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Storytime™



THE CHARIOT RACE
Marcus is in it to win!

THE GREAT DROUGHT
Who drank all the water?

THE MONKEY KING

**The Sister of the Sun, The Sea Lord's Gift,
a grumpy elephant and a FLYING GIRL!**

WHAT WILL YOU DISCOVER INSIDE THIS MAGAZINE?

Watch out for a martial arts monkey,
a magical cow, surprising sisters
and a formidable fox!

THIS ISSUE BELONGS TO:

SPOT IT!

Can you find this
basket somewhere
in this issue?



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Starring **AMAZING** animals
from all over the world!

THIS ISSUE IS A WINNER!

READ HAPPILY EVER AFTER...

Myths and Legends

THE GREAT DROUGHT

What has happened to all of the water in Australia? The animals get together to find out!

6

Favourite Fairy Tales

THE SISTER OF THE SUN

A boy goes in search of a magical golden chicken – with help from a clever fox!

30

Tales from ~~Today~~ ^{Yesterday}

THE CHARIOT RACE

By Amanda Brandon. Marcus gets his chance to compete in Rome's famous Circus Maximus!

10

Famous Fables

THE ELEPHANT WHO LOST HER PATIENCE

The tale of an annoying ant who infuriates an elephant!

36

Awesome Adventures

NADIA, WHO DREAMED OF FLYING!

The amazing young gymnast who got an Olympic high score!

15

storyteller's corner

THE SEA LORD'S GIFT

What would *you* do if a mighty magical being gave you an amazing cow?

39

Around the World Tales

THE MONKEY KING

A story of action and adventure, starring the world's greatest monkey!

20

storytime playbox

Learn to draw an elephant, guide Monkey through a maze, and make a cute model cow!

44

OUR COVER STORY

Short stories, Big Dreams

THE STEP-SISTERS

Cinderella's step-sisters discover a way to feel better about themselves!

28

Story Magic

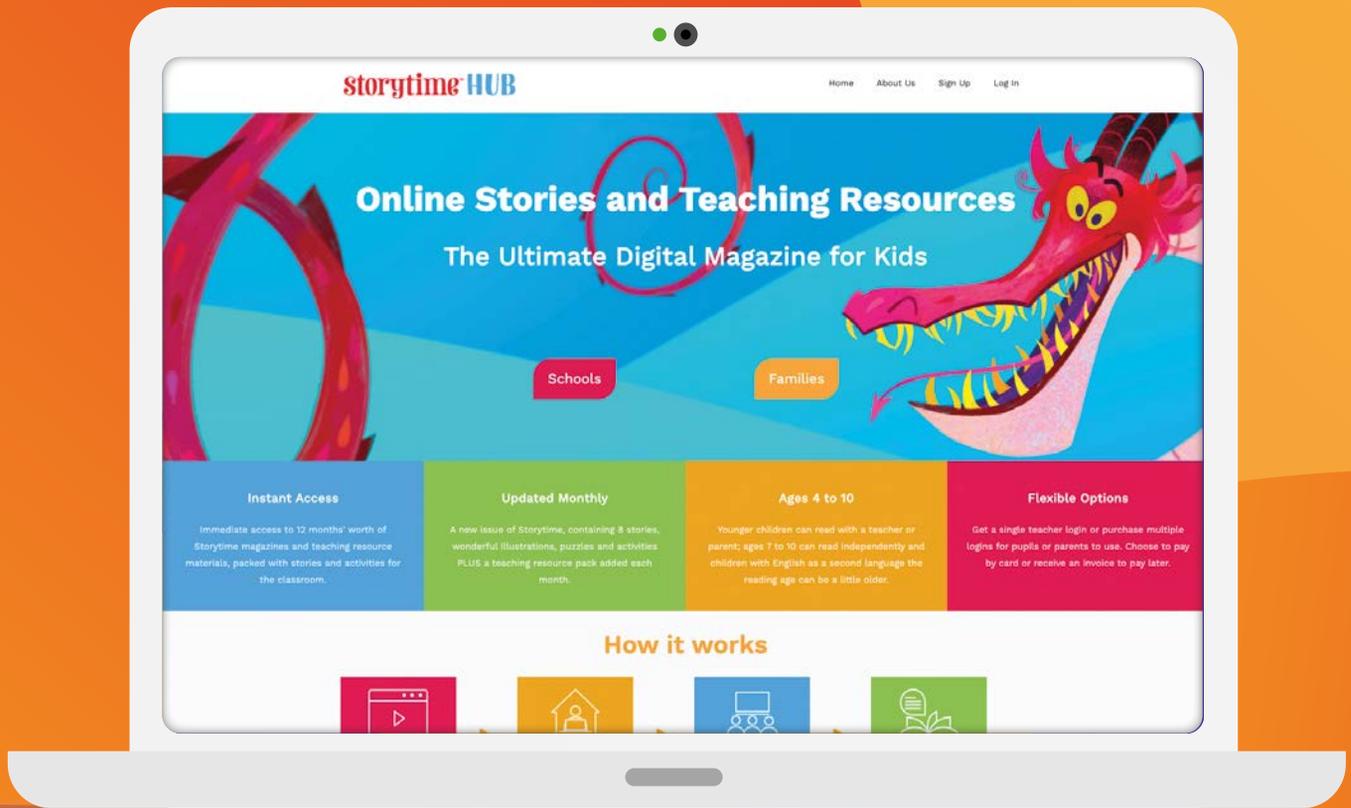
Read reviews of three new books about animals, and answer a question to win them all!

50

Enter a thrilling chariot race!

SEE PAGE 48!

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THE GREAT DROUGHT

Long before people first came to Australia, there was an age called the Dreamtime, when animals could speak and spirits walked the land.

During this time, there was once a long drought. The rivers stopped flowing, the billabongs dried up, and the animals were worried that they might die of thirst.

They held a great meeting called a *corroboree*, and every animal went – the giant red kangaroos and the little grey rock wallabies, the bandicoots and koalas and thylacines, the snakes and the frilled lizards, the spiny echidnas and the great slow wombats, the kookaburras and the emus and even the shy platypus who seldom left his river.



“We must find out what has happened to our precious water!” said the wombat, blinking his little eyes. “I agree!” said the koala. “The eucalyptus trees are dying, and soon my children will have nothing to eat!”

The animals decided that they must go out and try to discover what had happened to the water. They set off across the dry, dusty land, looking for any sign of life-giving moisture.

At long last, the frilled lizard found a huge, bloated frog sitting in a mudhole at the bottom of a dry billabong. The great amphibian had swallowed all of the water in the world!

The animals gathered around the frog and begged him to give back some of the water he had greedily drunk. However, the frog did not listen. Instead, he just blinked at them with his great green eyes.



The animals held another corroboree that evening to plan what to do.

“I know!” squawked the kookaburra. “If we can make the frog laugh, then he will let out the water he has stolen!”

The kookaburra perched on a tree by the great frog and laughed as hard as he could. ➔



He laughed so hard that he ran out of air and fell out of his tree, but the frog did not react. He just licked his eyes with his long tongue.

The frilled lizard then did his best to make the frog laugh. He puffed up his throat like a balloon and made his ruff stick out from his neck. He then began to dance and jig as hard as he could. The other animals couldn't help chuckling at this, but the big frog didn't even giggle.

The animals were worried. What would happen if they couldn't make the frog laugh?

The animals began arguing among themselves, for they were angry and anxious. That was when they heard a voice from the bottom of the billabong. It was the eel, who had been sleeping beneath the cracked and dry mud.

"Let me have a try!" he said.



The eel crawled out of the muck and began to twist and wriggle in front of the frog. He turned and squirmed and tied himself in knots before flopping around like a grub and tickling the frog's belly with his tail. The animals watched in wonder, and then they heard a strange bubbling sound.

The frog began to giggle – and then laugh out loud! When his mouth

opened, a great fountain of fresh water gushed out. It quickly filled the billabong and went into the rivers. Clouds formed, which brought rain to the dry land. Where the rain fell, green grass grew, and the trees sprouted fresh leaves.

The animals danced and sang in the rain, for they knew that the drought was finally over! ☆



THE CHARIOT RACE

By Amanda Brandon

Marcus watched the chariots thunder past. The horses' hooves pounded the track and the chariot wheels rattled.

The red and blue teams neared the finish.

"Come on, reds! You can do it!" he shouted.

The charioteer of the blue team cracked his whip. His horses galloped faster. Marcus felt a shower of dust and rubbed his eyes.

His favourite team had lost again.

"I wish I could race," he said to his sister Camilla later, when they were cleaning the horses. Marcus loved to smooth their coats and brush their tails.

No one was watching, so he grabbed the reins of a grey horse nearby. "I want to have a go at being a charioteer," he said.

"Don't! You'll get in trouble. We only look after the horses! Help me with this one's tail." Camilla stroked a white stallion who wore a red ribbon.

Marcus ignored her and hitched a small chariot to a horse named Castor. He climbed on the two-wheeled cart and drove it in a circle.



“Come back!” Camilla shouted, but Marcus continued and drove out onto the deserted racetrack.

He imagined he had three more horses pulling him, and a crowd cheering him on! Faster and faster he went. Suddenly, he heard an angry shout.

“Stop that at once!” It was Titus, who was in charge of the red team. He glared at Marcus and strode over.

Camilla looked frightened as her brother climbed down from the cart.

“What is the meaning of this?” Titus yelled. “Castor is our most valuable horse. I should thrash you with my whip!”

He stepped forward. Camilla begged, “Please don’t hurt my brother.”

“Sorry, sir,” Marcus mumbled. “I wanted to see what it felt like to be a charioteer.”

“He won’t do it again. I’ll make sure of that,” Camilla said.

“Too right,” Titus said. “He’s fired. Away with you! I don’t want you near these stables again.”

“Oh Marcus! What have you done?” Camilla wailed.

“I’m sorry. But I don’t regret driving the chariot,” Marcus told her later.

“Titus was upset at losing. Perhaps you can ask for your job back when he’s calmed down?” Camilla suggested.

Marcus shook his head. “I don’t think he will be happy to see me. But I won’t stay away from the racetrack...” ➔





Marcus knew that one of the most important races of the year was just five days away.

“But chariot racing is so dangerous,” Camilla sighed.

Marcus glared at her. “Racing is in my blood. Father taught me when I was younger. I wish he could see how I have improved. I’m light but strong. I can take the corners on the track better than anyone!”

Marcus and Camilla thought of their dad, who had died the year before. He had been a champion and the red team’s top charioteer. Since he died, the reds no longer won races. The blue team always came in ahead.

Marcus got his father’s old helmet and tried it on. It was too big. The strap was loose and the brim covered his eyes. He didn’t mind. He imagined the thrill of driving in a chariot race.

“I’m sure I could be a great charioteer if I only had the chance,” Marcus said.

Camilla was worried. She loved her brother and she knew he wouldn’t give up on his dangerous dream.



The day of the big race finally arrived. Marcus and Camilla packed a picnic and set off for the stadium.

The streets were full of people. Some carried baskets of food and pushed and shoved in their rush to find the best seats for the race.

“There’s a place with a good view!” Camilla pointed to a spot near the front and they headed down there.

“I don’t know what the reds will do. Titus has hurt his arm and pulled out of the race,” a man nearby said.

“Good. That means the greens might win this time!” his friend replied.

Marcus saw his chance. Whilst Camilla greeted a friend, he slipped away to the back of the stadium where the charioteers were getting ready.

Titus was with Castor, and his arm was in a sling. He looked sad. “Sorry, no racing for us today,” he told Castor as he stroked the horse’s mane.

“I could race for you,” Marcus said.

Titus turned and scowled. “I told you not to come here again, lad!”

“Please sir, I know how to race. I even have a helmet...”

Titus stared at him. “This is the helmet of Julius, the greatest charioteer of the red team! Where did you get it?”

“Julius was my father. He taught me everything he knew.”

Titus stroked his beard. “Okay, let’s see if you are really Julius’s son. Tie the reins around you.”

Titus gathered Castor and the other three horses and harnessed them to the chariot. Marcus climbed on and wrapped the reins around his body.

He gulped. His hands were sweaty and his heart beat rapidly.

Marcus drove to the start line, where the other racers were waiting. The blue charioteer jeered, “The reds have a kid driving – this should be easy!”

Marcus gritted his teeth and stood up straight to hide his nervousness.

A trumpet blasted. The track gates opened. The charioteers charged out.

The blue charioteer galloped past. “Loser!” he yelled as he cracked his whip at Marcus.

Grit stung Marcus’ eyes. He blinked and urged his horses to pick up speed.

Marcus overtook the white team first. He completed three... four... five laps. Only two laps to go! He could hear the white and green chariots behind him.

Suddenly, there was a crunch of wheels and a panicked squeal from the horses. ➡



The audience gasped. The white and green chariots had crashed into each other! Only he and the blue chariot were still in the race.

Marcus saw the finish line just ahead, but the blues' charioteer suddenly swerved in front of his horses.

Castor reared up to avoid a crash. The blue chariot veered away, but Marcus's horses were frightened.

Marcus managed to bring Castor and the other horses under control, and drove close to the *spina* in the centre of the racetrack. He urged his horses to go faster, but then his feet slipped on the chariot, and his helmet fell off.

"That charioteer is going to be thrown from his cart!" Camilla cried. When she saw who was driving the red team's chariot, her face turned pale.

Marcus's chariot sped across the finish line. He found himself tangled in the reins, and cut himself free.

As he did so, the crowd cheered. Titus came up to Marcus and patted him on the back. The red team's boss was grinning.

"You won the race, lad!" Titus said. "Your father would be proud!"

Tears stung Marcus's eyes, but they were tears of joy. He had achieved his dream of becoming a charioteer! ★



NADIA, WHO DREAMED OF FLYING!

In the land of Romania, there once lived a little girl called Nadia. She might have been small, but she was a tough tomboy who was always running around and getting her clothes dirty.

Nadia especially loved climbing trees! She would hang from the branches and swing up high before letting go and flying through the air.

Even when Nadia was at home, she was always charging through the kitchen or bouncing on the beds. When she was four, her mum took her to nursery school. She told the teacher, “My daughter has too much energy! What can you do with her?”

The teacher just laughed and said, “I think we have just the thing for Nadia!”

The teacher took her to the school gymnasium. Nadia looked in wonder at the uneven bars and the balance beams and the mats, as well as the bigger kids doing all sorts of flips and jumps. She felt right at home there! →

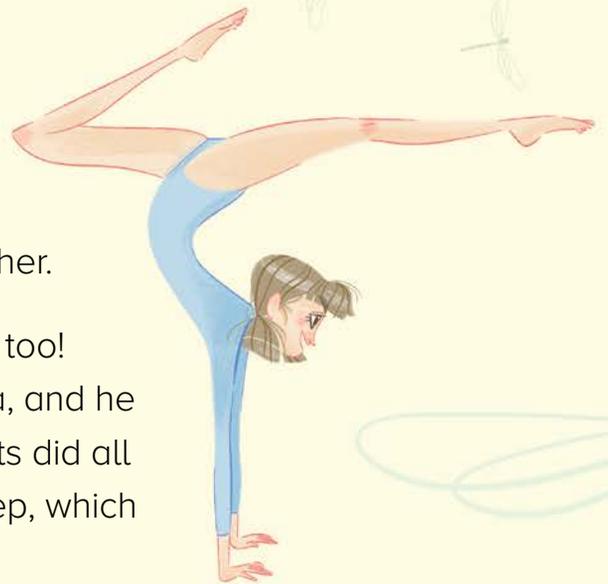


The gymnastics team she joined was called The Flame, and Nadia soon became their brightest star. Learning new moves gave her a feeling of achievement – and the coach would reward her with chocolate if she worked hard!

Nadia loved the sense of freedom she felt while doing gymnastics. It was like flying! “I’m going to be the greatest gymnast ever!” she would tell people.

They would reply, “Look how big your nose has got!”, which is what Romanians say to boastful people.

When Nadia was six, a man with a big droopy moustache came to her school and saw her doing cartwheels in the playground. “Would you like to go to my special school for gymnasts?” he asked her.



Of course, Nadia said yes – and her parents agreed, too! The man with the droopy moustache was called Bela, and he was a coach at the school. He made sure the students did all their exercises, ate healthy meals and got lots of sleep, which helped to make them healthy and fit.

The gymnastics school was magical for Nadia. She liked doing maths and chemistry in the mornings – but she *loved* doing gymnastic exercises in the afternoons! She got her first leotard, and was so excited that she went to bed with it instead of a teddy bear.

Learning how to perform moves on the high beam, the uneven bars or the mat wasn’t always easy. Sometimes, Nadia would get hurt and had to stop doing gymnastics until she got better – but then she kept on practising.



FUN FACT!

Nadia invented two gymnastics moves that were named after her! The ‘Comaneci Salto’ and the ‘Comaneci Dismount’ are very tricky techniques used on the uneven bars.

She was a tough girl and wasn't about to give up on her dreams!



When Nadia was nine, she went to her first national competition – which was a big deal for her! She had been practising for months, but this was very different from doing her routines in the school gym. She felt nervous!

There was total silence as she began... When she climbed onto the high beam to do her routine, she went through her first steps gracefully.

But while doing a big jump, she lost her concentration and tumbled off one side of the beam. Red-faced, she climbed back on... only to fall off the other side! She breathed deeply as she got back up on the beam and continued her routine, just as she had rehearsed it.

But while doing a forward roll, she fell off for the third time!

Bela had some advice for her: “Don't worry! Put your fears out of your mind and just do your best!”

Inspired by his words, Nadia worked even harder, and in the next competition, she won some medals. She beat gymnasts from other countries – even though most were older than her!

Bela came to Nadia one afternoon with exciting news. “You have been chosen to represent Romania in the Olympic Games!” he said. →



Nadia was only 14 and didn't really know what the Olympic Games were – but before long she was on a plane, flying to Montreal in Canada. She was amazed by how huge and busy the Olympic Village was! She met athletes from all over the world, and tried new foods like 'pizza', 'peanut butter' and 'cereal'. They didn't have Western products like these in Romania, so this was very exciting!

When it was time to compete, thousands of spectators and television cameras from around the world were focusing on her, but Nadia was calm. She was doing what she loved, and wanted to do it as well as she could.

She jumped onto the uneven bars and swung and flipped between them, while executing flawless tumbles and splits. It was an amazing performance, and the crowd gasped.

When she was finished, she knew she had done well, but wondered what score she would receive. Performances were rated from one to ten. Very good routines would usually score a 9.7, since it was practically impossible to be perfect. Would she get a 9.5, or even a 9.6?

There were some whispers in the judges' box, and after a breathless wait, her score flashed up on the electronic scoreboard: a 1.0!



Had something gone wrong? Nadia's performance had been worth more than that!

She and her coach were confused and upset – but a judge told her that she had actually been given a 'perfect 10'! Nobody had ever received this score before and the scoreboard couldn't show it – so it had shown a '1.0' instead...

Cheers erupted in the crowd, and Nadia hugged her coach while crying tears of joy!

Nadia received six more perfect 10s at the Montreal Olympics, as well as three gold medals, a bronze and a silver. Nadia was overjoyed! Her hard work had paid off, and she was the greatest gymnast of all time. ★



» WHAT « HAPPENED NEXT?

Nadia also won medals at the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. In 1981, she went on a special tour of the United States to show off her skills. During this tour, Bela decided to 'defect', which means to go and live in another country without his government's permission.

The Romanian government was afraid that Nadia might follow Bela, so they started to watch her very closely to make sure she wouldn't leave. In 1990, though, she finally left Romania and went to live in the United States. She became a coach and passed on her love of gymnastics to a new generation of kids.

Nadia is still well loved in Romania, however. Her achievements have made her a national hero, and she is an inspiration to every young kid who dreams of turning cartwheels in the air.

THE MONKEY KING

Adapted from 'Journey to the West'

Long ago, when the world was young, a great stone egg was created where the sky touched the earth. One day, the egg hatched – and out of it jumped a monkey!

He was no ordinary monkey, for he was particularly strong and quick and clever. He was also very boastful and loved causing trouble!

The other monkeys chose him to be their ruler and brought him the finest fruit to eat. They gave him the title of 'Handsome Monkey King', which he liked very much. However, in this story, we will just call him 'Monkey'.

He was determined to learn the secret of immortality, so he found wise monks who shared their knowledge with him. He mastered the martial art of kung fu and learned how to use many special powers.

As I have said, Monkey was very proud. He even demanded that the great Jade Emperor who ruled the heavens should give him an important job.

"I am king of the monkeys and possess much wisdom!" Monkey chattered. "You must give me a job worthy of my rank, so everyone will know how great I am!"



The Jade Emperor told Monkey that he could guard the peach trees of his heavenly garden. However, Monkey was greedy. He gobbled all of the peaches, so there were none left for the Jade Emperor's feast!

The mighty ruler was furious. He told Monkey: "For disobeying my orders and eating my peaches, I will imprison you beneath a great mountain until you have learned your lesson!"

Monkey was trapped there for many years, until a young monk called Tang Seng came to visit him.

The monk said, "Monkey! The Jade Emperor has told me to collect some holy scrolls from a great mountain far to the west. I have heard of your powers and will set you free – if you agree to protect me on my journey!"

"That sounds like fun!" replied Monkey. "Anyway, I am bored of picking fleas off myself in the dark!"

Tang Seng introduced Monkey to his other protector, a strange being who was part human and part pig.

"Who are you?" asked Monkey. "And why do you look so ugly?"

"They call me Piggy!" grunted the creature. "I was once a soldier in the Jade Emperor's heavenly army. To punish me for being greedy and lazy, the emperor sent me to Earth in this form. If I help Tang Seng, he will forgive me, and let me return to my home in the Heavens..."

The three heroes began their long journey to the west, travelling through mountains that grew ever taller in front of them. ➡



Eventually, they came to a place where a stream crossed their path, and there they saw a most terrible sight. The crossing-place was littered with bones. Even worse, a frightening figure with a necklace of skulls around his neck blocked their way across.

Monkey and Piggy jumped forward to attack the creature. Monkey leapt at him with his magical staff, while Piggy swung his heavy iron rake.

The dark creature prepared to defend himself, but then Tang Seng stepped forward and raised his hands.

“Do not fight!” he said in a calm voice. “This is Sand – he was once a general of the Jade Emperor, but he was turned into this lonely monster after breaking one of his precious goblets.

He, too, will join us in our quest, so that he might be forgiven!”

Monkey always liked to meet new and interesting people, so he bowed politely to Sand and welcomed him to the group.

With their new companion, the party continued through the mountains until they came to a small village. There they met a young girl, who was carrying a bowl of shiny purple plums.

She bowed to Tang Seng, and said, “Oh holy monk, please accept these fruits to eat on your journey!”

Tang Seng replied, “Thank you for this gift!” As he reached for the basket, though, Monkey shrieked. He had the ability to see through any disguise, and he saw that the ‘girl’ was really a wicked spirit!



He hit her with his staff, which made the spirit drop the plums and flee.

Tang Seng did not know about the spirit's true nature and was most upset.

"Monkey!" he said, "How dare you attack an innocent girl! You are not worthy to be in our group – go home!"

Monkey tried to chatter out an explanation, but Tang Seng did not listen. He continued on down the path with Piggy and Sand, leaving Monkey behind.



For the first time in his life, Monkey felt like crying. He did not deserve this! He began to walk back towards his home, with his tail dragging in the dust.

That evening, he made a small campfire and tried to get to sleep. Just as he was dozing off, though,

a shadowy figure leaped out of the darkness. It was Sand.

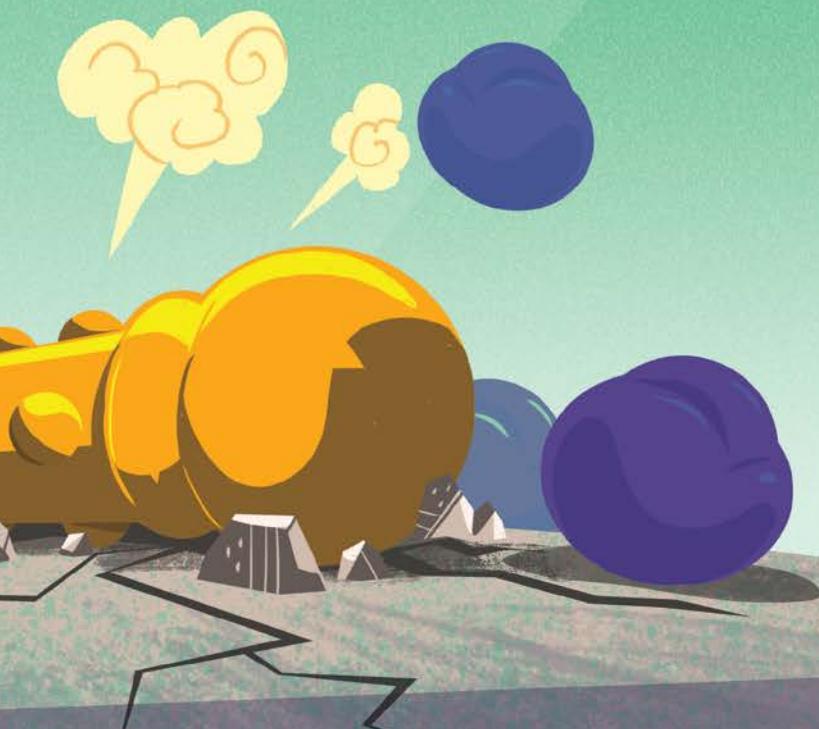
"Dear Monkey!" Sand exclaimed. "I am so glad I have found you! Tang Seng and Piggy have been trapped in a cave by spider-demons. Can you forgive us and help me rescue them?"

Monkey bounced to his feet and grabbed his staff with a grin.

"Of course!" he chattered. "Brave Monkey loves to save the day!"

When Monkey and Sand entered the cave, they saw Tang Seng and Piggy tied up in spider webs and hanging from the ceiling. Even worse, great spider-like creatures were poking at them, as if deciding which to eat first.

Monkey charged at the evil spiders. "Leave them alone!" he yelled. →



"The mighty Handsome Monkey



SPOT IT!

Tick off all these things when you find them in the picture!



Answer: There are 6 bats.

King will defeat you!"



How many bats can you find in this cave? Write your answer in here!



Monkey used his most fearsome attacks on the demons – the Spinning Comet kick, the Stone Hand strike, and even the legendary Hundred Fists of Heaven punch! The bruised creatures scuttled deeper into the cave to hide.

Sand freed Tang Seng and Piggy. They were most grateful to Monkey and told him they were very sorry for not trusting him. Monkey forgave them with a smile and said they should continue on their quest.



The next obstacle they encountered on their journey was a fiery volcano that blocked their path. Tang Seng shook his head and said, “There is no way we can possibly get past... unless we can obtain the magic

fan of Princess Iron Fan, who lives in that castle...”

He pointed to a tower of black rock on a nearby mountain peak.

Monkey preferred to act first and think later! He bravely strode towards the castle and yelled out, “Princess Iron Fan! Give us your fan, for we have need of it!”

Princess Iron Fan came out of the tower gates to see who was making such a noise. She was a powerful demoness, and sneered at Monkey.

“A puny being like you should learn some manners! You may have my fan... if you can take it!” Monkey leaped towards the Princess Iron Fan, but she was far too big for him to fight!





However, Monkey was clever. He transformed himself into a bee and flew into the princess's mouth. He went down her throat, and began stinging her from inside her stomach. Princess Iron Fan shrieked and said she would give Monkey her fan, if only he would stop stinging her!

Monkey used the fan to put out the fires of the volcano, while his friends watched and admired his cleverness.

The four companions journeyed on for many more days, until they finally reached the very top of the tallest mountain, which pierced the clouds. There they met a wise man, who was so holy and pure that he glowed from within. He greeted them with a warm smile, and spoke.

“Tang Seng, my kind friend! For completing your quest, I will give to you the scrolls of wisdom you seek! Take them to China and share their knowledge, for wisdom will bring peace and happiness to the Earth!”

The wise man then turned to the monk's friends. “Piggy! For your service, you shall have the holy duty of caring for temples. Sand, you have earned the Jade Emperor's forgiveness, and may return to the Heavens! And Monkey, you shall have the gifts of immortality and great wisdom!”

So ends the story of Monkey and his journey to the west. People still talk about his great deeds today – and that makes him very happy! ★

THE STEP-SISTERS

Annie and Drizzie were a bit jealous of their step-sister Cinderella. Once upon a time, they had bossed her around and made her do all the housework. But after she had married Prince Charming and moved in with him, the two sisters had to clean up after themselves!

They did the dishes and swept the cinders out of the fireplace – and none of the mice offered to help them. To make matters worse, they also had to dust the mirror they had bought for a bargain price at the Wicked Witch’s yard sale. It was magic, and had many opinions that it loved to share with them!

“I must say, you two look particularly frumpy and grumpy today!” it said as the sisters swept the hallway, looking red-faced and irritable.

“Be quiet, or you might get broken!” Annie snapped.

“Only if you want seven years of bad luck!” the mirror chuckled in reply.

The sisters particularly hated having to run downstairs to the front door whenever someone rang the doorbell.

One hot summer day, both Annie and Drizzie clattered downstairs to catch the postman.



But by the time they got there, he had posted a card saying, **'WE TRIED TO DELIVER YOUR PACKAGE'** through the mailbox and left. Needless to say, they were a little bit upset.

However, after hiking upstairs and downstairs for a week or two, the sisters noticed that it was not as much bother as before.

“My legs feel stronger!” Drizzie said.

“And I don't get out of breath any more!” commented Annie.

The mirror also noticed that they had changed. One morning, it said, “You both look healthy and happy – going up and down those stairs must be doing you good!”

Though they didn't want to admit it, the two step-sisters now liked the challenge of climbing the stairs. Annie even knitted some colourful outfits for them to wear while exercising.

One morning, Annie had an idea: she and Drizzie should share their new activity with others! They made flyers and posted them through doors:

'STEP-SISTERS AEROBICS CLASSES.
You can become healthy and happy – one step at a time!’

Their first class was a big success, with a dozen folk from the neighbourhood going up and down the stairs in time to the music of Annie's flute. That night, they went to bed tired but happy – and slept very well indeed! ★



THE SISTER OF THE SUN

In a kingdom far, far away, there once lived a prince. His father, the king, was most fond of him, and would get him anything he desired – toys, pets or treats.

Now, the prince's favourite playmate was the son of the palace gardener, who was named Onni. The king did not like his heir hanging around with a peasant boy, but he did not want his son to be unhappy and so let them play together.

The prince had two fine bows, and he and Onni liked to have shooting contests. One fine day, they decided to see who could shoot an arrow the furthest. They both drew back their bows at the same time and shot their arrows up into the sky.

They then went out to find their arrows, and spotted them in a field far away. They were most surprised to see that one of the arrows had pierced through a golden hen-feather!



The prince was sure that the arrow with the golden feather was the one he had shot, but Onni was certain that it was his. They argued, and the prince suggested that the king should decide whose arrow it was.

The king of course declared that the arrow must be his son's. Onni claimed that it was definitely his, but this angered the king.

"If you insist that the arrow is yours, then you must prove it to me!" he bellowed. "Bring me the golden hen the feather came from. But if you come back without it, I will throw you in prison!"



That evening, Onni went home and packed his little knapsack with clothes and a loaf of bread.

When the sun rose the next morning, he set off in search of the golden hen – though he did not know where he might find it.

As he was walking down the dusty road, he saw a handsome fox watching him from atop a fence.

"Hello, young lad! Where are you travelling to?" the fox asked him.

Onni replied, "I am searching for a golden hen that is missing one of its tail feathers!"

The fox looked thoughtful and said, "The only golden hens I know of belong to a lady called the Sister of the Sun. I will take you there."

Onni and the fox went on their way, and came to the grand mansion where the Sister of the Sun lived. ➔



The fox told the boy, “Go into her garden and find the golden hen you seek – but do not give in to curiosity and go into her house!”

The boy sneaked into the yard and soon found a golden chicken pecking at some grain. It was missing a tail feather, so he knew that it must be the bird that he was seeking!

He tucked it under one arm and was about to leave when he saw a bright and beautiful light shining through an open doorway in the house. He could not resist going in to see what was making it.

He went down the hall until he got to the room the light was coming from and saw a beautiful lady on a bed.

“She must be the Sister of the Sun!” he whispered to himself.

As Onni stood there, dazzled by the bright light, the Sister of the Sun woke up and saw him.

“Who are you, and why are you in my house?” she yelled.

Onni was terrified and could only stutter, “My lady, I came seeking this golden hen, to prove to the king that I am not a liar!”

The Sister of the Sun thought carefully before replying. “Very well then, you may have the golden bird! But since you seem so brave, you must do me a favour.



“Rescue my daughter Aurora, for she is being held prisoner in the giants’ hall!”

The boy agreed to do this, even though he did not know where the hall was. He told his friend the fox about the quest he had been given.

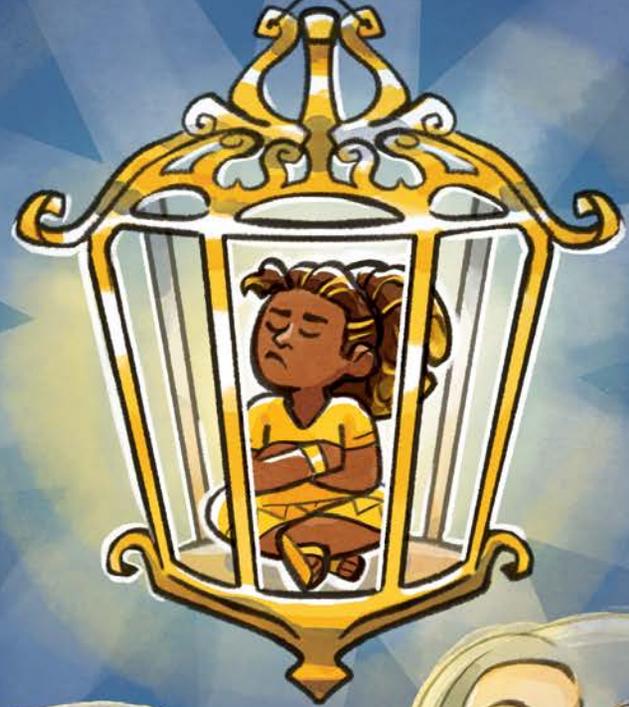
The fox laughed and said, “Do not worry – I know how to get to the giants’ hall and will lead you there!”

Onni and the fox journeyed for a day and a night to reach the huge hall where the giants lived. Inside, they could hear the noise of a lively party, with much dancing and shouting.

The fox said to Onni, “I have a plan to save Aurora – you must hide in the bushes and wait till I bring her out.”

The fox then pulled a great black cloak out of his bag. He put it on and walked proudly into the hall, with his cloak swirling behind him.

Inside, he found the giants feasting, dancing and having a great time. Their hall was lit by a lamp filled with candles, but there was also a golden light shining from a little girl who was sitting in a cage hanging from the rafters. ➡



The fox knew right away that she must be Aurora, the Sister of the Sun's kidnapped daughter.

The fox greeted the giants. "Hello, ladies and gentlemen – might I join the party? I know the very latest dance from a distant land!"

The giants replied, "Please, Mister Fox, show us this new dance!"

The fox told them, "I will need a partner my size to dance with, and you are all too big – perhaps I could dance with that girl up there?"

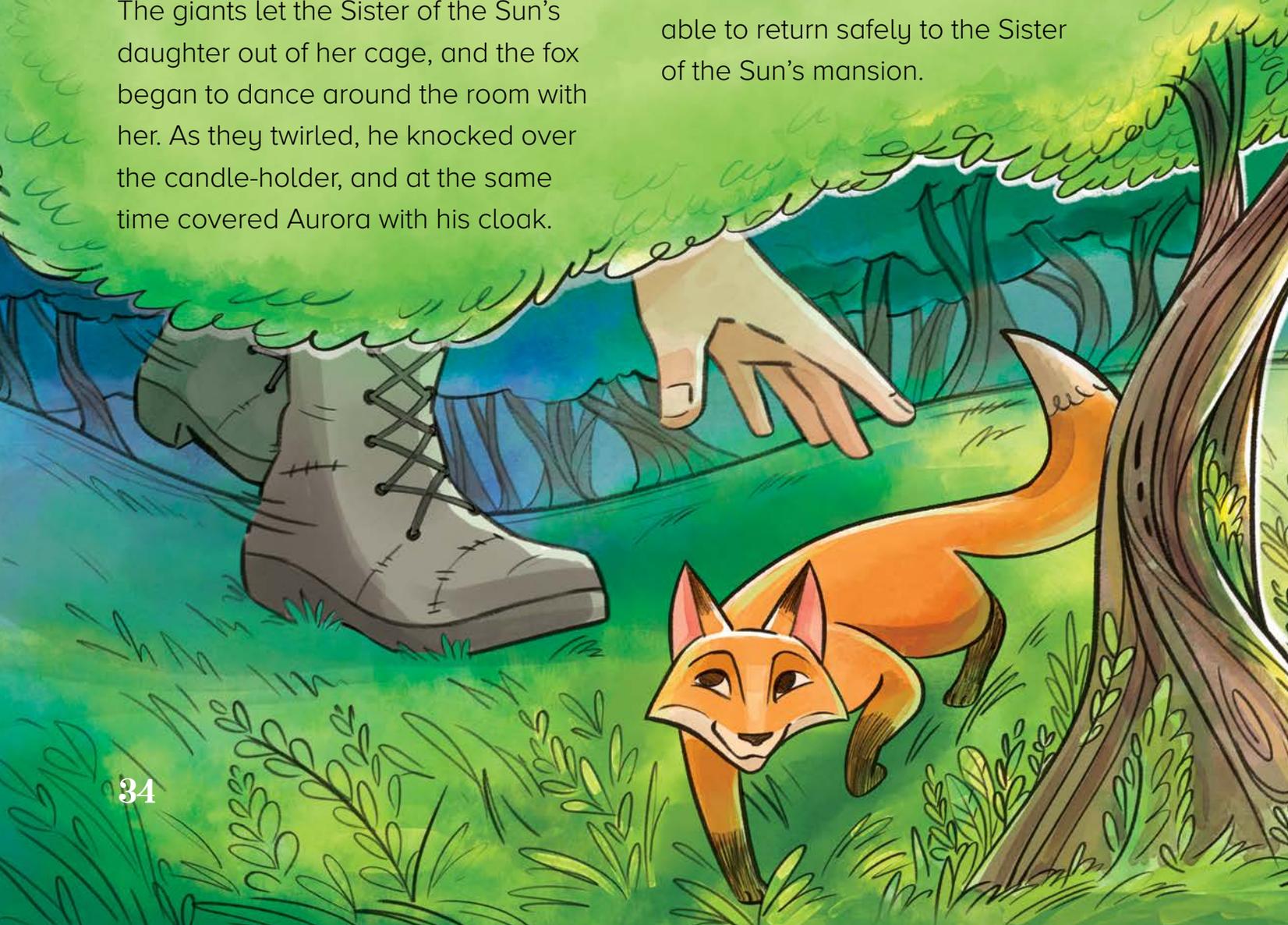
The giants let the Sister of the Sun's daughter out of her cage, and the fox began to dance around the room with her. As they twirled, he knocked over the candle-holder, and at the same time covered Aurora with his cloak.

The room turned pitch black when the candles went out! The giants were surprised and stomped around in the dark, trying to work out what had happened.

In the confusion, the fox led Aurora outside to where Onni was waiting.

"Take her back to her mother!" the fox told the boy. "I will let the giants chase me in another direction so you two can get away!"

The giants stormed out of the castle and chased the fox into the forest. Meanwhile, Onni and Aurora were able to return safely to the Sister of the Sun's mansion.



The Sister of the Sun was overjoyed to see her bright and beautiful daughter again. She was so grateful to Onni that she offered to let him live with them in her mansion, to keep Aurora company.

Onni was honoured, but he told the Sister of the Sun that he had something to take care of first. The boy went to the king's castle with the hen that the golden tail-feather had come from.

The king was upset that the gardener's son had proven that he had won the shooting contest, and treated him most rudely. However, Onni did not care. He returned to the wonderful mansion of the Daughter of the Sun, where he was greeted with open arms. ★

COLOUR IT!

Get a picture of a golden hen from www.storytimemagazine.com/free and colour it in. Then hang it up to bring some extra brightness to your room!



THE ELEPHANT WHO LOST HER PATIENCE

In the jungle, there once lived a talkative ant. He had many opinions, and liked to share them!

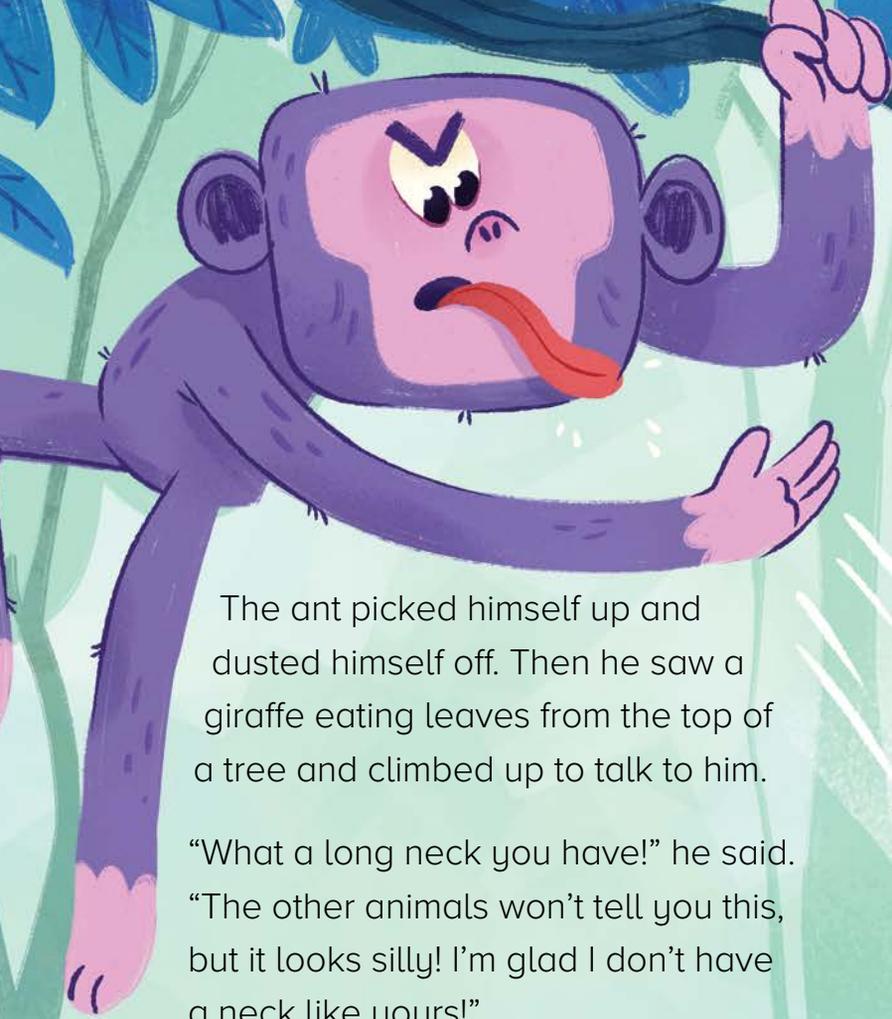
As he walked through the trees, he would chatter to the animals that he met. What he liked to talk about most were the things that he thought were wrong with his friends.

First he came across a tiger, who was stretched out on a rock and having a nice nap.

“I don’t know why you have those ugly stripes, tiger!” the ant said. “The orange and the black and the white are so tacky, they give me a headache!”

Finally, the tiger got sick of the ant’s nattering and swatted him away. “Beat it, ant – you are disturbing me! If you come back, I will gobble you up in one bite!”





The ant picked himself up and dusted himself off. Then he saw a giraffe eating leaves from the top of a tree and climbed up to talk to him.

“What a long neck you have!” he said. “The other animals won’t tell you this, but it looks silly! I’m glad I don’t have a neck like yours!”

The giraffe soon got tired of the ant going on and on about his neck, so he flicked him away with his ear.

“Go away and let me eat in peace, ant! If you bother me again, I will step on you!”

The ant sailed through the air and landed on a tree near a monkey. He was relaxing on a branch and scratching himself.

“Hello monkey! Has anyone ever told you that your ears are much too big?” said the ant.

The monkey got grumpy and flicked the ant off his leaf. “Has anyone ever told you that you are very annoying, ant? You are even worse than a flea!”

The ant fell through the air and landed on the broad back of an elephant who was walking through the jungle. The ant was glad to have someone new to talk to, so he crawled into the elephant’s ear.

“Hello, elephant, do you want to be my friend? I will hang out with you, even if you have silly floppy ears!”

The elephant was a very calm and patient animal. She did not have the heart to tell the ant to go away.

The little ant made himself at home in the elephant’s ear and kept chattering to her! ➔



In the morning, she would wake up to the sound of the ant saying, “Your skin is so rough and wrinkly, not like my shiny shell!” In the evening, she would fall asleep to the sound of the ant telling her, “Your feet are big and clumpy, like big tree trunks!”

“Your nose is so long, it must be horrible having it hanging off your face like that!” said the ant one morning.

The elephant may have been kind and patient, but when the ant made fun of her nose, she lost her temper.

“My nose helps me breathe when I go swimming!” she rumbled, and slowly began striding through the forest towards the river.

When the ant saw the water ahead, he began to feel scared. “Where are you going?” said the ant. “NOOO! Don’t go in there, I can’t swim!”

The elephant did not listen and jumped into the river. She squirted the ant out of her ear, and was finally able to get some peace and quiet.

The ant managed to struggle out of the water a long way downstream. The patient elephant was nowhere to be seen! The ant learned his lesson, and was never rude to anyone ever again. ★

THINK ABOUT IT!

Do you think it is always a good thing to share your opinions with others? When should you *not* tell someone what you are thinking? Maybe you can think of different ways to share your opinion - and remember that being kind is very important!

THE SEA LORD'S GIFT

A long time ago, in the country of Finland, an elderly couple named Matte and Marie lived by the sea with their little dog, Prince.

In winter, they would stay in a cosy wooden cottage and fish for cod. In summer, they would stay far out at sea on a red rock called Ahtola. There, they would fish for herring.

On Ahtola, they had a little wooden shack of driftwood, with an old weathervane on the roof. Yellow flowers and tufts of grass sprouted in the cracks in the rock, and Marie grew a small herb-garden there.

Matte and Marie were not rich, but they had a happy life. They caught plenty of fish and preserved them in barrels of salt. If they had any to spare, they sold them at the market, where they bought coffee to enjoy in the morning and the evening.

However, Marie was not completely satisfied. ➡



She wanted to have milk and cream as well! Marie often told her husband how much better life would be if they had a cow.

Matte would ask, “Where could we keep such a large animal? We cannot take it on our boat to Ahtola, for it would quickly eat up all of our herbs and flowers!”

But Marie could not stop thinking about having a cow. Late one night, she could not sleep and sat outside, looking at the sea. She thought of the stories she had heard as a child, about the sea lord Ahti. He ruled a great realm beneath the waves, and had herds of cows that grazed on seaweed. He would help those who asked him, but would punish any who made him angry.

She remembered an old song about the sea lord, and began to sing it. She ended it with the rhyme,

*“Oh great lord, from beneath the sea,
Please send one of your cows to me!”*

When Marie had finished, all she could hear was the murmur of the waves and the creak of the weathervane on the roof. Feeling disappointed, she went to bed.

However, she was woken in the middle of the night by the howling of the wind and the crashing of waves that smashed against the walls of the shack. Matte and Marie closed the windows and barred the door. They wondered if they might be washed away by the storm!

In the morning, the sea grew calm. When the elderly couple went outside, they found a great cow standing outside their shack.



Marie was surprised, but quickly got her bucket and began to milk the cow. It gave so much milk that she soon filled every cup, bucket and basin in the house.

“But what can we feed such an animal?” asked Matte in wonder. He need not have worried. The cow did not seem interested in the grass, flowers and herbs on the rock. It waded into the sea and began to eat great mouthfuls of the seaweed that grew there.

So Matte and Marie began to make butter and cream and junket from the sea-cow’s milk, which they sold at market every week.

Soon they became rich. They hired workers to help them make butter, and a maid to clean their house.

“We need a bigger house now, husband!” said Marie. “Build a second storey on our shack, so our workers can live downstairs!” Marie also brought many fine dresses, while Prince the dog now refused to eat fish. He grew fat on cream instead! ➔

DAIRY CHOICES!

We use milk to create many delicious things, including butter, cheese and even ice cream. Can you count how many dairy products you have at home? What is your favourite dairy food and why do you like it?





One night, Marie sang her song to the sea lord, and added the rhyme:

"Oh great lord, from beneath the sea,
Please send three more cows to me!"



The next morning, they found three more magnificent cows outside, and began to milk them too.

"We need more servants to make milk and cheese, and help around the house!" said Marie. "We should build a grand mansion on this rock!"

"But where can we fit it?" asked Matte.
"Our rock is too small!"

Marie had an answer for that already.
"Our servants must get boatloads of

rocks and dump them into the sea next to our rock!" she said. "That way, we can make our island bigger."

And so it was that the couple's servants collected many boulders and tipped them into the ocean. But when they did so, dark clouds filled the sky, and great waves began to crash down on them. Matte and Marie's servants paddled away in a hurry, afraid that they might be drowned.

Matte and Marie saw a huge green figure come up out of the sea. He had a long beard and wore a crown upon his head. The green giant looked very angry indeed.

"I am Ahti the sea lord!" the figure

“I have given you all the cows that you desire – but now you grow greedy and throw stones upon my head!”

The sea lord gestured with his hand, and a mighty wave crashed into the rock. Matte and Marie clung on for dear life as the water washed over Ahtola, and held onto little Prince as well. When the wave had passed over them, their house was in ruins, and all of the butter and cream they had stored was washed away. Their four great cows were nowhere to be seen.

Matte began to build a little shack with the wood that he found on the shore.

“This is all we truly need!” he said.
“It never pays to get too greedy!” ★



storytime

PLAYBOX

This month, see if you can solve some sums, count some marsupials, and even draw an elephant!

1 MOUNTAIN MAZE

Monkey and his friends are lost – can you **help them find their way** to the wise man's mountain?



2 WHERE'S THE MIRROR?

Uh-oh! Cinderella's step-sisters have lost their magic mirror somewhere on the Playbox pages – **can you find it?** Tick this box when you spot it!



3

TOP 10!

Nadia received a 'perfect 10' at the Olympics – the highest score ever given in gymnastics!

Can you solve all of these sums that feature the number 10?



A $5 + 5 + 10 =$

C $3 \times 2 \times 10 =$

B $20 - 4 - 10 =$

D $40 \div 2 \div 10 =$

4 MAKE A CRAFT COW!



Want to make a fun model cow? Here's how!

- You will need a paper cup, sticky tape, a pencil and eraser, safety scissors, light card or heavy paper, craft paints and a brush.
- Print and cut out two ear-shapes and two horn-shapes from the template you can download from storytimemagazine.com/free.
- Fold over the tabs of the ear and horn pieces. Turn the cup upside down and stick one horn and one ear onto each side by taping on the tab with sticky tape.
- Mark where you want to paint the eyes and nose with a pencil. (See the picture to the right for guidance!)
- Paint the cow! Do the eyes and nose as shown. Cows are often brown, reddish-brown, black, or white with black blotches – but you can paint yours any colour you like!
- Why not make a piglet or chicken too, to keep your cow company? We have included extra cut-outs for these animals on the download sheet...

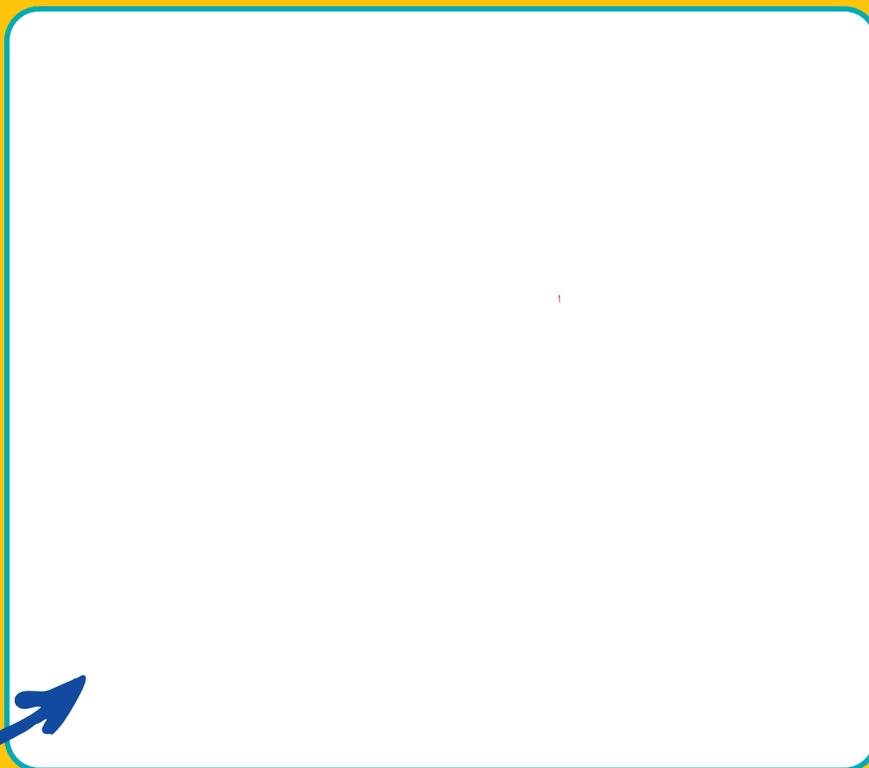
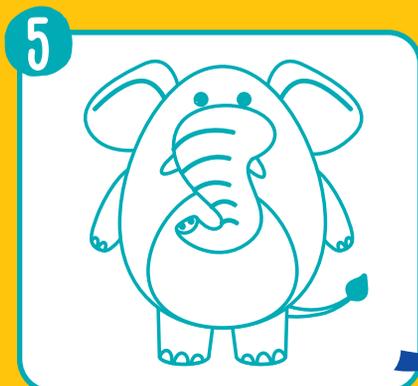
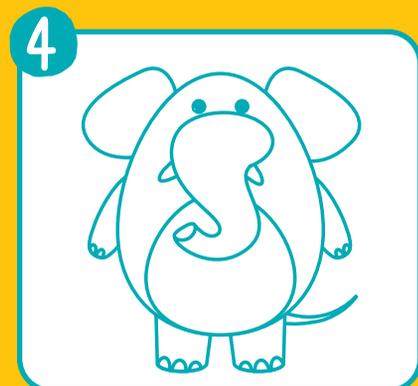
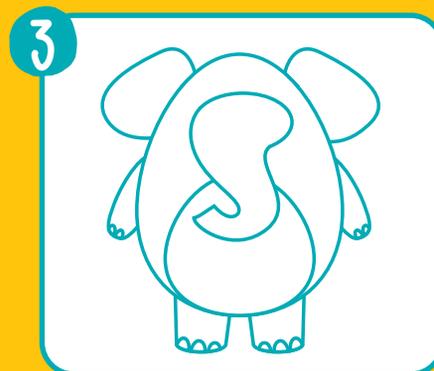
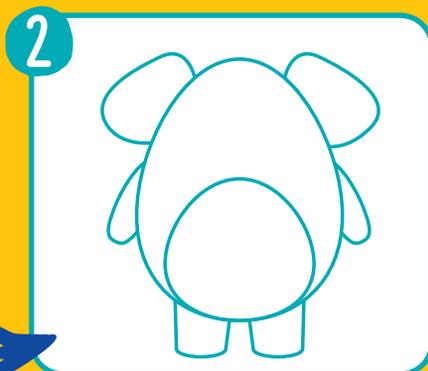
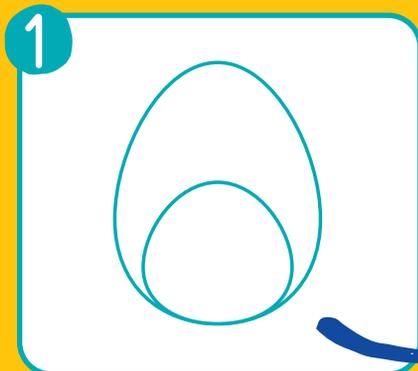


If you have a green pipe-cleaner, carefully make a hole just under the cow's mouth with the scissors and stick a piece of pipe cleaner in it – this is its grassy dinner!

5

DRAW AN ELEPHANT!

Be patient and follow these simple steps to draw a cool pic of the ant's big-eared friend! (Don't forget to colour it in when you are finished...)



HA HA!

Q. What time is it when an elephant sits on your fence?

A. Time to get a new fence!

Ha ha! The elephant's ears are too big and the trunk is floppy!



6

HOW MANY MARSUPIALS?

How many of each of these creatures are at the great corroboree?

KOALAS: _____

PLATYPUSES: _____

ECHIDNAS: _____



DID YOU KNOW?

Platypuses and echidnas are the only mammals that lay eggs!

7

WHERE DOES LIGHT COME FROM?

The Sister of the Sun and her daughter glowed with light – but can you think of **5 things that give off light** in real life?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



ANSWERS: 1. Mountain Maze – see right; 2. Where's the Mirror? – it's on this page; 3. Top 10! – A. 20, B. 6, C. 60, D. 2; 6. How Many Marsupials? – there are 5 koalas, 5 platypuses and 7 echidnas; 7. Where Does Light Come From? – possible answers include the sun, stars, flames, flames, screens and fireflies!

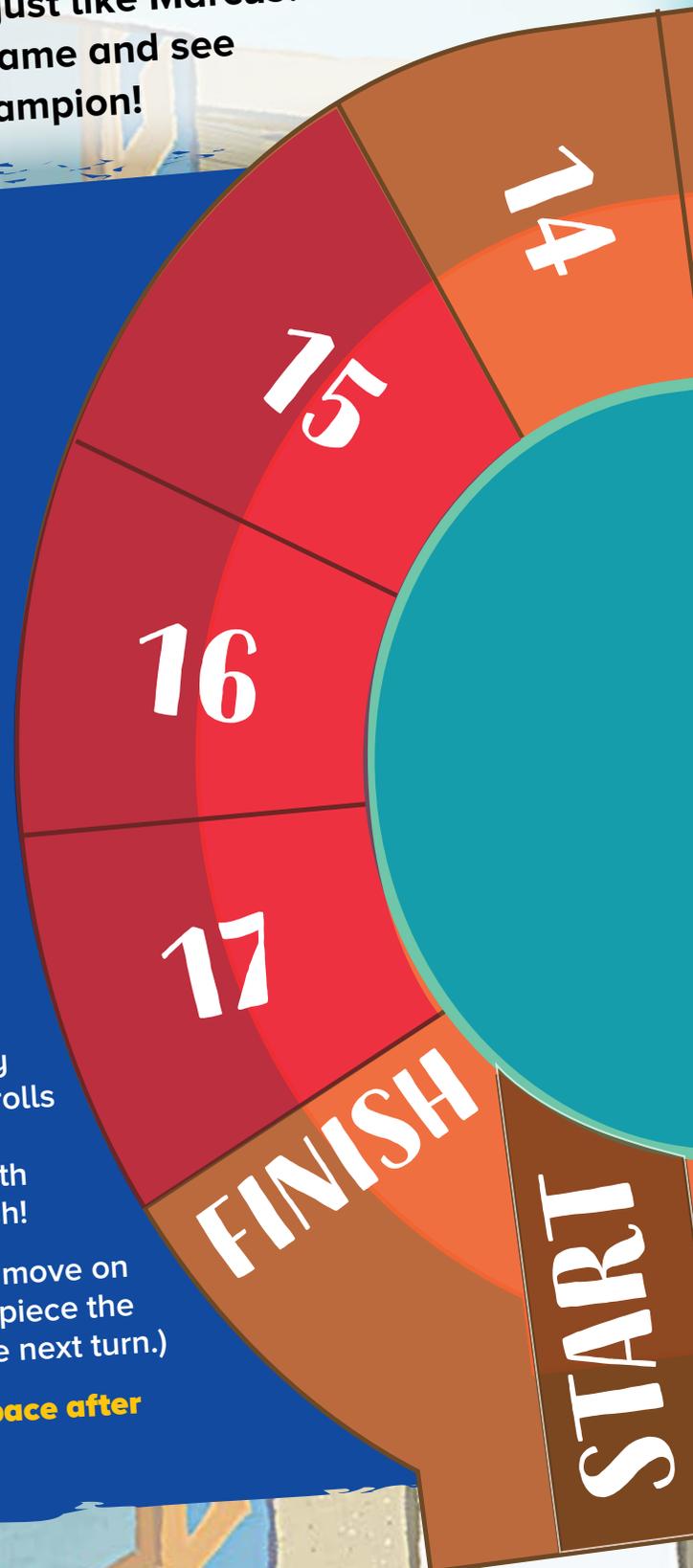
CIRCUS CHARIOT

Want to take part in a chariot race, just like Marcus?
Challenge your friends to this fun game and see
if you have what it takes to be a champion!

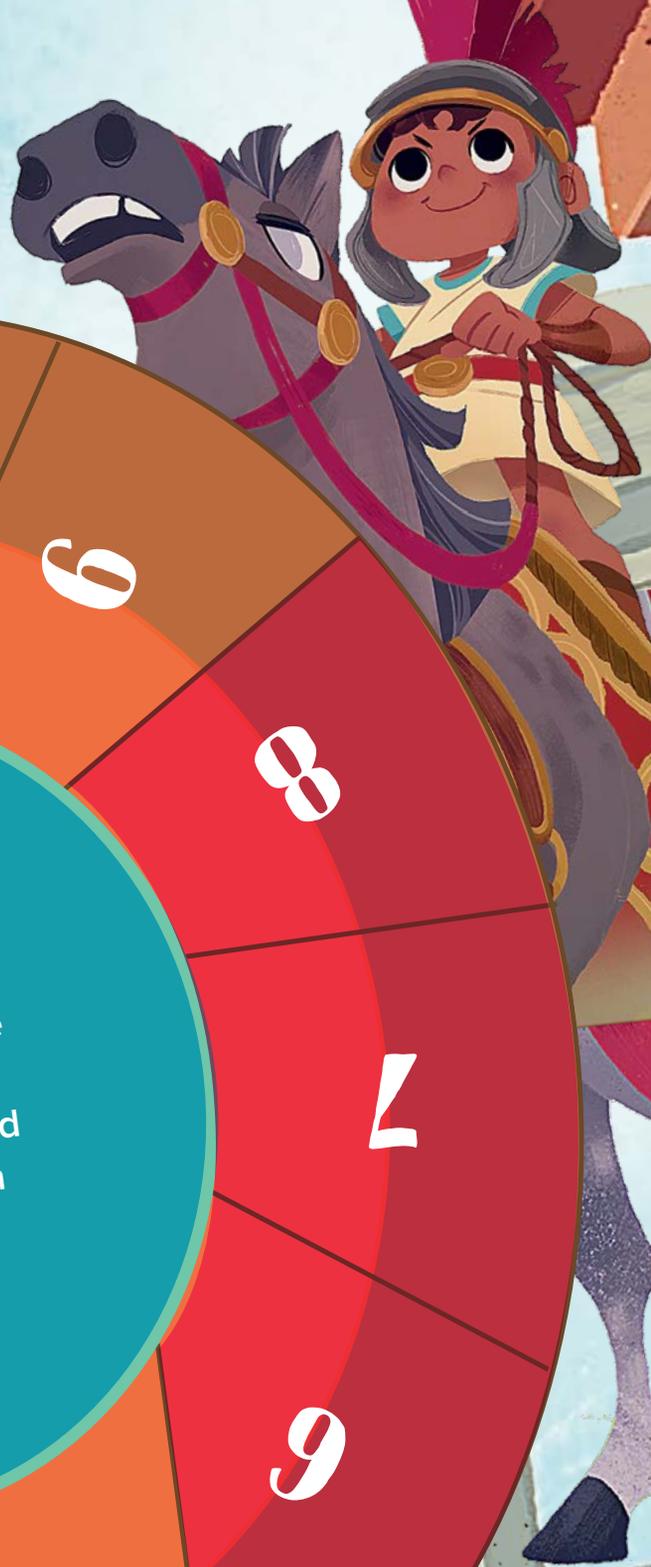
How to Play

Download the chariot counters from storytimemagazine.com/free. Print and cut them out! You will also need two dice and two or more players.

- ★ Choose your counter and place it on the **START** space.
- ★ Take turns rolling two dice and moving your chariots. You can choose to move the number of spaces shown on either dice!
- ★ The turning areas at the ends of the racetrack are shaded red. If a player moves through this area without ending their move in it, they finish their move and then **CRASH** – they must flip over their piece!
- ★ If a player ends their move in the same square as another player's piece, they can try to make the other player crash. Each player rolls a dice – the one who gets the lowest number crashes, and has to flip over their piece. If both players roll the same number, they both crash!
- ★ If your piece is upside down, you cannot move on your turn – but you *are* allowed to flip your piece the right way up! (This means that you can move next turn.)
- ★ **The first person to reach the FINISH space after completing three laps wins!**



RACE!



13

12

11

10

6

8

7

9

DID YOU KNOW?

The biggest chariot-racing track in Ancient Rome was called the *Circus Maximus* – but there were no clowns or performing elephants! Racing could be dangerous, and chariots often crashed when trying to turn around the ends of the *spina* (the island in the middle of the track).

1

2

3

4

5



STORY MAGIC

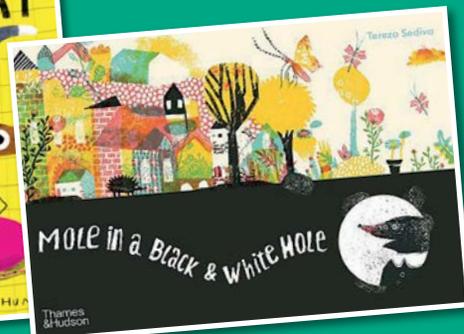
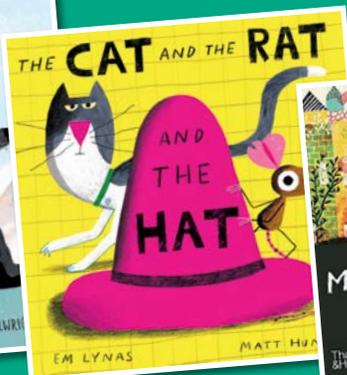
This month, we review three books starring amazing animals – a mole, a wolf, a rat and a cat. Check them out!

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

★ **THERE IS NO BIG BAD WOLF IN THIS STORY** by Lou Carter, illustrated by Deborah Allwright (Bloomsbury) has a very long title – and it might even be truthful! It **does** star a hairy villain from many fairy tales, but he decides that he doesn't want to be bad any more. The bright and lively art just adds to the fun of this tale about how people can change!

★ **THE CAT AND THE RAT AND THE HAT** by Em Lynas, illustrated by Matt Hunt (Nosy Crow) proves that stories for beginning readers can still be great fun! It was written to be read out loud, and the pictures of the title characters and their zany fashion choices make it engaging for children and adults alike. A fantastic bedtime read!

★ **MOLE IN A BLACK AND WHITE HOLE** by Tereza Sediva (Thames & Hudson) is a lovely book for readers who are looking for something a little different. It's about a burrowing mammal who is scared of the world above him, but is encouraged to venture outside by the radish that grows through his ceiling! It's a heartfelt tale about overcoming fear and appreciating the wonders of the world, and the bold and original illustrations are a key part of the story.



CLEANING UP!

The laundry detergents we use to wash our clothes end up in our rivers and seas! They are not good for the environment – so switching to an **eco-friendly detergent** can make a big difference!



WIN!

Which story is the basket on page 3 from? Tell us and you could win all of the books on this page! Send us your answer at: storytimemagazine.com/win

NEXT MONTH:
A gamer goes on holiday and finds a new way to level up!



MISCHIEVOUS ANIMALS AND ACTION GALORE!

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Brilliant
Books!**



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**NEXT MONTH:
meet a musical
hedgehog!**

