter but the moms couldn't see him.
 Afro Ant lined up after break but his classmates bumped and squashed him.
 In class, Afro Ant put up his hand to answer the question but the teacher didn't see him.
 At home time Afro Ant ran for the school bus but it left without him.
 Afro Ant was tired of being s-m-a-l-l. He wanted to be t-a-l-l, b-i-g, f-a-s-t and s-t-r-o-n-g.
 And he had an...





... amazing ant plan!
He ate a lot of food every day.
He grew broader ...
He helped move heavy bits and bobs about the anthill.
He grew stronger ...
He drank muscle-building drinks.
He grew taller ...
He did push-ups, sit-ups, lift-ups.
He got faster ...
He lifted weights.
He got fit.





At last ... Afro Ant looked amazing ...

But ...

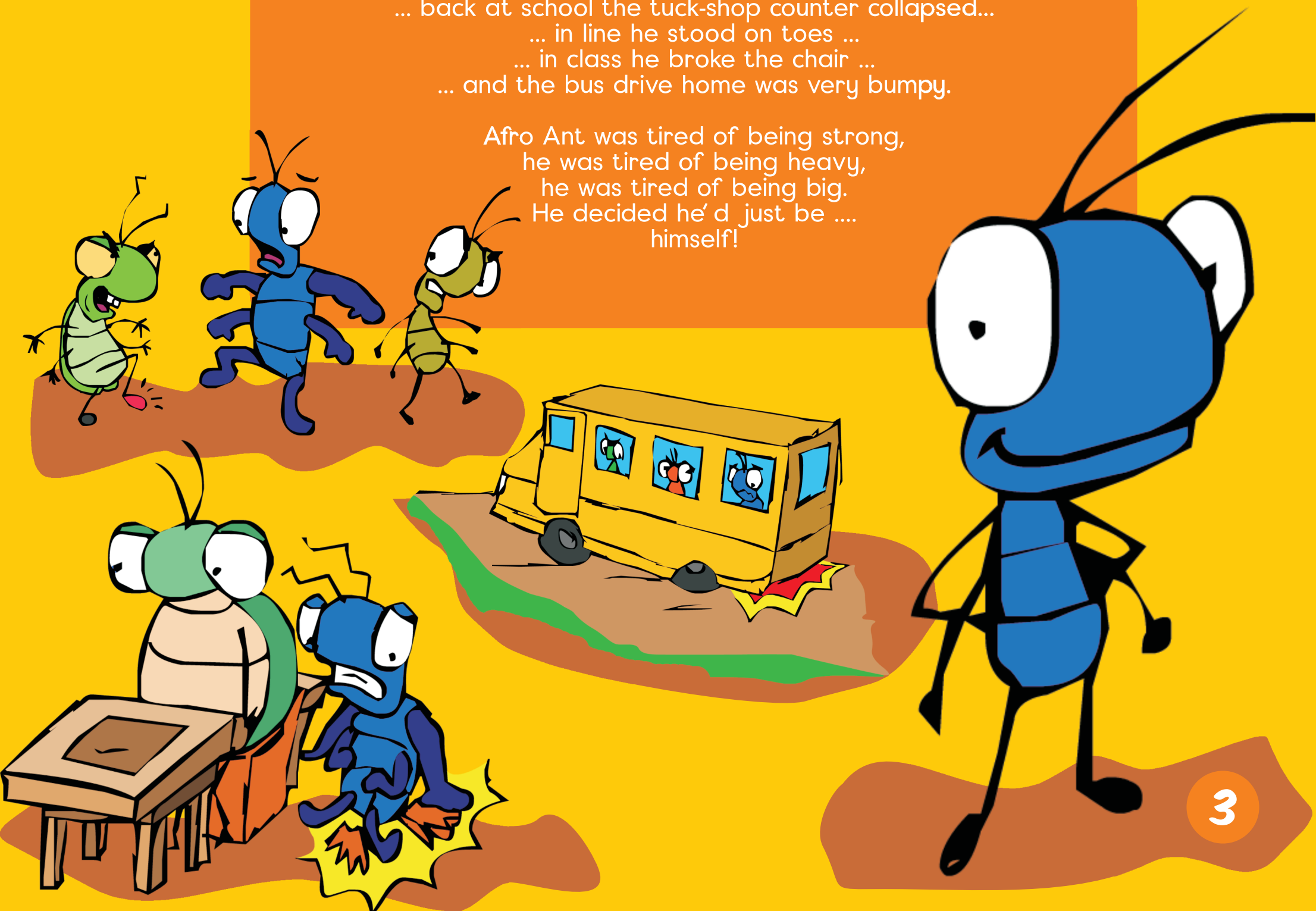
... back at school the tuck-shop counter collapsed...

... in line he stood on toes ...

... in class he broke the chair ...

... and the bus drive home was very bumpy.

Afro Ant was tired of being strong,
he was tired of being heavy,
he was tired of being big.
He decided he'd just be
himself!





2

Vusi and the vuvuzela

My senses

Vusi loved soccer.
He loved Bafana Bafana ...
He loved his soccer ball ...
He loved his soccer shoes ...
But he loved his vuvuzela best of all.

He blew it in the morning.
He blew it in the afternoon.
He even blew it at night!

Voo, vooo, voooo went the vuvuzela.

No! said Mom.
No! said Dad.
No! said Sis.
No! said the neighbours.

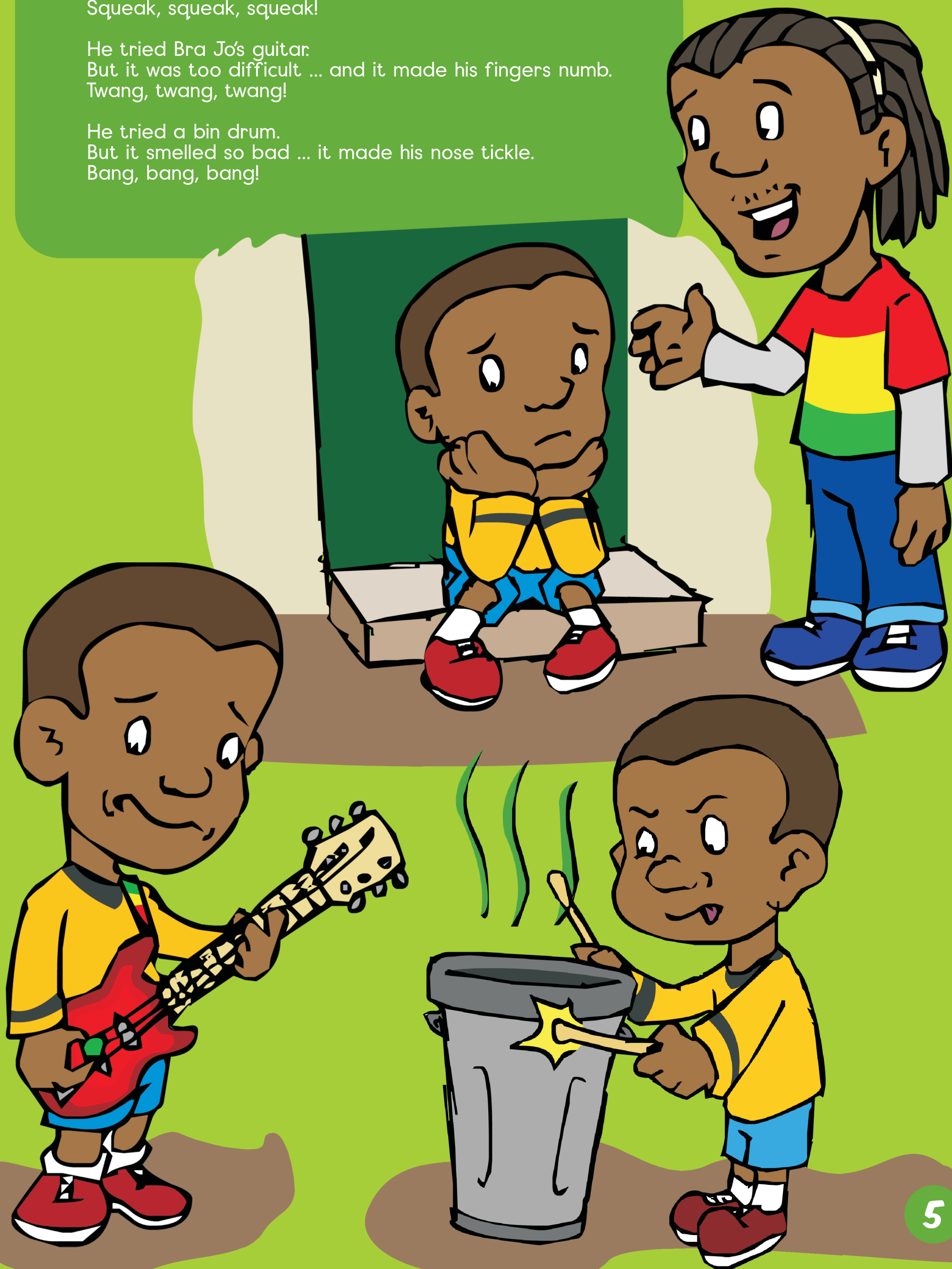


“Try playing something else, Vusi,” said Bra Jo.

He tried Oupa’s penny whistle.
But it was too soft ... and it made his lips buzz.
Squeak, squeak, squeak!

He tried Bra Jo’s guitar.
But it was too difficult ... and it made his fingers numb.
Twang, twang, twang!

He tried a bin drum.
But it smelled so bad ... it made his nose tickle.
Bang, bang, bang!





What was he to do?
He missed his vuvuzela.

“Look!” said Dad.
Vusi could not believe his eyes.

At the game Vusi blew his vuvuzela
as loud and as hard as he could.
Vooo, went his vuvuzela.
Vooo, vooo, vooo, went all the vuvuzelas!
Vooo, vooo, vooo!
Viva, viva!
Viva Bafana Bafana!



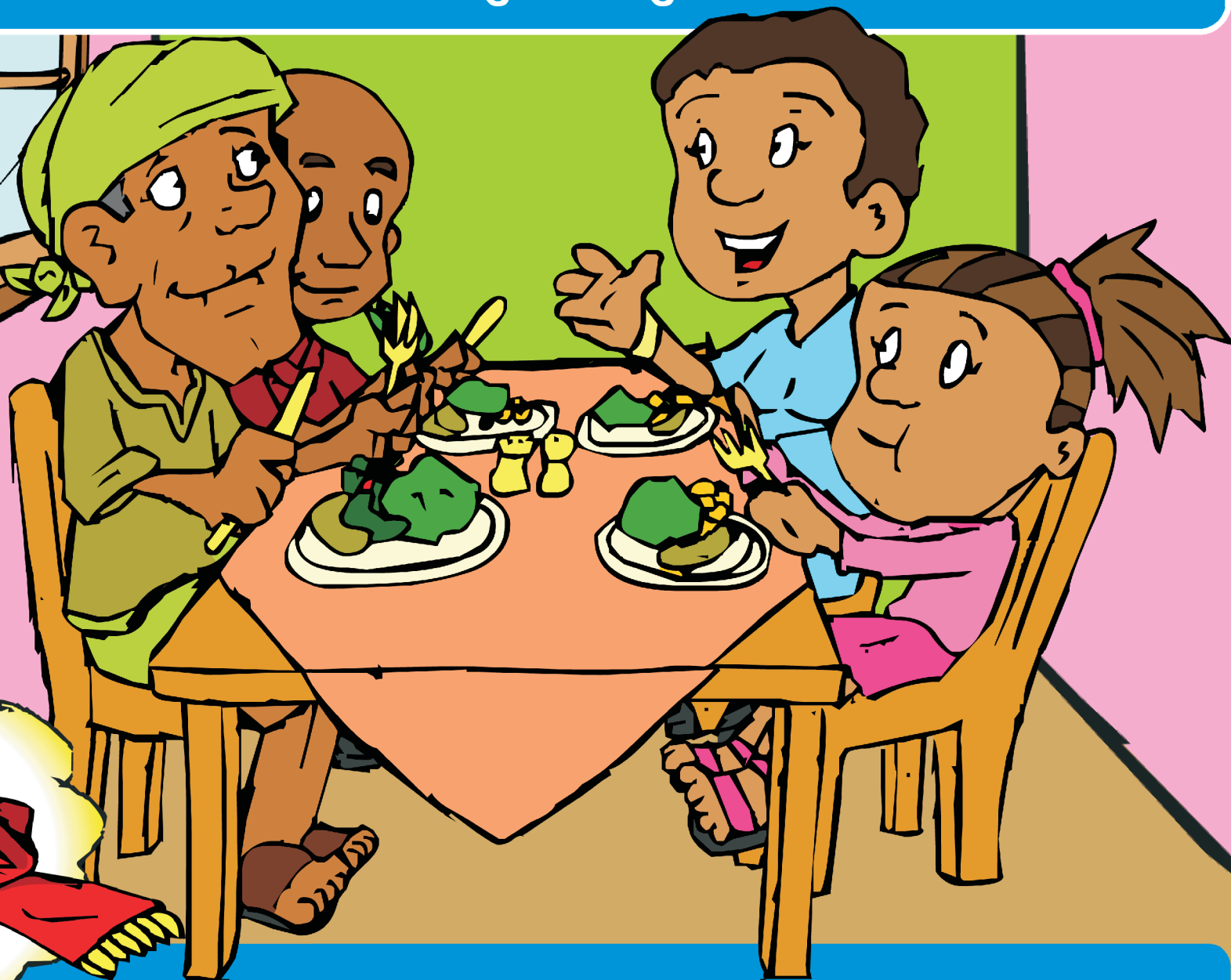


3



A surprise for Gogo

My family



"Hau, Gogo ... in two weeks' time you'll be seventy!" said Mama.

That night, as Gugu lay in bed,
she thought about all the wonderful things Gogo did for her.

"I must give Gogo a nice present," she said.
"What will it be?"

"I will give Gogo a birthday party!" thought Gugu.





Gugu made invitations.
*Come to Gogo's surprise party on Saturday.
 Please bring food. Love, Gugu*

When no one was looking ...

She hid one in Dad's skaf tin.
 She slipped one into Uncle Jabu's big pocket.
 She popped one into Cousin Nozi's sharp handbag.
 She slid one into Aunt Mavis's big shopper.

As Saturday approached Gugu began to worry.
 Had her family found the invitations?

On Saturday morning Gugu put on her party dress
and went downstairs.

"Ding dong!" went the doorbell.
Gogo opened the door ... one, two, three, four, five!
Everyone was there!

"Happy Birthday, Gogo," everyone sang .



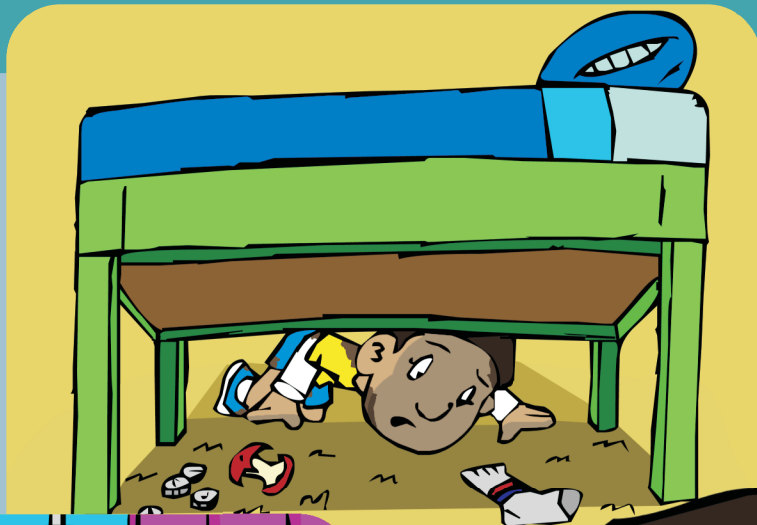


4

Dirty Duduzile

Keeping clean and fit

Dudu wants to play with her doll.
Where oh where can she be?
Is she under the bed?
Is she behind the curtain?
Is she on top of the bookshelf?
Maybe she's inside the cupboard?
"Mamaaaa," wails Dudu,
"My doll Mbali has run away again!"





“Just look at this mess, Duduzile,” says her mom.
 “No wonder you can’t find Mbali.
 It’s time to tidy up, you grubby little girl!”
 Dudu packs her blocks away in the toy box.
 She stacks her books on the bookshelf.
 And finally, Dudu puts all her dirty clothes in the wash basket.
 Peek-a-boo! Just look whose hiding there!



"Hey Mbali," cheers Dudu.

"Come out and play!"

"Not so fast, young ladies," says Duduzile's mother.

"You can't go out looking like that!"

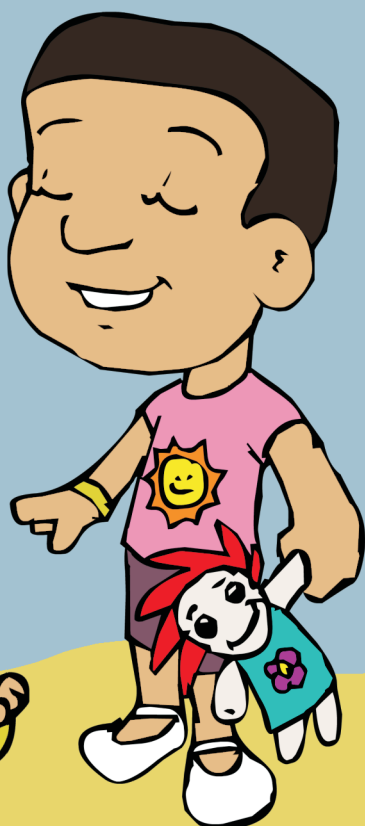
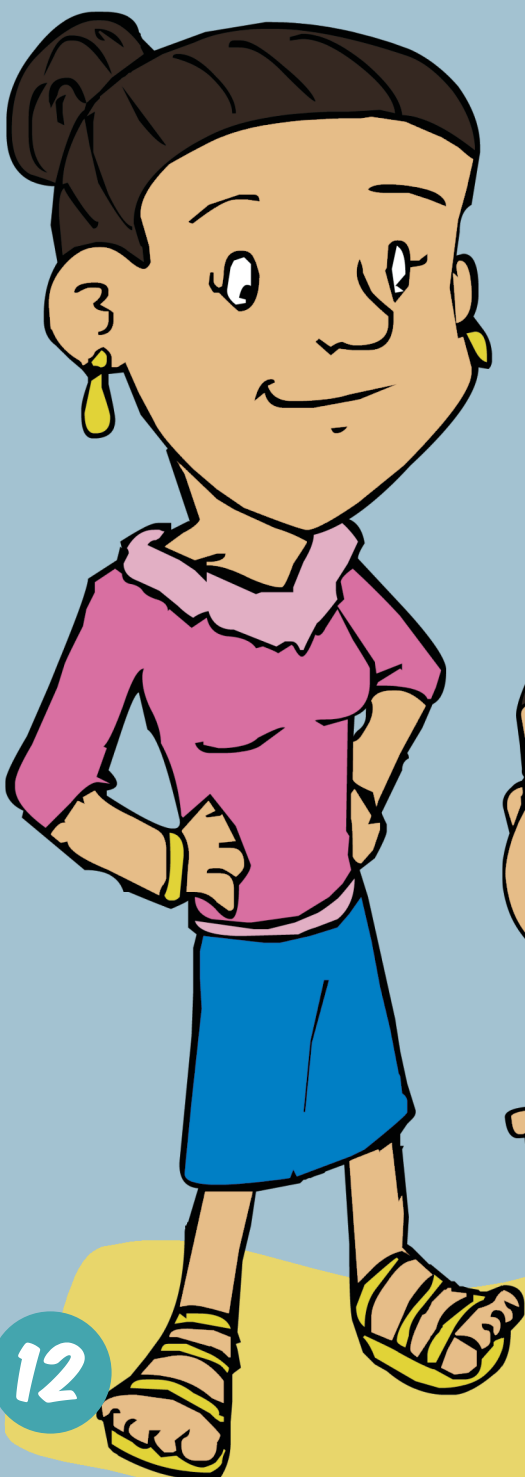
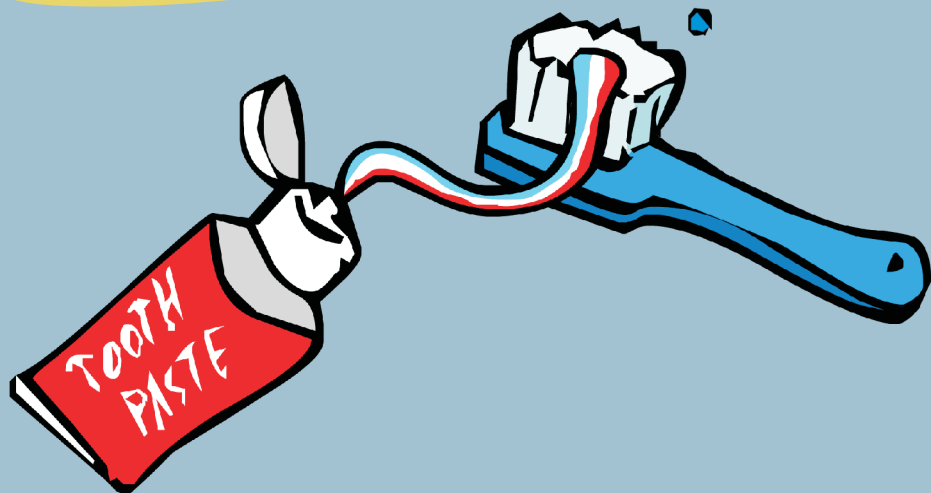
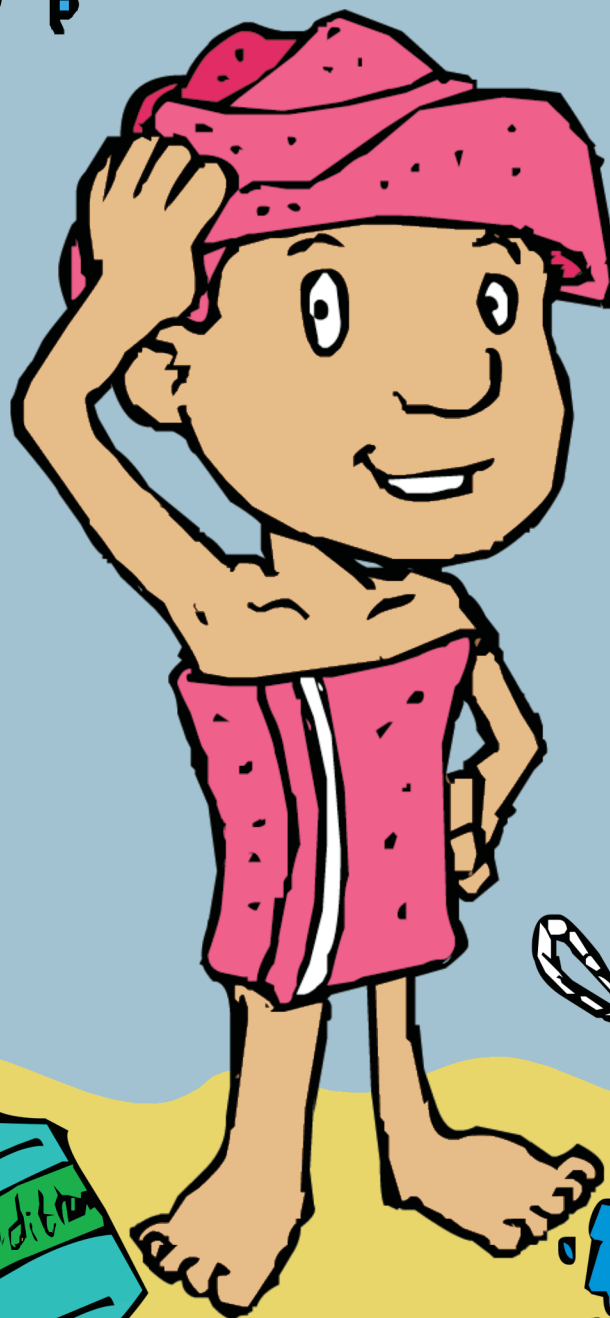
Dudu washes her face and hands.

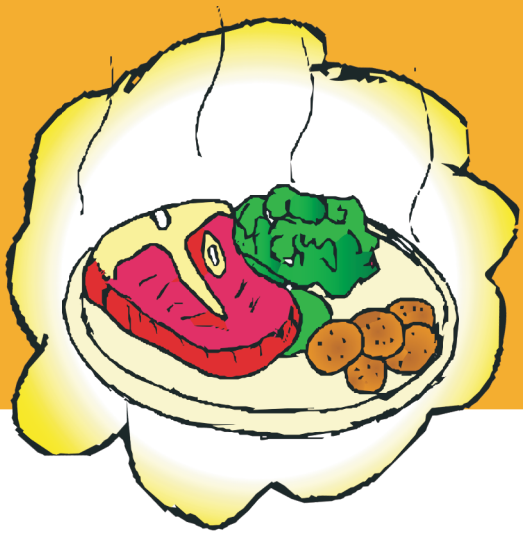
She scrubs behind Mbali's ears.

She cleans their teeth.

And out they run to play with their friends.

Dudu's mom waves goodbye and smiles.





5

Mmmmm, mud pies!

Healthy eating



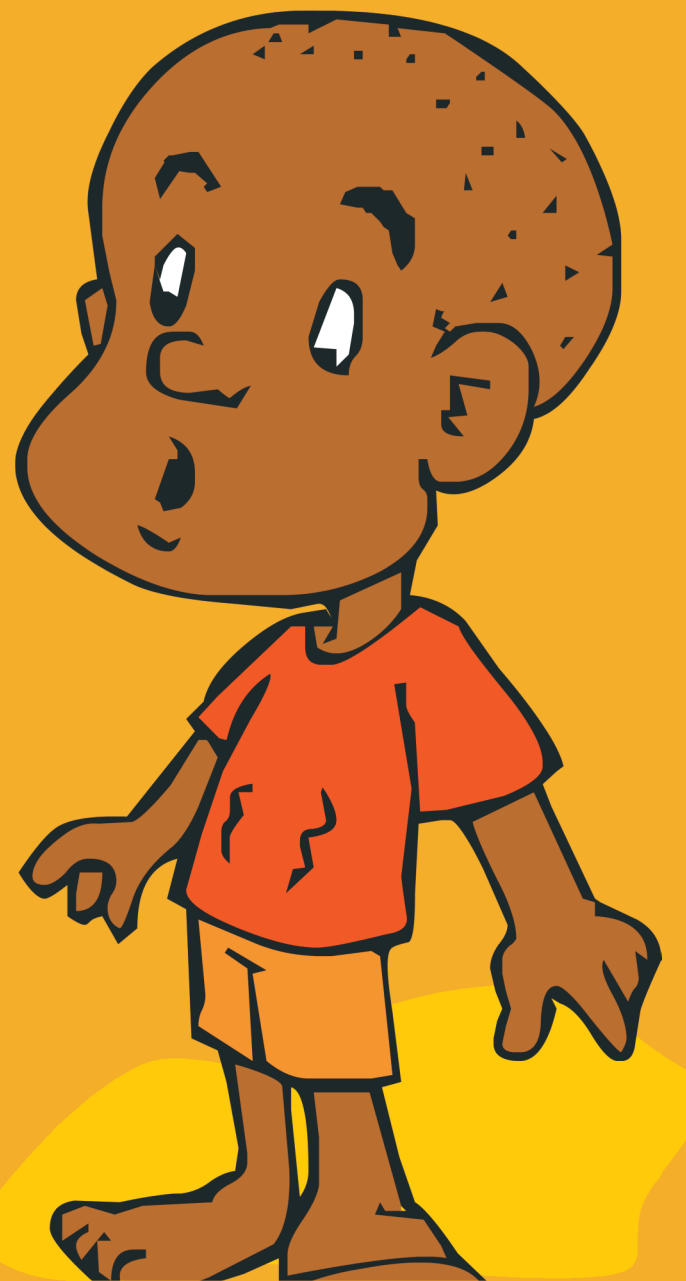
Mondli is making a marvellous muddy meal.
Let's see what he is cooking ...

- Meat
- Potatoes
- Spinach
- And yummy chocolate pudding!





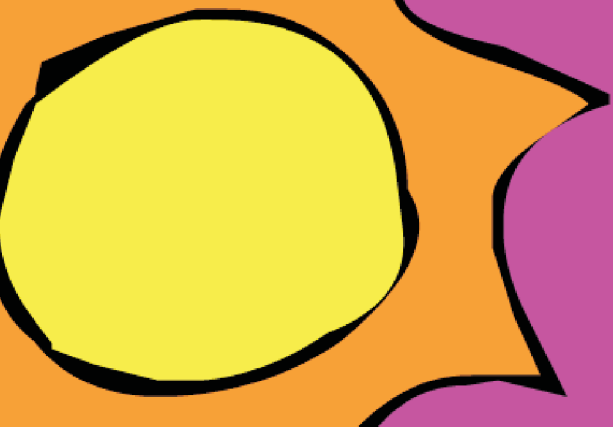
"Come and share my lovely meal," says Mondli to his sister Thandi. Thandi licks her lips. "Mmm, this chocolate pudding looks delicious," she says. "You can't have any pudding until you've eaten all your veggies," says Mondli. "Can too," says stubborn Thandi. She grabs a mud pie and takes a big bite. "Yuck!!!" she shouts, spitting it out. "This tastes awful!"





“Mooooondliiiiiiii!” calls his mother.
“Come inside for supper.”
“Guess what’s for dinner?” says mom.
She takes the lids off the dishes and
Mondli’s eyes light up at the sight of his favourite meal.
There is ...
-Meat
-Potatoes
-Spinach
-And yummy chocolate pudding!
“Tuck in,” says Mondli’s mom.
“Just remember, Thandi: no pudding until
you’ve eaten all your veggies!”
Thandi groans.
“I think I’ve lost my appetite,” she says.





Proud to be me

Friends

When I went to school today
Miss Silva said, "This is May!"
This little girl she cannot see,
I look at her, she walks past me!

I tell my mom at the end of day.
She says, "Invite her home to come and play!"

At break a boy plays quietly,
He sits alone under a tree.
He sees me, then as I come near
I say, "Hello," but he doesn't hear.

I tell my dad. He says, "It's fine,
Try a wave and smile next time!"



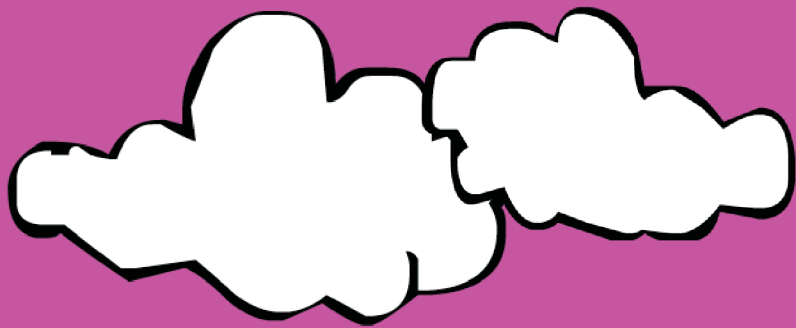
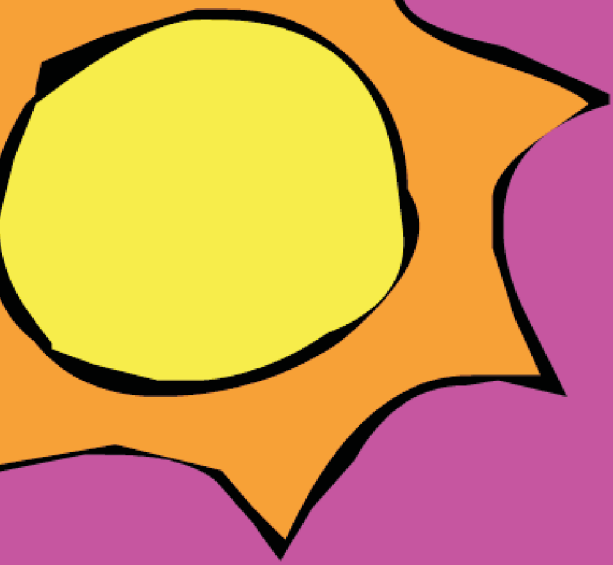


At the shop I stop to stare,
This baby gives me quite a scare!

I think this baby looks so odd,
But Gran says, "She's a gift from God."

I hold Gran's hand as we walk home,
And she explains about Down's Syndrome.





My best friend Jason sits in a chair
And sometimes people stop and stare.

His legs don't work, he cannot walk,
And he can see how people gawk!

Jason says he doesn't care,
He loves his super-fast wheelchair!

We are all different in some way,
But we can still be friends and play.

It doesn't matter how we're made,
We all belong to the 'Proudly Me' Parade.
It doesn't matter how you look,
Just come and sign our Friendship Book!





7

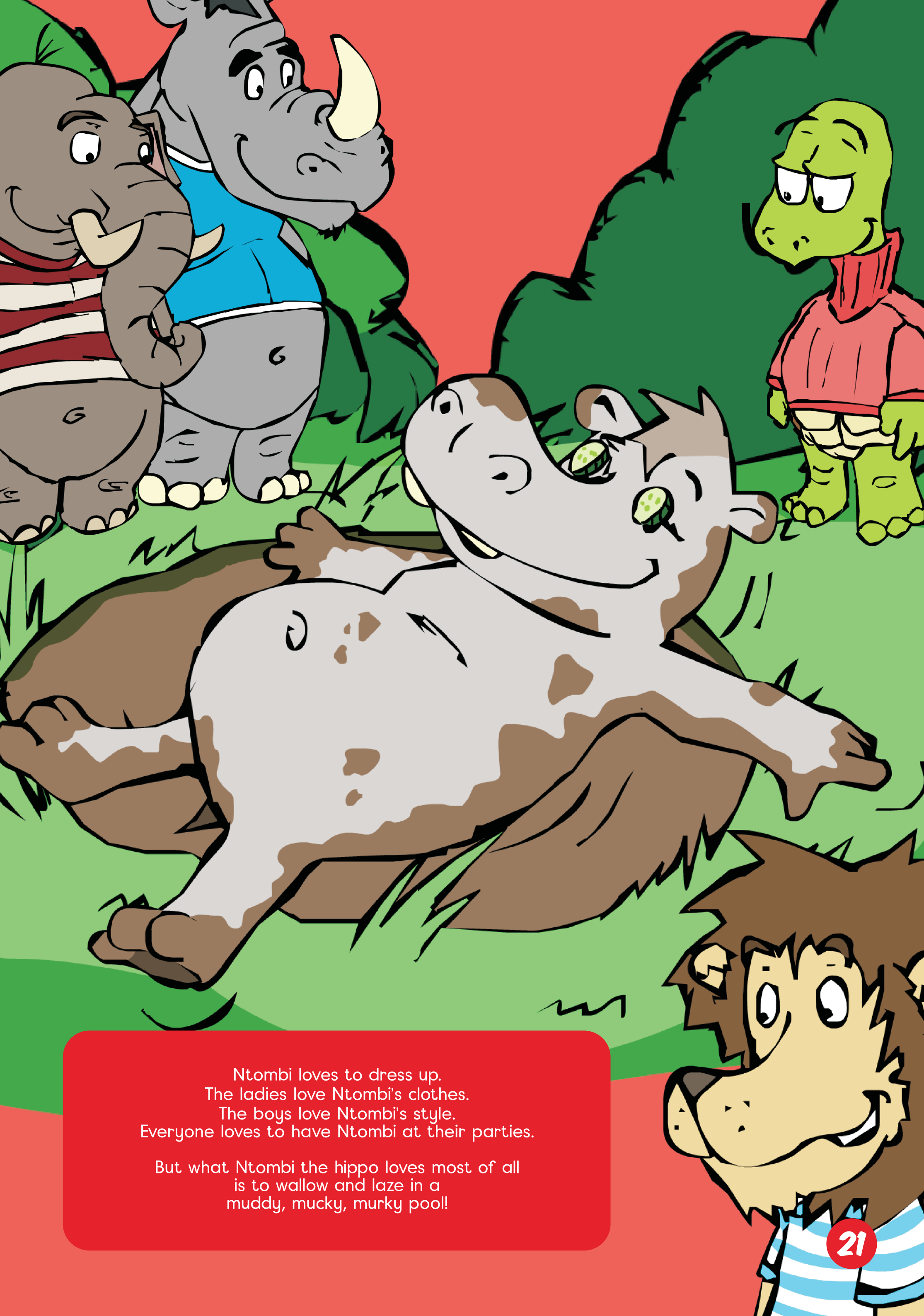
Ntombi Hippo

This is what I wear

Ntombi loves to dress up.
She has a wardrobe full of clothes.
There are winter clothes and spring clothes.
There are windy day clothes and rainy day clothes.
She has everyday clothes and she has party clothes.

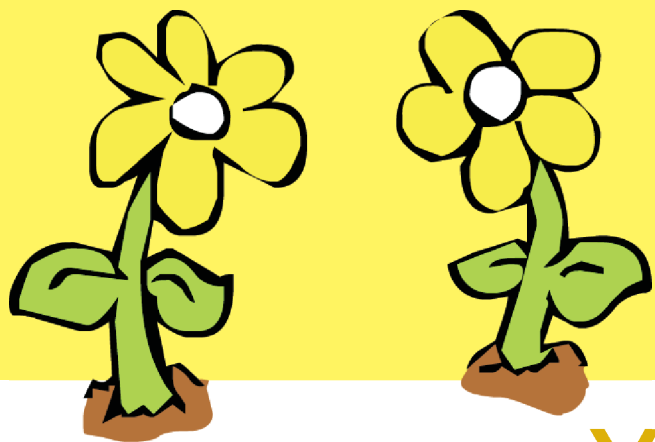
She is the Belle of the Bush and everyone
wants her at their parties.





Ntombi loves to dress up.
The ladies love Ntombi's clothes.
The boys love Ntombi's style.
Everyone loves to have Ntombi at their parties.

But what Ntombi the hippo loves most of all
is to wallow and laze in a
muddy, mucky, murky pool!



8



Yellow Yolanda

Shapes and colours in my environment



Yolanda loved yellow.

When Mom asked, "What do you want for dinner?"
Yolanda answered, "Yellow rice please!"

When Dad said, "What will you drink?"
Yolanda said, "Yellow milk please!"

When Granny wrote, "What can I knit for you?"
Yolanda wrote back, "A yellow scarf please!"

"Come and paint my doll's house, Yellow Yolanda," said Ami, her best friend.

Ami said, "The bedroom must be green."
They painted the bedroom green.
Oops!

Ami said, "An orange kitchen please."
They painted the kitchen orange.
Splat!

Ami said, "A blue bathroom please."
They painted the bathroom blue.
Eek!



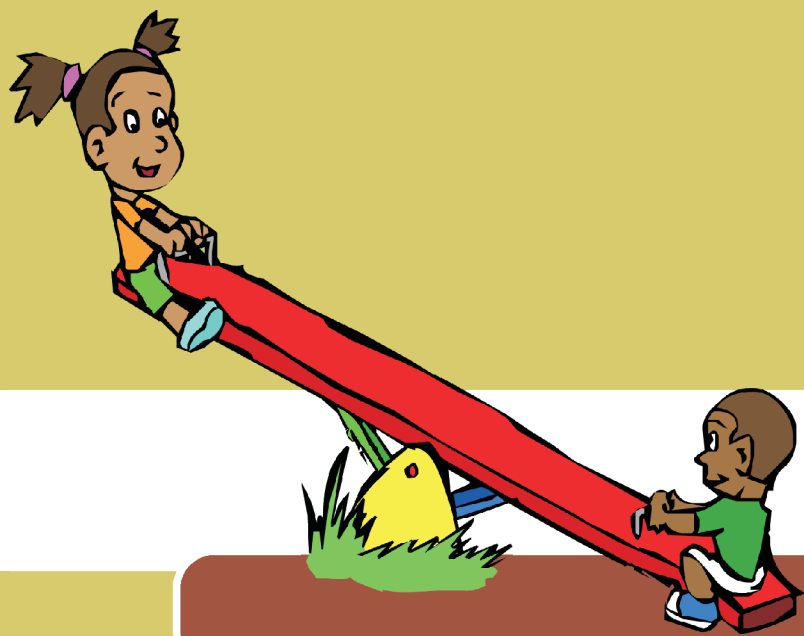


Yolanda wanted to cry.
Her lovely yellow overalls were ruined.
“Don’t cry,” said Ami, “come and look!”

Yolanda looked at herself in the mirror.
Her overalls were beautiful.

“No more Yellow Yolanda,” said Ami.
“From now on you’re Rainbow Yolanda!”

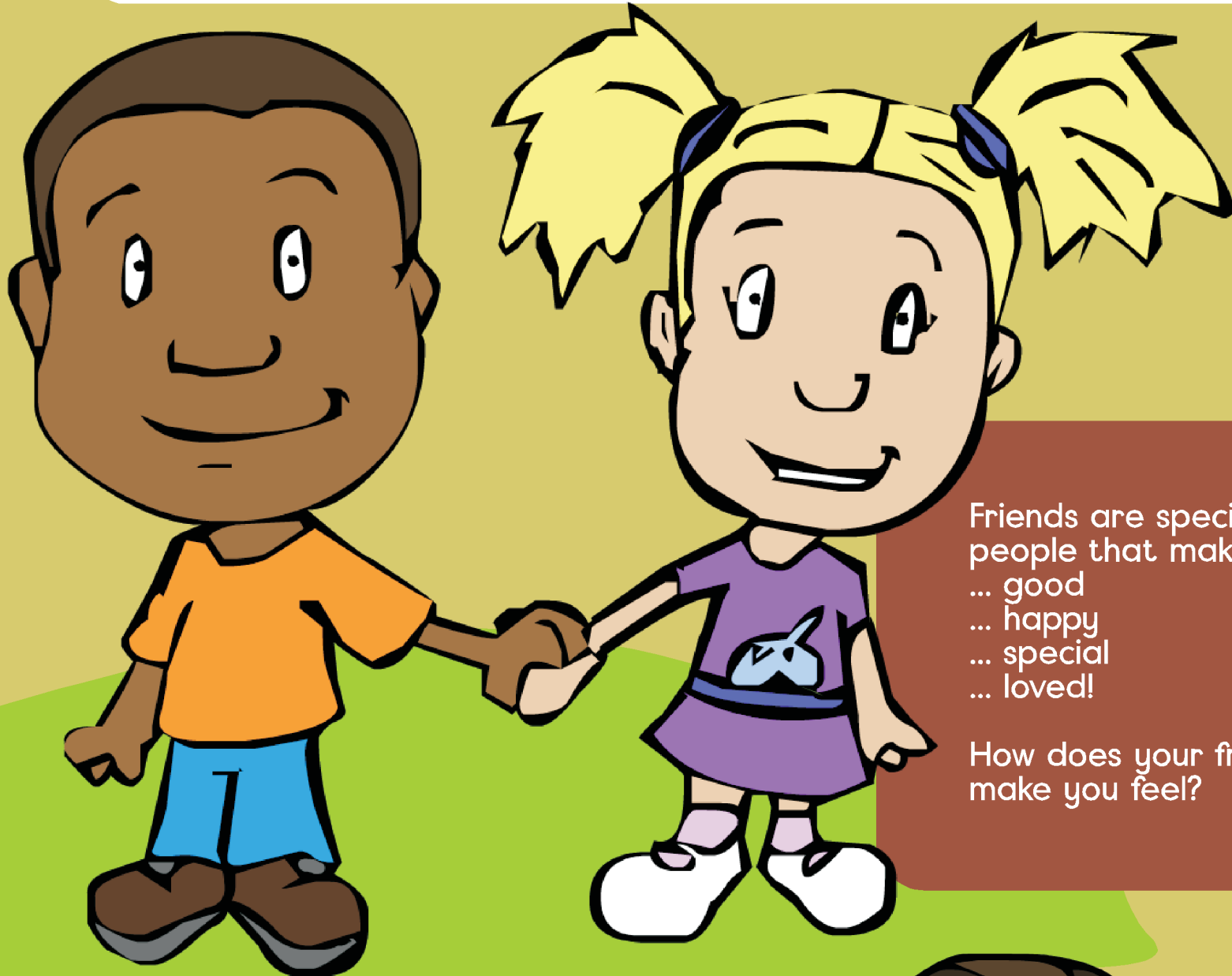
“Agreed!” said Yolanda.



9

Friends

Opposites



Friends are special
people that make us feel ...
... good
... happy
... special
... loved!

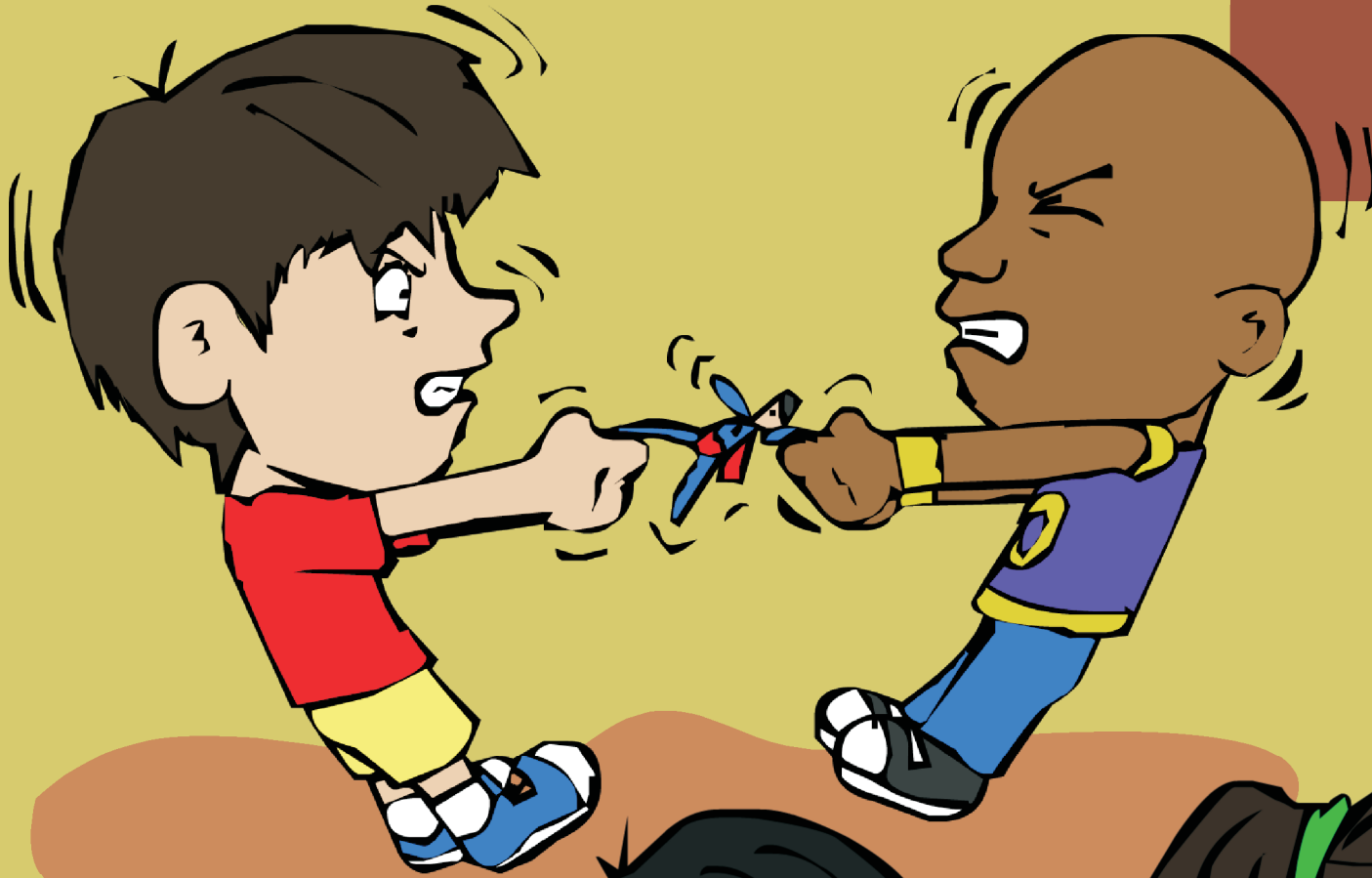
How does your friend
make you feel?



Sometimes friends get ...

... angry
... sad
... jealous
... mean

How does your friend
make you feel?



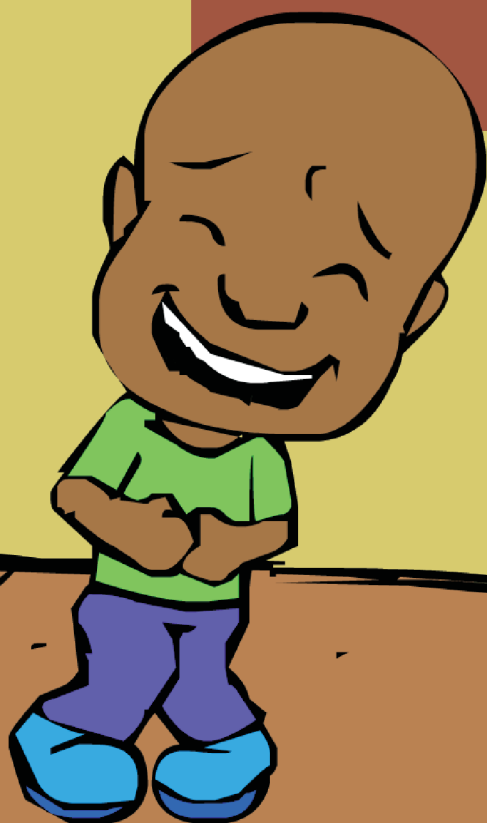


But friends know how to ...

... make up and say sorry.
So that they can ...

... play
... laugh
... share and agree all over again!

How does your friend make you feel?



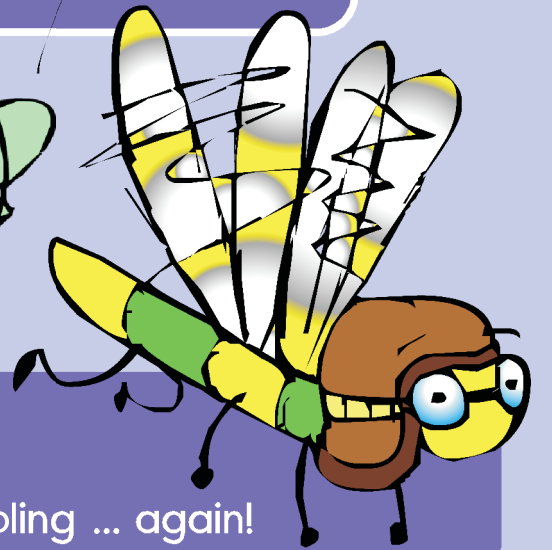
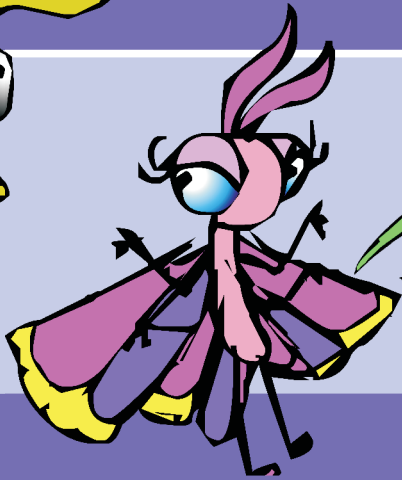
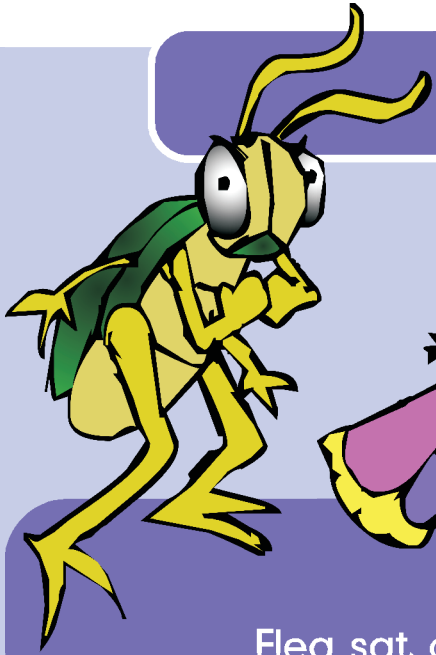


10



Fastest, smartest flea

Gardens and bugs



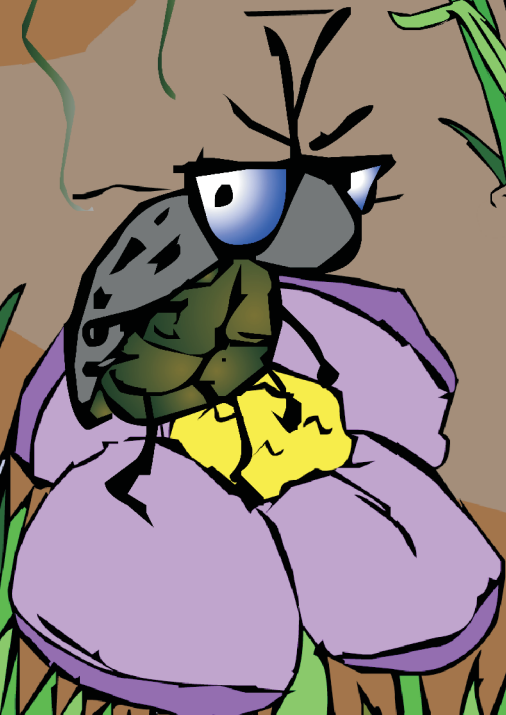
Flea sat quietly on Ratty's ear and watched the insects squabbling ... again!

"I'm the fastest," groaned Grasshopper.

"Impossible!" droned Dragonfly. "Everyone knows I'm fastest."

"Ridiculous, I'm the fastest," buzzed Bee.

"A race," suggested Flea. "Let's have a race!"





The garden was abuzz as the insects trained for the big race.

Bee buzzed from flower to flower gathering pollen. Bzzzz!
Grasshopper practised his high jump. Boinggg!
Dragonfly hovered, soared and dived. Drrrrr!



Race day arrived! The garden was dizzy with excitement. Everyone was there.

Bang!

"And they're away ... Butterfly is in the lead ..." announced Centipede.

Wasp stung Butterfly.

"And Wasp takes the lead ... but what's that?" continued Centipede. "Bee has left the race!"

Bee could just not resist the honeysuckle.

"It's neck and neck ... Wasp and Dragonfly to the finish line," Centipede's voice bellowed.

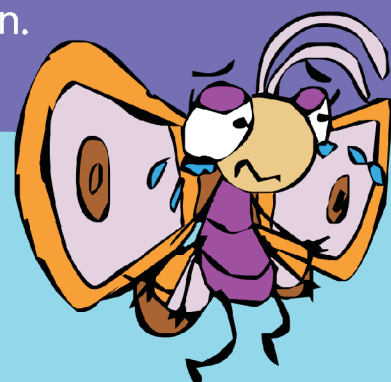
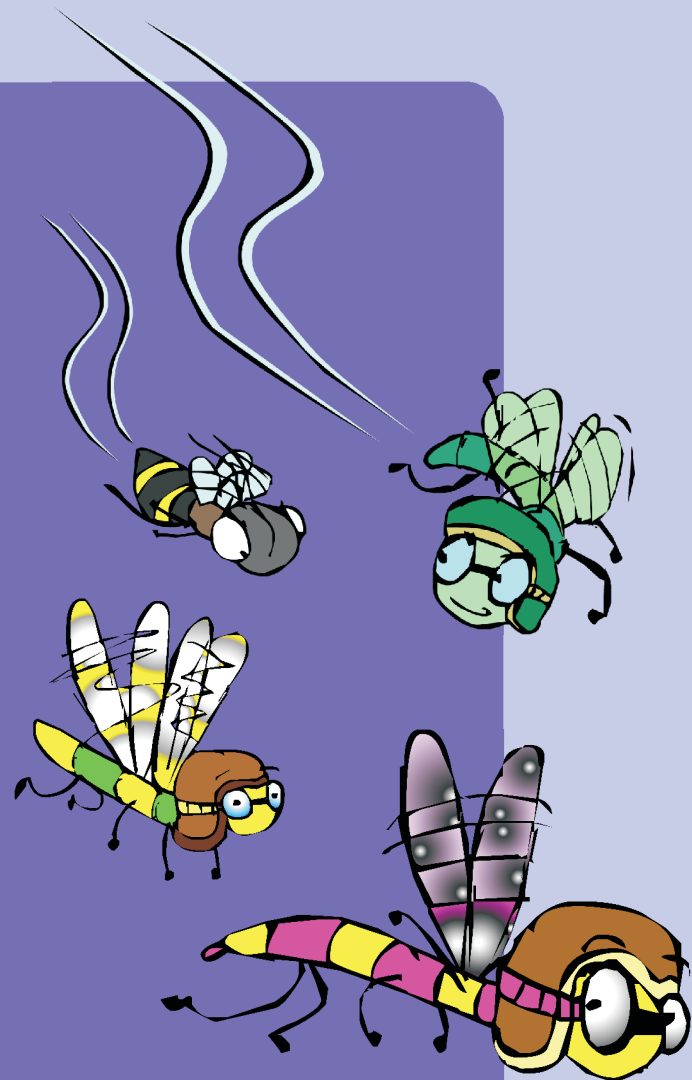
Dragonfly pushed Wasp. Wasp pushed back. Shove. Push. Bump!

Flea, who was sleeping under Dragonfly's wing, woke up with a jolt. He jumped to get away from the fight ... and over the winning line he flew!

"Yay!" cheered the crowd.

"And the winner is Flea," announced Centipede.

And that's how Flea became the fastest insect in the garden.



11

Clouds

Time and weather

It is morning.
I see one cloud in the sky.
It looks like my cat Cuddles.
She wants to play with me.





It is the afternoon.
I see two clouds in the sky.
They look like an apple and
a bunch of grapes.
I will eat them up.



It is night time.
I see three clouds in the sky.
They look like a guitar, a drum and a trumpet.
They will play me a tune while
I go to sleep.



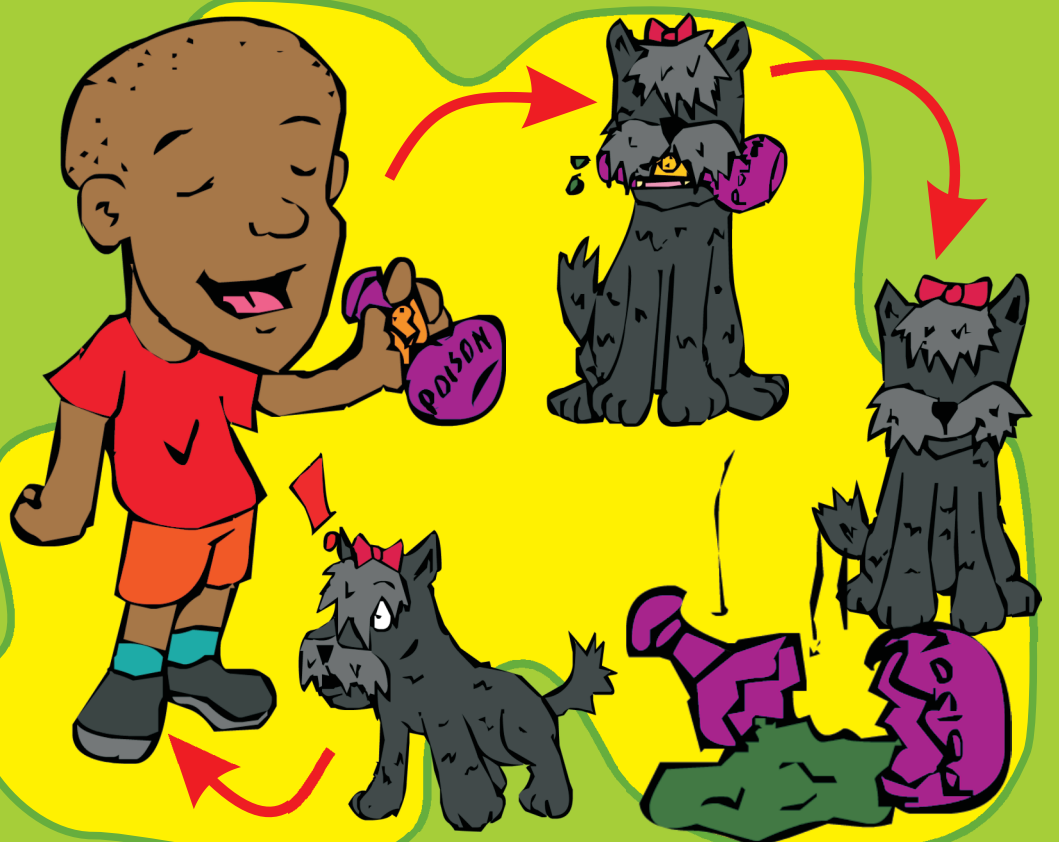
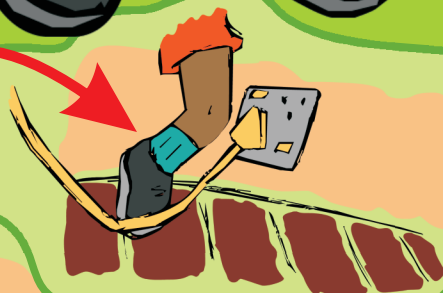
12



A boy's best friend

Keeping safe

Come on
Bheki, my buddy.
It's time for
your supper.

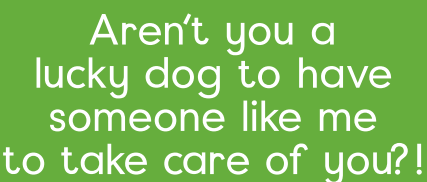




Hey Bheki!
Time for your
walk, girl!



A cartoon illustration of a young boy with brown skin and a large head, wearing a red t-shirt and orange shorts, walking and smiling. He is accompanied by a large, dark grey, shaggy dog sitting and looking at him. The background is a solid light green color.



13

Queen Quellerina

The sky



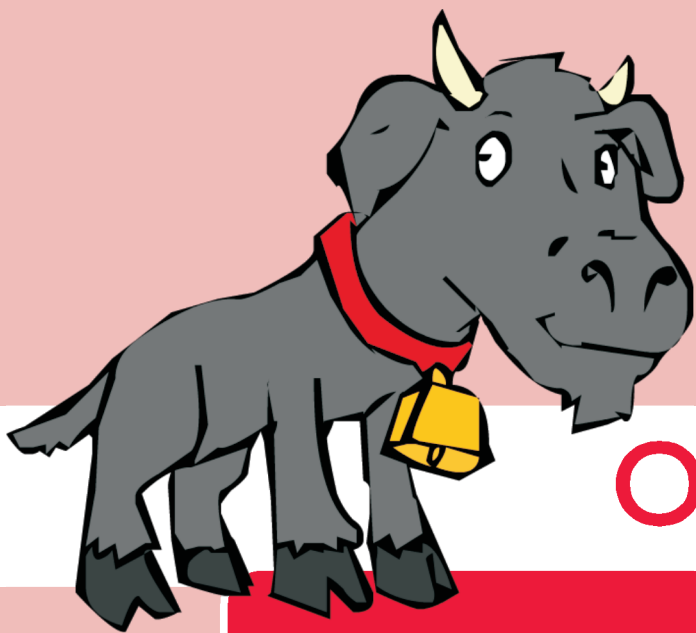
Quellerina is the queen of the sky ...
At night the moon hums songs for her.
The stars twinkle brightly.
They watch over
her while she sleeps.



Quellerina is the queen
of the sky ... During the day the
sun beams down at her.
It shines its warm rays on her hair.
The wind blows her kisses.
It whispers words of love.



Quellerina is the queen of the sky ...
The rain falls at her feet.
The thunder roars her name.
The lightning flashes a smile.
They celebrate her beauty and goodness.



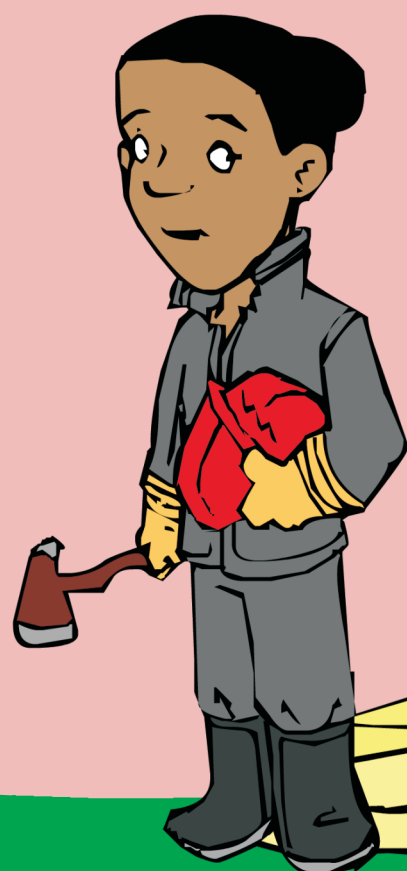
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Our goat Godfrey

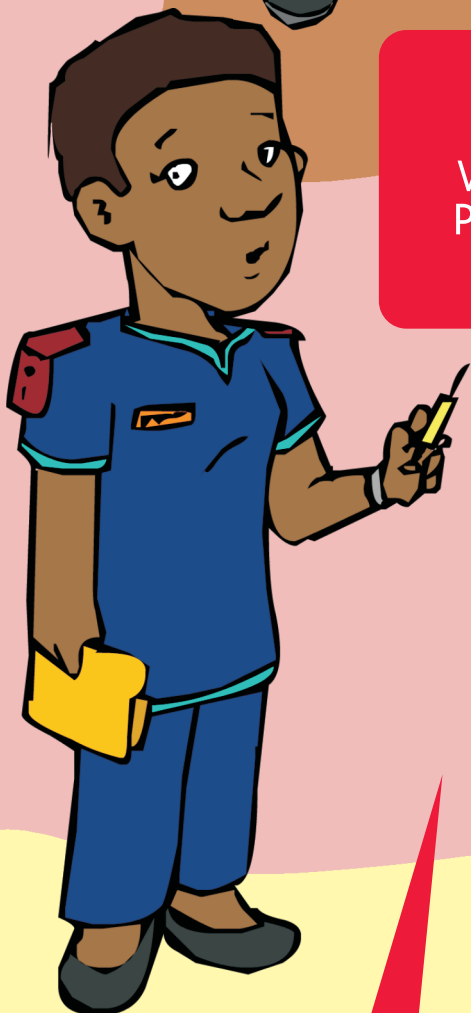
People who help us



Hello Pule the policeman!
We've lost our goat Godfrey ...
Please can you help us find him?



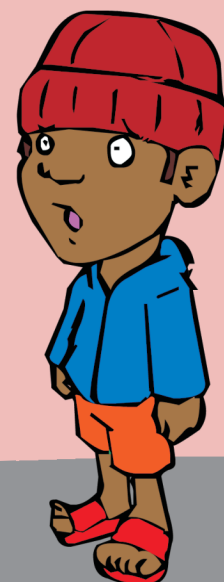
Hello Franny the firefighter!
We've lost our goat Godfrey ...
Please can you help us find him?



Hello Nombulelo the nurse!
We've lost our goat Godfrey ...
Please can you help us find him?



Hello Manny the mail man!
We've lost our goat Godfrey ...
Please can you help us find him?





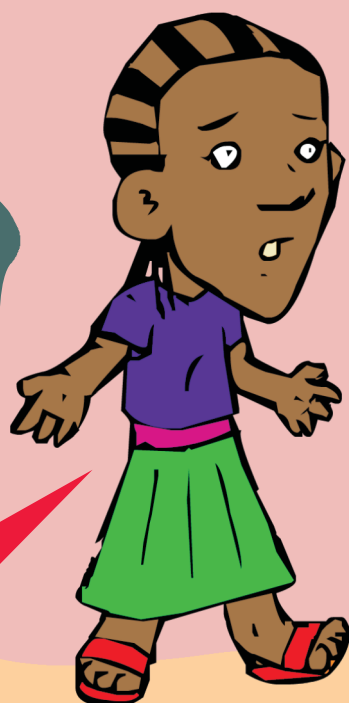
Hello Rusty the rubbish collector!
We've lost our goat Godfrey ...
Please can you help us
find him?



Hello Loyiso the librarian!
We've lost our goat Godfrey ...
Please can you help us
find him?



Hello Tansy the teacher!
We've lost our goat Godfrey ...
Please can you help us
find him?



Hello Miriam the minister !
We've lost our goat Godfrey ...
Please can you help us
find him ?



Hey, it's Godfrey!
Isn't he clever – he found us!
But thank you for your help everyone!



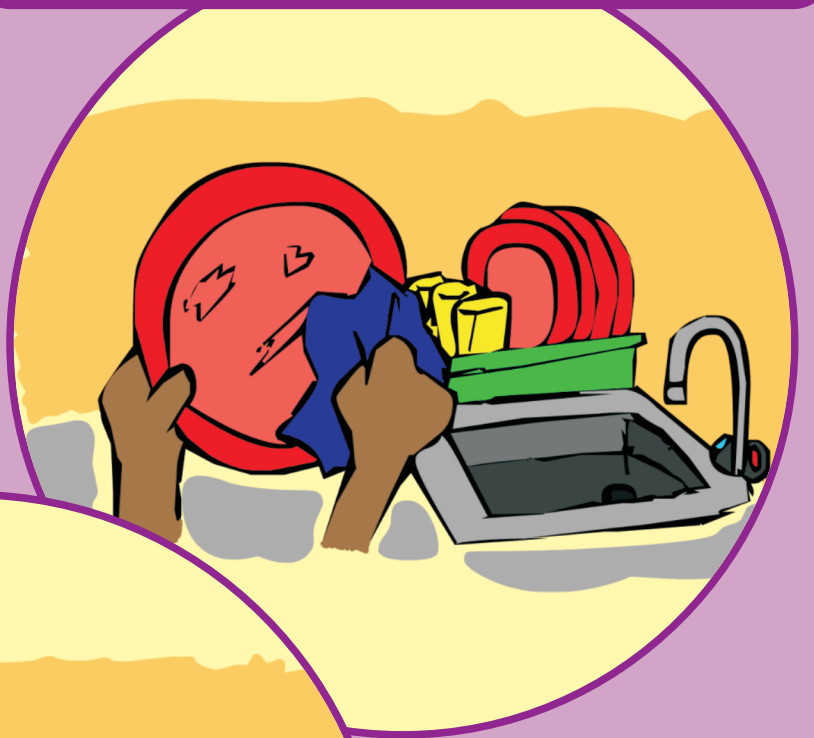
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I like to help

Helping hands

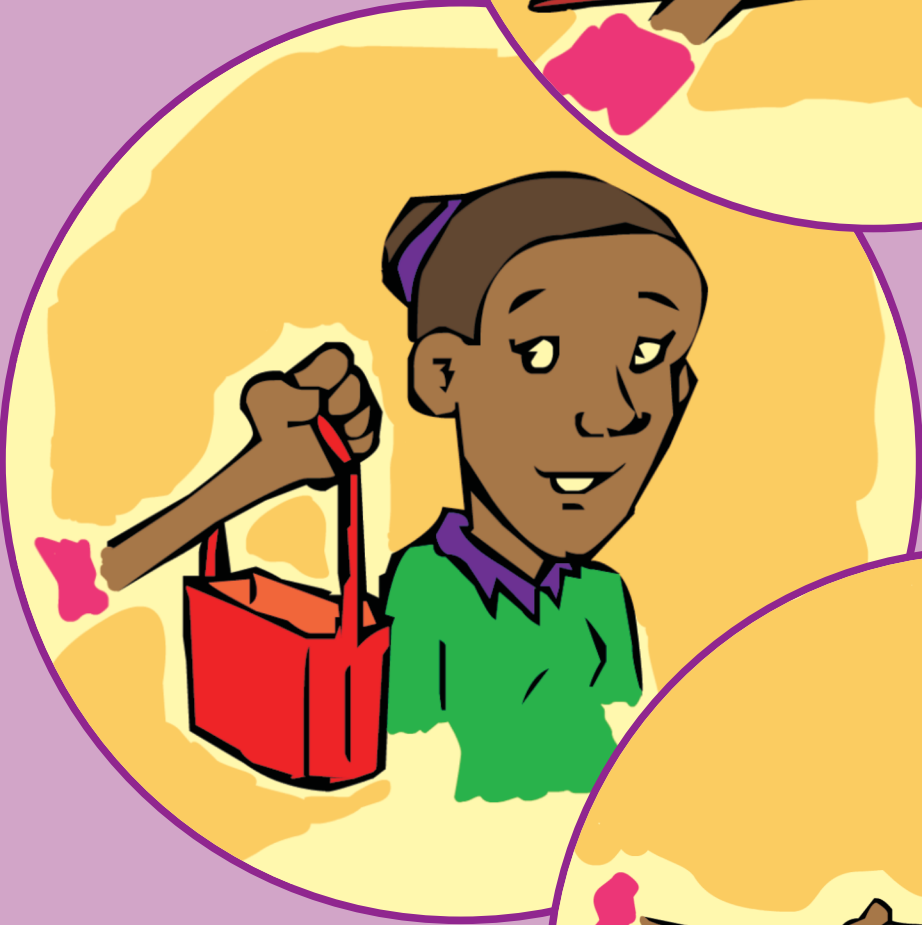
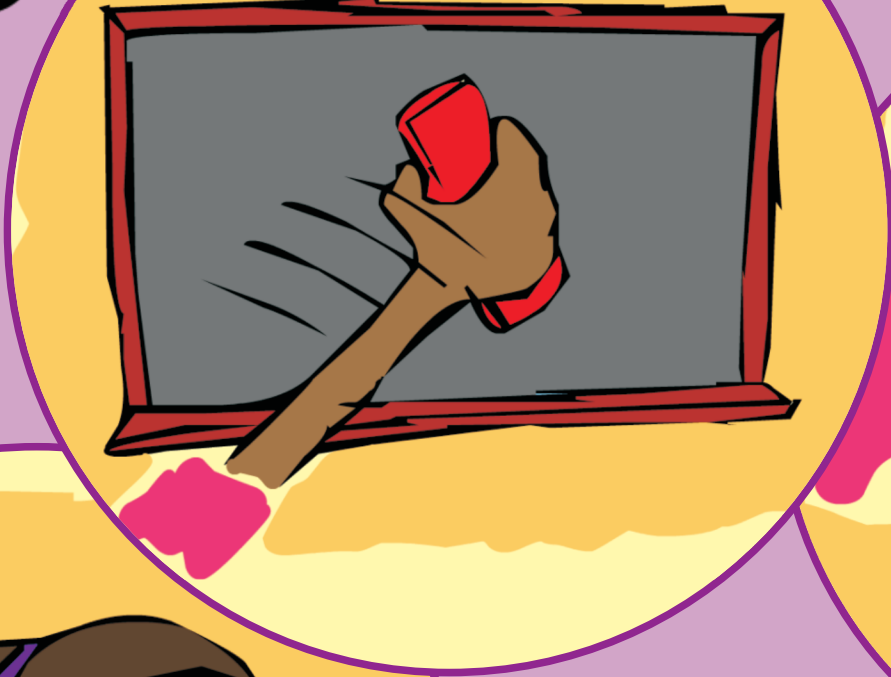


I like to help at home ...
I wash the dishes.
I pack away my clothes.
I water the plants.
I make my bed.
I clean my shoes.



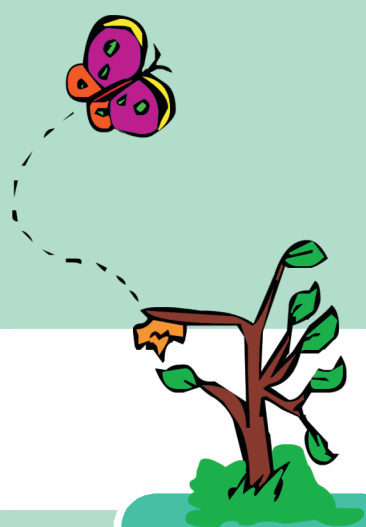


I like to help at school ...
 I clean the blackboard.
 I empty the waste paper basket.
 I carry my teacher's bag.
 I pick up litter.
 I help my friend.

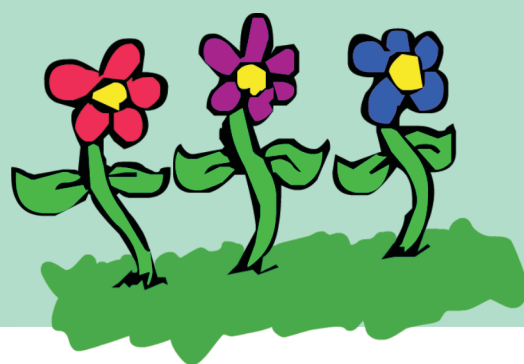


I like to help my family ...
I braid my mother's hair.
I make my father tea.
I clean my granny's glasses.
I bath my baby sister.
I take the dog for a walk.
... I like helping all the people
who love me and look after me!





16

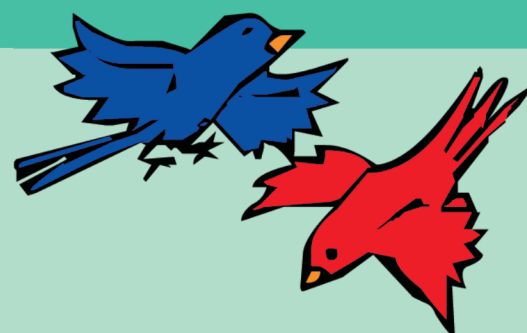
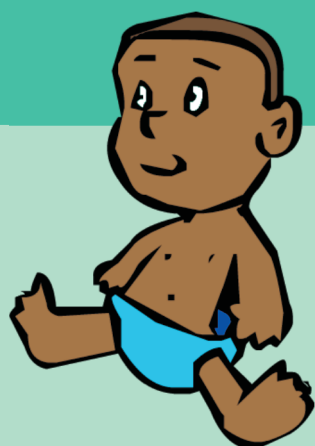


A spring surprise

New life



My mom came home from hospital with a spring surprise for me,
She said he was my brother Bart, but I was not happy!
Oh no, I thought, this is not good, he'll just get in the way,
He'll wail and cry and burp and poo and lie around all day.
I'm leaving home right now, I said, and down to the river I ran,
To get away from Baby Bart and hide there was my plan.



But on the way I stopped for breath and something caught my eye:
Where once I'd seen a caterpillar, there was now a butterfly!
There were bunnies in the rabbit hutch, and new buds on the trees,
Bright blossoms on the flowers, and lots of birds and bees.
Our ducks had had new ducklings, our hens had hatched some eggs,
There was a new foal in the paddock, stumbling about on its skinny legs.



By gosh, I thought, it's not so bad, this is just what happens in spring,
The sun comes out, new life is born and everyone starts to sing.
I went back home, crept up the stairs and into the nursery,
I looked down at the new-born babe and he looked back at me.
Don't worry sis, he seemed to say, this is really not the end,
Just give me a chance to prove myself,
and I'll be your very best friend!





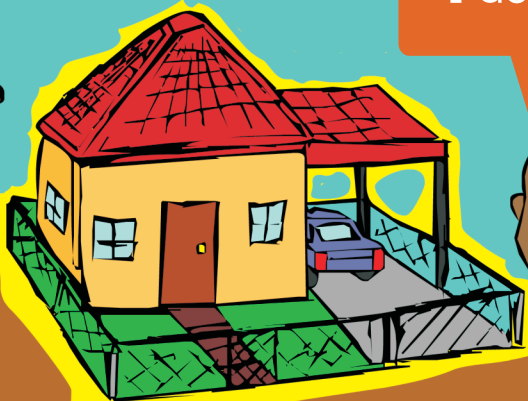
17

Who lives here?

This is where people live



Who lives here?



I do.



Siphe lives in a house in a city.



Who lives here?



I do.



Jamal lives in a flat in a town.



Who lives here?



I do.



Anele lives in a shack in a squatter camp.



Who lives here?



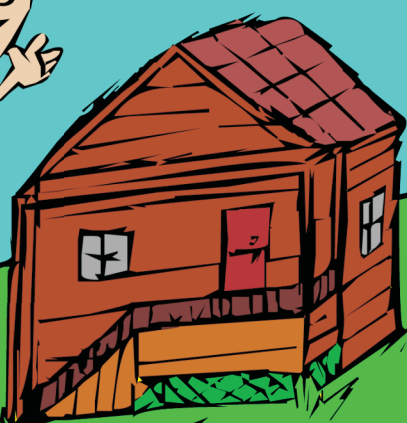
I do.



Mandisa lives in a rondavel in a village.



I do.



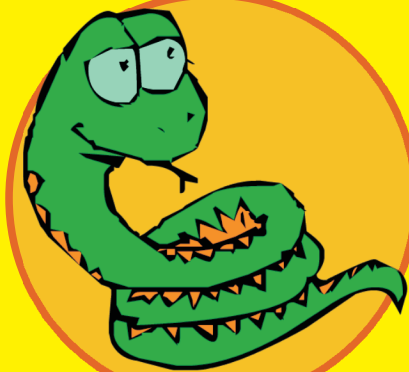
Who lives here?



Hannah lives in a cottage on a farm.

Who lives here?

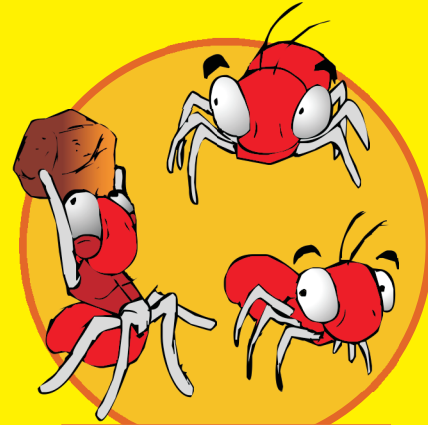
We do.



snake



rabbit



ants

Who lives here?

We do.



squirrel



monkey



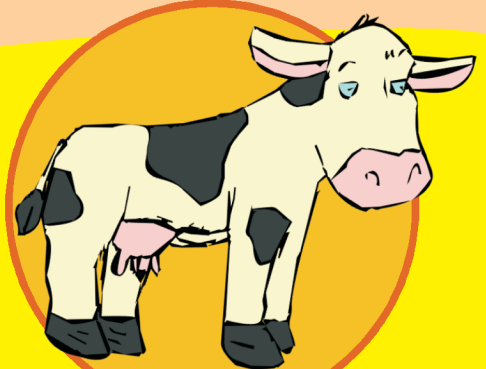
owl

Who lives here?

We do.



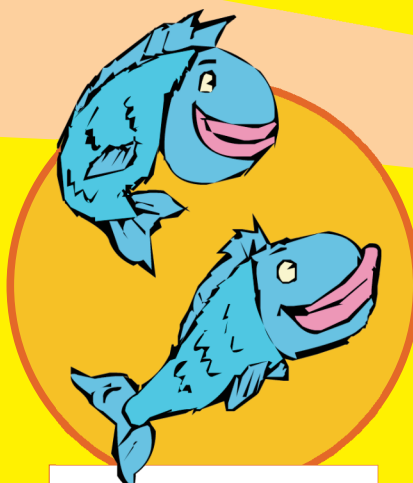
horse



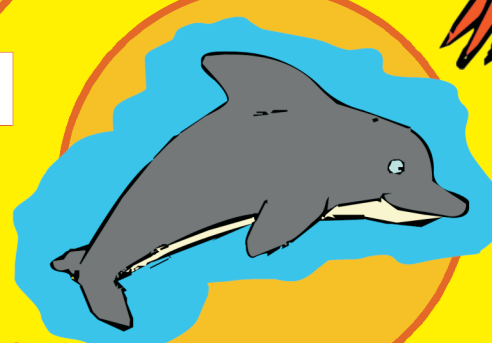
cow

Who lives here?

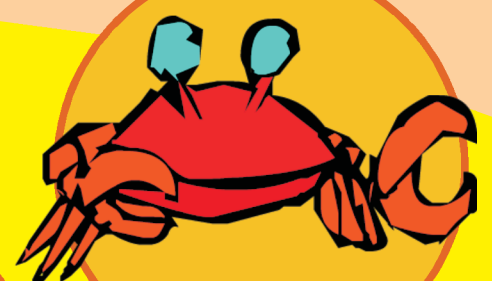
We do.



fish

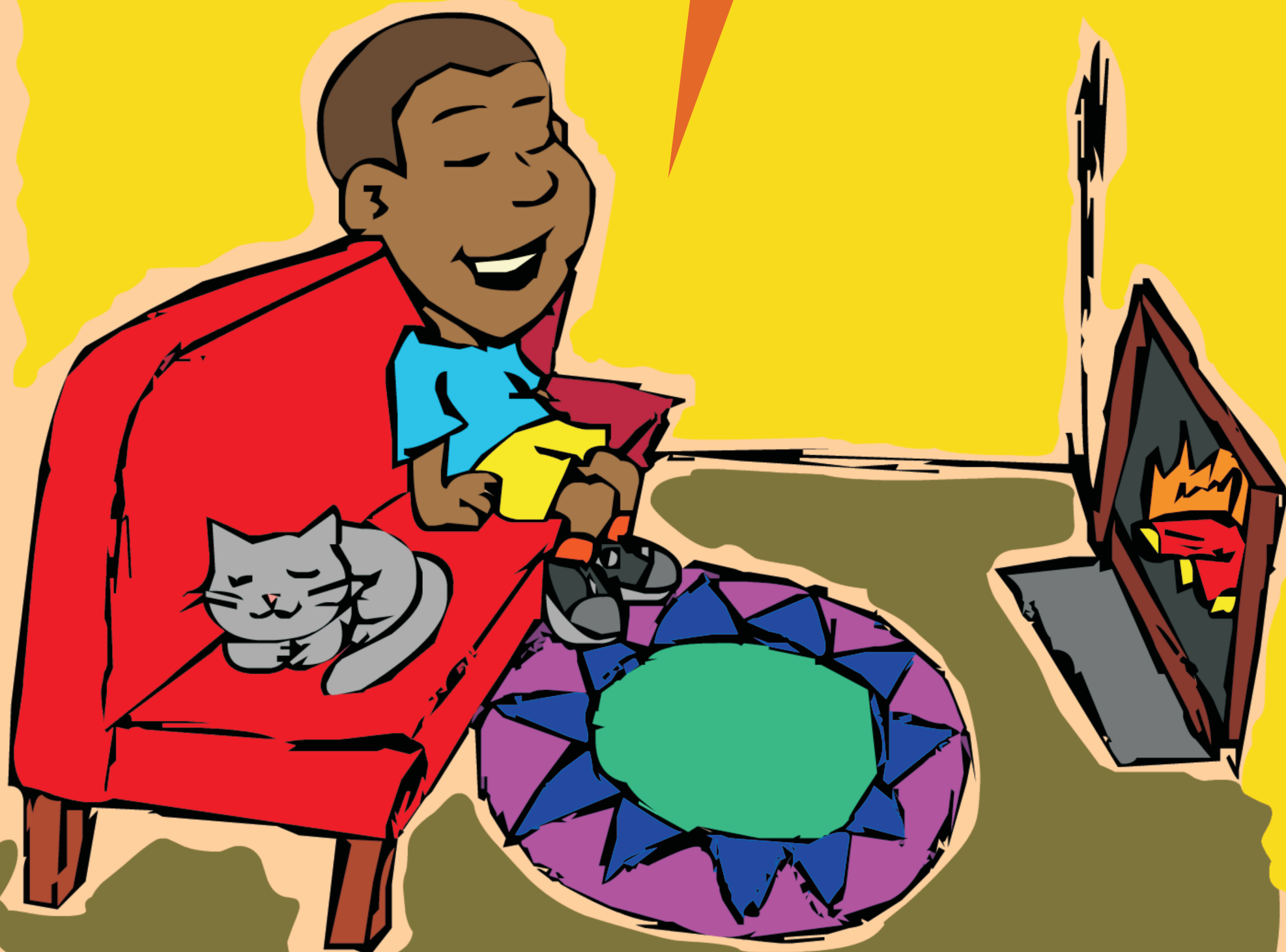


dolphin



crab

Bees live in a hive ...
Spiders live in a web ...
Birds live in a nest ...
But I still think our home is the best!



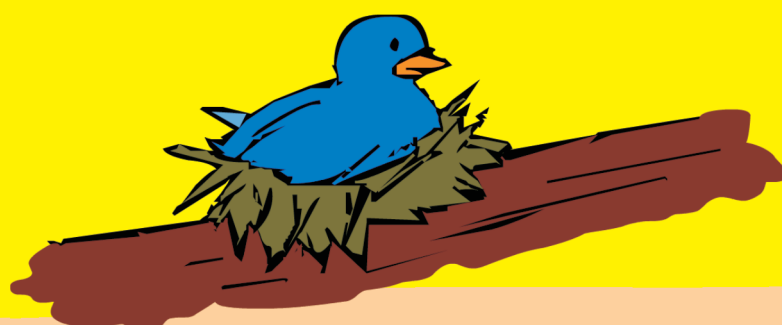
bees



spiders



birds





18



How do you feel today?

My feelings



S'bu the Snake is off to her friend Dassie's birthday party.
She slithers on her stomach ...

"Hello" she says to all the friends she meets along the way.

"How are you feeling today?"

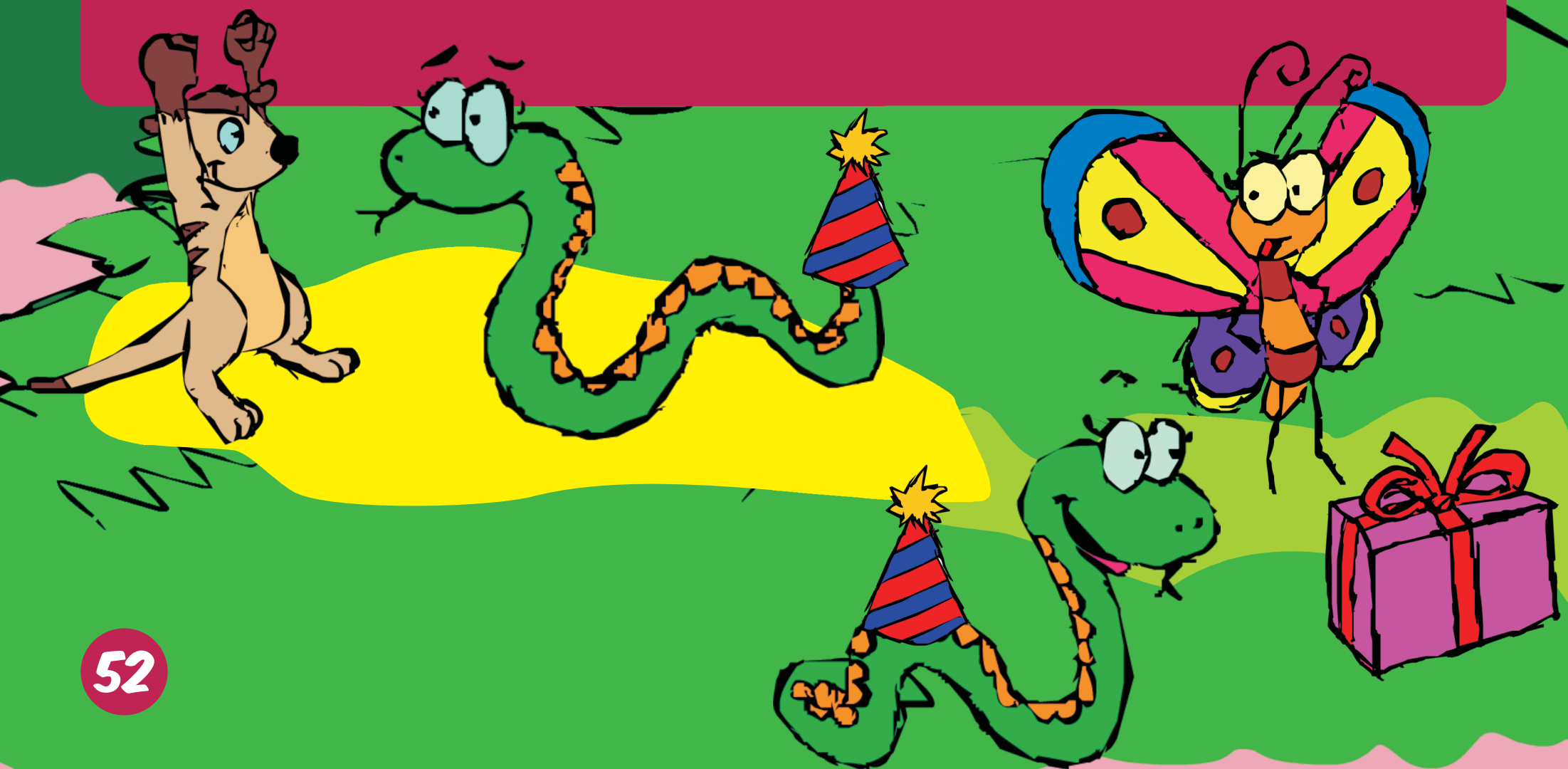
"Boo hoo, I'm sad!" sobs Tortoise. "I'm too slow.
The others have gone to the party without me."

"I'm so excited!" says Meerkat.

"I can't wait to tuck into all that yummy grub at Dassie's party."

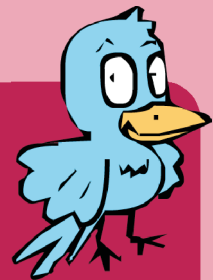
"I'm jealous," says Butterfly.

"All those presents for Dassie and none for me!"

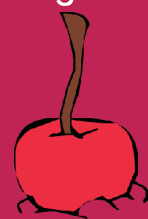


“Ooh, I’m frightened!” shivers Frog.
“You might swallow me whole.
Then I’ll never get to Dassie’s party.”
“Don’t worry,” says S’bu. “I had a big breakfast this morning
so I’m not hungry!”
“I’m worried,” frowns Spider. “I’ve hurt one of my legs.
I might not be able to dance at the party.”
“Don’t worry, you’ve got seven more – you can hop!” says S’bu.
“I’m feeling brave,” says Mouse.
“I did all my exercises this morning.
Now I’m so strong no cat can catch me!”
“I’m so proud,” says Owl.
“I made this birthday card for Dassie all by myself!”





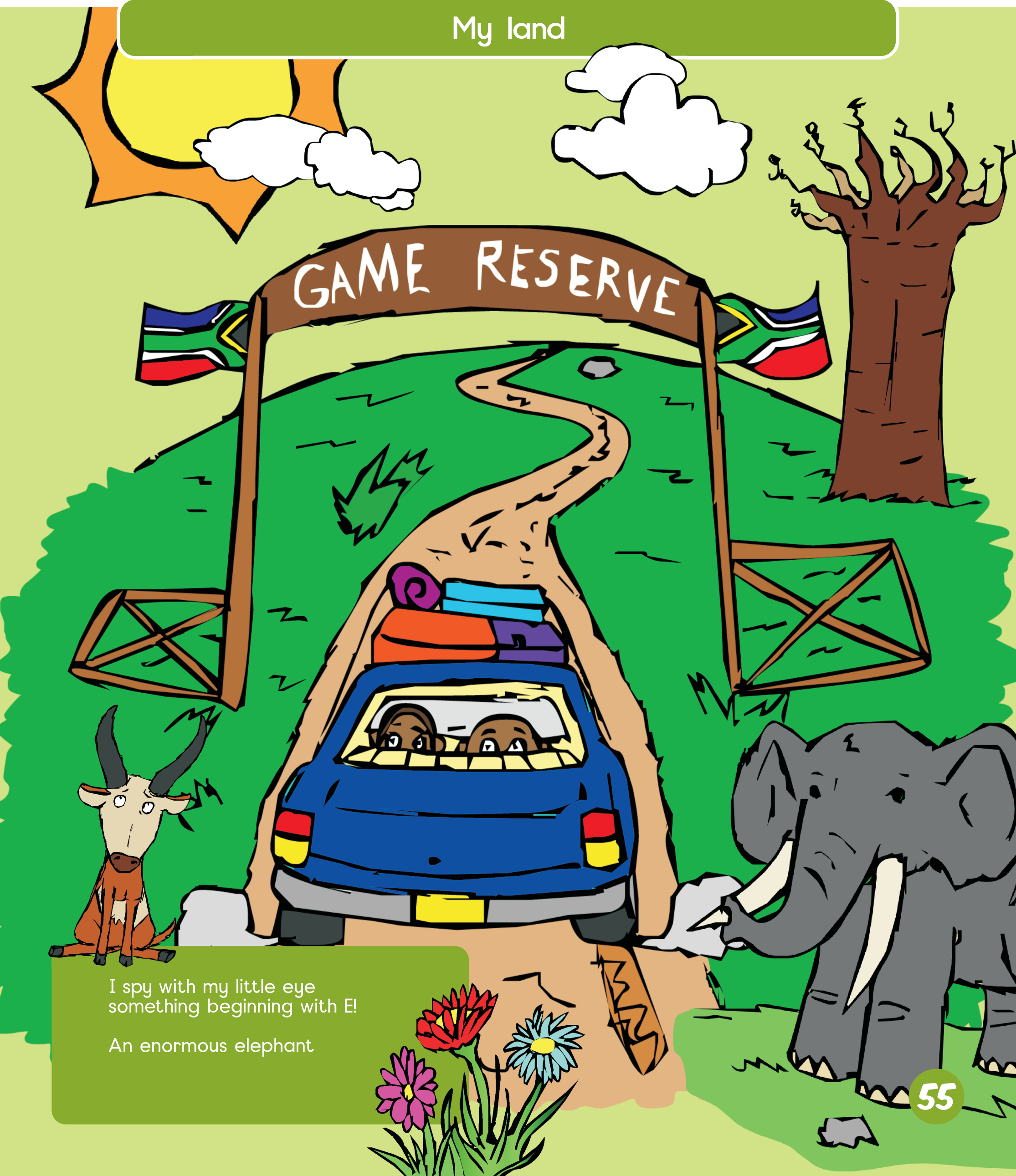
The animals finally get to Dassie's den.
"Hey Dassie," says S'bu.
"How are you feeling today?"
"I'm happy," says Dassie.
"It's my birthday and we're having a party!"
"Hooray!" shout all the animals.
"We're hip-hop-happy too!"



19

Our lovely land

My land



I spy with my little eye
something beginning with E!

An enormous elephant



I spy with my little eye ...
Something beginning with G!

A gentle giraffe

I spy with my little eye ...
Something beginning with L!

A laughing lion

But the best thing I can see ...
is my fantastic family!





20

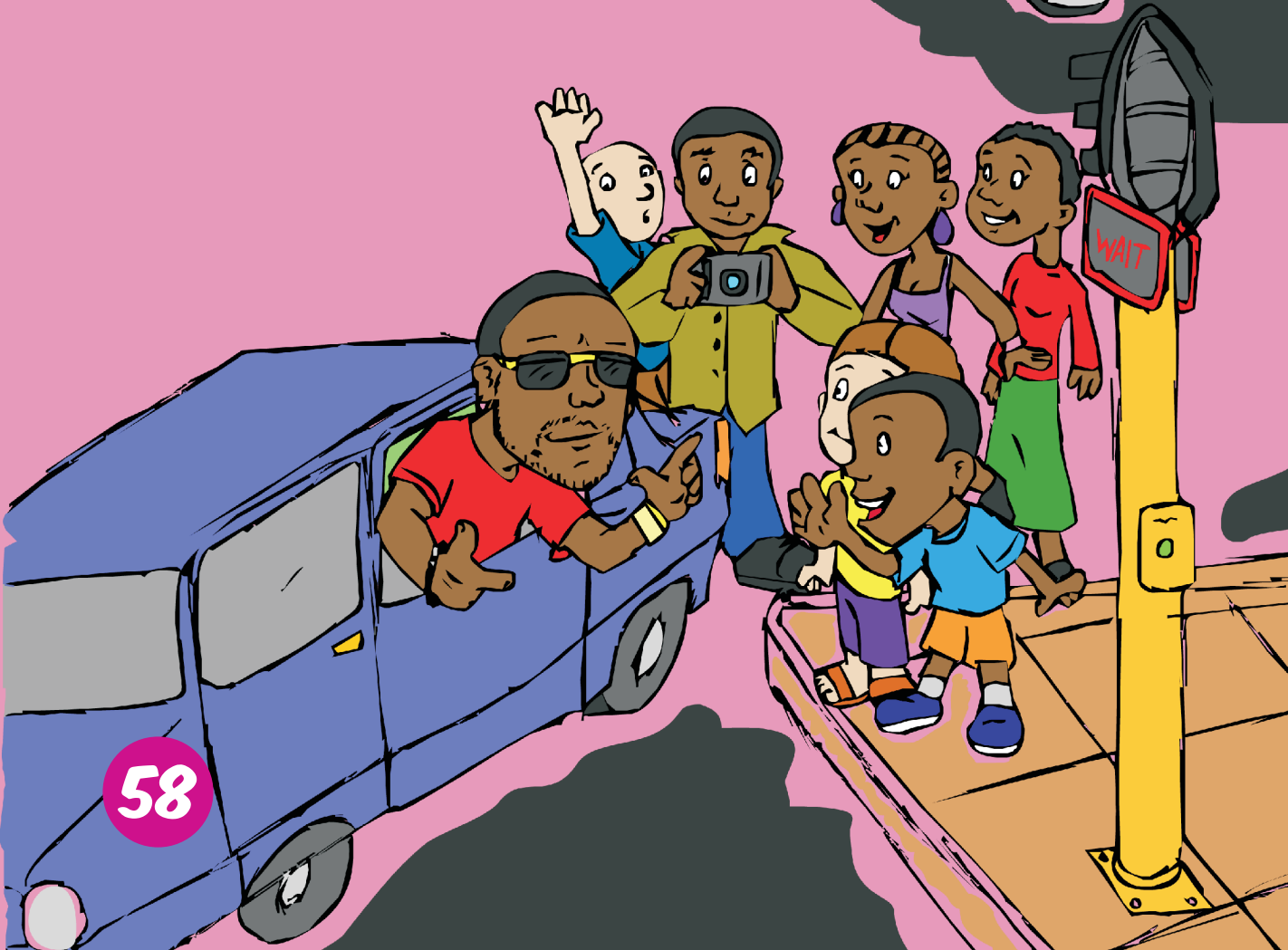
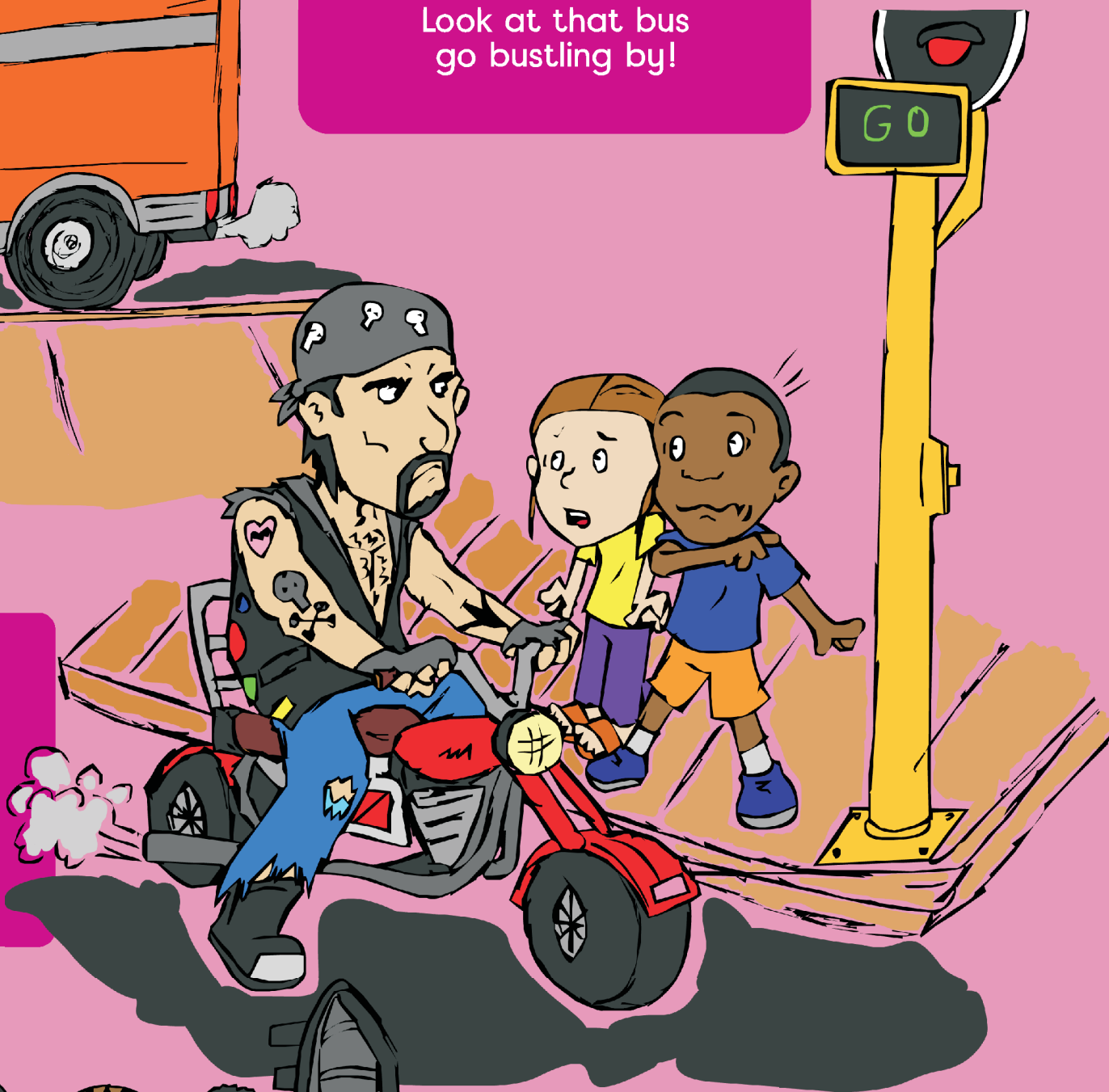
Rules of the road

On the move

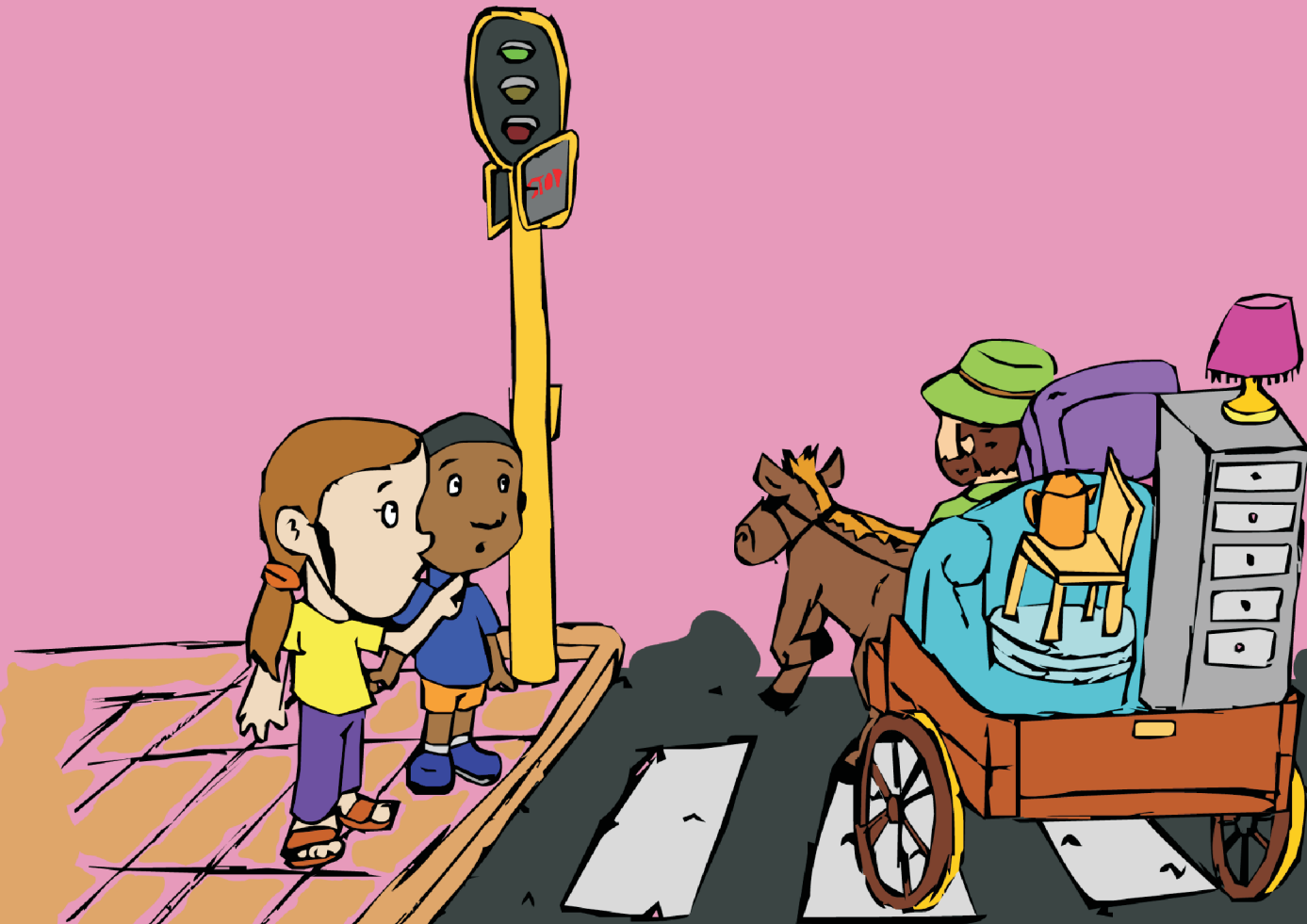


Look right, look left!
Whoosh!
Look at that bus
go bustling by!

Look right, look left!
Roarrrrrrr!
No way, scary biker guy,
you go first!
We'll wait for the next
green light.



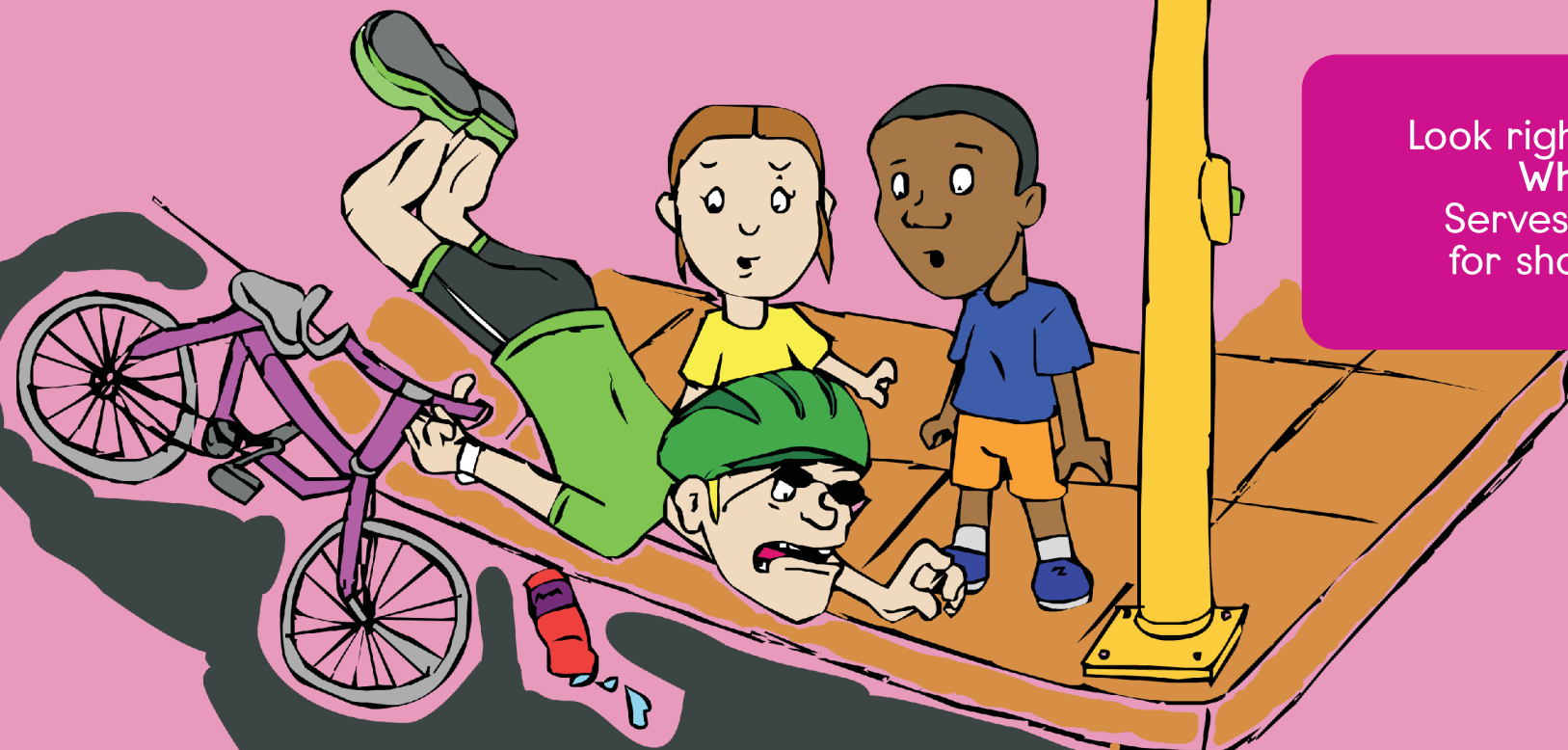
Look right, look left!
Hey! It's Zola!
Cool! Give us an
autograph man!



Look right, look left!
Whoah!
Get a load
of that!

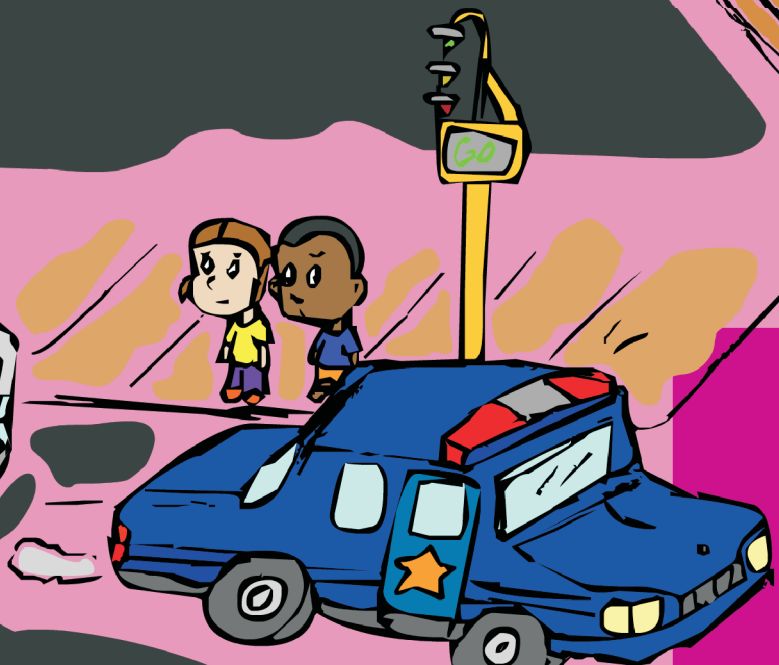
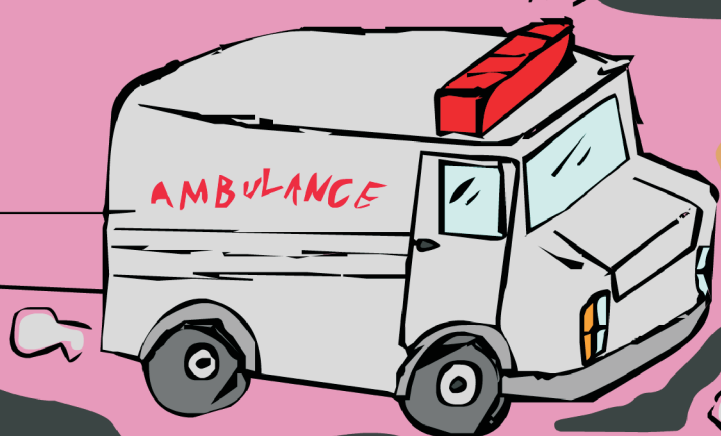
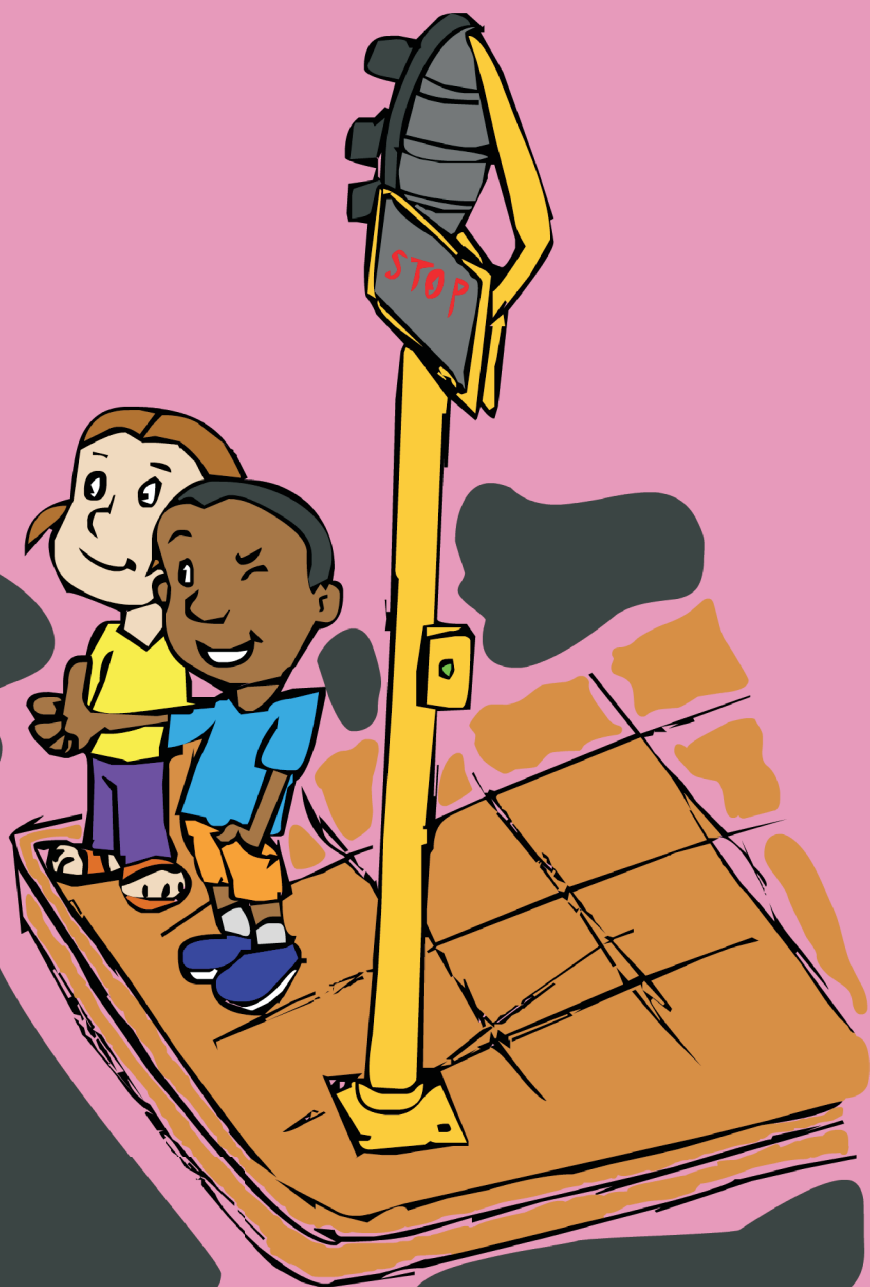


Look right, look left!
Beeeeep!
Slow down, taxi driver:
Take this dude to town!
We'll wait for the
next green light.

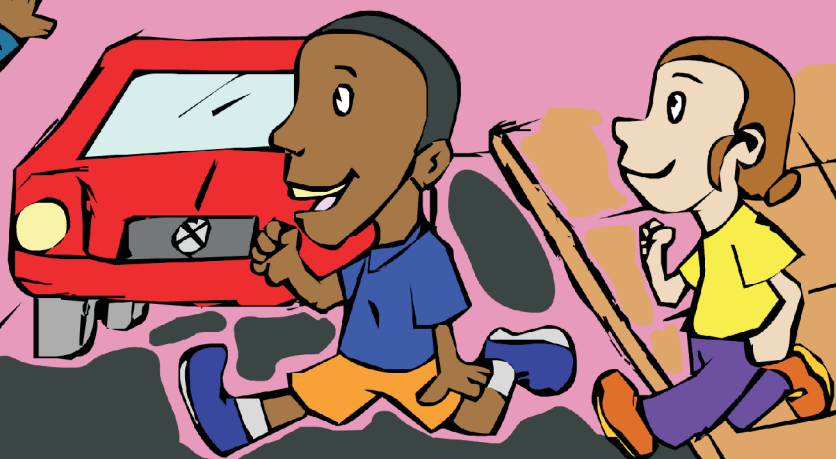
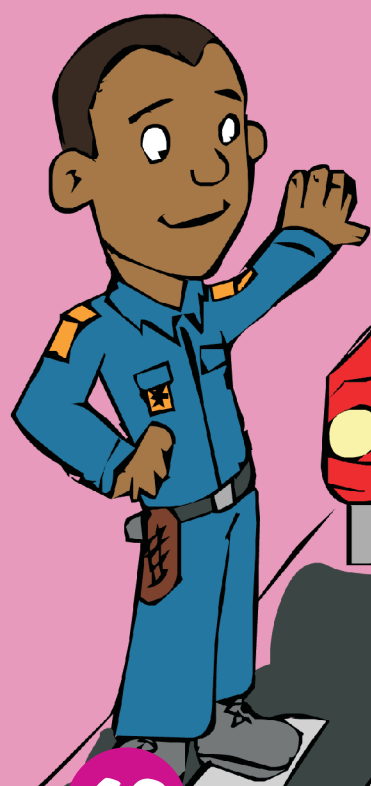


Look right, look left!
Whoops!
Serves you right
for showing off!

Look right, look left!
Ya yebo yesssss!
How's that for turbo-
charged muscle power!



Look right, look left!
Eish! Step back -
emergency vehicles get
right of way! Sigh!
We'll just wait for the
next green light.



Look right, look left,
look right again!
Shu! At long last!
But better safe
than sorry!

Laying Solid Foundations for Learning

Parent and teacher notes to support the stories

Story 1: **Afro Ant's adventure**

Introducing the story

Read page 1 of the story. Discuss the illustrations and the frustration on Afro's face. Why is being small so hard for him? Ask children to talk about similar experiences they may have had.

Reading skills

Identifying the initial sounds of letters:

Say Afro Ant's name out loud a few times. Ask your children what they notice about his name. (The initial sound of both names begins with the sound 'a'.) Ask them what else starts with 'a'? Go through the first few letters of the alphabet and get the children to make up names – for example, Big Bob, Clever Candice, etc.

Comprehension questions

- Why was Afro Ant so tired of being small?
- What did he decide to do about it?
- Why was the bus drive home very bumpy?
- Do you agree with his final conclusion? Say why.

Activity

Call out five words (pick four words beginning with the same sound, and one word starting with a different sound). Say them slowly. Ask your children to tell you which word is the odd one out. Let them explain why. (This is an auditory discrimination activity.)

Story 2: **Vusi and the vuvuzela**

Introducing the story

If possible, blow a vuvuzela for the children before reading them the story. Chat about the sound it makes; ask them to describe the sound and how it makes them feel. Look at the illustrations on the first page – ask whether the people are happy and discuss why they are not. Read the story and chat about the ending.

Reading skills

Identifying the beginning, the middle and the end of a story:

Ask your children to re-tell the story, describing what happened at the beginning, the middle and the end of it. Ask them why they think every story needs a beginning, middle and end.

Comprehension questions

- What did Vusi do that made everyone upset?
- When did he play his vuvuzela?
- Do you think it was a clever idea for his father to get him Bafana Bafana tickets? Why?

Activity

Get your children to act out the story, but changing the beginning, the middle or the end.

Story 3: **A surprise for Gogo**

Introducing the story

Ask your children if they know what a surprise is. Ask if they like surprises – and if so, why. Encourage them to talk about a special surprise that they gave someone, or a special surprise that they received. Then read the story together. Talk about what Gugu did and why they think she did it.

Reading skills

Identifying vowels and consonants:

Try to put up a poster or chart that lists the five vowels. Explain to your children that vowels are similar to builders: vowels build words, and without them no word could exist. Go through the story and search for the vowel 'a', the consonant 'g', the vowel 'e', etc.

Comprehension questions

- How old is Gogo now?
- What presents was Gugu thinking of getting her?
- Who came to the party?

Activity

Play a 'Surprise!' game. Hide an object somewhere in the room. Give one child three clues about where to find it – for example, 'it's near the window', 'it's under the pillow', 'it's closest to the door'. The child has to find it and when s/he does, the rest shout out 'Surprise!'

Story 4: **Dirty Duduzile**

Introducing the story

Read the story and chat about the illustrations. What did Duduzile have to do before she found her doll? What lesson can we learn from the story? (Keeping tidy and clean is very important for a healthy body and mind.)

Reading skills

Long and short vowel sounds

Call out these words from the story – 'top', 'run', 'doll', 'mom'. Ask children to name where they hear the vowel sound. Is it long or short? (These are short). Then call out these words – 'look', 'like', 'wave', 'smile'. How are they different? Are they long or short? (These are long).

Comprehension questions

- Where did Duduzile look for her doll?
- Where did she find it?
- How did Duduzile get so dirty? How did she clean up?

Activity

Call out a word from the story. If it starts with a vowel, children must stamp their feet and say the sound. If it starts with a consonant, children must clap their hands and say the sound.

Story 5: **Mmmm, mud pies**

Introducing the story

Read the title. What are mud pies? What would they taste like? Ask children to predict what they think will be happening in this story, judging from the pictures on the first page. Read the story and chat about the events as compared to their predictions.

Reading skills

Syllables

Call out a few words from the story and get children to clap out the syllables. For example, 'mud-dy', 'mar-ve-lous', 'spi-nach' etc. Read a sentence out loud, then select a word and clap the syllables without saying the word. Children must guess the word you thought of.

Comprehension questions

- What is Mondy doing?
- What is his favourite meal?
- What made his sister lose her appetite?

Activity

'Mondy is making a marvellous muddy meal.' Ask children what they notice about this sentence. This is called alliteration or a tongue twister. Ask children to make a tongue twister about meat, potatoes and spinach. For example, 'Peel potatoes please!'

Story 6: **Proud to be me**

Introducing the story

Chat to children about people; are we all the same? How are we different? Tell children that the story is all about people around us that are different in some way, but they are the same inside – they have a heart and need love and friendship – just like us. Read the story and chat about it.

Reading skills

Rhyming words

The story is written as a poem, with rhyming words at the end of each line. Call out some rhyming words from the story – ask children to say what they notice about these words. Chat about their final sounds as these are what make them rhyme. Call out a word and get children to brainstorm as many rhyming words as they can.

Comprehension questions

- How are May and the little boy different to us? What can they do?
- What does Jason like best of all?
- What is a 'Proudly Me Parade'?

Activity

Give children a piece of paper and get them to decorate it with pictures of things they like about themselves. They can also paste items, such as the wrapping of a favourite chocolate, photographs of their family etc. They can then chat about their page. Place all the pages together to create a friendship book.

Story 7: **Ntombi Hippo**

Introducing the story

Get children to chat about the illustration on the cover. Can they tell what the story will be about? Where does it take place? Who is in the story? Read the story and then compare actual events with the story.

Reading skills

Beginning and ending sounds

Call out a word from the story, for example, 'spring'. Ask children what sound they hear at the end – 'g' – can they think of a word that starts with that sound? Call out more words, making sure that the end sound is a single sound and not a blend (other examples: and, wants, lion, springbok). Children name the end sound and think of a word that begins with that sound.

Comprehension questions

- What does Ntombi love to collect?
- What is a Monkey's wedding?
- What does Ntombi love to do?

Activity

Create paper dolls and outfits that children can dress their dolls in. Label each item of clothing. Children can have fun creating a winter wardrobe for their paper doll, or a wedding outfit, party clothes etc.

Story 8: **Yellow Yolanda**

Introducing the story

Ask children why they think Yolanda is called Yellow Yolanda. Chat about the illustrations for the story; can they figure out why? Read the story and chat about the events.

Reading skills

Sounds in words

Call out these words and instructions, one at a time. Draw a picture to show what is left when you don't say the 'every' in 'everyone'; when you don't say the 'room' in 'bedroom'; when you don't say the 'room' in 'bathroom'. This gets children to listen to the parts of words, which helps them to break down words for easy decoding when reading.

Comprehension questions

- What did Yolanda have for supper?
- What did she help her friend do?
- What is Yolanda's new name? How did this happen?

Activity

Provide children with paints in various colours. Get them to create a picture on paper – it should be an 'accidental' picture like the way Yolanda's overalls got painted. Children can dictate a sentence for their picture. All sentences must then be read to the class. Create a class book called 'Rainbow pictures'.

Story 9: **Friends**

Introducing the story

Chat to children about friends. Why are friends special, how do we look after our friends, what makes a good friend? Read the story and chat about the illustrations.

Reading skills

Middle sounds (long and short)

Call out a few words from the story and ask children to listen out to the sounds in the middle. If the middle sound is long they must open their arms out wide. If the sound is short they must hold up their thumb and second finger showing a short distance between them. For example, good, happy, sad, mean, play, make.

Comprehension questions

- How do friends make us feel?
- What fun activities do friends do together?
- Tell us about your friends.

Activity

Provide children with magazines, pairs of scissors and glue. They must search through the magazine and find pictures to show how friends make us feel. Write captions for each picture, as dictated by the child.

Story 10: **Fastest, smartest, smallest**

Introducing the story

Read the story and stop to discuss the events as they unfold. Discuss any challenging words that children may not understand in the context of the story.

Reading skills

Individual sounds

Select words from the text that are short and easily broken up into their parts. For example, s-a-t, b-i-g, a-n-d, f-r-o-m, w-a-s-p, l-e-f-t etc. Say the individual sounds and ask children to identify the word you are saying.

Comprehension questions

- What is Ratty?
- Which insects entered the race?
- Was it a fair race? Why do you think so?

Activity

Get children to enact the story, but they must change the outcome of the story – and its title.

For example, 'Biggest, meanest, maddest' or 'Fattest, widest, bumpiest' etc.

They must also include a commentator in their re-enactments.

Laying Solid Foundations for Learning

Parent and teacher notes to support the stories

Story 11: **Clouds**

Introducing the story

Go through the story first and discuss the images with your children. What do they see? If possible, have a quick look at the sky: are there clouds? What ‘pictures’ can they make from the clouds? Read the story, stopping at each page to look at the illustrations. This story also deals with time sequences and number.

Reading skills

Initial sounds

Call out a few words from the story and get children to name the initial sound. Then they can name other words that begin with the same sound.

Comprehension questions

- What did the girl see in the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening?
- What was she doing at those different times of day?
- What do you do at those times?
- How many cloud pictures did she see in the morning? How many more in the afternoon? How many altogether?

Activity

Get children to listen out for a specific sound as you re-read the story. Each time they hear the sound they must clap their hands. This is an auditory figure-ground activity.

Story 12: **A boy’s best friend**

Introducing the story

Before reading the story chat about safety. Name dangerous items and activities both in and out of the home. Read the title; what does it mean? Ask children to chat about their pets, are they their best friend? Why? Read the story and chat about the silent story evident in the illustrations.

Reading skills

Syllabification

Call out a few words from the story and get children to break them up into their syllables. For example; Bhe-ki, bud-dy, spe-cial, pic-nic etc. Children can clap, stamp or jump the syllables.

Comprehension questions

- Describe the dangers the boy faced at home.
- Is the boy aware of his surroundings? Why do you think so?
- Is the dog truly his best friend? Why do you think so?

Activity

Call out five items – children listen carefully and only draw those items within the parameters you set. For example, draw all the dangerous items found in the kitchen – call out ‘knife, spoon, hot iron, plug, cloth’. Children only draw the knife, hot iron and plug. This is an auditory figure ground activity.

Story 13: **Queen Quellerina**

Introducing the story

Ask children to name the things they see in the sky, both during the day and at night, for example: sun, moon, stars etc. Tell them that in this story, Queen Quellerina rules all these things. Read the story. Read slowly and discuss each page. Look at the illustrations and chat about where Queen Quellerina lives.

Reading skills

Final /end sounds

Call out these words (one at a time) from the story: sky, night, moon, sun, rain. Ask children to name the sound they hear at the end. Can they think of other words that end in the same sound? Now ask them to change the ‘s’ in sun to ‘r’ – what word do they have now? Change the ‘n’ in night to ‘f’ etc.

Comprehension questions

- Who is Queen Quellerina? What does she rule?
- Where is her kingdom?
- Do you think all her subjects love her? What makes you think so?

Activity

Call out a pair of words; children must clap their hands if the words sound exactly the same. For example: sky/dry (not the same), moon/moon (the same) etc. This is an auditory discrimination exercise.

Story 14: **Our goat Godfrey**

Introducing the story

Read the title. Ask children what they think Godfrey gets up to. Look at the pictures; can children predict what they think will happen in the story?

Reading skills

Punctuation

Point out the question marks in the story. What are they? Tell children that whenever a question is asked, this symbol is placed at the end of the sentence. Children can search through magazines and newspapers and make a collage of question marks.

Comprehension questions

- What happened to Godfrey?
- Where are the children? Why makes you think that?
- Where was Godfrey? How do you think he found them?

Activity

Enact one of the professions mentioned in the story. Children must guess who it is – they must say the name and the job they do. This is an activity that tests their memory, both visual and auditory.

Story 15: **I like to help**

Introducing the story

Read the title. Ask children what they do to help at home and at school. Read the story. Chat about what the boy does to help all those that he loves.

Reading skills

Word families

Select a few words from the text that can be used to discuss word families. Word families (or chunks) are groups of words that have the same letters and thereby sounds, often at the end of a word. For example, pack (rack, back, Jack, lack, sack); make (bake, cake, fake, hake, Jake, lake, rake, sake, take, wake). Write the word on the board and get children to think of other words to add to this family. They can also use flashcards to make new words – have individual letter cards and word family cards (ack, ake etc.)

Comprehension questions

- What does the boy like to do at home?
- How does he help at school?
- Do you think the people he loves know he loves them? Why do you think so?

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Activity

Read one of the set of activities the boy does. Now call them out aloud, but in the wrong order. Children must sequence the actions in the correct order. This is an auditory sequencing activity as well as auditory memory.

Story 16: **A spring surprise**

Introducing the story

What was the surprise? Does the girl in the picture look happy? When is spring? What happens during springtime? Read the story and emphasise the rhyming phrases.

Reading skills

Rhyming words

Read a rhyming phrase from the story. Which words sound the same? Where in the word do they sound the same? Ask children to name other words that end in the same sound. Re-read the story and get children to touch their heads each time they hear a rhyming word.

Comprehension questions

- Why was the girl not happy about her spring surprise?
- What made her change her mind?
- What month do you think the baby was born in?

Activity

Play a visual discrimination game – I spy. Open the story to the second page and ask children questions based on the illustrations. For example, I spy with my little eye, something that starts with ‘r’ (rabbit); something that has four legs and runs very fast (horse) etc.

Story 17: **Who lives here?**

Introducing the story

Look at the illustrations first and discuss the various homes for people and animals. Read the story, using a different voice for the different characters to make the story come alive for the children.

Reading skills

Phonemes (sounds)

Children need to be able to hear the different sounds in words. Call out short words from the story and get children to break them into their different sound parts. For example, cow (‘c’ and ‘ow’); owl (‘ow’ and ‘l’); crab (‘cr’ and ‘a’ and ‘b’) etc.

Comprehension questions

- Where does Jamal live?
- Which animals share Hannah’s home?
- What is your home like? Talk about it.

Activity

Call out sentences based on the story and children fill in the missing words. For example: The _____ lives in the sea. This is an auditory closure activity.

Story 18: **How do you feel today?**

Introducing the story

Chat about feelings. Ask children what makes them happy, sad, excited, scared etc. How are they feeling now? Look at all the facial expressions in the characters of the story – how are they feeling? Read the story and afterwards discuss all the various emotions. Were they correct in their predictions as to how each character was feeling?

Reading skills

Retelling events

Ask children to retell the story in their own words. They need to sequence the events in order. This activity encourages children to use vocabulary from the story in their speech. It also tests their ability to remember details from the story.

Comprehension questions

- Where was S’bu the snake going?
- Name five animals the snake meets on her way.
- What do you think Dassie had made for his friends to eat at his party?

Activity

Call out words from the story in their parts (syllables/word chunks). For example, m-ou-se; spi-der; sn-ake etc. Say the word slowly so the syllables almost blend into one another (almost like stretching the word out), children have to try and guess the word before you get to the end of it. If they call it out before you finish the word, they get a point, if not, you get a point.

Story 19: **Our lovely land**

Introducing the story

Ask children if they have ever been to a game reserve. What did they see there? Who did they go with? What did they do? Read the story, chat about the different animals seen. How are they described?

Reading skills

Letters and sounds

Read some of the descriptive phrases from the story, for example, heavy hippopotamus, fantastic family etc. Children must name the initial sounds they hear. Hold up a letter card (a, b, c etc) and children must name the sound the letter makes and then name an animal that begins with that sound.

Comprehension questions

- Name some of the animals the family saw at the game reserve.
- How did they travel through the game reserve? Why?
- What does a giraffe look like?

Activity

Alliteration or tongue twisters are great fun. Get children to create tongue twisters about some of the animals in the story, for example, the heavy hippopotamus hops home. Children can then decorate each one. They can make a book of animal tongue twisters.

Story 20: **Rules of the road**

Introducing the story

What are the rules of the road? Why do we have rules for the road? Read the story and look at the illustrations. This story is full of action; get children to chat about the various vehicles on the road and the people driving them.

Reading skills

Punctuation

Point out the exclamation marks in the story. What are they? Tell children that this symbol shows excitement, shouting, fear and surprise. Read the sentences that have exclamation marks and then read them again with no expression. Can children hear the difference? Get children to look at each picture again and come up with a sentence that would need an exclamation mark. For example: ‘Hey stop driving so fast, taxi driver!’

Comprehension questions

- Name some of the land transport mentioned in the story. How many wheels does each one have?
- Why did the cyclist fall off his bike? What do you think he had been doing?
- How do you cross a road? Describe the steps.

Activity

In words, describe a character from the story; the children then guess who it is.