

BRIGHTEN UP SUMMER!

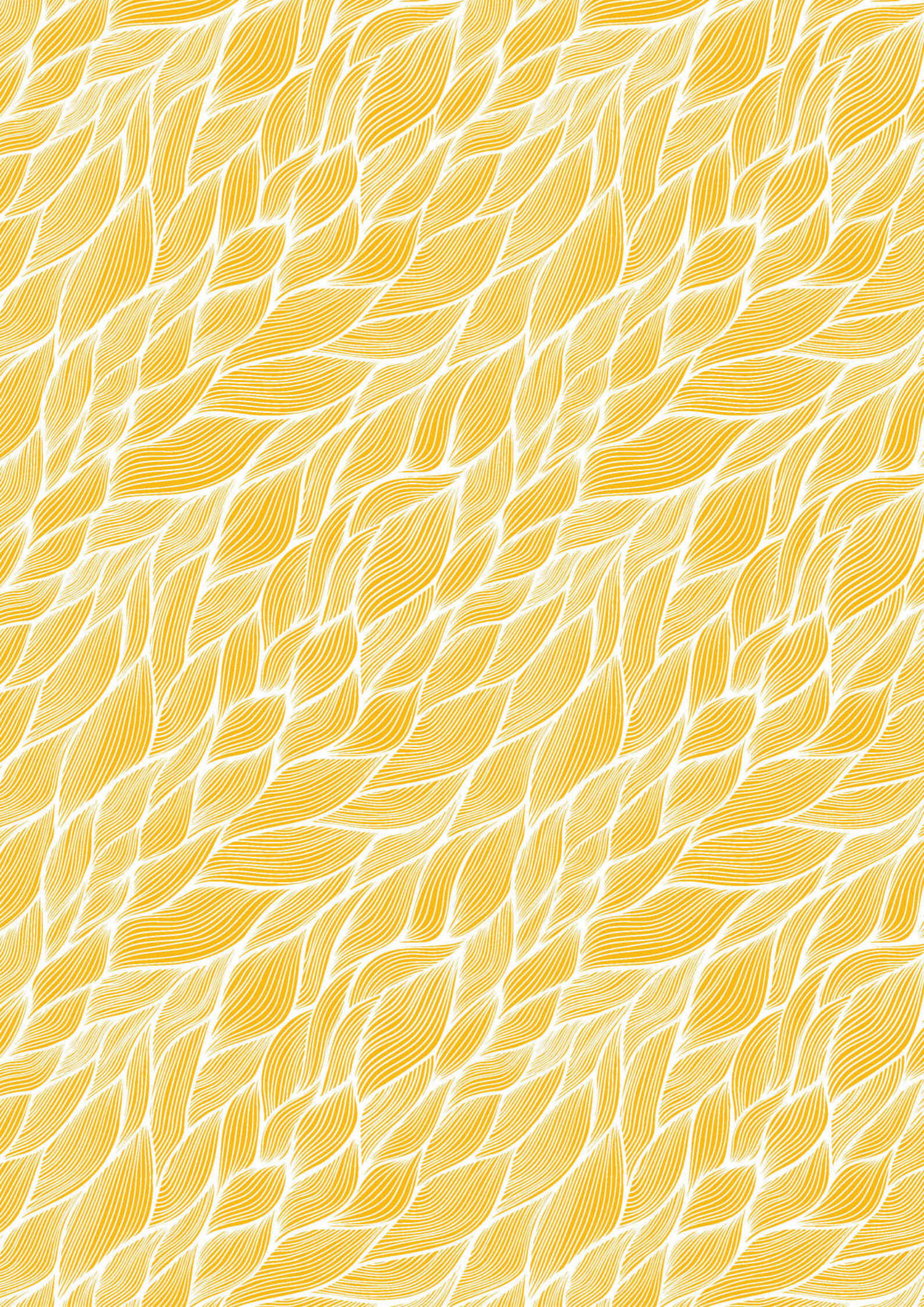
Storytime



THE EYE OF RA is unleashed on the people of Ancient Egypt!

THE SUN HORSE

The Wise Rat, a Pirate's Real Treasure and The Island of Flowers PLUS LOUIS'S ZOO!



STORIES TO BRIGHTEN UP YOUR SUMMER!

Dive in for tales about
sunshine, beaches, cool kids
and funny animals galore!

THIS ISSUE BELONGS TO:

SPOT IT!

Can you find the
story that this
little cupcake
appears in?

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Red Barns to Egypt and the Azores!

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Spot all the animals hiding in this scene!

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I'M TICKLED PINK!



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THE WISE RAT

Gigi was a big, fluffy cat. Her ears were long, her fur was grey, and her eyes were different colours. One was yellow, and one was blue!

At first, the mice in the house were cautious around her, but as time passed, they became overconfident.

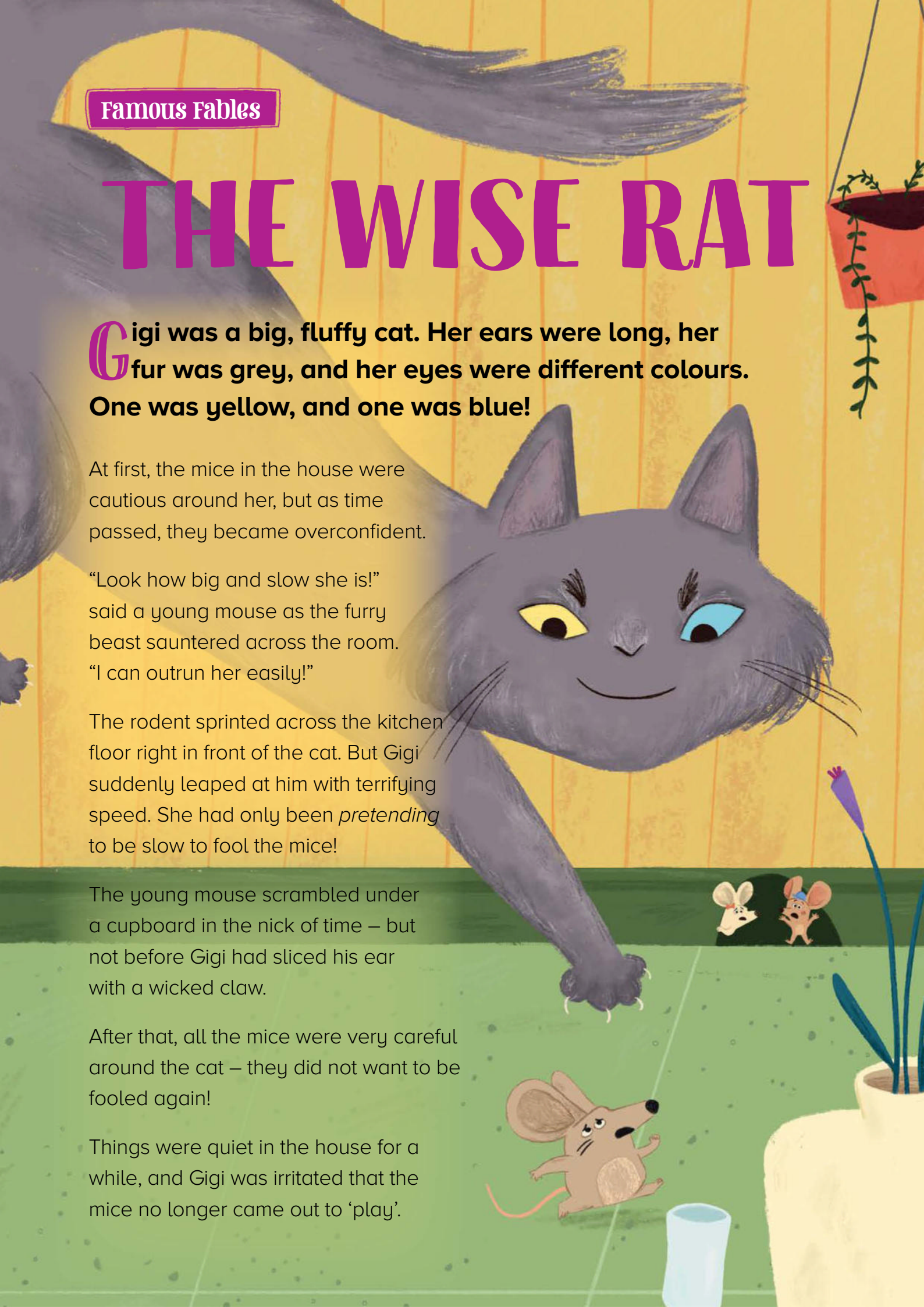
“Look how big and slow she is!” said a young mouse as the furry beast sauntered across the room. “I can outrun her easily!”

The rodent sprinted across the kitchen floor right in front of the cat. But Gigi suddenly leaped at him with terrifying speed. She had only been *pretending* to be slow to fool the mice!

The young mouse scrambled under a cupboard in the nick of time – but not before Gigi had sliced his ear with a wicked claw.

After that, all the mice were very careful around the cat – they did not want to be fooled again!

Things were quiet in the house for a while, and Gigi was irritated that the mice no longer came out to ‘play’.



She lay on her cushion with her tail thrashing from side to side.

“I need to come up with a new plan to catch them!” Gigi growled to herself.



The next day, the rodents saw something peculiar when they peeked out of their holes. There was a gift box in the middle of the kitchen floor! It was tied up with a bow and had a card on it...

The mice were curious about this! Gigi was nowhere to be seen, so they sneaked out to sniff at the box.

“What does the card say, I wonder?” squeaked a mouse.

The words ‘A PRESENT FOR THE MICE’ were scribbled inside, along with a couple of paw prints.

“It’s a gift for us!” she said.

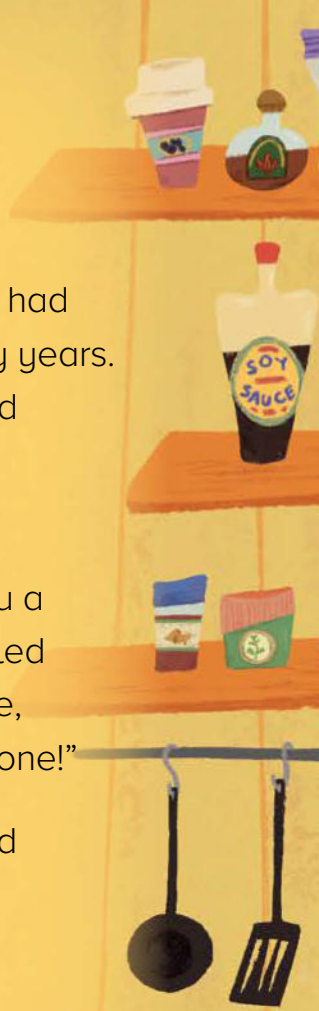
“How nice!” squeaked the rest of the mice.

Old Jerome was a rat who had lived in the house for many years. His whiskers were grey and he couldn’t see very well, but he was very wise.

“Nobody has ever sent you a present before!” he grumbled suspiciously. “If you ask me, you should leave it well alone!”

But the young mice ignored what Old Jerome said.

“Pay no attention to him!” they laughed. “He’s suspicious of everything!” The young mice began to pull the lid off the box. →





“I bet there’s cheese inside!”
chattered one.

“I bet there are *two* kinds of
cheese inside!” squeaked another.
(Mice think about cheese a lot!)

But when the lid came off, the mice
had a nasty surprise. Gigi leaped
out and pounced on them! The mice
wriggled out from under her furry
body and scrambled to safety as
fast as they could.

Old Jerome was waiting for them in
the mousehole. He was grooming
his whiskers in a dignified way.

“What did I tell you?” he said. “Some
things are too good to be true!”



For many days after that, the mice
were too scared to leave their holes.
But one evening, the littlest mouse
decided to go into the kitchen and
find something to nibble. He came
back breathless and excited!

“You’ll never guess what I found!”
he said quickly. “Someone has
left the lid off the flour tin – we
can help ourselves!”

The mice began to squeak excitedly.
Flour was almost as tasty as cheese!

But old Jerome cleared his throat.
“Haven’t you learned *anything*?
I bet it’s another trap set by that
cunning cat!”



In the kitchen, Gigi was hiding inside the flour tin, with only her two ears and one yellow eye poking out above the surface.

“This is my greatest idea yet!” she gloated. “Those greedy mice can’t resist a nibble – and this time, I will catch them all!”

Gigi heard a scurrying sound on the floor! She grinned toothily and prepared to leap...

Just then, there was a clang and the world around her went dark! Someone had shut the lid of the flour tin, and Gigi was trapped! She yowled in surprise and thrashed around frantically.

Old Jerome had closed the lid on the cat, and he watched with amusement as the tin banged and clattered around.

Finally, it fell down and burst open when it hit the floor. Out came all the flour – and Gigi, whose grey fur was now white!



When Gigi’s owners came into the kitchen the next morning and found the floor *and* the cat covered in flour, they scolded her for being so naughty. They also gave Gigi a bath, much to her disgust!

Old Jerome felt proud for having taught the youngsters a valuable lesson. “Oh, you silly cat!” he laughed. “You can trick us once or even twice, but you were foolish to try a third time!” ★



THE PRINCESS OF RED BARNES

There once was a girl called Gertrude, and she lived in Red Barns. Despite its name, it wasn't a barn at all – it was a huge brick mansion. As far as Gertrude was concerned, it was her own private kingdom!

Gertrude was a very clever and curious girl. She loved lying on the floor and reading books, but hated having to sit in a chair and do lessons. That was why she would play tricks on the governesses who were hired to teach her. "I don't need them!" she would complain to her father. "I'm cleverer than they are – just let me read more books instead!"

As soon as her lessons were over, Gertrude would go in search of adventures! Red Barns had huge gardens to explore – and her brother Maurice would tag along with her.



Well, maybe Gertrude wasn't the *only* ruler of Red Barns – if she was its princess, then her father, Hugh, was its king.

He was in charge of big iron and steel factories in the city of Middlesbrough. Since his wife had passed away, though, he spent a lot of time with Gertrude and Maurice, and they had a happy home.

Gertrude's dad was so important that he had his very own train platform at the bottom of their garden. Every evening, Gertrude would run down to meet him as he stepped out of the carriage. She would carry his papers up to the house and chatter to him about everything she had done that day.

Hugh would answer all her questions about the world and tell her about his work.

These conversations were Gertrude's favourite part of the day! She would ask to see maps of the many places her dad had visited. What were they like? Could they go there on holiday?



But one day, everything changed. Her dad went away on a trip to London, and a week later, the housemaids came to get the kids.

“You must get ready!” they told Gertrude and Maurice. “Your dad is coming home with someone special that you must meet. You must be on your very best behaviour!”

When the steam train stopped at the Red Barns platform, their father stepped out. He was smiling happily – and holding the hand of a lady who was wearing grey gloves. ➔



“Who is she?” Maurice whispered.
“I bet she’s *eighty years old!*”

“Don’t be silly!” Gertrude hissed.
“She’s sixty at the most!”

After their father and the lady had greeted the staff, they came up to the children. “It’s so nice to meet you!” the lady said to Gertrude. Her name was Florence, and she was actually twenty-four years old.

Her father smiled at the two kids. “I like Florence very much, and I think you will come to like her too. Just give it time!”



The next day, the siblings held a meeting in the coal cellar. The ceiling was so low that only kids were able to get inside without crouching!

“I don’t think much of this new lady!” Gertrude told her brother.

“But she seems nice!” Maurice piped up. “She read me a wonderful bedtime story last night!”

“Ah, but that’s just what she *wants* you to think!” said Gertrude. “If she’s around, then we might not get as much special time with Dad!”

That afternoon, Gertrude took Maurice up to a first-floor window in the house. “Look!” she said, pointing outside. “We can get onto the greenhouse roof from here!” She climbed out of the window and onto one of the greenhouse’s roof beams. “See? It’s easy!”

But when Maurice looked out, he got scared about how high up it was!



“I don’t think I can!” he whispered.

“Oh, don’t be so silly!” Gertrude scoffed, skipping on the roof.

Maurice slowly climbed out of the window and tried to balance on the beam – but he was trembling with fear. There was a shriek and a crash as he fell through the glass roof of the greenhouse and hit the ground!

Florence came running, her face pale. “Maurice!” she gasped. “Are you all right?” The boy was a bit shaken and bruised, but luckily, he was not badly hurt. Their father just laughed when he heard about their adventure. “It’s only natural for kids to get some cuts and scrapes!”

Gertrude was expecting Florence to be bossy, but the lady was kind and

understanding to both children.

She tried to teach Gertrude how to behave like a lady and made her do sewing, though, so Gertrude decided to play another prank.

The following morning, Florence heard the kids shrieking and went to investigate. Coming into the living room, she saw that Gertrude had grabbed all the hats from the hallway and was throwing them around. Maurice saw this and joined in the fun, too!

But when one of Florence’s finest hats flew into the fire and was burnt, Gertrude felt terribly guilty.

“I’m so sorry!” she told Florence. “I didn’t mean to destroy your hat – it was very pretty!” →



Florence did her best to stay calm. “You have both been a bit naughty, but I didn’t like that hat very much anyway. Perhaps we can go to town and buy some new hats tomorrow?”

Gertrude had to admit that their new mother was quite nice after all. She told the most wonderful stories, sang beautifully and taught Gertrude how to dress stylishly. Perhaps she and Maurice should do something nice for her?



A few days later, Florence found a card on her desk. It read:

‘To Mrs Bell, please do us the pleasure of coming to the Wigwam for tea.’

The Wigwam was Gertrude and Maurice’s playhouse in the garden and where they played all day long.

At teatime, Florence left the house and found the two children waiting for her in their little goat-drawn cart. They drove her down the gravel paths to the Wigwam. The cart *did* tip over once, but Florence got up and dusted herself off. She said she would walk the rest of the way!

At the Wigwam, Gertrude and Maurice served Florence tea and cucumber sandwiches.

Then, Gertrude cleared her throat and said in a serious voice, “We would like to welcome you into our family! We have decided that you



are a nice lady, and you make Daddy very happy. We will do our best to be good children... but we can't promise we will be perfect!"

Florence smiled and took a cucumber sandwich from the plate.

"Thank you, Gertrude!" she said.

"Your father and I know that you are a very clever girl with an amazing spirit. I can't wait to see what life holds for you! I'm sure that we will get along."

Florence drank her tea and listened as Gertrude told her all about the adventures she planned to go on, far beyond the gardens of Red Barns! ★



WHAT HAPPENED NEXT...

Gertrude Bell went on to study at Oxford University. In 1888, she became the first woman to graduate with a first-class degree in Modern History, which was one of the few subjects women were allowed to study at the time!

Gertrude then went to visit her uncle in Persia and fell in love with the Middle East. She travelled extensively throughout the region, learned several languages (including Persian and Arabic) and wrote about her travels. She befriended Arab leaders and became involved in Middle Eastern politics.

Gertrude taught herself about archaeology and helped to dig up several ancient sites. She also became an accomplished mountain climber and scaled Mont Blanc, one of the highest peaks in Europe.

During World War One, Gertrude used her knowledge of the Middle East and her links with Arab leaders to help the British forces in their fight against the Ottoman Empire. After the war, she advised the British government when it established the country of Iraq.

THE FIRST COCONUT

When the sun got unbearably hot in the middle of the day, Sina loved to go swimming in the lagoon. A dip in the beautiful blue-green sea cooled her down nicely!

As she paddled through the water, she looked at the brightly coloured fish that flitted this way and that. Then, she saw a long, snakelike creature. He was staring right at her!

This gave her a fright.

“Your eyes are so scary!” she shrieked.

The girl saw that he was a fish called an eel. The sleek and graceful creature had a lovely rippled pattern on his slippery skin!

“Oh, I’m so sorry for screaming at you!” she apologised. “That was most impolite of me!”

The eel swam around her in a figure-of-eight pattern. Sina thought that this might be what eels do when they accept an apology.

The following morning, Sina found the eel waiting for her when she went down to the lagoon. The girl greeted him warmly.

Sina and the eel soon became friends and spent a lot of time together. He would swim all around her when she paddled in the lagoon and show her secret grottoes in the coral reef.

In return, she would share her lunch with the eel. He would raise his sleek head up out of the water and nibble the food from her hand!

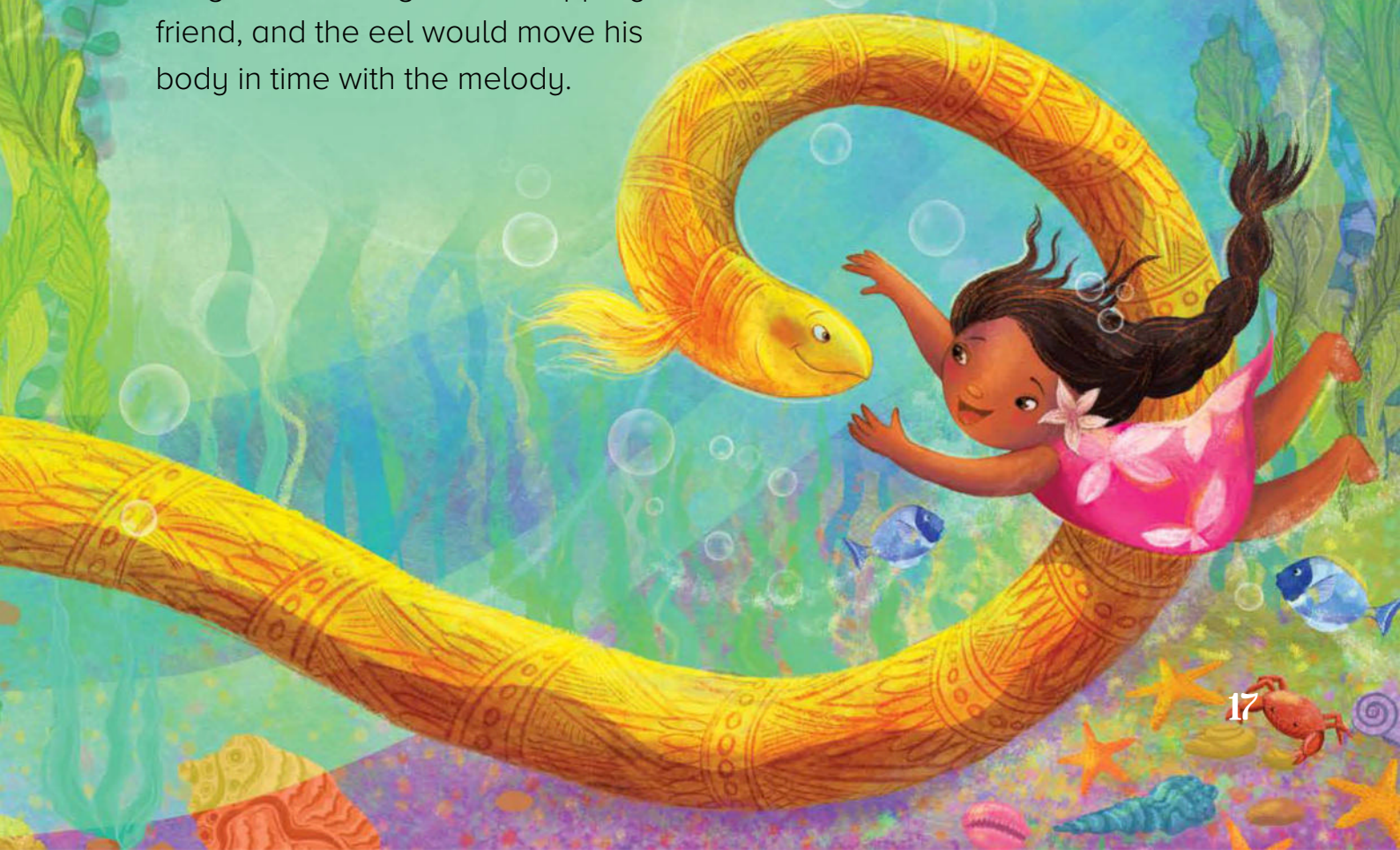
As the sun was going down over the Pacific Ocean, Sina would sing the songs of her village to her slippery friend, and the eel would move his body in time with the melody.

But after several months, Sina noticed that the eel's mood had changed. He didn't swim as fast or as far as he used to, and he had even lost his appetite.

"What is wrong, my dear friend?" she cried.

The eel looked at her with his soulful eyes, and all at once he changed. His skin shimmered and stretched as he transformed into a tall man with long hair and a melancholy expression on his face.

By looking at the tattoos that covered the man's skin, Sina knew that he must be an important chief! →



“My dear girl!” said the man in a voice like rumbling surf, “I was once the chief of an island many miles from here. I heard stories about the kindest girl in the world, with a smile that brightens up even the cloudiest day, and the beautiful island where she lived. I used my magic to take the shape of an eel and came here to find you...”

The chief sighed. “Staying here has been wonderful. Thank you for sharing your time and your songs with me! But now it is time for me to go beneath the earth. I will leave you a gift so you will always remember this wonderful summer!”

Before Sina could say a word, the man turned back into an eel and disappeared into a hole in the ground. She never saw him again.


The girl missed her friend terribly, and often visited the place where he had disappeared.



After several weeks, she spotted a green shoot coming out of the ground where the eel had gone.

As the days went by, it grew into a tall palm tree with bright green leaves.





On the tree grew green nuts that were bigger than Sina's head!

When she took the green husk off one, she found a round brown shell inside, marked with three dimples that looked like two eyes and a mouth. It reminded her of the face of her eel friend, and this made her smile. When she poked a hole in the nut, out came a clear liquid that tasted delicious!

The people of the village were amazed by what she had found, and called it a 'coconut'.

More trees grew from the nuts of this first coconut palm, and soon they could be found all over Samoa.

Sina was grateful to the eel for his parting gift, and thought of him every time she looked up at the beautiful swaying trees that gave so much to her people. ★

LEARN ABOUT IT!

Coconuts are a source of nutritious coconut water and coconut flesh, and sailors in the Pacific carried them on long voyages. The timber from coconut palms is used to build houses, the leaves make good thatching for roofs, and the fibre of the nuts is woven into rope.



THE SUN HORSE

Once upon a time, on a distant island, there were seven kingdoms. Six of them were blessed with the light of the sun – but the seventh was always in darkness.

The people who lived there were thin and pale, and they had to walk about by candlelight. Owls flew through the air instead of sparrows, and mushrooms and toadstools grew in the fields because it was too dark for plants to flourish.

However, the king of that land had a magical horse whose coat glowed like the sun. Every day, he would ride the Sun Horse across his kingdom, bringing light into the lives of his people.

One morning, the king went to his stable and found it empty. The Sun Horse had been stolen!

He summoned his soldiers. “We must find the Sun Horse, or else our land will be in darkness forever!” he told them. His troops searched all over the kingdom, to no avail.

When the king heard that the horse was nowhere to be found, he frowned grimly. “The thief must have fled to another country, then! We must find him!”

The king and his army marched to the border, with their weapons and armour clanking.



As they went past a little cottage, a long-bearded old man peered out of the window.

“Who is making that racket?” he complained. The king recognised the old man straight away. He was a seer and the cleverest person in the kingdom. He knew many secrets and could even do magic!

“My men are leaving the kingdom to search for the Sun Horse, which has been stolen!” declared the king.

The seer smiled and said, “You don’t need an army to find it. Lend me one of your servants and I will get the Sun Horse back for you!

The king decided to do as the wise old man said. He told his page, Viktor, to go with the seer.

The two of them set off on their journey. They crossed the border,

and Viktor was astounded to see how bright it was in other lands!

“Where does all this light come from?” he gasped, covering his eyes.

The seer pointed at a great glowing globe in the sky. “It comes from that – people call it the ‘sun’!”



The pair wandered across six kingdoms and saw many wonderful things. They asked everybody they met if they had seen a horse whose coat glowed like the sun.

“Oh no, I haven’t seen anything like that!” said a friendly merchant.

“That sounds like something from a fairy tale!” exclaimed a haughty lady.

“I’ve never heard of any such thing!” grumbled a stony-faced guard. ➔



Viktor started to worry that they might never find the Sun Horse! Just then, the seer spotted a beggar...

“A week ago, a man rode past on a horse that glowed so brightly, you could hardly look at it,” the beggar told them. “He is the prince of the secret *eighth* kingdom, which lies beyond the mountains. In that land, the sun never rises above the horizon and it is always twilight!”

“We must go there!” exclaimed Viktor.

The beggar wagged his finger. “Be careful! The prince’s mother is a wicked witch-queen, and she has taught him some powerful magic!”

Viktor and the seer were not going to give up, though! The pair climbed over the steep and forbidding mountains to the eighth kingdom. They soon found the castle – it was carved out of dark rock, with towers that thrust into the sky like bony fingers.

“Hide here!” the seer told Viktor. “I will look for the Sun Horse.”

The old man snapped his fingers and turned into a little bird with bright green feathers.

The seer flew over the castle wall, but could see no sign of the Sun Horse anywhere.

He fluttered up to a tower window, where he saw a young woman in a crown. He guessed that she must be the prince’s wife.

The seer-bird perched on the windowsill and chirped.

“Oh, how beautiful you are!” gasped the woman. “My husband would love to see your green feathers – he rode away on his new Sun Horse today, but he should be back tonight!”

Just then, the witch-queen stormed into the room.



“Stay away from that green bird!” she hissed. “It stinks of magic!”

She hurled a bolt of lightning at the seer, but he dodged it and fluttered out of the window. He then flew back to where Viktor was waiting.

The seer turned back into a man in a cloud of green feathers.

“I know where the Sun Horse is!” he told Viktor. “Follow me!”

They went to a bridge not far from the castle.

“The prince is travelling back on the Sun Horse tonight!” the seer explained. “He must cross this river to get back home!”

The pair hid by the bridge as evening fell. They waited until a glow appeared in the distance. It was the prince of that land, on the magnificent Sun Horse!

When the prince tried to cross the bridge, the seer stepped in front of him and drew his sword.

“You stole the Sun Horse from us!” he said. “You must return it!”

The prince grinned wickedly. “Never! It belongs to *me* now!” He drew his own sword.

The two fought fiercely until both their swords broke.

“We shall settle our quarrel with magic!” smirked the prince. Waving his fingers, he turned into a boulder, which rolled towards the seer.

The seer turned himself into another huge boulder. They crashed into each other and shattered!

The prince transformed into a bright red flame and tried to scorch his opponent. The seer turned into an icy blue flame and tried to put out the red one! →



Neither could win, for they were both equally powerful and burned equally brightly!

Viktor decided to help the seer. He scooped a bucket of water out of the river and threw it over the red flame. It went out and the prince reappeared, his clothes drenched!

The blue flame turned back into the seer, who mounted the Sun Horse and chuckled.

“You have lost, Your Highness!” he said. “We are taking this horse back where it belongs!” Viktor climbed onto the glowing horse too, and they rode off.

The prince had to walk back to his castle in his sodden clothes. The witch-queen was furious when she heard what had happened.

“You fool!” she screamed. “I must get that valuable beast back!” She flew off on her iron rake.

Meanwhile, Viktor and the seer were riding towards their home kingdom.

The boy’s stomach rumbled with hunger – and that was when he saw a tree with rosy red apples hanging from every branch.

“Oooh, they look so tasty!” Viktor said, licking his lips.

But the seer shook his head. “Those apples are poisonous!”

The wise man took a stick and gave the tree a sharp rap on the trunk. The tree turned into the witch-queen, who rubbed her head. “How dare you!” she screeched.

The seer and the servant continued on their way. As the miles went by, Viktor became thirstier and thirstier. When he saw a marble fountain ahead, he jumped off the horse and ran towards it.

The seer stopped him and threw a rock into the fountain.

The fountain turned into the witch-queen, who was holding her sore knee.

“I’ll get you, and your servant too!” she screamed as she flew off.

The pair rode on through the night, and suddenly the boy smelled a lovely scent. It was a rose bush laden with blossoms! He went to sniff one of them.

“Stop!” snapped the seer sharply. “Those roses are cursed!”

He set fire to one of the bush’s branches with a match.

There was a loud scream as the bush turned into the witch-queen, whose hat was on fire.

Realising that she could not outwit the seer, she flew home to her castle, where she sulked for many days.



After riding across all six kingdoms, Viktor and the seer finally reached their homeland. They were welcomed as heroes, and the people celebrated the return of the wondrous Sun Horse!

Its bright light brought warmth and joy to the country. Flowers blossomed, and people danced in the streets to celebrate.

Viktor was knighted for his brave deeds, but the seer did not want any reward.

He just patted the glowing animal’s mane and said... →



"Bringing light and joy back



SPOT IT!

Tick off these animals when you find them!!

Answer: There are 7 fireflies!



to the land is enough for me!"



How many fireflies are there in this scene? Write your answer here!

BEN GUNN'S REAL TREASURE

It had been a long sea voyage, and young Jim Hawkins was glad when the ship he was on finally docked. He said goodbye to his shipmates and went down the gangplank, carrying a heavy chest on his shoulder.

With him was Ben Gunn. Jim had met the old sailor on Treasure Island – he was a nice fellow, but had become a bit peculiar after being stranded on the desert island for three years!

“What are you going to do now, Ben?” he asked.

The old sailor chuckled. “Ol’ Ben Gunn is blessed with a thousand pounds worth of treasure, which is plenty for me! I will live a happy life!” He waved goodbye as he walked off down the road.

Jim hiked up the hill to the Admiral Benbow inn. His mother saw him through the window and rushed outside.

“Oh, my darling boy!” she cried as she hugged him. “It’s so good to see you – I thought you had been lost at sea!”

“I’m glad to be home!” he told her. “I’ve gone through enough mutinies, betrayals and battles to last a lifetime!”



Jim showed her the one thousand pounds worth of treasure he had earned. She was amazed!

Jim settled into life at the inn, helping his mother cook and clean and serve customers in the dining room.

A few weeks later, the young lad was surprised to see a familiar figure come through the door.

“Why, if it isn’t Ben Gunn!” Jim exclaimed. “What brings you here?”

The old sailor sighed. “Ill fortune, Jim! The treasure weighed me down, and there were so many things to spend it on. In nineteen days, I had lost every last coin!”

This was a sad turn of events! Jim asked Ben if he had any family he could stay with.

“Oh, Ben Gunn’s been at sea for so long, I wouldn’t know where to find them!” he sighed. “I’ve forgotten so many things on that island. Why, I couldn’t even tell you when my birthday might be!”

Jim felt sorry for the fellow! He went into the kitchen and came out with a fruit cake and a gift-wrapped box.

“Since you don’t know when your birthday is, let’s say it’s today!” Jim told him. When Ben tore the paper off the box and smelled what was inside, a tear came to his eye.

“CHEESE! The very thing I missed on that island for so many years. You’ve taught me a grand lesson – gold coins come and go, but friendship is a treasure that lasts forever!” ★



LOUIS'S ZOO

Louis didn't want to go to another country.
He was quite happy where he was!

"All my friends are here! Why do we have to move?" he complained.

His mum sighed. "I know, my darling, but Anton got a great job offer. It's a chance we just can't miss!

"There'll be so much to see and do in South Africa, and there are all sorts of cool animals there! You'll never get bored!"

Louis gave a little smile. He was an only child, and he *did* feel lonely sometimes. Maybe he could adopt some pets? That would be nice!

Anton poked his head through the door and grinned.

"Come on, you two! Let's get packing for our great adventure!"

Louis bounced off the bed. His stepdad was so cheerful, he spread his enthusiasm to everyone!



The next few days were a blur of packing and sorting things. Louis became an expert at folding clothes and taping up cardboard boxes!

The moving truck arrived, and Louis counted a hundred and fifteen boxes as they were loaded. All his toys were packed ... except for Olly the elephant, of course. Louis explained that he would be too scared to travel in a dark box.

Louis and Mum and Anton (and Olly) took a taxi to the airport. They stood in a lot of queues, then there was a *loong* flight, another airport and more queueing! Finally, they jumped into an old Jeep and started the last part of their journey.

It was a bumpy drive along dirt roads, with lush forest

on one side and the jewel-blue sea on the other. The sunlight was bright and the air felt hot and moist – it was far more humid than at home.

“We’re here!” Anton grinned as he turned down a hidden driveway.

Looking out of the window, Louis saw a white house surrounded by trees of all kinds. Was that a lawn, or just a spot where the bushes didn’t grow quite as high?

As soon as the car stopped, Louis jumped out to explore.

He breathed in deeply – the air had a special feel here.

“That’s what wet, fertile soil smells like!” his mum said. →

NEW BEGINNINGS!

Moving to a new place can be difficult!. You might miss your old friends and familiar places, but there are also new things to look forward to! Read this story and then make a list of things that could be nice about relocating to a home in a new city or country!



Louis had a great time exploring the garden. He watched the spiders weave intricate webs in the guava tree branches and followed the bees as they buzzed from flower to flower!



Three weeks after moving into his new home, Louis came down for breakfast. He found Mum and Anton sitting at the kitchen table, and in front of them was an ice cream cake with sparklers on it. “HAPPY BIRTHDAY!” they chanted in unison.

Anton put a box with a bow on it in front of Louis.

“Here’s your special present – we know you’ll love them!”

When Louis opened it, he saw three fluffy yellow things that made the cutest *peep-peep-peep* sound.

They were chicks! He gave Mum and Anton a special thank-you hug.

He made a box for the chicks in his bedroom, with a light bulb to keep them warm. They could be a bit noisy when he was trying to sleep, but he soon got used to it...

Anton had to go away for work that week, and he came back cradling something in his hands. “I found this fellow by the side of the road...” he whispered as he showed Louis a cute tortoise. “I thought you could take care of him!”

The tortoise poked his head out of his shell and stared at Louis with his big, serious eyes.

“Oh, he is so funny!” said Louis. He couldn’t help but giggle!

Louis gathered fresh leaves for Tony the Tortoise every day.



The little fellow slept in a box on his desk most of the time.

The next member of the menagerie was a flamboyant green parrot.

Louis knew that parrots could talk, so he was sure they would have great conversations. The boy often walked around with the green bird on his shoulder, talking about things big and small.

“Will it rain today?” he asked.

“Rain today, it will!” Pip the Parrot would squawk in reply.

Pip also had a place to sleep in Louis’s bedroom, which was becoming rather full by now. Mum said it had to stay clean and tidy – so Louis had to do a lot of mopping and sweeping up!

Every time Anton went away, he came home with another pet.

Bob the Bunny was the fluffiest – and the hungriest. Louis lost count of how many cucumbers he ate. Then came Vinnie the Vervet, a monkey with big round eyes. He loved to cause mischief by dropping things from high places!

Vinnie could climb trees faster than any other creature in the world, and Louis did his best to follow him wherever he went.



One afternoon, Louis saw Anton bumping down the driveway with the head of a long-necked bird sticking out of the window of his Jeep. It was the most unusual creature Louis had ever seen! →





He named the young ostrich Bella, and she was the largest animal in his collection so far!

She was as tall as Louis and loved to run around in the garden with him. It wasn't easy to find space for her in his bedroom, but a big pillow in the corner made a nice nest for his new feathered friend.

Louis started to think that his bedroom was a bit *too* full!

But then he saw Dinky the Duiker picking her way through the trees in the garden. The little antelope looked lost! Louis quietly got his mother and pointed at the animal.



“Mum, can we *pleeease* keep her?” Just this one... She is all alone... she needs me...” begged Louis. “She can have my duvet!”



After coaxing the duiker to come closer, Louis fed her from an old baby bottle filled with milk. He made a bed for her with his duvet, and she soon fell asleep.

Louis felt pretty tired himself, but he found that he couldn't drop off. The noises (and smells!) of all his animal friends made it impossible! After tossing and turning for an hour, he went and lay in the hammock on the veranda. Now he could finally sleep in peace!

“You know what I’ve decided?” he said to Mum and Anton the next morning. “Perhaps my pets will be happier outside!” He opened the door and soon Dinky was out running after the chickens, Tommy was hiding next to Bob in the grass and Bella was chasing Vinnie up a tree.

His parents nodded wisely, but Louis had the feeling they were trying to stop themselves from bursting out laughing.

“Also, there’s room for *many* more animals outside!” said Louis with a grin. ★



THE ISLAND OF FLOWERS

Far, far up in the sky, there is a secret garden among the clouds. In that garden grow the most fabulous flowers the world has ever seen. There are blossoms of red and blue and yellow and purple and other colours that we don't even have a name for!

The flowers smell even more lovely than they look. Anyone sniffing their perfume would wonder if they were asleep and having a wonderful dream!

This magical place is tended by dozens of gossamer-winged fairies who water the plants every day, so they grow even bigger and more beautiful.

Most of the fairies are quite happy flitting around their cloud-garden, paying no attention to what is going on in the world far below.

But Belen was different. She was curious! Sometimes, she would peer down through the clouds at the blue seas and rocky islands beneath her.

"I wonder what it's like down below?" she thought. "Surely the lives of the humans who live there would be brightened up if they could see and smell our flowers. They are missing out on such beauty!"





She went to Amalia, the fairy who ruled the garden. “Please, Your Majesty, could I take some of our flowers down to Earth and plant them there?” Belen asked her.

The fairy queen frowned grimly.

“Never! I will not share my blossoms, for they are my special treasure! How dare you even suggest it! You do not deserve to live in this beautiful garden – I banish you from my kingdom forever!”

Belen wept bitterly when she heard this. She would miss the garden so much! She went to see her favourite flowers one last time, and gently stroked their petals with her hand.

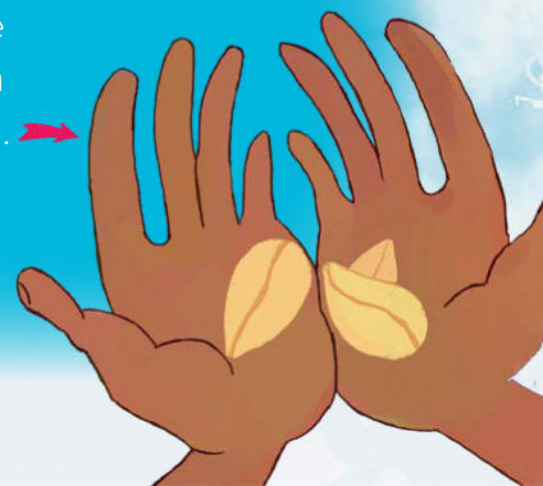
“Grow well, my beauties,” she sobbed, “and think of me sometimes!”


Belen went to the edge of the cloud garden and drifted down towards the Earth on her gossamer wings. When she wiped her tears on her dress, she found that dozens of seeds were tucked into its folds.

“They must be a last gift from my flower friends!” she gasped. “I have to find the best place to plant them!”

Belen glided over churning oceans, endless deserts and towering mountains.

At long last, she came upon a place where nine different-coloured islands were scattered on the blue sea. →





The greenest one seemed to Belen to be the most beautiful. It had lush forests, clear crater lakes and many waterfalls that tumbled down the steep mountainsides.

“What a gorgeous place!” she breathed. “This is where I will plant my special garden!”

She carefully spread the seeds on the red soil and watered them every day. Soon, colourful flowers sprouted all over the island, turning the hillsides pink and purple and yellow. Belen cared for the plants, and the island became as beautiful as the garden in the sky. She was truly happy there and did not miss the cloud garden.

When humans sailed to the island in their ships, they could smell the scent of the flowers from far across the water! When they landed and saw Belen’s garden, they thought they had found a paradise on Earth!

They named the archipelago the Azores – and the island that was the fairy’s home was called Flores, which means *flowers* in Portuguese. Belen continued to care for the plants there, and the island is famous for its beautiful blossoms to this day! ★

ENJOY THE OUTDOORS!

Spending time playing outside and enjoying nature is good for your mental and physical health! Have you gone to play in your local park recently? What did you enjoy the most? Which plants, animals and other things did you see there?

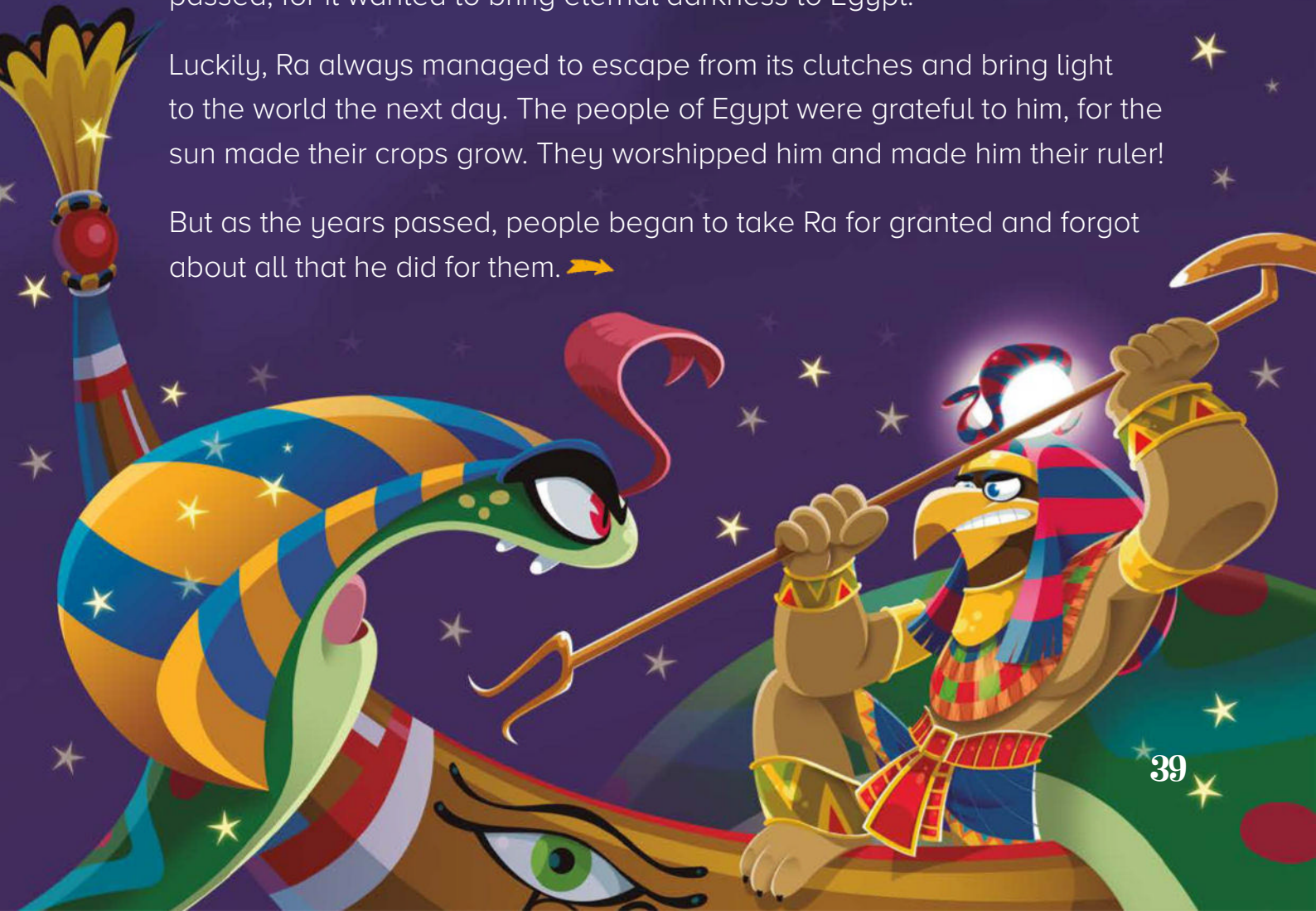
SEKHMET AND THE EYE OF RA

Ra was the sun god of Ancient Egypt. Every day, he would sail his sun-ship across the sky, bringing light and warmth to the world, and each night, he would guide it through the gloomy caverns of the underworld.

Ra was powerful and fearless, but he had a mighty enemy: the snake Apophis. It dwelled in the underworld and attacked the sun-ship as it passed, for it wanted to bring eternal darkness to Egypt!

Luckily, Ra always managed to escape from its clutches and bring light to the world the next day. The people of Egypt were grateful to him, for the sun made their crops grow. They worshipped him and made him their ruler!

But as the years passed, people began to take Ra for granted and forgot about all that he did for them. ➔



“He’s not that great, is he?” people would whisper. “He can’t even finish off that evil snake Apophis. Perhaps we should to replace him with a new and mightier ruler!”

When Ra heard that the Egyptians were plotting to rebel against him, he was furious!

“How dare they be so ungrateful!” he yelled. “I give them light every day – and yet they want to get rid of me!”

He turned to his daughter Hathor, who was always by his side.

“Will you go out and strike fear into the humans?” he asked her.

“They need to be taught a lesson!”

Hathor was the goddess of beauty and dance, but on her headdress she carried a red disc called the Eye of Ra. It was a gift from her father, and it contained all of the destructive power of the sun.

Hathor was nervous about using this power, but she hated to see her father upset and decided to do as he asked.

The goddess went outside and let the power of the Eye of Ra flow through her. Her beautiful hair turned into a shaggy mane, her teeth became sharp fangs, and golden fur sprouted all over her body. Gentle Hathor had transformed into ferocious Sekhmet, the unstoppable lion-goddess of war and chaos!



She let out a roar that echoed across the land. When the Egyptians heard it, they were terrified!

“What was that?” they asked, their voices trembling.

The ground shook as Sekhmet prowled through Egypt, searching for the rebels. Her eyes blazed as brightly as the sun, and wherever she looked, things caught fire!

People fled from their houses as flames engulfed them. Sekhmet chased after them, growling! The Egyptians ran into the desert to hide from her wrath...

The hot sun scorched them as they staggered across the sand. People sought shelter in caves – but even then, they could find no peace.

There was no food or water, and sooner or later they would have to come out!

The people knelt in their hiding places and prayed.

“Oh Ra, please forgive us!” they begged. “We were wrong to doubt your great powers! Please help us!”



Ra heard their prayers as he looked out across the land of Egypt. It was now scorched and without people. The sun-god felt terrible about letting Sekhmet loose!

“My daughter, that’s enough!” he begged her. “The people have learned their lesson – please stop what you are doing!” →





“Once I have set the power of the Eye of Ra loose, it cannot be controlled!” growled Sekhmet. “I could not stop, even if I wanted to!”

On hearing this, the sun god was worried sick. He had to find a way to save Egypt and get his beloved daughter Hathor back!

Ra went to the palace cellars and filled seven thousand jugs with beer and pomegranate juice. Then, he poured the bright red liquid out onto the earth so it flooded across all of Egypt!

Sekhmet was surprised when she saw this. “Whatever can that be?” she thought. She sniffed it... it smelled good! The lion-goddess began lapping up the sweet liquid.

She drank it all, and then fell asleep for a long time. When she woke up, she had turned back into peaceful Hathor, the goddess of beauty.

The people cautiously left their hiding places in the desert and returned to Egypt. They bowed down to Ra and thanked him for ending Sekhmet’s rampage.

Ra smiled kindly and said to them, “I should not have given in to anger and unleashed a power I could not control. I believe it is time for me and the other gods to go and live in the sky. You humans deserve to be ruled by your own kind!”

Ra went up into the heavens, and he continued to sail the ship of the sun from east to west each day.

He chose a human to be his representative on Earth – and that was how the first Pharaoh came to rule over the land of Egypt.

The people of Egypt never forgot what happened when they rebelled against the sun-god! Every year, they held a festival where they offered seven thousand jugs of beer and pomegranate juice to his daughter Hathor – to make sure she would not turn into Sekhmet and ravage their land again... ★

Sekhmet's name comes from the Egyptian word 'Sekhem', which means 'power' or 'might'. Her name is often translated as 'Powerful One' or 'She who is Powerful'. In early Egyptian writing, she was also called the Eye of Ra. The hieroglyph for her name looks like this:



STORYTIME PLAYBOX

Make a pirate treasure chest, solve sums to save the Sun Horse, find your way through a pyramid maze and play coconut bingo!

1 HAT AND GO SEEK

What a mess! Gertrude has to find all the hats she threw around the living room... See if you can spot all eight of them, and **circle them** when you do!



2 RHYME TIME

This month's fable stars a CAT and a RAT... but **how many other three-letter words that end with -at can you come up with?** Then, see if you can complete the sentence underneath!

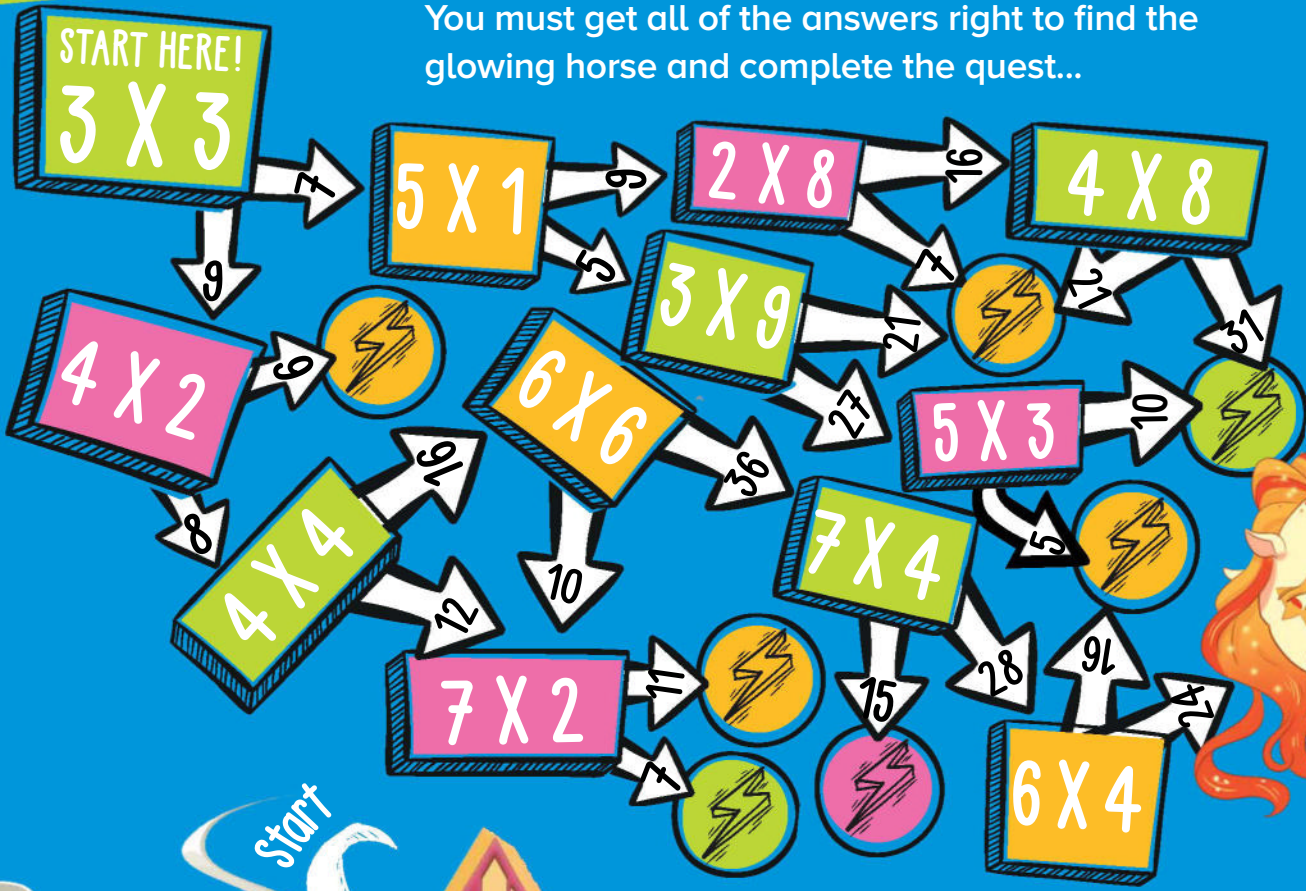
CAT	<input type="checkbox"/> AT	<input type="checkbox"/> AT
RAT	<input type="checkbox"/> AT	<input type="checkbox"/> AT
<input type="checkbox"/> AT	<input type="checkbox"/> AT	<input type="checkbox"/> AT
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A at at at on
a at patting a at!



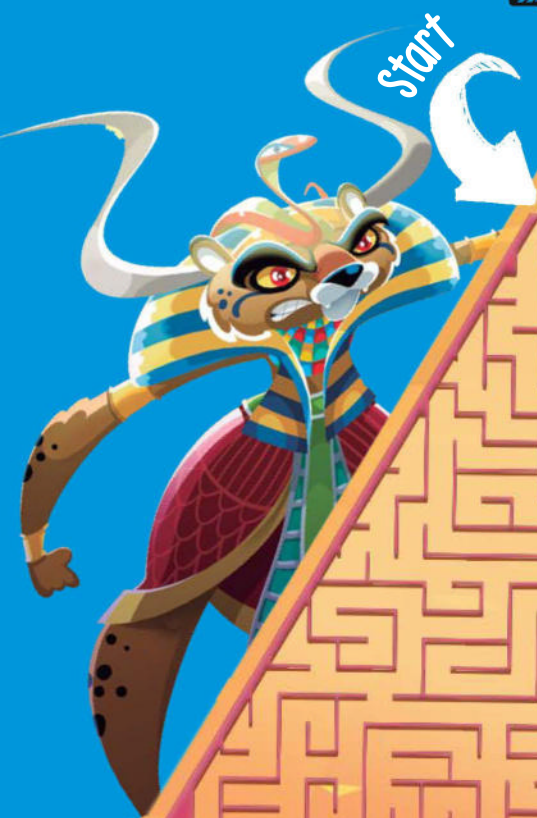
3 MATHS MAP

The seer is looking for the Sun Horse, but he needs to use maths to work out where it is! On each space is a sum that needs a solution. **Choose an answer on an arrow and move to the space it is pointing at!** You must get all of the answers right to find the glowing horse and complete the quest...



4 HATHOR'S PYRAMID!

The Egyptian lion-goddess is on the loose and cannot find her way home! **Draw a path through the pyramid maze** to get her back to her father's palace and bring peace to the land!



5 WHO'S IN LOUIS'S ZOO?

Louis is counting the animals in his bedroom – but he seems to have one extra pet!

Can you spot the beast that didn't appear in his tale?

Read the story again if you need help working it out!

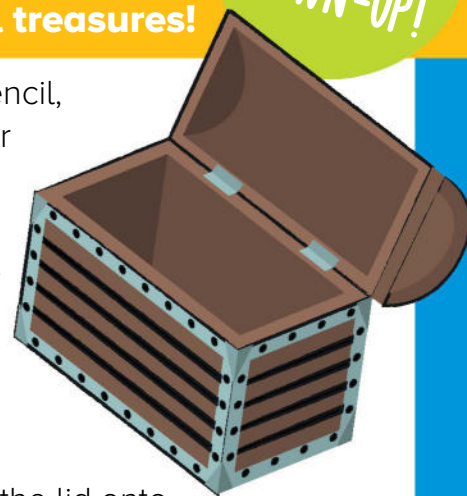


6 MAKE A TREASURE CHEST

Jim Hawkins carried his gold in a chest... and now you can create a chest to hold your own special treasures!

ASK A GROWN-UP!

- You will need a cardboard box with a lid, cardboard, a pencil, scissors, sticky tape, a glue stick, brown and gold or silver paint, paint brushes and a jar of water to wash them in.
- First, you need to make the arched lid for the chest. With an adult's help, cut out a rectangle of card that is as wide as the lid and a bit bigger across.
- Tape one side of the rectangle to one side of the lid and the other side of the rectangle to the other side of the lid, creating an arch.
- Next, use a pencil to trace the two shapes of the arch on the lid onto cardboard and cut them out. They should be the right size to fit on the sides of the arched lid.
- Put them under the arched top of the lid on either side and stick them in position with tape or glue. Then, paint the box and lid brown.
- Cut off more strips of cardboard and paint them gold or silver. Stick them around the edges of the front, back, sides and top of the lid as if they were bands of metal that hold the chest together.
- You can paint dots to represent nails on the bands of 'metal'!
- Use sticky tape to create hinges to join the back of the lid to the back of the box.



TIP!

COLLECT YOUR BOOTY! Fill the chest with your favourite treats and treasures, like sweets, stickers or marbles!



7

COLOUR THE FAIRY FLOWERS

Brighten up Belen's garden by **colouring in the flowers in the picture!** Follow the colour guide below the picture to find out how to paint each one. Can you work out what each flower is?



Lily



Daisy

Rose

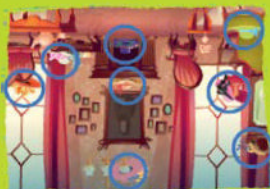
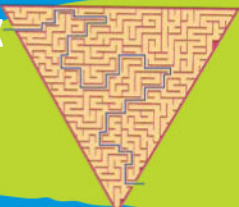


Forget-me-not

Leaves



X



ANSWERS: 1. Hat and Go Seek – see right. 2. Rhyme Time – answers could include cat, rat, bat, fat, hat, mat, pat, sat and vat. 3. Maths Map – the correct answers are 9, 8, 16, 36, 28 and 24. 4. Hothor's Pyramid! – see right. 5. Who's in Lou's Zoo? – the dog isn't in the story.

COCONUT BINGO!

In this fun game, use your maths skills to complete this coconut bingo card with Sina!

How to Play

You will need two or more players, a different-coloured pen or pencil for each one, a dice and the bingo card on the right. You can print out more copies of the card from storytimemagazine.com/free to play more games.

- ★ The youngest player rolls the dice and multiplies that number by one, two, three, four, five or six (their choice).
- ★ They should say the equation out loud and then cross out the result on the bingo board. For example: "I rolled a three. Three times two is six, so I'm crossing out the six!"
- ★ The player to their left then rolls the dice and also multiplies the number they get by one, two, three, four, five or six, and crosses off their result on the table with their coloured pen or pencil.
- ★ Players keep taking turns rolling dice, multiplying the numbers they get, and crossing off the results. They cannot cross off a number that has already been crossed off by another player!
- ★ When every number has been crossed off, it's time for the players to add up their scores. They get one point for every number crossed off in their colour!

SPECIAL RULE: The player who crossed off the last number is called 'the eel' – they get three bonus points!



TEE HEE!

Q. Why couldn't the coconut tell a joke properly?
A. He kept cracking himself up!



STORY MAGIC

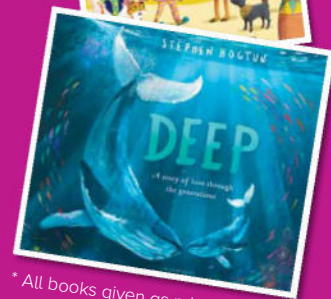
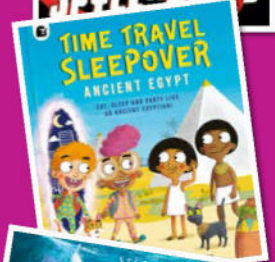
BRILLIANT BOOKS TO READ NOW!

★ **SPYCERATOPS** by Alex Willmore (Farshore) answers an age-old question: what is cooler than a dinosaur? The answer is: a dinosaur who is also a *spy*! Spyceratops has gadgets, a sidekick, and even a cool spybike. He sets off on a mission to investigate his grandad and a mysterious box. The cartoon-style illustrations really bring the fun hero and his prehistoric world to life!

★ **TIME TRAVEL SLEEPOVER: ANCIENT EGYPT** by Timothy Knapman, illustrated by Matt Robertson (Happy Yak) will take you on a trip to ancient times! Written like a guidebook,

it introduces you to how Ancient Egyptians lived, worked, played and ate. This wonderful book and its colourful art will make you look at the past in a whole new way...

★ **DEEP** by Stephen Hogtun (Bloomsbury) is a tale of love and wonder that follows a baby whale and his mother on their journey through the ocean. The lush and moody art welcomes you into the undersea world of these amazing creatures, and you will learn a lot about whales as you lose yourself in the story.



* All books given as prizes are provided by the publishers. If a book is not available, they might send an alternative title to the winner.

WIN!

Did you find the cupcake shown on page 3?

Tell us which story it was from and we will enter you into a draw to win the books reviewed above! Go to: storytimemagazine.com/win

LET'S TALK ABOUT... TAKING TIME TO REST

DISCONNECT TO REST!

Being on the go all the time isn't good for us, and taking the time to rest is necessary for thinking well, feeling well and being well as a whole. Resting doesn't always mean sitting around and doing nothing! We can rest whilst being creative, being with our loved ones or even doing something active. We all need different kinds of rest in our lives. (It's important to take a break from screens, too!)

THINK DEEPER When you are tired, it might be helpful to figure out what *kind* of rest you need. Does your *body* need rest? Do you need a rest from *thinking*? Do you need a rest from some *tricky feelings*? Sleeping and disconnecting from devices are good ways to rest!

Jessica Bowers is our expert consultant for the *My Mind Matters!* section. She is a wellbeing writer, counsellor and psychotherapist. Visit her website for more information: www.jessicabowers.co.uk

TRY THIS!

Here are 3 different 'rest' activities to try:
Doodling – try holding a pencil in each hand and doodling with both at the same time. This engages both sides of your brain, which is very calming.

Squeezing – squish some modelling clay and enjoy the feeling of it between your fingers.

Cloud-spotting – lie on the grass and look at the sky. Notice all the different shapes of the clouds and imagine what they look like!.





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