

PLASTIC FREE!

Storytime™



THE KING OF BEASTS
invites a rabbit to dinner!

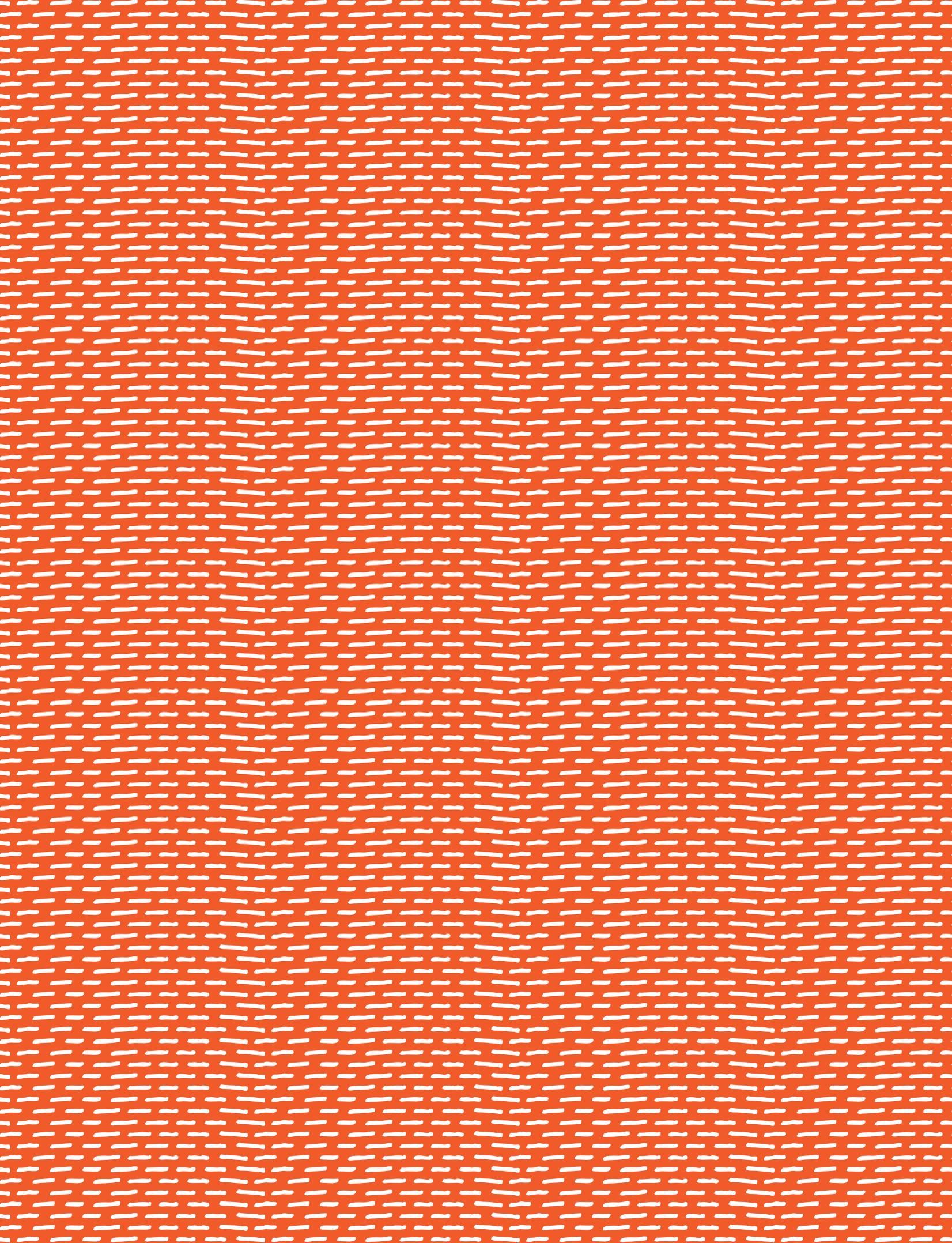


LEONARDO'S STORY
A boy is inspired by birds!

THE MAGICIAN'S HORSE

The Creation of the Sun, Shadow

Puppets and MUSICAL ANIMALS!



A MAGAZINE FULL OF MUSIC, MAGIC AND FUN ANIMALS!

Celebrate the coming of
spring with these funny
and sunny stories!

THIS ISSUE BELONGS TO:

SPOT IT!

Can you find
where this
fellow is
hiding?



Storytime™ magazine is published
every month by **Storytime Magazine Ltd**,
90 London Rd, London, SE1 6LN.

© Storytime Magazine Ltd, 2021. All rights reserved.
No part of this magazine may be used or reproduced
without prior written permission of the publisher.
Printed by Warner Group.

Editorial Director: Lulu Skantze

Editor: Sven Wilson

Commercial Director: Leslie Coathup



Storytime and its paper suppliers have been
independently certified in accordance with the
rules of the FSC® (Forest Stewardship Council)®.

www.storytimemagazine.com

ILLUSTRATORS:

Mike Bonales The Rabbit and
the King of Beasts

Giorgia Broseghini The Frogs' Choir

Pham Quang Phuc Shadow Puppets

Sara Mauri The Peabody Experiment

Romanovsky Diaz The Magician's Horse

Elena Aiello The Owl and the Grasshopper

Alberto Badalamenti The World According
to Leo

Guilherme Franco The Creation of the Sun

Featuring frogs, grasshoppers,
rabbits and the KING OF BEASTS!

READ HAPPILY EVER AFTER...

Catch me if you can!

storyteller's corner

THE RABBIT AND THE KING OF BEASTS

Can a mischievous bunny escape from the hungry king?



6

Famous Fables

THE OWL AND THE GRASSHOPPER

The grasshopper annoys everyone with his singing – but is the grumpy owl a fan?

30

short stories, Big Dreams

THE FROGS' CHOIR

When the frogs in her pond make a racket, a princess comes up with a musical solution!

10

Awesome Adventures

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO LEO

The story of a bright boy and his amazing discoveries!

33

Around the World Tales

SHADOW PUPPETS

The story of how Chinese shadow puppets were invented to cheer up a sad emperor.

12

Myths and Legends

THE CREATION OF THE SUN

A young Aztec hero goes on a quest to save the world from an everlasting winter.

38

Tales from Today

THE PEABODY EXPERIMENT

A school gardening project goes out of control, thanks to a teacher's new fertiliser formula!

16

storytime playbox

Find your way through a maze puzzle, try an animal wordsearch and learn how to draw an owl!

39

Favourite Fairy Tales

THE MAGICIAN'S HORSE

A horse and a prince team up to escape from a wicked magician.

21

Story Magic

This month, we have four new books – about wolves, Aztecs, the oceans and a bird detective!

50

OUR COVER STORY

Make some shadow animals!

SEE PAGE 48!



LOOKING FOR A GIFT IDEA?

Subscribe today and get
a free **£5 Book Token**



VISIT WWW.STORYTIMEMAGAZINE.COM/BOOKS

The National Book Token will be emailed to you once a subscription is placed through the link above. National Book Tokens can be redeemed instore at WH Smiths, Waterstones and many independent book shops, and redeemed online at many retailers. Visit www.nationalbooktokens.com for participating retailers. National Book Tokens redeemable in the UK only. Tokens are available while stocks last. We reserve the right to withdraw this offer at any time.

THE RABBIT AND THE KING OF BEASTS

Long before people walked the forests of North America, there lived a rabbit who loved to cause trouble.

He would play tricks on all the other creatures, and then laugh at them. The animals went to the King of Beasts and asked him to teach the rabbit a lesson.

“I will put a stop to his tricks once and for all!” rumbled the mighty King of Beasts.

“Fox! Go and fetch me the rabbit! I will have him for my dinner!”



The fox went in search of the rabbit. He found him in an orchard, gnawing on the ripe and tasty apples that had fallen onto the ground.

“You must come with me!” growled the fox. “The King of Beasts has invited you to dinner!”

The clever rabbit did not trust the fox, so he said, “Of course! But surely you would like to try some of these delicious apples first?”

The fox agreed, and ate an apple. It was delicious!

He ate more and more until his belly was full, and he had a terrible stomach-ache. The rabbit laughed and hopped away.



Meanwhile, the King of Beasts was getting hungry. “Go and find the fox!” he told the coyote. The coyote found the fox in the orchard, groaning and holding his aching belly. ➡





“What happened?” asked the coyote.

The fox did not want to admit that he had been tricked by the rabbit, so he said, “ I have swallowed the rabbit so I could bring him safely to the King of Beasts – but he is kicking me from the inside. Could you get me some herbs from over the hill? They will make my tummy feel better!”

The coyote went over the hill to gather herbs, but he found the herbs so tasty that he ate them all and fell asleep.

Back in his lodge, the King of Beasts was getting even hungrier. “What has happened to the fox and the coyote?” he grumbled. “Blue jay! Fetch the rascally rabbit for me!”

The blue jay flew over the forest and soon found the rabbit sunning himself outside his burrow. Before the bunny knew what was happening, the bird had swooped down and picked him up in his claws.

The blue jay carried the rabbit back to the King of Beasts' lodge and dropped him in front of the king.

"At last!" growled the king. "It is time for my dinner!"

The little rabbit shook in fright, but managed to say, "Your majesty, surely you would like an appetiser? I know where to find a tasty gopher!"

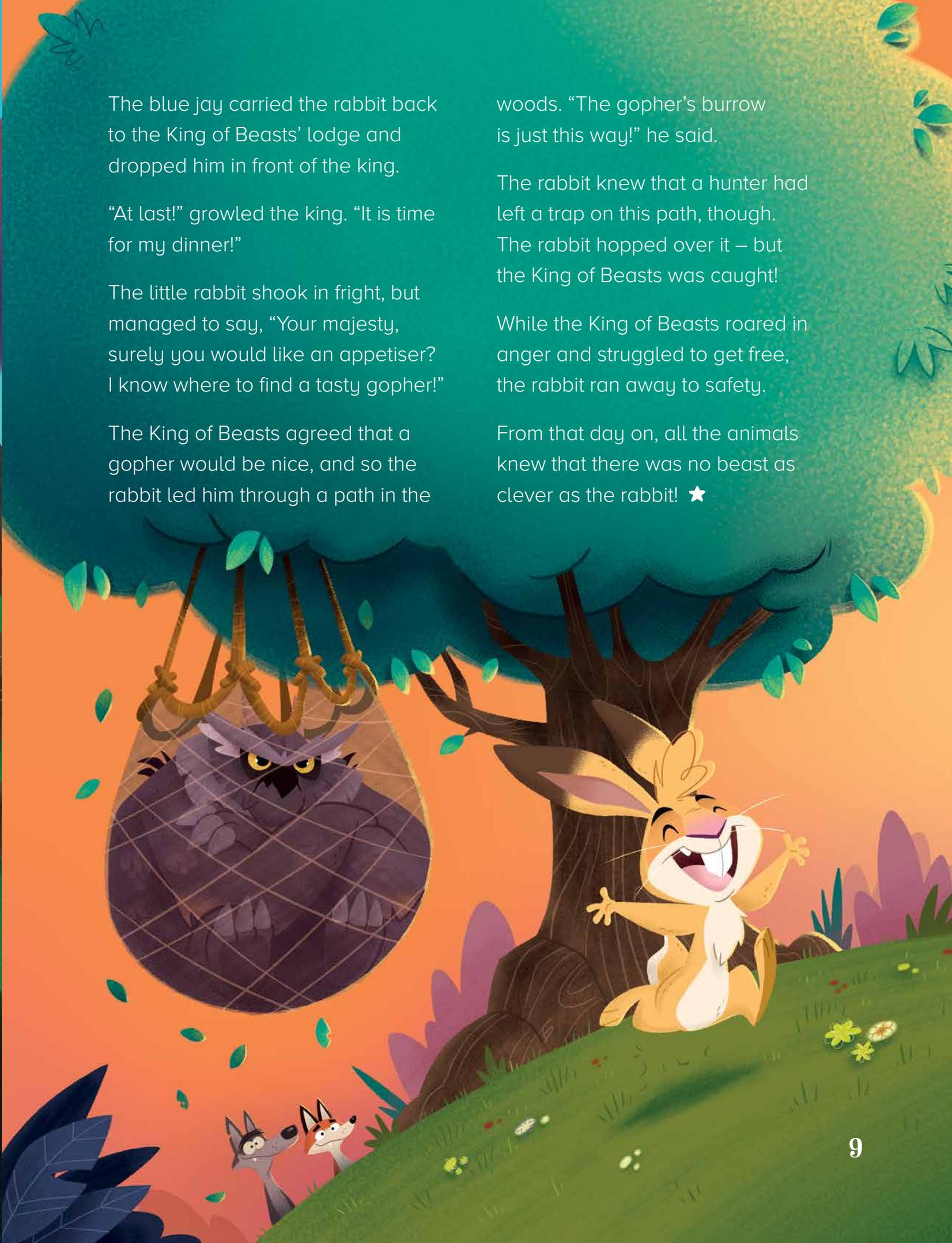
The King of Beasts agreed that a gopher would be nice, and so the rabbit led him through a path in the

woods. "The gopher's burrow is just this way!" he said.

The rabbit knew that a hunter had left a trap on this path, though. The rabbit hopped over it – but the King of Beasts was caught!

While the King of Beasts roared in anger and struggled to get free, the rabbit ran away to safety.

From that day on, all the animals knew that there was no beast as clever as the rabbit! ★



THE FROGS' CHOIR

Princess Tina was happy living with her husband, Prince Webster. He had once been a frog, but after Princess Tina had kissed him, he had turned back into a handsome prince.

They lived in a fine palace with a beautiful garden and many servants, but there was one problem. In the garden there were lots of ponds, and in those ponds lived dozens of frogs. By day, it was fun to see them hop and swim – but at night, their croaking kept everyone awake!

“We must get rid of those frogs!” Princess Tina complained. “Nobody can sleep because of their noise!”

Prince Webster frowned. “I cannot do that!” he replied. “They are my friends from when I was a frog!”

Princess Tina went into the garden and sat beside the largest pond. She idly toyed with her golden ball and watched the frogs flit through the water under the lily pads.





“If only their croaking was more pleasant...” she said to herself.

All of a sudden, she had a brilliant idea! She ran inside and came back out with a xylophone and her little book of songs.

“My dear frogs!” she announced, “You are wonderful singers, and I have some songs for you!”

Across the pond, little green heads popped out of the water, and dozens of big bulging eyes looked at her.

Princess Tina began to play a pretty tune on her xylophone – and the frogs croaked loudly to show how much they enjoyed it.

“I can teach you how to sing this!” she said. “Little frogs, you go like this...” She hit some high notes.

“You fine big bullfrogs should sing this at the same time.” She then played several deep notes on the bars of her xylophone.

By the end of the afternoon, the frogs had learned the princess’s tune. That evening, when the moon was in the sky and everybody in the palace was tucked up in bed, all was quiet...

... Until the frogs began to croak out their pretty and tuneful lullaby. Everyone in the palace listened to it and fell into a peaceful sleep! ★

SHADOW PUPPETS

Many centuries ago, China was ruled by a kind and just emperor. He governed the country well, and was very much in love with his wife, the empress. She was a wonderful storyteller who enchanted him with her tales of heroes and villains and dragons from ancient times.

Unfortunately, the emperor's wife got sick and passed away, leaving him heartbroken. Filled with sadness, he locked himself away in his garden. He and his wife had created it together, and he had many memories of good times spent there with her. He stayed in the garden, weeping for days on end, and stopped caring about what happened to China.





This worried the emperor's minister. As he journeyed through China, he could see that the roads were not repaired, the crops were not growing, and the people were unhappy.

After a long day travelling, he stopped to rest for the night in a small village. There he saw children playing with puppets in the light of a lantern. Their puppets cast shadows on the walls, and as the children moved the puppets, the shadows seemed to come to life! It was wonderful to see, and the kids were filled with joy as

they acted out a story with their toys. This gave the minister a brilliant idea...

He rushed back to the capital city and went to the most talented craftsmen he knew. He told them to make beautiful puppets of people, animals and mythical beasts out of leather.



The next evening, the minister visited the emperor's garden. The emperor was sitting in the moonlight, staring up at the stars with tears running down his face. ➔

“Oh, how I miss my dear wife!” he sighed to the minister. “The evenings seem so empty and dull without her magical stories.”

The minister smiled kindly and told the emperor that he had a surprise for him. He had servants bring in a cloth screen, and a lantern which was placed behind it.

Then in came puppeteers, with the beautiful puppets the craftsmen had made, inspired by the stories the

empress used to tell. They held up the puppets between the lantern and the screen, and used rods to make the puppets move and dance. The puppets cast shadows on the screen that moved as if alive. The emperor’s eyes lit up with wonder.

It was then that a figure that looked like the emperor’s wife walked across the screen. The puppeteer made it move like the empress had, and imitated her voice.



The empress-puppet began to tell one of the ruler's favourite stories, and the emperor watched spellbound as the beautiful moving shadows of the puppets acted out the tale. It was as if his wife was there talking to him, and he felt his sadness drain away. What a beautiful evening it was, and a very special one too.

The next morning, the emperor went to his court, and once again ruled China as an emperor should.

The people became happy and prosperous, and the crops grew well in the fertile soil.



The emperor told the puppeteers that from that day on, they must put on their shows for the court every evening. Shadow-puppets became very popular across China and far beyond – and you can still see these magical shows today! ★





THE PEABODY EXPERIMENT



Everybody in class 3B agreed that Ms. Peabody was the best teacher in the whole school – and maybe the world!

She often forgot what she was doing, and once lost three pairs of glasses in one day, and interrupted maths lessons to talk about newts – but that was part of the fun. They never knew what would happen next!

That morning, when they all clattered into class and sat at their desks, Ms. Peabody looked particularly excited. She adjusted her glasses and straightened the white lab coat that she always wore. It was covered with ink and paint stains, but she said wearing it was better than ruining her clothes!

“Settle DOWN everyone!” she said. “I have a VERY exciting announcement – we are going to start a CLASS GARDEN! Mr. Wensleydale the caretaker has set aside a special plot for us outside, and this morning we are going to plant some LOVELY seedlings the people at the garden centre gave us!”

The class buzzed with excitement as they all lined up and marched outside.





There they found the planting bed Mr. Wensleydale had spent the weekend building. There were also trays of seedlings, some trowels for digging with, and gardening aprons to stop their uniforms from getting dirty.

Ms. Peabody told them what to do. “Aprons ON, everybody! Now, we need to gently take the seedlings OUT of the tray. Then use your trowel...”



Following her instructions, they used the trowels to make little holes in the black soil of the bed, and then gently but firmly planted the seedlings.

“Put those radishes in a NICE row, Hugh!” Ms. Peabody said. “And Sunita, smell the leaves of that rosemary plant – they are delicious on roast potatoes!”

Wendy was given the job of planting a seedling with wide leaves and little curly tendrils. “That’s the pumpkin plant, Wendy!” Ms. Peabody said with a smile. She helped Wendy plant it right in the middle of the plot and tamp in the soil around it.

Everybody was pleased with their work, and when they were finished, they admired the neat rows of seedlings. “Well DONE, everyone!” smiled Ms. Peabody.

She then adjusted her glasses and pulled a little tube out of her stained and spattered lab coat.

“I was reading some VERY interesting articles on organic farming last night, and made my own SPECIAL fertiliser. It’s 100% organic, eco-friendly, and SHOULD help our plants grow better!” ➡➡





All the kids knew that Ms. Peabody lived in a little tumbledown cottage around the corner from the school. There were rumours that it was filled with books on every subject under the sun, and that she had a little laboratory in her shed where she did experiments.

Ms. Peabody leaned over the bed with the little vial. "I think I'll just try a DROP on the pumpkin plant first!" she said. "Oops! That's a bit more than a drop – but I'm sure it will be fine!"

It was time for maths, so all the kids took off their aprons and trooped back into class.

They had almost finished their lesson on multiplying fractions when they heard the voice of the headmaster over the intercom. He sounded a bit panicked!

"Ms. Peabody, please report to ..." The intercom then crackled and went silent.

"How strange!" said Ms. Peabody. "I suppose I should go to the office..."

She opened the door – and saw that there were great big vines snaking down the corridor, with star-shaped orange flowers and lots of spring-shaped tendrils. The vines were still growing, wriggling through doors and around corners. From down the corridor, the class could hear yells and shrieks from teachers and students.

Alison pointed towards the window. "Look at that!"

Outside, they could see that more vines had grown across the playground and up the monkey bars!



Great green leaves bigger than umbrellas were blocking out the sun. And what were those huge round orange things growing from the vines, higher than a person was tall?

“PUMPKINS!” gasped Ms. Peabody. “I must have made a mistake with my fertiliser formula!”

“Follow me, children!” she said. She ran down the corridor, jumping over the wriggling vines. The shoots had gone into the library, knocking books from the shelves, and had begun to cover the windows.

As she ran, Ms. Peabody pulled another vial out of her coat pocket.

“Luckily, I made THIS fertiliser antidote. Now if I can just pour it over the pumpkin plant’s ROOTS…”

The teacher then gave a little yelp – a pumpkin tendril had wrapped itself around her waist and lifted her up off the floor!

“Kids! You must pour the formula over the roots of the pumpkin plant we put in – don’t worry, it is 100% natural and safe for humans!”

She tossed the vial to Sunita, who gave it to Hugh. He began pushing through the vines in the hallway and had almost made it to the door when another tendril snagged his ankle. ➔



“Alison! You take it!” he shouted. Alison grabbed the vial from his hand and dashed out of the door to where the garden they had planted was. It looked like a jungle, with great big pumpkin stalks, huge leaves and orange pumpkins the size of hot air balloons everywhere!

Alison unstopped the bottle and splashed the bluish liquid around the bottom of the thickest pumpkin stalk. The plant shuddered. Its leaves stopped growing, and the plant’s runners stopped wriggling across the ground.

The rest of the class managed to get Ms. Peabody free of the pumpkin tendrils, and she went to explain what had happened to the headmaster.

After lunchtime, she was back in the classroom, and Mr. Wensleydale was grumbling as he began chopping up the pumpkin plant runners that had grown all over the school.

“Well, that was an important lesson!” said Ms. Peabody. “Always be extra-careful when measuring things!”

She then smiled. “The headmaster told me that we are going to be doing another special project tomorrow! We are going to be COOKING. You’re going to learn about all of the things you can make out of pumpkins! It will be DELICIOUS!” ★

COOK IT!

Pumpkins are very tasty and can be cooked in many different ways! Go to www.storytimemagazine.com/free to download the recipe for a healthy and delicious pumpkin soup!

THE MAGICIAN'S HORSE

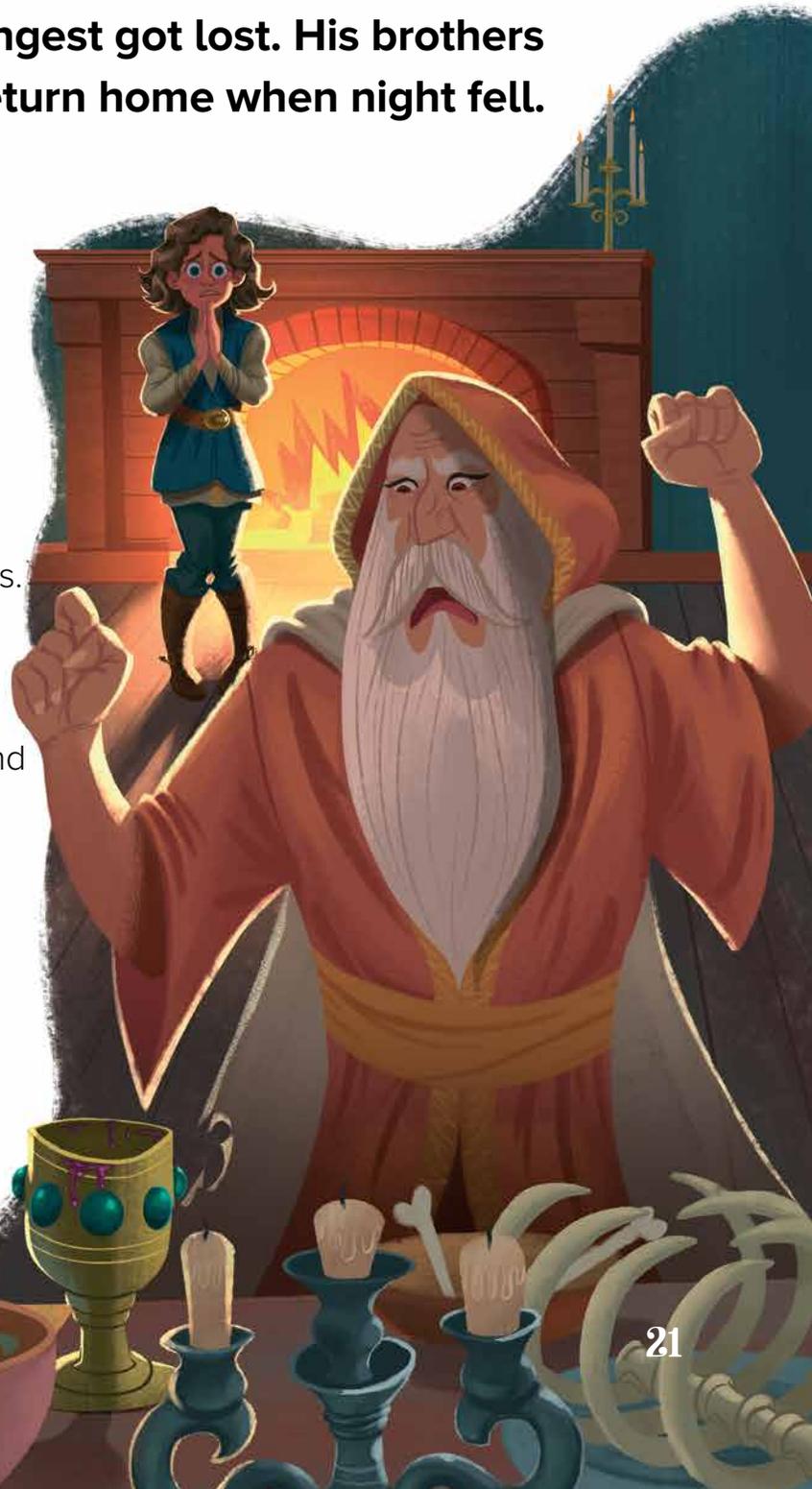
Once upon a time, in a land far away, there lived a king who had three sons. One day, the princes went hunting together in the wilderness, and the youngest got lost. His brothers searched for him, but had to return home when night fell.

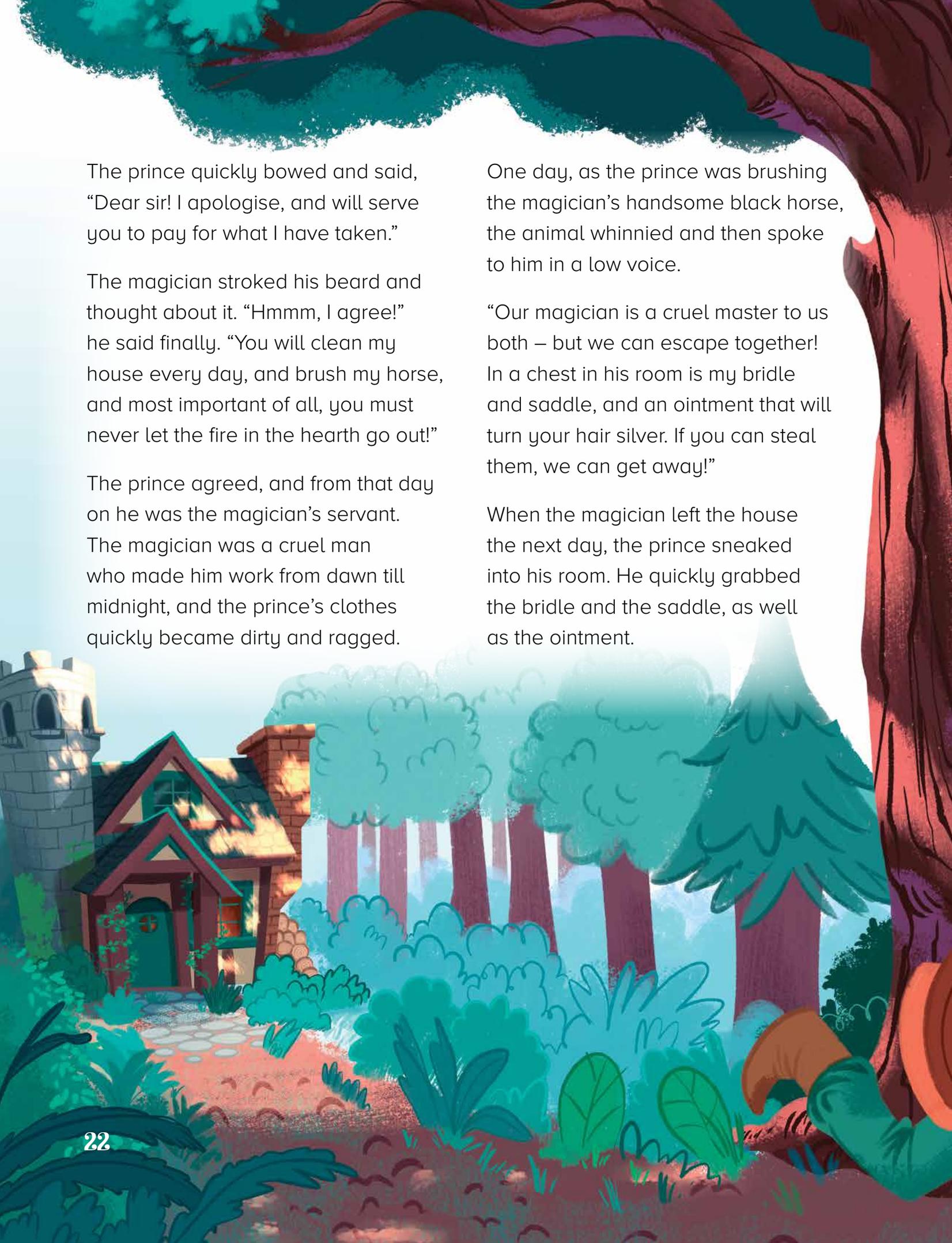
Left alone in the wilds at night, the young prince looked for shelter and saw an impressive house on a high hill. He knocked on the door, and discovered that it was open.

Inside was a grand hall, and in that hall was a great banqueting table. The table was loaded with delicious food and drinks. The hungry prince sat down and ate until he was full.

Just then, he heard a voice thunder behind him: "How dare you enter my house and help yourself to my dinner!"

The prince whirled around to see a very large and very angry man in the doorway. From his great beard and embroidered robes, the young man guessed that the stranger must be a mighty magician. ➔





The prince quickly bowed and said, “Dear sir! I apologise, and will serve you to pay for what I have taken.”

The magician stroked his beard and thought about it. “Hmmm, I agree!” he said finally. “You will clean my house every day, and brush my horse, and most important of all, you must never let the fire in the hearth go out!”

The prince agreed, and from that day on he was the magician’s servant. The magician was a cruel man who made him work from dawn till midnight, and the prince’s clothes quickly became dirty and ragged.

One day, as the prince was brushing the magician’s handsome black horse, the animal whinnied and then spoke to him in a low voice.

“Our magician is a cruel master to us both – but we can escape together! In a chest in his room is my bridle and saddle, and an ointment that will turn your hair silver. If you can steal them, we can get away!”

When the magician left the house the next day, the prince sneaked into his room. He quickly grabbed the bridle and the saddle, as well as the ointment.

“Good!” said the horse. “Now use the ointment on your hair – but then cover it so that no one can see it!” The prince did as the horse asked. His hair turned bright silver, but he covered it with a cloth, which he wrapped around his head.

The horse then told him, “Now put the saddle and bridle on me! But before we leave, pile firewood high in the magician’s fireplace!” The prince put a lot of wood on the fire, and it was soon blazing so fiercely that the great hall began to catch fire. The prince then ran to the black horse, and together they fled into the night.

Behind them, the wicked magician’s house caught fire. When they looked back from the top of a hill, they saw the house collapse and the fire go out.

“That is good!” said the horse. “The magician’s power came from the fire in his fireplace – and now he is powerless!”



They travelled for two days and two nights. The next morning, the prince discovered that the black horse had carried him to a green field, and in the middle of the field was a grand hall made of shining marble. The black horse shook his mane and looked at it with pride. ➔



"I am a great lord among horses,
and this is my home!" said the horse.



HOW MANY?

See if you can count all the little bluebirds in this picture. Write in the number you find here.



Answer: There are five bluebirds.



Can you spot these things? Tick the boxes when you find them.



The horse then told the prince,
“Beyond that hedge is the palace of a
great king. You must go there and ask
to serve him – and every day you
must bring half your food to me!”

The prince did as the horse told him.
At the gate to the king’s palace, the
gardener asked him what he wanted.
He replied, “I want to serve the king!”

The gardener looked at the young
man in his ragged clothes and said,
“You can help me in the garden!
You will get three meals and one
florin a day, and a hut to sleep in.”

The prince agreed. Every day, he
would work hard in the garden,

then take half his food to the black
horse in his hall, and go to sleep in
his simple hut.

One day, the horse said to him,
“The king has three daughters,
and today they will each choose
a husband. They will walk in the
gardens, where the princes of many
lands have gathered. Each princess
will throw a jewelled apple on the
ground – and will marry the man
it lands in front of. Go and rake the
leaves in the garden, by the pond!”

Puzzled, the prince did as the horse
told him and began raking the leaves
by the lily-covered pond.





The youngest of the princesses was walking on a path above, and her jewelled apple fell from her hands and landed beside him.

The princess was surprised to see her apple fall in front of a ragged gardener – but when she saw a lock of silver hair slip out from under his head-cloth, she fell in love with him.



All three princesses were married a week later – the older two to wealthy princes, and the youngest to the palace gardener’s assistant! The king was embarrassed that his beloved youngest had married such a ragged man, but she loved him and lived happily with him in his humble hut.

Now, it so happened that some of the king’s barons rebelled against his rule. The king and his knights rode out to fight them.

The prince begged the king, “Just give me a horse and I will fight with you!”

The king laughed and sneered, “Take my oldest carthorse – any other horse would be too good for a gardener’s assistant!”

The young prince rode out with the rest of the king’s men, but his old carthorse collapsed only a short way down the road. The king’s army left him behind, laughing at him.

The sad prince went to the black horse’s hall to tell his friend about what had happened. ➡



The black horse snorted and said, “Get my saddle and bridle, and put on the armour in the next room. We will go into battle together!”

The prince did as his friend said. He put on the suit of shining armour and picked up a long sword as a weapon. They then galloped off down the road after the king’s army.

They arrived just in the nick of time – the king and his knights were surrounded by enemies and under attack! The prince charged into battle on his horse. With his sword, he drove away the king’s enemies, sending them fleeing from the field. However, he was wounded in the leg.

The king’s knights tried to carry him to safety, but the prince just tied his handkerchief around the wound and climbed back on the black horse.

Before anyone could do anything, the prince and the magician’s horse galloped away, back to the black horse’s hall. The prince took off his helmet and shining armour, and then went back to his hut to sleep. His wife noticed the wound on his leg, but he told her not to worry about it.

When the king returned from the battle, his youngest daughter was overjoyed that he was victorious and had not been hurt.



“We only won because of the bravery of a mysterious knight in shining armour!” the king told her. “I was losing the battle when he saved the day. He was wounded in the leg, but tied up the wound and galloped away, his silvery hair streaming from underneath his helmet! If I could find him, I would give him half my kingdom!”

The youngest princess realised that the mysterious hero must have been her husband.

She took the king to her humble home, and showed him her husband’s wounded leg and silver hair.

In gratitude, the king gave the youngest prince his thanks and half his kingdom, which the young man ruled wisely for many years. ★

DOWNLOAD IT!

Go to storytimemagazine.com/free to download cool knight’s helmet masks to print out, colour in and play!



THE OWL AND THE GRASSHOPPER

In the very heart of the forest, an owl lived in a hole in an old oak tree.

By night, she would fly through the trees on silent wings and eat moths. By day, she would sleep in her feathery nest, with her eyes covered by her wings.

One day, a grasshopper was making his way through the forest, enjoying the sunshine. The insect believed he was a great musician. All day long he rubbed his hind legs across his wings, making a **chirp-chirp-chirp** sound. He thought that this sound was wonderful, but not everybody agreed.

WING SINGING!

Did you know that grasshoppers actually 'sing' by rubbing their legs against their wings?

First, he played his song by the riverbank. He thought he was sounding particularly good today. "I will surely become a famous musician if I keep playing so well!" he said to himself.

A frog who lived in the river did not like the grasshopper's tune, though.

"Stop making that horrible racket!" he croaked, and tried to catch the grasshopper with his sticky tongue. The grasshopper jumped away and went further into the forest.

"Of course a frog won't appreciate the music of a genius like me!" he thought. "He doesn't even have ears!"

He stopped by an earth bank and began rubbing his legs against his

wings again. That was when a rabbit stuck his head out of a hole.

"Stop making that awful chirping, grasshopper!" the rabbit squeaked.

"Of course a rabbit like you could never appreciate my original sounds!" said the grasshopper snootily. "You have dirt in your ears!"

The grasshopper hopped deeper into the forest and decided to chirp-chirp-chirp underneath the owl's oak tree.

The owl had just fallen asleep when she heard the insect's annoying chirp-chirp-chirp.

She poked her head out of her hole and said, "Will you please keep quiet? I am trying to sleep!" ➡



The grasshopper looked at her and said, "My music is so new and challenging that an old owl like you just can't appreciate it!" He then kept on chirping.

The owl was the wisest of all the animals in the forest, and she came up with a rather clever idea.

She said to the grasshopper, "Now that I have heard more of your music, I can understand how amazing it is! Will you come up to my hole so I can hear it better?"

The vain grasshopper was most pleased, and climbed up the tree towards the hole.

"At last I have found someone who appreciates my special sound!" he thought. "I am sure that my chirping will become a sensation, and I will become rich and famous!"

When the grasshopper got up to the owl's hole, he began to chirp-chirp-chirp as loud as he could.

The owl ate the grasshopper with a snap of her beak, and then went back to sleep! ★



THE WORLD ACCORDING TO LEO

In the countryside in Italy there is a little town called Vinci. About 500 years ago, a baby was born in a simple cottage outside that town. The boy's father, Piero, named him Leonardo.

When he was just a toddler, a great bird called a kite perched on Leo's crib, and its tail slipped into his mouth. From that day on, little Leo was fascinated by nature – and birds in particular! He watched them soar across the sky, drew pictures of their wings and feathers, and dreamed of one day building a machine so that he might fly among them! ➔



Leo was very smart in school – but he was curious about so many things that he couldn't concentrate on lessons! He preferred to go exploring in the hills, where he could study nature.

He would look at birds and how they flew through the sky, draw sketches of how water flowed in the river, and examine plants to see how they grew.



On one of his rambles through the country, Leonardo found a great cave in a hillside. It looked dark and dangerous – what lay within it? Were there wonderful things to be discovered, or was it home to a horrible monster? Leo was terrified but curious... and in the end his curiosity gave him the courage to explore the deep and silent cave.

Inside, he found some huge bones. They were much too big to be a human's and looked more like the bones of a fish. He worked out that they must belong to a whale that had died many thousands of years before!

This discovery set his imagination on fire. He couldn't stop thinking about how the whale must have swum through ancient oceans. Its bones became part of the rocks, and the rocks were thrust out of the ground to become hills! It was mind-blowing – and he wrote all this down, with sketches and notes.



Leonardo had hundreds of other amazing ideas which he scribbled in journals. They were full of questions and notes and observations about nature and maths and medicine and art and the human body. Why is the sky blue? How do the muscles and veins and bones of the body work? He came up with ideas and sketches by the hundred!



When Leo turned 15, his father had some exciting news: they were moving to the city of Florence! Leonardo was sad to leave the countryside, which he

loved to explore – but at that time Florence was one of the most exciting cities in the world.

It was filled with artists and master craftsman and scientists who were exploring and arguing with each other and coming up with exciting new ideas. New buildings were being built, new paintings were being painted, and new books were being printed. It was definitely the place to be for a brilliant boy with a head full of ideas! He walked through the streets, staring at the buildings and sketching the faces of people, and he added even more notes to his journals. ➔

Leo's father found him a job as an apprentice in the workshop of a man called Verrocchio. Verrocchio was a sculptor, a painter and a goldsmith, and he created many other things as well. He and his apprentices worked together to make art of all kinds for the people of Florence.

Verrocchio gave Leo lessons on how to paint, and the boy soon learned everything his master could teach him. Leo also mixed paints, helped to build cranes and other devices, and was taught how to make things with metal.

Leonardo began helping Verrocchio and the other artists in the studio to create large paintings. At first, he added the backgrounds and smaller details. However, as his confidence grew, so did his skill. Soon he was a better artist than his master!

When Verrocchio was hired to paint a large biblical scene, he asked Leo to help. Leo used all of his knowledge to paint lifelike faces, animals that looked like they could move, and landscapes that resembled the countryside outside Vinci.





Stories tell us that when Verrocchio saw how brilliant the bits of the painting done by his student were, he broke his own paintbrushes and said he would never paint again.

Verrocchio and Piero realised that Leo was an amazing painter – but the boy would soon prove that he was a genius in many other areas as well. His journals of brilliant ideas are still a source of wonder to us today! ☆



= WHAT HAPPENED NEXT... =

Leonardo da Vinci, as he is known, is considered to be one of the greatest geniuses of all time. He was an outstanding artist, but also had an incredible knowledge of engineering, science, the natural world and the human body. Today we still view Leonardo's works with awe, and his journals sell at auction for millions of dollars.

Those books are a treasure trove of ideas – he produced over 28,000 pages of notes on more than 50 subjects. He drew sketches and plans for a winged flying machine, a self-propelled cart, and even a device that works like a helicopter! These ideas show us that Leonardo was a man who was hundreds of years ahead of his time.

If you want to know what young Leo looked like, you should check out the statue of David created by Verrocchio. Young Leonardo was the model for the bronze sculpture – and you can see it in Florence today!

THE CREATION OF THE SUN

When the Earth was young, a bright sun shone down on it. The Aztec people of Mexico worshipped the sun, for it brought warmth and light, and helped their crops grow in plenty.

However, there were evil gods who hated the sun and wanted to bring cold and darkness to the world. They used their sorcery to put out the sun's fires, bringing an everlasting night and an eternal winter.

Crops and animals died, and the people that survived suffered terribly from cold and hunger. The Aztec tribes journeyed to a secret place to meet and talk. Among them was a group led by a young chief named Chicovaneg. He took his people to the meeting-place, where the young and old of all the tribes were gathered together to discuss how they might stop the eternal winter and return life to the world.

HOW DO YOU SAY IT?

Aztec: **az**-tek

Chicovaneg: **chee**-ko-va-neg

Quetzalcoatl: ket-zol-ko-atil

Quetzal: ket-zol

Masqueshab: mas-ke-shab

Maguey: ma-**gey**

“We must make a new sun to shine upon the world!” Chicovaneg declared.

“But how can we do that?” wailed the gathered people.

The wisest man in all the tribes was a philosopher who had lived for more than 300 years.

He said, “There is only one way to create a new sun. A mighty hero must make a great shield! He must then go into the heavens and take pieces of all the stars to place on his shield, which will become the new sun.

Now who will do this?”

The greatest warriors and chiefs of the tribes stood up and shouted that they would go on this quest, but the philosopher told them not to be hasty.

“The hero who creates the sun will have to travel with it across the sky forever!” he said. “They will live until the end of time, but they can never come down to Earth again.”

The heroes of the tribes fell silent, for they did not want to be separated from their loved ones forever. However, Chicovaneg spoke up.

“I have a kind wife, a healthy son, and a wise mother. I will go on the quest for the sake of them, and for all the Aztec people.”

Chicovaneg worked for many days to create a great shield, and then prepared to set off on his long journey. ➡



The philosopher told him, “First, you must find the feathered serpent Quetzalcoatl, the god of our people. He will guide you on your quest to make a new sun!”

The warrior journeyed across the wintry world, searching for Quetzalcoatl – but the feathered serpent was nowhere to be found!



One day, while passing by a lake, the young chief saw a brightly coloured quetzal bird who had fallen in the water. Using his great shield as a boat, he paddled out to rescue it, and then warmed it in front of his campfire.

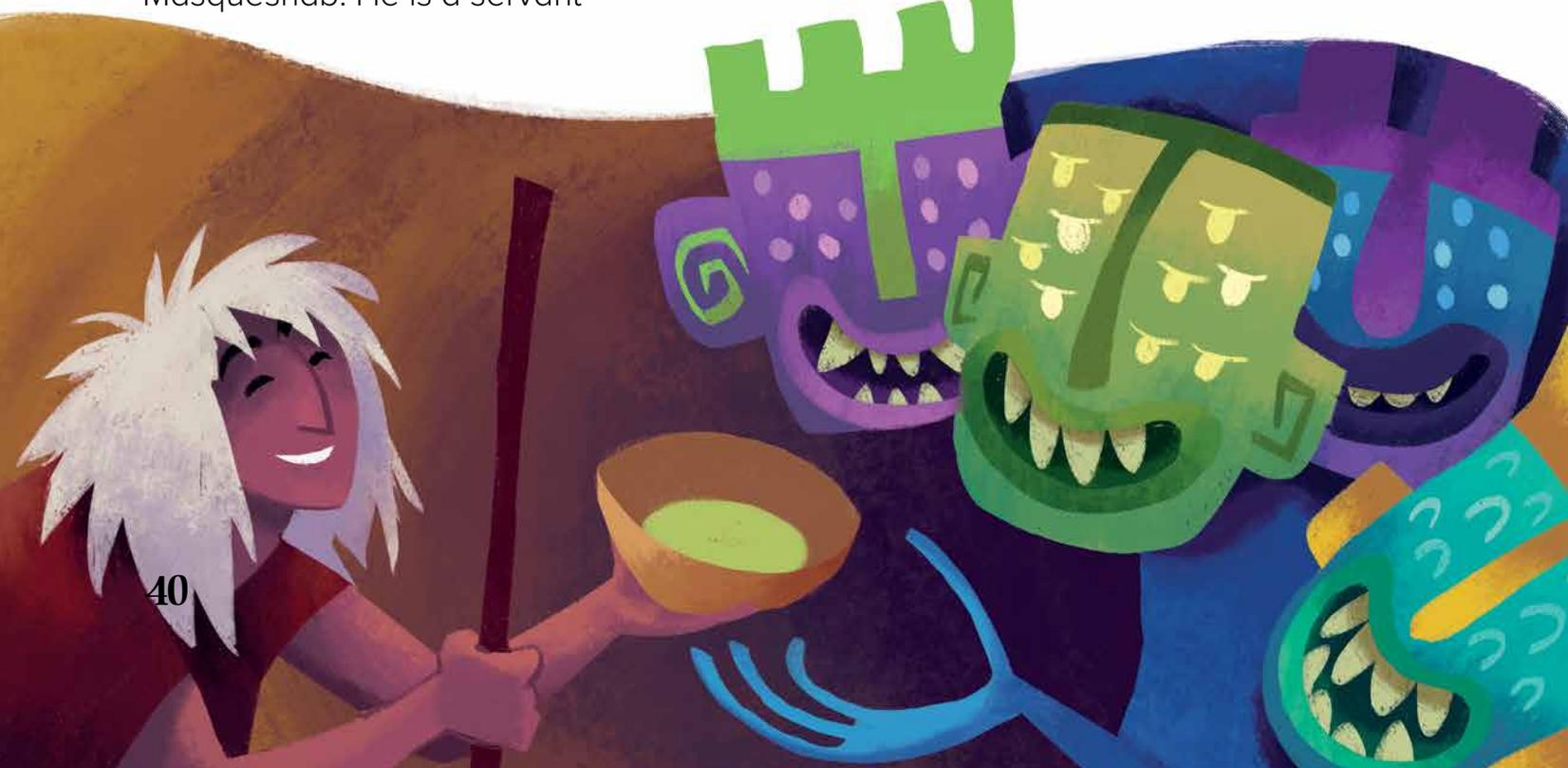
“Thank you for saving me!” squawked the bird. “Are you looking for Quetzalcoatl? He is being held prisoner by the evil sorcerer Masqueshab. He is a servant

of the gods who brought eternal night and winter on the world!”

The bird guided Chicovaneg to the cave of Masqueshab, an enormous being with eight arms and legs, four heads and forty eyes. When he slept, he closed only thirty of his eyes, so he could never be sneaked up on.

The young chief came up with a clever plan to trick the sorcerer and free the feathered serpent. He disguised himself as an old man, with a ragged wig and dirt on his face, and walked with two walking-sticks. He went to Masqueshab’s cave and asked if he could work as his servant.

The sorcerer agreed, and Chicovaneg made him a delicious drink of sugar-cane juice, honey and a plant sap called maguey.





This drink was so strong that it made the sorcerer fall asleep, and all forty of his eyes closed!

While Masqueshab snored, the disguised hero explored the cave and found Quetzalcoatl tied to a rock. With one blow of his sword-club, he cut the rope that kept the feathered serpent prisoner.

“Thank you for freeing me!” said Quetzalcoatl. “Now I will guide you on your quest to reach the stars so that you can make a new sun!”



The feathered serpent took Chicovaneg on a journey that lasted many weeks, across the dark and icy world. The young chief sometimes used his shield as a toboggan on the snow, or to protect them from blizzard winds.

At long last, they reached the edge of the Earth, where they could see the stars hanging in the empty void.

“You must leap to the lowest star!” Quetzalcoatl told Chicovaneg. “Do not turn around, do not look back. Be brave and leap forwards!”

But when he prepared to jump, Chicovaneg became afraid that he might slip and fall into space. “Can I jump from a hill instead?” he asked.

Quetzalcoatl did not reply. With a mighty swing of his feathered tail, he knocked the warrior off the edge of the Earth and sent him flying towards the closest star!

Chicovaneg grabbed the star and pulled himself up onto it. From there, he could see the icy Earth far below! ➡



SUN WORSHIP!

The Aztec people were great farmers who worshipped the sun, because it helped their crops grow! They made offerings to the sun so that he would keep shining on the world.

The hero chipped off a piece of the star and placed it on the great shield he carried.

Quetzalcoatl flew up through the sky towards him.

“Well done!” the feathered serpent said. “Now you must leap to all the other stars and collect all the pieces you need to make the new sun!”

Chicovaneg jumped from one star to another. From each one he took a glowing piece and fixed it to his shield. When he put the fragment from the highest star on it, the shield began to glow like a yellow flame.

Chicovaneg floated through the heavens with his sun-shield, and its warmth and light melted the ice that covered the Earth. Rivers began to flow, new plants sprouted, and life returned to the world. The evil gods were terrified of the sun and fled to the deepest, darkest caverns, where they live to this day.

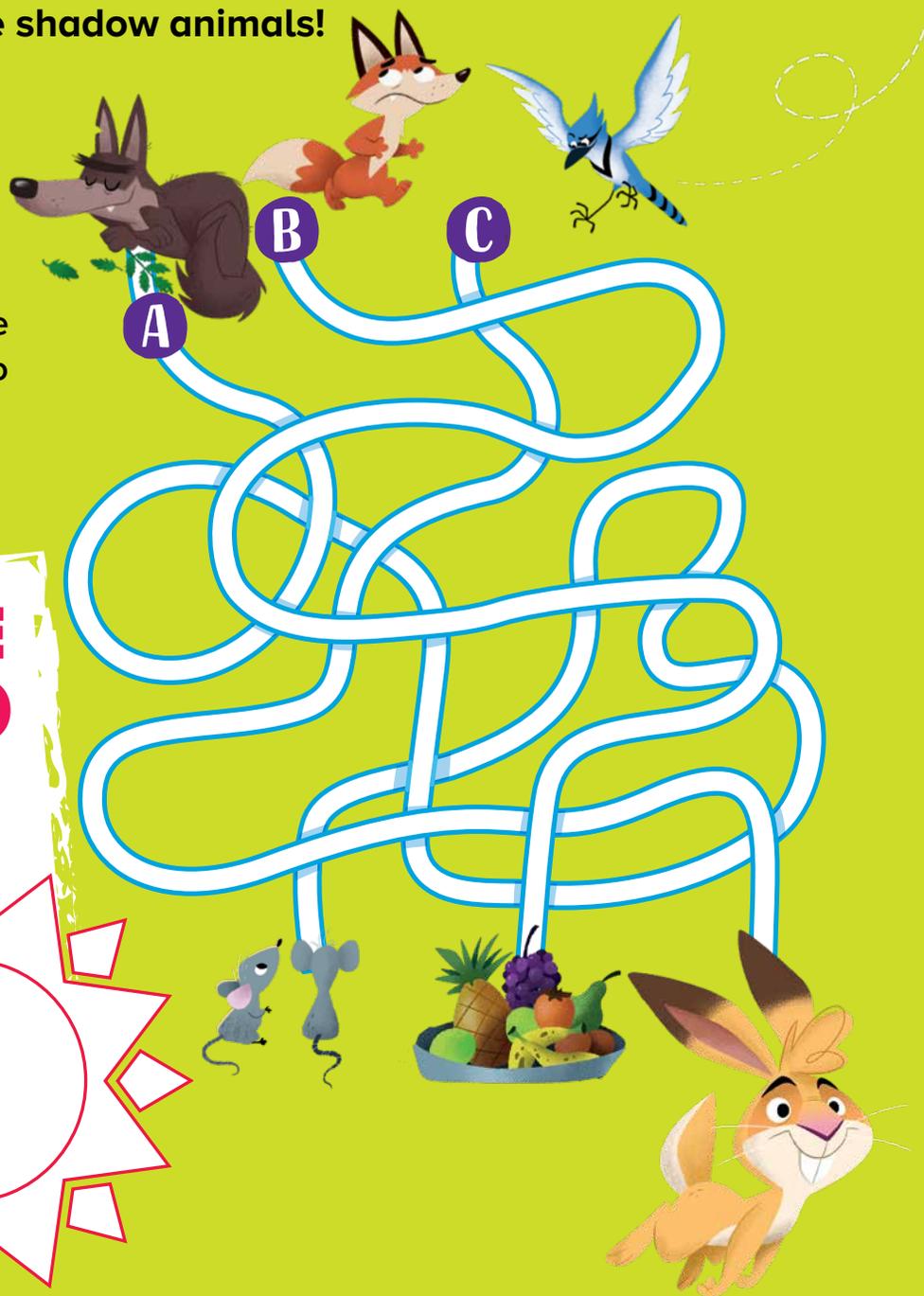
The Aztec tribes looked around in wonder as new crops grew on what was once frozen earth – corn and tomatoes, avocados and breadfruit and coconuts. They held a great festival in honour of the mighty hero Chicovaneg, who had brought the sun back to the world! ★

STORYTIME PLAYBOX

Discover how to grow bean sprouts, complete our wordsearch, and make shadow animals!

1 HUNT THE RABBIT

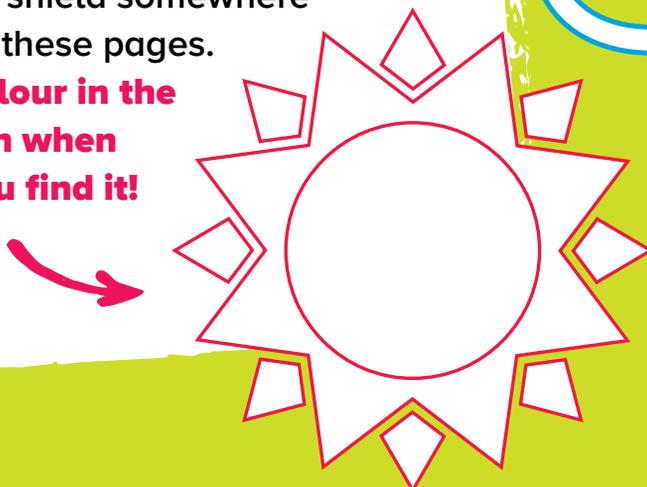
The King of Beasts has sent the wolf, the fox and the blue jay to hunt down the rabbit. Follow the paths from each animal – **which one will catch him?**



2 FIND THE SHIELD

Chicovaneg has lost his shield somewhere on these pages.

Colour in the sun when you find it!



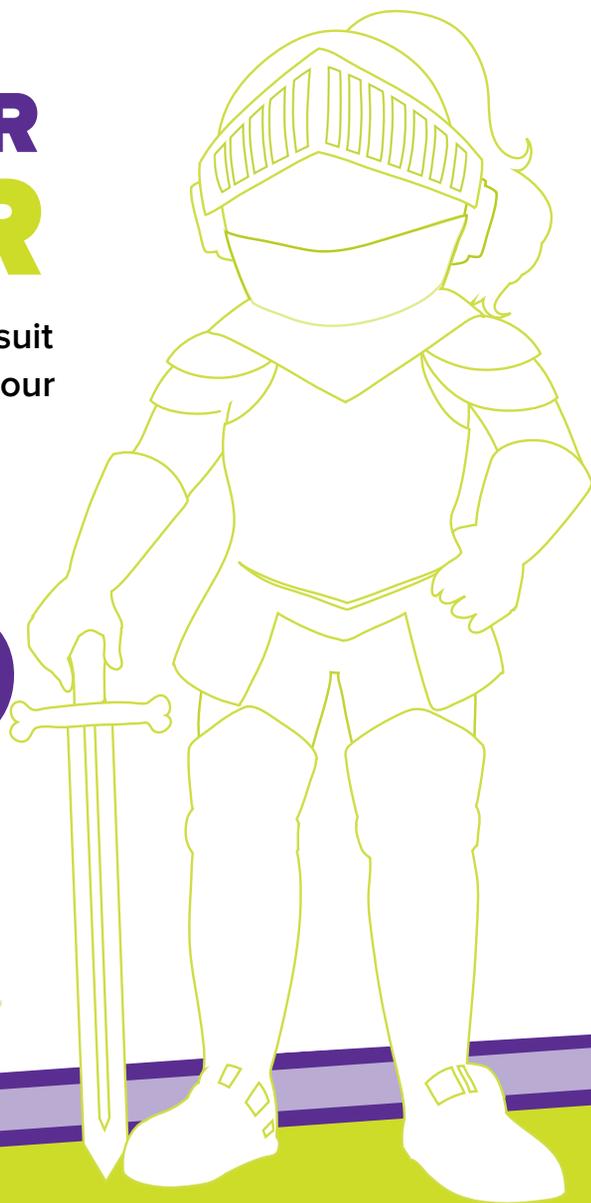
3 COLOUR YOUR ARMOUR

In 'The Magician's Horse', the hero wears a suit of armour in battle. Colour in the suit of armour to the right – how would you like it to look?



What do knights do in the morning?

(answer on page 46)



4 WHAT DID LEO WRITE?

Leonardo wrote his journals in backwards writing. **Can you work out what his notes below say?** (Clue: try looking at what he has written with a small mirror!)

TO DO LIST

- A CREATE GREAT PAINTING
- B INVENT FLYING MACHINE
- C DISCOVER AMERICA

GUESS IT!

Which one of the three things on his list did Leo NOT do?

5 PUMP UP THE VOLUME

Can you work out which frogs in Princess Tina's choir are loudest?

Add up the musical notes to find out!



A **B** **THE CROAKERS**

C **TOAD SOLID CREW**

HEROES OF HIP HOP

6 SEE A BEAN SPROUT!

ASK A GROWN-UP!

You won't need Ms. Peabody's formula to turn some beans turn into cool sprouts! Just follow these simple steps...

YOU WILL NEED:

- Dried beans from the supermarket – white or kidney beans work well!
- Glass jar
- Cotton balls
- Small plant pot and some soil or potting mix (optional)

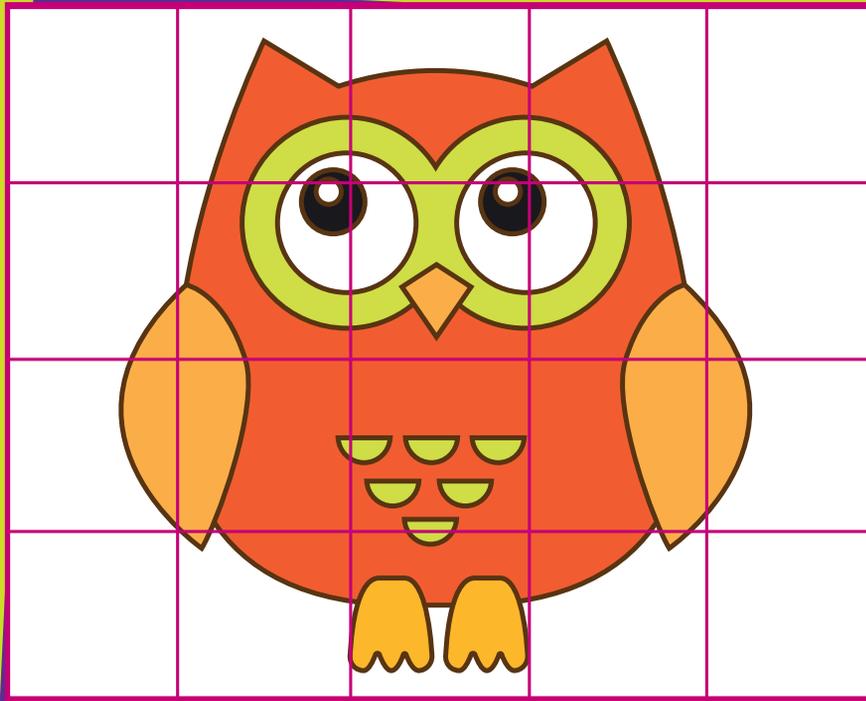
- Soak your dried beans in water overnight – this will 'wake them up'.
- Dampen the cotton balls in water and then put them in the jar.
- Tuck a few of the beans around the sides of the jar, snugged into the cotton balls.
- Put the jar on a sunny windowsill.
- Wait and watch! Every day, check out what is happening to the beans, and dribble or spray a little bit of water into the jar to stop the cotton balls from drying out.
- After a few days, you should see green shoots and pale roots coming out of the beans. Make a sketch of how the bean sprouts are developing every day, and don't forget to write the date on each drawing!



Once the beans have sprouted, you can plant them. Fill a small pot with soil and plant the beans so that the green shoots are sticking out of the soil. Water gently every day!

7

DRAW AN OWL!



Use the grid below to copy this picture of an owl – then colour it in!

LOL!

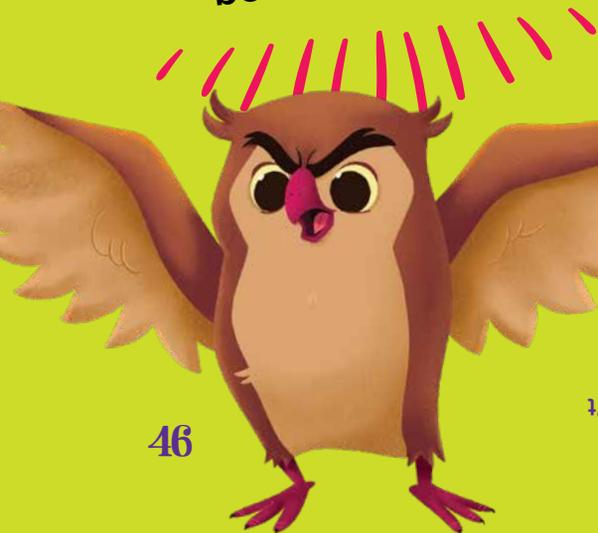
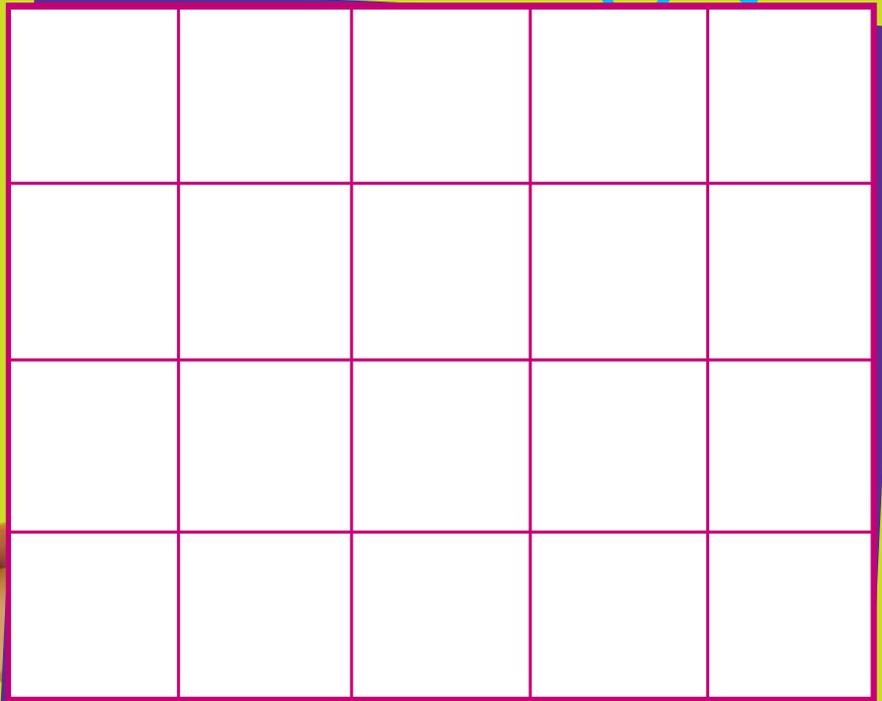
Q. What is a barn owl's favourite subject at school?

A. Owlgebra!

TEE HEE!

Q. Why did the owl invite his friends over?

A. He didn't want to be owl by himself.



ANSWERS: 1. Hunt the Rabbit – C; 2. Find the Shield – it's on page 44; 3. Riddle answer: they wake up! 4. What Did Leo Write? A. Create great painting, B. Invent flying machine, C. Discover America. Guess It: he didn't do it 5. Pump Up the Volume A. Heroes of Hip Hop are the loudest.

NAME THAT ANIMAL!

How many can YOU do?

In 'Shadow Puppets', the Chinese minister uses puppets to tell stories – but you don't need puppets to make shadows come to life!

How to Play

The 12 shadow-animal cards opposite show you how to make different shadow-animals using your hands. You need a wall with a bright light shining at it – a desk lamp is ideal! Ask an adult to point the lamp at the wall in such a way that you can put your hands in front of the light and cast a shadow.

You will also need 4 players and 12 shadow animal cards – cut out the ones on the opposite page or print them out from storytimemagazine.com/free. You will also need a timer, and a pencil and paper to keep score.

- ★ Divide the 4 players into 2 teams.
- ★ Put all the cards face-down on a table or the floor and shuffle them around.
- ★ One person on the team with the youngest player has to make the first shadow animal. That player picks up a shadow-animal card from the pile and then tries to make that shadow-animal on the wall. (They aren't allowed to show anybody else what is on the card.)
- ★ If that player's teammate can guess what the shadow animal is within 30 seconds, their team gets a point. If they get it wrong or can't guess, the other team can guess what the animal is. They get a point if they are right.
- ★ The teams take turns picking up cards and making shadows until all the cards have been picked up. The team with the most points wins!

SPECIAL RULE: If a kid is making a shadow animal, they are also allowed to make an animal noise to give their teammate a clue!



Rabbit



Goose



Donkey

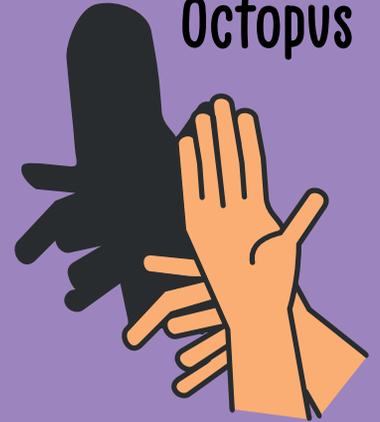
Snail



Duck



Octopus



Rooster



Moose



Dog

Horse



Crab



Kangaroo



STORY MAGIC

This month we have four new books – about Aztecs, wolves, endangered animals and the world's oceans!

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

★ **DANNY THE DODO'S DETECTIVE DIARY**

by Dr. Nick Crumpton, illustrated by Rob Hodgson (Thames & Hudson). The title character of this book wants to solve a mystery: why are so many of our planet's animals endangered or extinct? Danny tells the story of many of the world's threatened species – and even has helpful tips for those who want to help them!

★ **FOURTEEN WOLVES** by Catherine Barr, illustrated by Jenni Desmond (Bloomsbury) is a beautiful true tale about the fourteen wolves that were reintroduced to Yellowstone Park in the United States. It's a wonderful story, made all the more special by haunting artwork.

★ **SO YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT IT BAD? A KID'S LIFE IN THE AZTEC AGE** by Chae Strathie, illustrated by Marisa Morea (Nosy Crow). If you liked 'The Creation of the Sun', our Aztec myth in this issue, you are sure to enjoy this book! It is packed with facts about what it was like to grow up in the Aztec civilization. There are lots of jokes, and the cool illustrations add to the fun.

★ **A TURTLE'S VIEW OF THE OCEAN BLUE** by Catherine Barr, illustrated by Brendan Kearney (Laurence King) is a great read for kids who love the sea! It's packed with facts about the world's oceans, from their ecosystems and currents to their lifeforms, and the illustrations are gorgeous and informative.

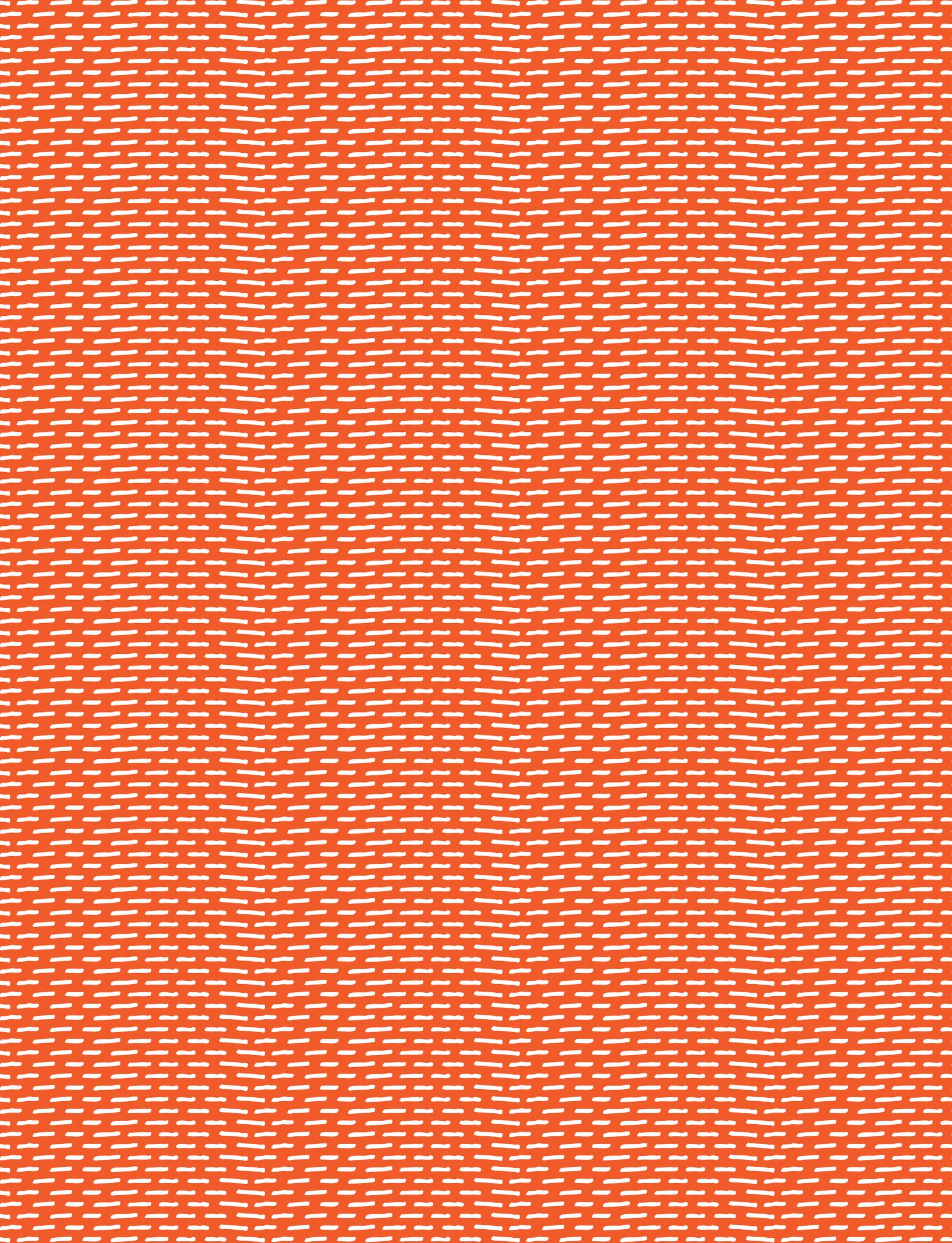


WIN! WIN! WIN!

Did you discover which story the raccoon on page 3 is from? Send us your answer and you will be entered into a draw to win this month's books – go to: storytimemagazine.com/win

NEXT MONTH:
A tale of twelve princesses and two fairies!





MAGIC TALES FOR READERS OF ALL AGE!

**WIN
Brilliant
Books!**



DOWNLOAD EXCITING ACTIVITIES FROM:
www.storytimemagazine.com/free

**LETTER TO
PLANET EARTH**
Our winner is
announced!

