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Storytime™



ROBIN HOOD RETURNS
In a daring bridge battle!



FLY OVER THE RAINBOW
With Dorothy and Toto!



BENJI'S MAGIC BOOTS

~~~~~

**Bouki the Hyena, Cap o' Rushes, Mr Luck  
and Mrs Pluck, a Nature Poem & MORE!**



“There were hundreds and hundreds of animals racing by.”



# Jump into Our World of Magic and Adventure!

In this issue meet tricky tricksters,  
lucky lazybones, legendary heroes, clever  
princesses and a boy with magic boots!

This issue belongs to:

**WOOF!**

I'm hiding in this  
magazine. Can you  
spot me?



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WITH SUPER STORIES FROM AFRICA,  
SHERWOOD FOREST AND STORYLAND!





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# Storyland's Surprise Visitor

**I**t was a sunny afternoon in Storyland when a big dark shadow suddenly fell across the town square.

Sleeping Beauty looked out of her shop window at Sleep-Pea Heads Beds, fearing a dragon. Instead she saw a hot air balloon flying bumpily through the sky. The balloon was getting lower and lower, and a girl was hanging over the edge of the basket shouting, "Help! My balloon's got a hole in it!"

The balloon was losing height fast. It soared over the Golden Ball Toy Shop then drifted towards Bramble Woods, before colliding with the top of Rapunzel's Tower. It plunged to the ground, crash-landing in the woods.





Sleeping Beauty sprinted towards the balloon. Meanwhile, Rapunzel raced down the steps of her tower to find out what the commotion was. When they reached the crashed balloon, a yappy little dog ran up wagging its tail. Sleeping Beauty spotted two feet in sparkly red shoes sticking out from under the basket, and heard a muffled voice calling out for help.

As the two princesses heaved the rickety basket out of the way, it fell apart.

The girl beneath sighed with relief. “Thank you so much! Flying monkeys tore a hole in my balloon and I lost control. I’m Dorothy. Pleased to meet you.”

As the princesses introduced themselves, the little dog ran over to Dorothy and licked her face. “Poor Toto, are you hurt?” she asked. Toto yapped. He was fine.

“Oh, look at my balloon,” wailed Dorothy. “It’s destroyed! How will we get over the rainbow now? We’re meeting friends in Emerald City – we’ll never make it.”

Sleeping Beauty inspected Dorothy’s balloon. “This is made from silk. I have sheets like this in my bed shop. I can patch it up for you.” ➡





Dorothy smiled. "That's so kind. Thank you!" But when she saw her broken basket, her smile soon faded.

"I have an idea for your basket," said Rapunzel. "Come with me, Dorothy."



Sleeping Beauty ran to her shop, while Rapunzel led Dorothy and Toto to Far, Far Away Fields. They soon reached a cottage with three doors.

Rapunzel knocked on the first door and called, "Little pig, little pig, are you in?"

A spotty pig answered the door and said, "Hello, Rapunzel. How can I help you today?"

"We need to fix a basket. Do you have anything we can use, please?"

"No, not by the hairs of my chinny, chin, chin," said the spotty pig. "I only have bricks and they're too heavy. Try my sister next door."

Rapunzel knocked on the second door and called, "Little pig, little pig, are you in?"

A small pig answered the door and said, "Hello, Rapunzel. How can I help you today?"

"We need to fix a basket. Do you have anything we can use, please?"

"No, not by the hairs of my chinny, chin, chin," said the small pig. "I only have sticks and they're too short. Try my brother next door."



Rapunzel knocked on the third door and called, "Little pig, little pig, are you in?"

A pink pig answered the door and said, "Hello, Rapunzel. How can I help you today?"

"We need to fix a basket. Do you have anything we can use, please?"

"Yes!" said the pink pig. "I knew those bundles of straw would be useful one day. I'll help you to carry them."

They made their way back to the woods, where Rapunzel plaited the straw to make it stronger. Then they worked together to fix the basket.

Just as they finished, Sleeping Beauty returned with the patched-up balloon.

Dorothy clambered into the basket with Toto, thanking her new friends for all their help. "Next time I'm on my way to Oz, I'll definitely stop in Storyland."



"Please do," said Sleeping Beauty. "And here are some spare patches, just in case you run into any more flying monkeys!"

Dorothy's balloon floated into the sky and Toto gave one last friendly yap. Then the princesses and the pink pig watched them soar over the rainbow. ★

*Next time:* Little Billy Goat Gruff sets out to prove his bravery.





# Bouki the Hyena

**B**ouki the hyena was famous throughout Africa for his troublemaking ways. If there was one thing he loved more than laughing, it was stirring up trouble. He especially liked playing tricks on his neighbour, Leuk the hare.

One bright morning, Bouki strolled down to the river for a drink. When he saw the sun's reflection in the water, shining like a ball of fire, it gave him an idea. "Ha!" he chuckled to himself. "This will be fun."

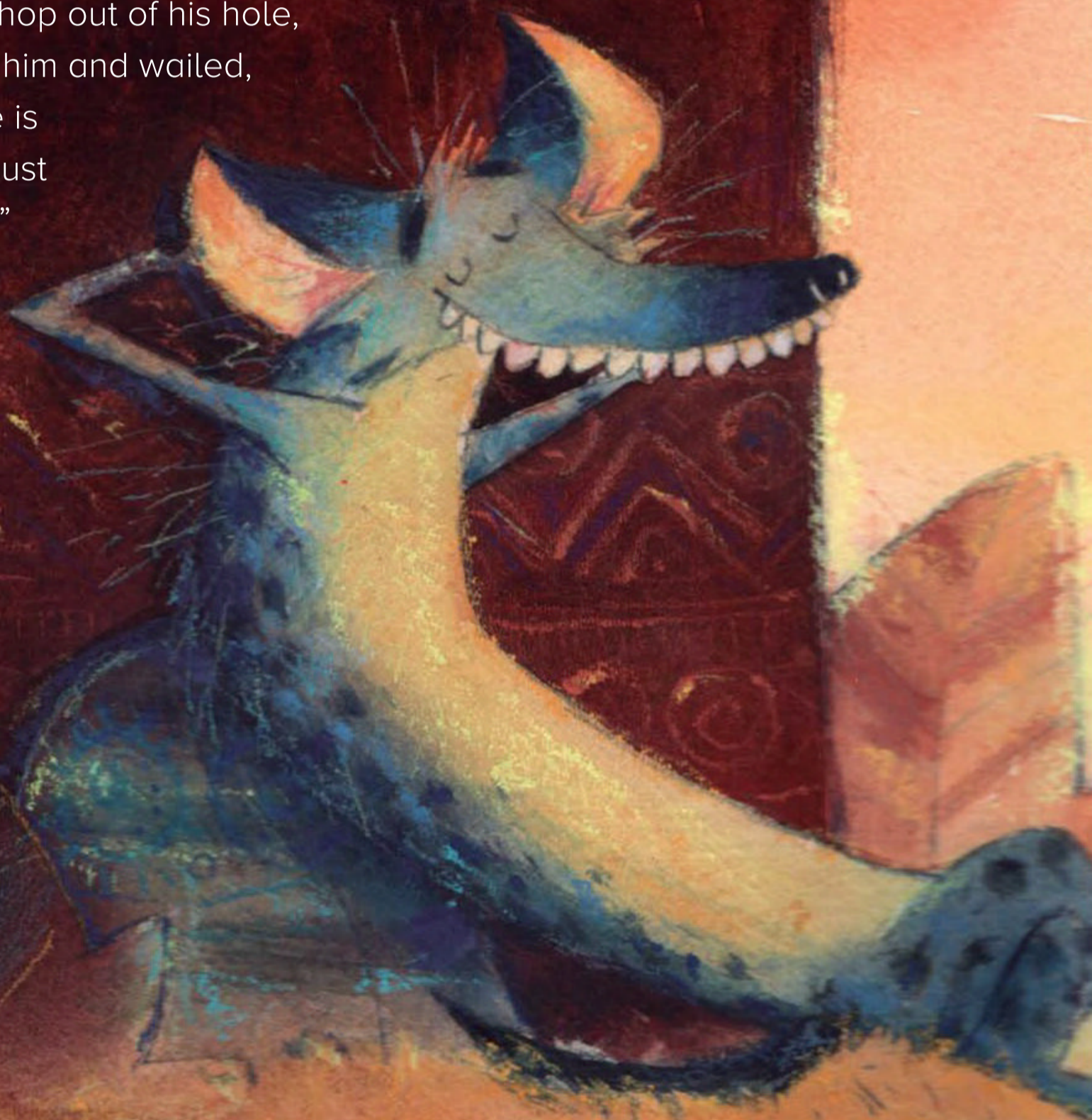
He headed for the jujube tree where Leuk lived.

When he saw the hare hop out of his hole,

Bouki sprinted towards him and wailed,

"Quick! A big ball of fire is heading our way. We must warn the other animals!"

Leuk was used to Bouki's tricks by now. He ignored him and stretched out his long legs.





“What are you doing?” cried Bouki, panting. “The fire is coming. You must hurry!”

Leuk looked at Bouki suspiciously. “Is this another one of your tricks?”

“Do you think I would run so fast and be so out of breath if it was a trick? Can’t you smell the smoke, my friend?”

Now he thought about it, Leuk could smell smoke. And Bouki – who was usually quite lazy – had certainly sprinted towards him.

“I suppose you are quite out of breath,” said Leuk, suddenly worried by the fire.

“You’re right, let’s warn the others. I’ll go this way and you go the other way.”

Leuk bounded away, yelling, **“Fire! Fire! A fire is coming. Run away!”**

Bouki watched Leuk go and laughed until his sides hurt. Then he was so tired from laughing that he lay down in the shade of the jujube tree to take a nap. He knew it would be a while before Leuk realised he had been tricked.



While Bouki dozed, Leuk was hopping around, yelling, **“Fire! Fire! Run away!”**


He passed a herd of gazelles who panicked and started to run. They joined in, shouting, **“Fire! Fire! Run away!”**

He passed a troop of chimpanzees who swung down from the trees and cried out,

**“Fire! Fire! Run away!”** →







He passed a gang of buffalo who stopped grazing and stampeded across the plain, bellowing, **"Fire! Fire! Run away!"**

Soon every animal in the bush had joined the mad dash to escape the fire – even the birds and the reptiles. But because nobody knew where the fire was coming from they ran round and round in circles, all shouting, **"Fire! Fire! Run away!"**



Eventually, they headed towards the jujube tree where Bouki the hyena was dozing. When Leuk saw him fast asleep, he knew he had been tricked but, instead of calling everyone off, he led the animals straight towards the tree.



When they got closer, Leuk sneakily ducked into his hole, leaving the gazelles, chimpanzees, buffalo and all the other creatures to charge right past Bouki.

Of course, the thundering hooves, wails, squawks and roars soon woke him. Bouki was amazed to see such a stampede. There were hundreds and hundreds of animals racing by.

“What’s going on?” Bouki shouted.

“Haven’t you heard?” called a hippopotamus. “There’s a fire. We’re running away!”

Bouki had been sleeping so deeply, he had completely forgotten about his trick. Startled by the news, he scrambled up the neck of a giraffe so he could run for his life. “**Fire! Fire! Run away!**” he yelled.

Leuk popped his head out of his hole and howled with laughter as he watched Bouki the hyena run and run until he was a tiny dot on the horizon. Then Leuk lay in the shade of the jujube tree to take a nap. ★

## Learn About It

In our story, there’s a **herd** of gazelles, a **troop** of chimpanzees and a **gang** of buffalo. Words that describe groups of animals are called **collective nouns**. There are lots of fun, interesting collective nouns, such as a leap of leopards and a knot of toads. Find the collective nouns for your favourite animals – or why not make some up?





# Mr Luck and Mrs Pluck

**D**eep in thought one day, Queen Eglantine asked her most loyal minister, “Do you believe in luck, sir?”

“Yes, Your Majesty,” said the minister.

“Can you prove it exists?” she asked.

“I can, Your Majesty. I’ll do so tonight.”

That night, the minister mixed up fresh green peas with the queen’s favourite diamonds. He wrapped them all in a bundle, climbed up a ladder and hung the bundle from the ceiling.

He took the ladder away and, as he left the room, he turned off the lights, plunging it into darkness.

Next, he introduced the queen to two strangers. “Your Majesty, please meet Mr Luck and Mrs Pluck. As you can probably guess from their names, Mr Luck believes in good fortune, while Mrs Pluck believes you only get what you want through courage and hard

work. Mr Luck and Mrs Pluck are going to spend the night in this dark room, and we will see what happens.”

The minister led Mr Luck and Mrs Pluck into the room and left them there.



Immediately, Mr Luck found the most comfortable spot in the middle of the room, right beneath the bundle. “What a soft, thick carpet,” he sighed, and he drifted into sleep.

Mrs Pluck, however, was eager to explore. She spent hours feeling her way around the room and eventually spotted the bundle hanging from the ceiling. As Mr Luck snored, Mrs Pluck balanced a stool on top of a table and reached up to the bundle. ➡







“What’s this?” she muttered, prodding and shaking the bundle. She could smell fresh green peas and feel small hard cold things. “Ah, they must be peas and stones from the garden.”

Mrs Pluck picked her way through the bundle, eating the fresh green peas. They were delicious. “A fine reward for putting in a little effort,” she said. “And you, you lazy thing, you can have these stones for being so idle.”

She dropped the stones on Mr Luck, but he slept through the whole thing.

In the morning, the queen and the minister came into the room. Before they switched on the lights, the queen said to Mr Luck and Mrs Pluck, “You may keep whatever you got from this room last night.”

Mrs Pluck felt pleased with herself for eating the royal peas – until the lights pinged on and she realised she had showered Mr Luck in diamonds.

The minister smiled and said, “Your Majesty, as you can see, there is such a thing as luck. However, it’s as rare as peas mixed with diamonds, so I wouldn’t advise anyone to rely on luck alone.” ☆



## THINK ABOUT IT!

Is it better to be lucky or plucky? Can you think of a time when you’ve had good luck and a time when you’ve been rewarded for your courage and hard work?



# Robin Hood and Little John

**B**efore Robin Hood lived in Sherwood Forest he was an earl, but when his enemy burnt down his home and stole his land, he was forced to flee to the forest.

At first, Robin felt sad about everything he had lost, but he loved the woods and was a skilled archer, so he soon felt at home. Over time, other men joined his camp and, before he knew it, Robin was the leader of a daring band of Merry Men.

Together, they made a huge camp in the woods where they hunted and fished and stole from the rich to give to the poor. Soon Robin Hood's name was known far and wide.

One morning, Robin was wandering through the forest when he came to a rickety bridge over a rushing river. As he stepped onto the bridge, he noticed a large man approaching from the other side. ➔





The bridge was too narrow for two people to pass so Robin called, “Sir, please go back and let me cross first.”

The stranger laughed and shouted, “Why should I go back? I say you go back and let me cross first.”

Robin Hood was so used to the Merry Men following his orders, he drew an arrow from his quiver and shouted, “Turn back or I’ll shoot, stranger.”

The stranger laughed even louder. “Try it and I’ll beat you with my staff.” He waved a sturdy stick in the air.

“Don’t be a fool,” cried Robin. “Before you could even reach me I’d have this arrow through your heart.”

“A fool, you say? Then you must be a coward! You’re pointing an arrow at a man with only a staff. Are you afraid I will beat you?”

Robin was not a coward and he was not afraid. “Very well,” he cried. “I’ll get a staff and we’ll have a fair fight.”

Grabbing a strong oak stick, Robin muttered, “I’ll prove I’m no coward.”

However, as he neared his rival, he was shocked to see how big he was. The stranger was a hulk of a man!

Even so, Robin refused to back down. “We’ll fight right here on the bridge. Whoever falls in the river first loses.”

## FIND IT!

Robin Hood and his Merry Men lived in Sherwood Forest in England. Some say they camped beneath the Major Oak – a tree that’s over 800 years old. Can you find the forest and tree on a map?





The stranger nodded and the fight began. Robin leapt forward and gave his enemy a strong blow that made the bridge shudder. For a moment, they both thought it would give way.

They carried on banging and crashing their staffs with force, while the bridge swayed back and forth. Struggling to keep his balance. Robin tilted this way and that, trying to stay upright.

Though the stranger was powerful, Robin was swift. He met every blow with several fast and furious clouts.

The stranger was surprised by Robin's speed, but he was determined to win, so he gathered all his strength and swung his staff. He struck Robin with a mighty wallop that sent him tumbling head over heels into the river. Robin was swept away by the strong current.

The stranger was worried – he didn't mean to drown his opponent. "Hello! Where are you? Are you okay?"

At last, from far down the river Robin called, "I'm over here! It's a fine day for a swim indeed." He laughed. ➡





The stranger spotted Robin clinging to a branch, drenched to the skin. He ran to help him. As he dragged Robin out of the water, he said, "I've never met anyone who can fight with a staff like you can."

"Ah, but well done for winning our battle," said Robin. "Now let's shake hands and we can be friends."

So the two men shook hands. Then Robin raised his bugle and sounded a long, loud blast.



Moments later, the Merry Men came crashing through the trees armed with their bows and arrows. They were all dressed in green, just like Robin.

"Why are you wet?" they cried and pointed their arrows at the stranger.

"Lower your arrows, men," said Robin. "He is our friend." To the stranger he said, "Forgive us. I am Robin Hood. My Merry Men won't harm you now."

The stranger was amazed. He had fought and beaten Robin Hood – the hero he had heard so much about!

"Would you like to join our band?" asked Robin. "I can teach you how to use a bow and arrow as well as that staff. We'll have great adventures."

"I'd like that," said the stranger. "My name is John Little and I promise to serve you faithfully."





“John Little!” exclaimed Robin. “That’s a funny name for a giant like you!”

John Little laughed and the Merry Men joined in.

“Come along then, Little John,” Robin Hood said jokingly. “Let me show you our hideout and we can celebrate you joining the Merry Men with a feast.”

From that day on, John Little was known as Little John – and, in time, he became Robin Hood’s second-in-command as well as his best friend. ★

Some Robin Hood stories say that the Merry Men gave John Little a special naming ceremony to call him Little John. They wrapped him in a long green cloak and poured buckets of water over his head to christen him, then they celebrated with a huge party!





# Benji's Magic Boots

**T**hey first caught my eye on the way to school – sturdy black boots in the charity shop window. They weren't new or shiny, but they were the kind of boots explorers wear.

"Dad, I think I need new boots for winter."

Dad laughed. "It's summer, Benjamin! Get a move on or you'll be late."

All day long I daydreamed about the boots. I imagined hiking through forests, trekking up sand dunes and crossing wobbly rope bridges.

All week I stared at them longingly when we passed the shop.

On Friday I told a fib. "Dad, we're doing a play about explorers and I need some new boots."

Dad wasn't listening. He was messing with his phone.

"They need to be big and black, like the ones they wear on expeditions."

"I see." Dad nodded, still tapping away on his phone.





“Like these ones,” I said, pointing in the charity shop window. “Can we go in?”

“Those scruffy things?” Dad didn’t look impressed. “I suppose…” he mumbled.

As we stepped inside, a bell tinkled. An old lady stepped out from behind a curtain and said, “I bet you’re here for those boots.” She winked at me. I nodded. She must have seen me looking through the window.

When she fetched the boots, my heart sank. They looked gigantic. I tried them on anyway and the old lady tied them up for me. When she’d finished, she did a funny wave of one hand and the boots suddenly fitted snugly.

“They’re perfect, Dad!” I grinned.

Dad scratched his head. “How much are they, please?”

“Oh, you can have them for free. They’ve been waiting for the right owner. Just make sure you send me a postcard from your adventures,” said the old lady, winking at me again. →





Later, when Mum saw the boots, she said, “Proper adventurer’s boots!”



After dinner, I went outside to try them on again. “They are just like proper adventurer’s boots,” I thought.

I tested them out with a big jump over the vegetable patch. But, as I leapt, the ground seemed to disappear from under my feet. There was a rush of air – like when you’re speeding downhill on your bike. I lurched forwards and my tummy flipped.

“Whoa! What’s going on?” I cried.

I waved my arms, frantically trying to find my balance, then I crashed down, face first in the grass.

“Earthquake!” I thought, expecting Mum and Dad to rush out and check on me. But, when I looked around, my house wasn’t there – it was missing! I wasn’t even in my garden. I was in a park. A big green park with lots of trees – and through the trees I could see a fancy house. Where was I?

I looked down at my boots and remembered the old lady in the shop – her winking at me, the funny wave of her hand, the way the boots had caught my eye. “These boots must be magic!” I thought.

I checked nobody was looking and then took a tiny step towards the big house. **Zip!**





I was knee-deep in a pond with a huge pelican next to me. It squawked and flapped its wings in panic. I took another tiny step. **Zip!**

I was next to a tall statue of a stern-looking lady on a throne. The fancy house was a lot closer – and a lot bigger than I had expected. It seemed familiar too. Another tiny step. **Zip!**

I was standing right under the nose of a man in a tall black fuzzy hat. He was wearing a bright red jacket with

shiny gold buttons. He was one of the Queen’s guards!

I tugged one of his buttons. “Excuse me, sir, is this Buckingham Palace? Am I in London?”

He jumped with surprise and his hat wobbled. “How did you get here?”

I wasn’t sure I could explain.

“It certainly is, young man, and if you don’t step back right now, you’ll be in trouble with the Queen!”

I took a tiny step back and hurtled towards the statue again. I waved at the guard, who looked confused. ➔

## DID YOU KNOW?

Pelicans have lived on the lake in St James’s Park, London, for almost 400 years. They eat fish from the lake and sometimes try to steal people’s lunch too!



Buckingham Palace was right there.

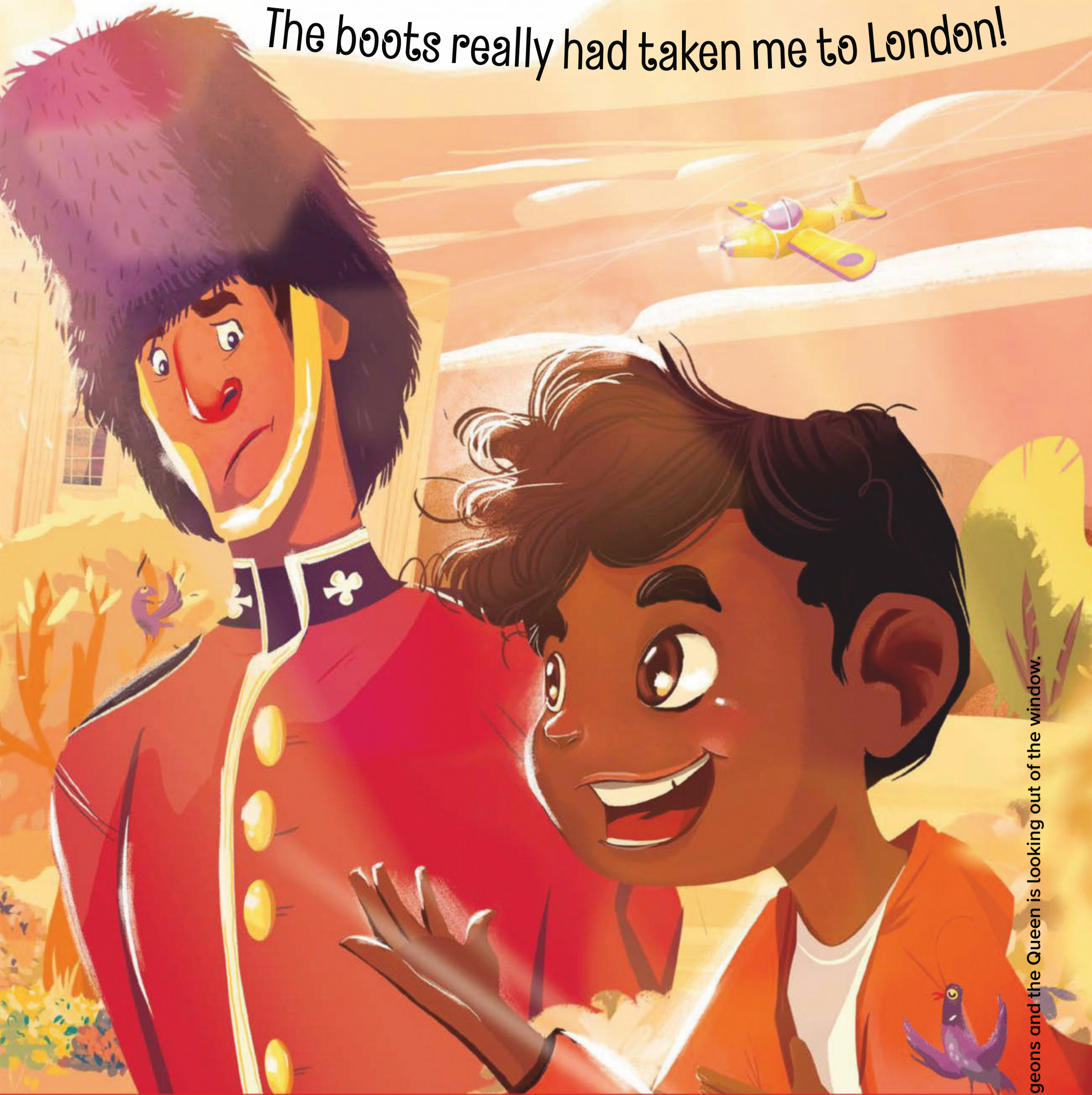


**SPOT IT!** Can you spot these five details in the picture?





The boots really had taken me to London!



**How many pigeons  
can you count?  
Write it here.**

**Who is looking out of the window?  
Write your answer here.**

Answers: There are 7 pigeons and the Queen is looking out of the window.



I'd never been to London. "Magic boots ... Buckingham Palace! Just wait till I tell my friends! What will Mum and Dad say? Oh no – Mum and Dad!"

I knew I'd better get home quickly. If Mum and Dad realised I was missing, they'd be worried. Now, how could I get home? My heart skipped a beat.

"Okay, I need to think like a proper adventurer, and a proper adventurer would... retrace his steps!"

I took a tiny step back and zipped to the pond. This time, I didn't land in the water. I took another tiny step and landed right where I had started.

"Okay, the first thing I saw here was Buckingham Palace, so if I turn my back on it and take a vegetable patch-sized jump, I should get home again."

I jumped forward and off I soared. **Whoosh!** The wind rushed through my hair and the world blurred around me. At last, my feet came down hard and I landed in a heap. I was almost scared to open my eyes. Had I got it right?

I opened one eye and almost jumped out of my skin. A little man with a big beard was staring right at me! It took a second to work out it was a garden gnome. I was in Mrs Pickle's garden, two doors down from our house!





I scrambled out of her flower bed before she spotted me, then took off my boots and crept up the street.

When I peeped through the kitchen window, Mum and Dad were chatting like nothing had happened. I ran in and hugged them.

“In already?” said Mum. “You’ve only been playing for ten minutes!”

“Yes, but I’ve been on an adventure,” I said. “I went to see the Queen!”

“Was she at home?” Dad asked.

Just then I noticed I was clutching something – it was a shiny gold button from the guard’s jacket.

“Not today,” I said. “I chatted with one of her guards instead.”

I shoved the button in my pocket and ran upstairs clutching my new magic boots, wondering where I should go on my next adventure. ★

## IMAGINE IT!

Imagine you owned a pair of magic boots like Benji’s. You could go anywhere in the world. Where would you choose? Have a look at an atlas to inspire you.

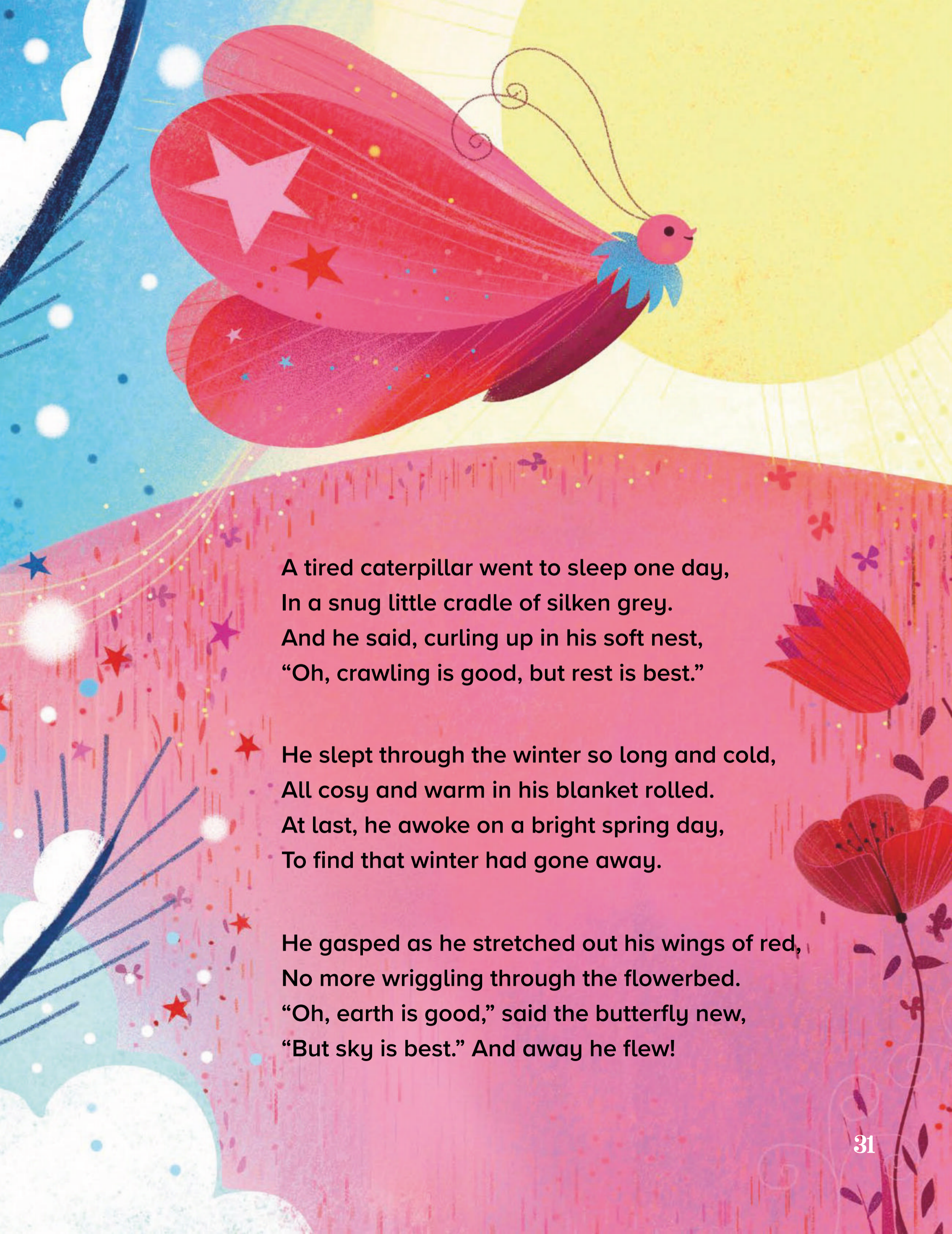


# The Transformation

## ACT IT OUT!

Download and print out our **Caterpillar and Butterfly Masks** so you can act out the transformation in this poem. Visit [storytimemagazine.com/free](http://storytimemagazine.com/free)





A tired caterpillar went to sleep one day,  
In a snug little cradle of silken grey.  
And he said, curling up in his soft nest,  
“Oh, crawling is good, but rest is best.”

He slept through the winter so long and cold,  
All cosy and warm in his blanket rolled.  
At last, he awoke on a bright spring day,  
To find that winter had gone away.

He gasped as he stretched out his wings of red,  
No more wriggling through the flowerbed.  
“Oh, earth is good,” said the butterfly new,  
“But sky is best.” And away he flew!



# The Story with No End

**L**ong ago and far away, there was a great and powerful king who had no family, so he was often bored and lonely.





To kill time, all he did every day was laze around on velvet cushions, listening to stories. This king was so fond of stories, he never wanted them to end. When the royal storyteller had finished, the king would say, “It was good, but it wasn’t good enough – it was far too short. Another!”

The king was so obsessed with hearing stories that the royal storyteller soon ran out of tales to tell. Undeterred, the king invited storytellers from all over the world to come to his castle and entertain him. “The longer your stories are, the better!” he announced.

Storytellers from far and wide came and tried to make their tales last as long as possible, but the king was always bad-tempered when their stories ended.

At last, the king made a proclamation. “The storyteller who can tell me a story that lasts forever shall be my heir and rule this land after me. But anyone who fails will be jailed for life!”

The thought of living a life of luxury was tempting, but the risk of being jailed meant that very few storytellers were brave enough to come forward. ➡





One brave young farmer managed to tell a story that lasted for four months, but when he ran out of things to say, the grumpy king locked him up. That scared storytellers off for a long time.



At last, one day, a young woman appeared at the court. “Is it true that the person who can tell you an endless tale will be your heir?”

“It is true,” said the king.

“Then I have a story to share with you,” said the young woman, “if you will allow me.”

The king was intrigued. Lying back on his cushions, he said, “I’m listening.”

So the storyteller began her tale...

“Once upon a time, a selfish king seized all the corn in his country, and locked it up in the granary for his own use. Soon after, a swarm of hungry locusts flew over his land and buzzed around the granary, searching for a way to get in. After many days they found a small crevice in the wall. It was just large enough for one locust to pass through at a time. So a single locust went in and carried away a grain of corn, then another locust went in and carried away a grain of corn, then another locust went in and carried away a grain of corn, then another locust went in and carried away a grain of corn...”

**WRITE IT!**

See if you can write the beginning of an endless tale. As your starting point, think about activities that take a long time.







Day after day, week after week, the storyteller kept repeating, “Then another locust went in and carried away a grain of corn...”.

A month passed. Then four months passed. Finally, at the end of a year, the king cried, “How much longer will these locusts carry away grains of corn?”

“Oh, sire!” said the storyteller. “They have barely taken a barrel’s worth so far – and you know how many thousands of barrels it takes to fill a granary.”

“Young lady,” wailed the king, “stop, before you drive me mad! I can’t listen to your story for a moment longer. Live in this castle, be my heir, rule my kingdom, but please don’t say another word about those dreadful locusts!”

So the clever storyteller lived in luxury, waiting to be the next ruler. Meanwhile, as long as he lived, the king never asked to hear another story. ★



# Cap o' Rushes

**O**nce upon a time, a rich country gentleman decided to test his three daughters by asking how much they loved him.

The first daughter answered, "Father, I love you as much as I love life."

This pleased the gentleman greatly. He turned to his second daughter, who said, "Father, I love no one better in all the world."

The gentleman smiled and turned to his third daughter, who replied, "Father, I love you as much as meat loves salt."

The gentleman was insulted and cried, "Meat and salt! What kind of thing is that to say? You don't love me at all! Get out of my house – you are not welcome."





He forced his daughter out of the house, shutting the door in her face. The poor girl was so stunned by her father's actions, she walked all day and night, unsure what to do. When she reached the river, she gathered some rushes and wove a long cloak and cap to cover her fine dress and hair. Nobody would ever have known that she came from a rich family.

At last she came to a great mansion. She knocked at the kitchen door and asked, "Do you need a maid? All I ask for in return is food and a bed."

Pitying the poor girl in her odd cloak and cap, the cook said, "You can stay if you don't mind washing pots and scraping pans."

So the daughter stayed and, every day, she washed pots and scraped pans. She always wore her cloak and cap, so everyone came to know her as Cap o' Rushes.



A few months later, there was a big festival in the next town. The cook and the servants were all excited because,





for three nights, they were allowed to go to the same dance as the rich folk and admire their wonderful clothes.

On the first night, the servants set off for the dance, but Cap o' Rushes said she was too tired and stayed at home.

As soon as they had left, she took off her cloak and cap of rushes, cleaned herself up, and went to the dance in her fine dress.

Her master's son was at the dance and, as soon as he saw her, he fell in love with her. He asked her to dance and, all night long, he danced and chatted with nobody else.

Before the celebration ended Cap o' Rushes quietly slipped away and ran home. By the time the other servants returned she was in bed in her cloak and cap, pretending to be asleep.

The next morning, they said, "You missed a wonderful night, sweet Cap o' Rushes! The most beautiful lady was dancing with our master's son. Perhaps she'll be there again tonight."

When evening came, the servants couldn't wait for another night of fun and dancing. They begged Cap o' Rushes to join them, but she said she was tired again and stayed at home.





The moment they left she took off her cloak and cap of rushes and set off for the dance. The master's son was so happy to see her again, and they danced and talked all night.

As before, Cap o' Rushes left early and was tucked up in bed wearing her cloak and cap by the time the servants came home.

In the morning, all anyone could talk about was the beautiful lady and how their master's son was in love with her. "He couldn't take his eyes off her! You must come tonight, Cap o' Rushes."

But, that evening, Cap o' Rushes said she was tired again, so the servants went without her. She watched them go, then took off her cloak and cap and made her way to the dance.

The master's son was elated to see her. He asked her where she came from, but she wouldn't tell him. Before she left there though, he gave her a ring and told her he loved her.

The next day, the servants said, "It's a pity you didn't come to the festival, Cap o' Rushes – now you'll never get to see the beautiful lady dancing." ➔



**COUNT IT!**  
How many people are wearing blue waistcoats in this picture?



Cap o' Rushes just smiled and said,  
"It's a pity indeed."



For many weeks after the dance, the master's son tried to find the beautiful lady, but nobody knew anything about her. He pined for her so badly, he soon refused to get out of bed.

The cook came into the kitchen one evening and said, "We need to make a hearty stew for the master's son. He's dying of a broken heart."

"I'll make it," said Cap o' Rushes and, as she spooned it into a bowl, she slipped in the ring he had given her.

The cook served the stew to the master's son and, when he spotted the ring at the bottom of the bowl, he cried, "Who made this stew?"

"It was our maid," admitted the cook.

"Please bring her to me," said the master's son, suddenly feeling better.

So the cook summoned Cap o' Rushes from the kitchen.





When she came in, the master's son asked, "Where did you get this ring?"

"From you," she answered, and she removed her cloak and cap of rushes to reveal her true self.

The master's son leapt out of bed. He was overjoyed to see her again. "Please will you marry me?" he asked Cap o' Rushes.

"Yes, of course!" she said, smiling, and they happily embraced.

In the following days they arranged a grand wedding, and invited gentlemen and ladies from near and far. Cap o' Rushes invited her father, but she didn't tell anybody that she was his daughter.



On the day of the wedding, she asked the cook, "Please make every dish without salt – not even a pinch."

"But everything will taste so bland." cried the cook. →





“That’s fine,” said Cap o’ Rushes. So the cook did as she asked.

The wedding ceremony was joyous and everyone was looking forward to the feast. The servants brought out one delicious-looking dish after the other, but everything tasted so boring, the guests hardly ate a thing.

At last, Cap o’ Rushes’ father, who was sitting at the far end of the room, burst into tears.

“What’s wrong, sir?” someone asked.

“Once, I asked my daughters how much they loved me and one of

them answered ‘as much as meat loves salt’. I thought she didn’t love me and I threw her out of our home. But now I’m eating this plain food, I realise she loved me best of all. I miss her so much and she’s gone!”

“No, Father, I am the bride,” said Cap o’ Rushes, running towards him.

Her father was so surprised to see her, he threw his arms around her and apologised for being so foolish. Cap o’ Rushes forgave him.

So that’s how Cap o’ Rushes got her happy ending and why her father also loved her like meat loves salt. ★





# storytime playbox

Fly away in a balloon, battle it out with Robin Hood, crack our crossword puzzles, and be a story super-brain!

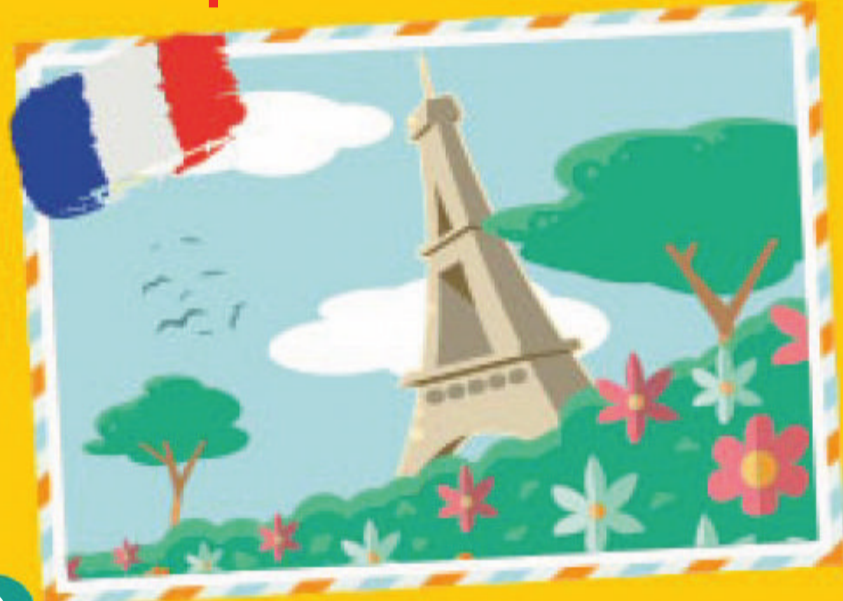
## 1 WISH YOU WERE HERE!

Which countries has Benji visited in his magic boots? **Write your answers below each postcard.**



A

E   P T



B

A N C

WHAT IS THE CAPITAL CITY OF THIS COUNTRY?



C

M  R  C

## 2 FOLLOW THE TRAIL

An animal stampede just ran through Storytime Playbox. **Follow the footprints until you find them.**







# 3 TELL ME A STORY

The storyteller in *The Story with No End* has run out of stories. **Draw lines to pair up these well-known story titles to read to him!**

A Jack and

B Beauty and

C Goldilocks and

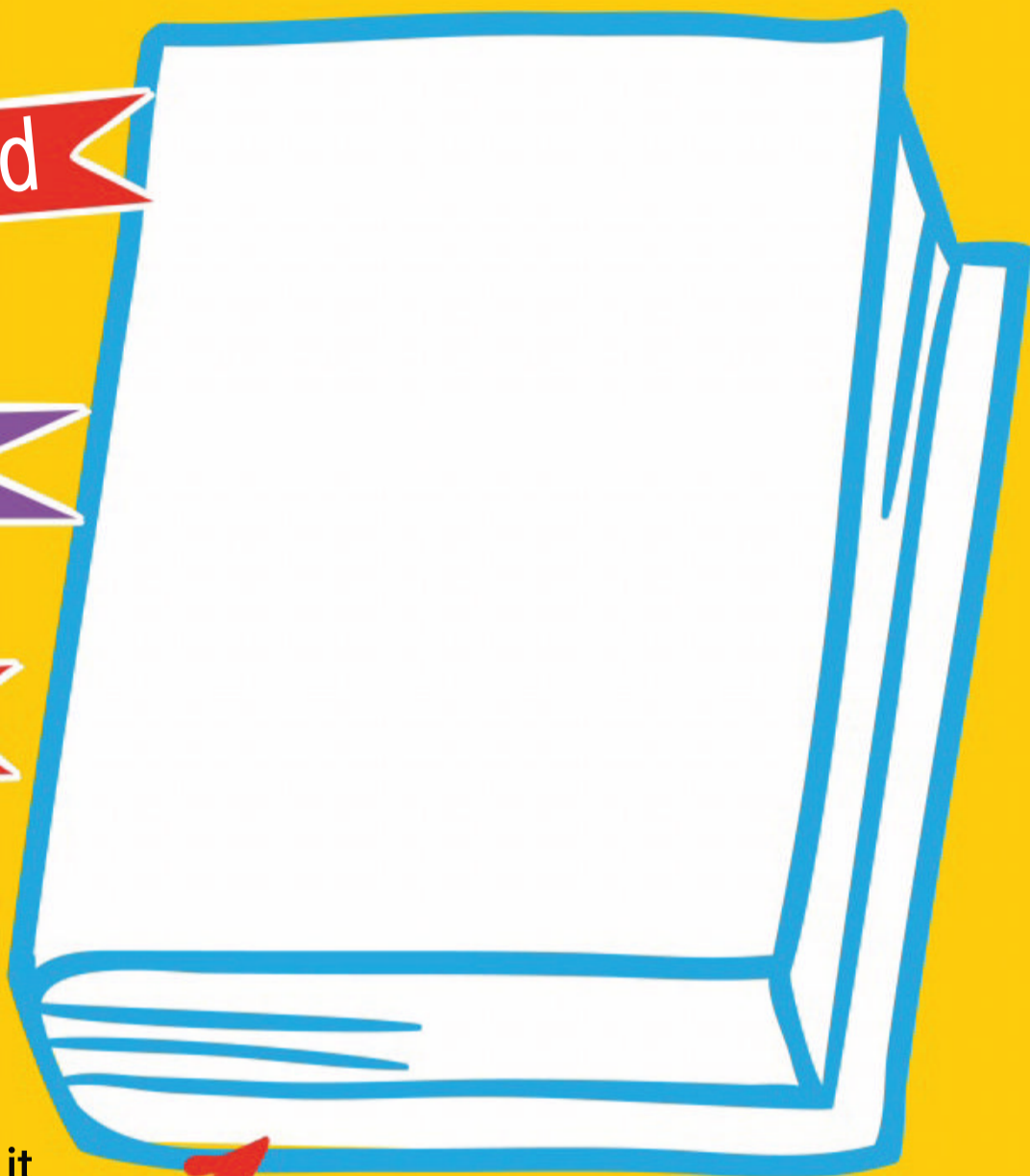
D The Princess and

1 the Pea

2 The Three Bears

3 the Beanstalk

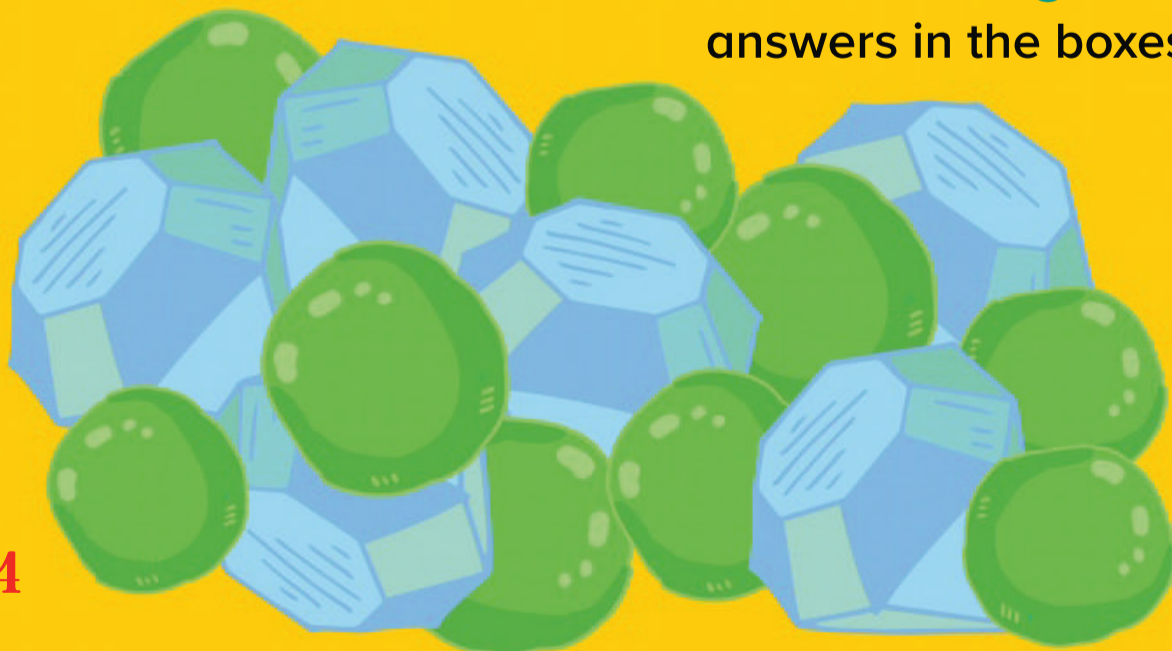
4 the Beast



**Invent your own fairy-tale title** and write it on the cover of this book. Colour it in too!

# 4 PEAS AND DIAMONDS

Mr Luck and Mrs Pluck's peas and diamonds are all mixed up. **How many peas are there and how many diamonds?** Write your answers in the boxes.





5

## Quick Quiz

In Cap O' Rushes, where did the master's son find the ring?

a. On a plate of meat



b. In a bowl of stew



c. In the salt bowl



6

## MAKE A BALLOON MOBILE

Follow our easy steps to make a Dorothy and Toto balloon mobile.

- Draw a hot air balloon shape on a sheet of A4 paper or print off our **Hot Air Balloon Template** from [storytimemagazine.com/free](http://storytimemagazine.com/free).
- Colour it in or print it on coloured paper.
- Cut out the balloon and fold it in half down the centre. Make five to seven more balloons in the same way.
- Glue one half of the back of one folded balloon to the back half of another balloon and repeat until you have a 3D hot air balloon shape, like the picture shown here.
- For the basket, trim off the bottom third of a toilet paper roll. Paint it or draw squiggly lines around it to make it look woven. You could also use a paper cup.
- Cut two 15cm lengths of wool, string, embroidery cotton or ribbon. Tape one end of each length inside the basket. Tape the other ends to the bottom edge of the hot air balloon.
- To hang the balloon from the ceiling, cut another longer length of string. Glue or tape one end to the top of your balloon. If you can, try to stick it inside the top centre of the balloon, where all the folded sections meet.
- To finish, print out our **Dorothy and Toto Finger Puppets** from [storytimemagazine.com/free](http://storytimemagazine.com/free) and stick them in the basket.

ASK A GROWN-UP!



TIP!

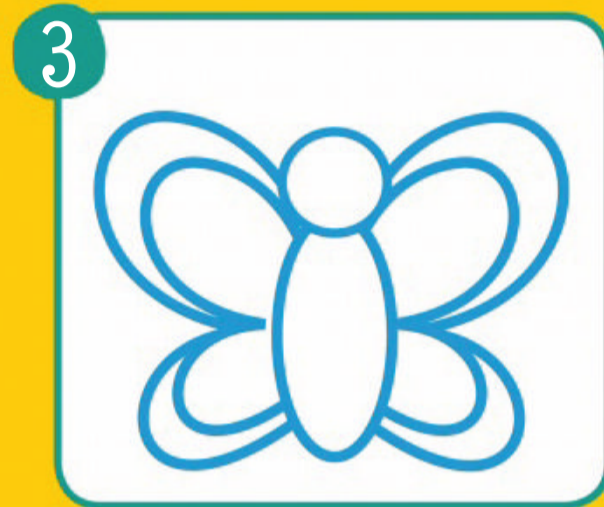
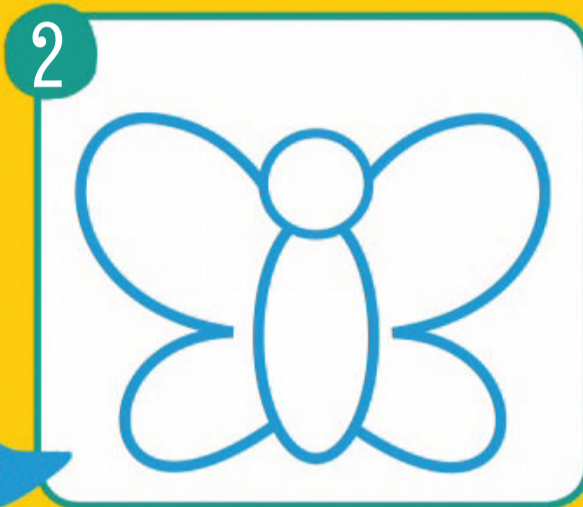
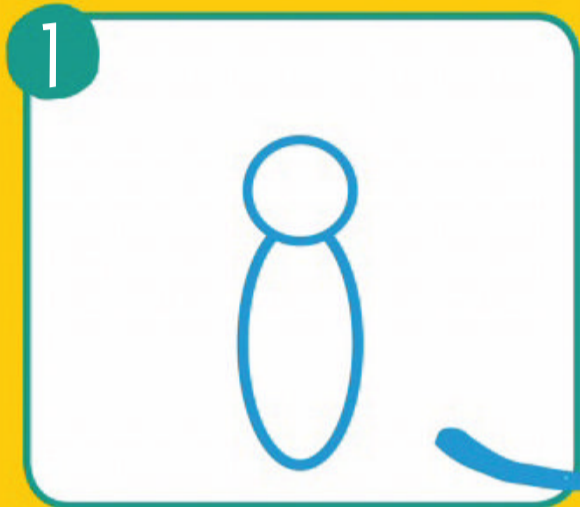
To give your hot air balloon mobile a personal touch, stick a photo of your family inside the basket instead.



7

# DRAW A BUTTERFLY!

Follow the steps to turn a caterpillar into a butterfly, just like the one in our poem, **The Transformation**. Decorate and colour the wings at the end.



HA HA!

Q. What scares a caterpillar?

A. A dogerpillar!

WHAT DO YOU CALL A BUTTERFLY WITH NO WINGS?

BUTTER!





# Storytime CROSSWORD

Every clue in this crossword is linked to the stories in this issue. **Can you solve them all?**



## ACROSS

1. What Dorothy used to fix her basket.
4. The caterpillar turned into one of these.
5. The fairy-tale animal that helped Dorothy and Rapunzel.
6. This character didn't get the Queen's diamonds.
7. The city Benji visited.

## DOWN

1. Meat doesn't taste good without it.
2. Who did Bouki play a trick on?
3. What the locusts carried away.
6. Cap o' Rushes' job title.

## ANAGRAM TIME!

Write the letters in the highlighted squares here.

Unscramble them to find the name of a story character.

□ □ □ □

7 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

**ANSWERS:** 1. Wish You Were Here! - A. Egypt, B. France, C. America. The capital city of France is Paris; 3. Tell Me a Story - A3, B4, C2, D1; 4. Peas and Diamonds - 9 peas and 6 diamonds; 5. Quick Quiz - b; Storytime Crossword - see right; Anagram Time! - Toto.





# BRIDGE BATTLE

Who'll cross to the other side of the bridge first – Robin Hood or Little John? Take part in our Sherwood Forest bridge battle to find out!

## How to Play

You need two players, a dice and our Game Counters from [storytimemagazine.com/free](http://storytimemagazine.com/free). The aim is to get your player to the other side of the bridge first.

★ Both players decide who to be – Robin Hood or Little John – and place their game counters on the correct side of the bridge.


★ Next, both players roll the dice. The player who rolls closest to 1 goes first.

★ Each player then takes it in turn to roll the dice and follow the instructions below.

- |                 |                                          |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Roll a 1</b> | Move forward 1 space                     |
| <b>Roll a 2</b> | Move forward 2 spaces                    |
| <b>Roll a 3</b> | Lose your balance, miss a turn           |
| <b>Roll a 4</b> | Hit by a staff, back 1 space             |
| <b>Roll a 5</b> | Whack! Your opponent moves back 2 spaces |
| <b>Roll a 6</b> | Fall in the river. Start again!          |

★ The first player to reach the opposite side wins and joins the Merry Men!

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTION!**  
If you roll a 6 twice in a row, your opponent falls in the water and you instantly win!



ROBIN HOOD





LITTLE  
JOHN



# STORY MAGIC

You're in for a picture book treat this month as these four fantastic titles hit the shelves!

## OUR BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Kristina Stephenson's **WHY ARE THERE SO MANY BOOKS ABOUT BEARS?** (Hachette Children's Books) sees the animal kingdom's most brilliant minds come together to answer the impossible question in the book's title. Gorgeously illustrated, clever, and funny in a way that adults will appreciate too.

It's impossible not to feel inspired and moved by **IT'S YOUR WORLD NOW!** by Barry Falls (Pavilion Books). In it, grown-ups share important life lessons with their little ones – and learn some new lessons along the way. A visual feast you'll be happy to pore over for hours and hours.

**SLOW SAMSON** by Bethany Christou (Templar Publishing) is a character you're sure to fall in love with. Poor old Samson is so slow and so busy making people happy, he misses every party he's invited to. But Samson's friends have a plan to put things right. Adorable through and through.

**THE SUITCASE** by Chris Naylor-Ballesteros (Nosy Crow) is a powerful story about a strange creature who raises everyone's suspicions when he claims that his suitcase holds impossible things. But when they force his case open, suspicion turns to empathy. A good starting point for talking about refugees.

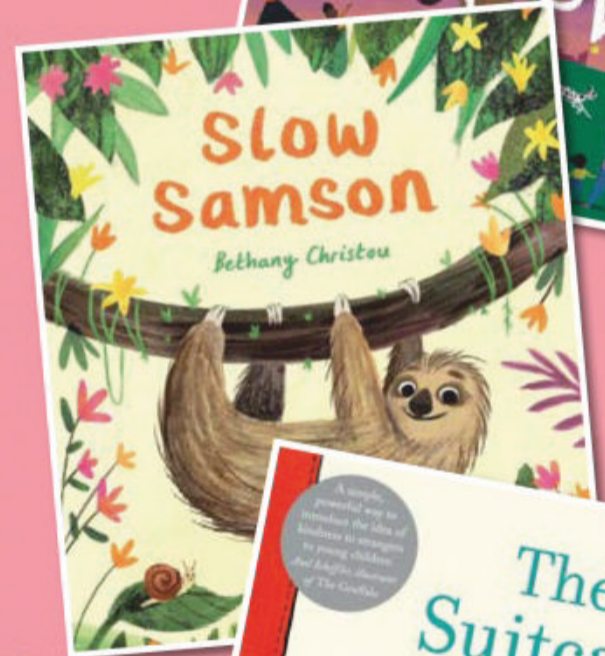
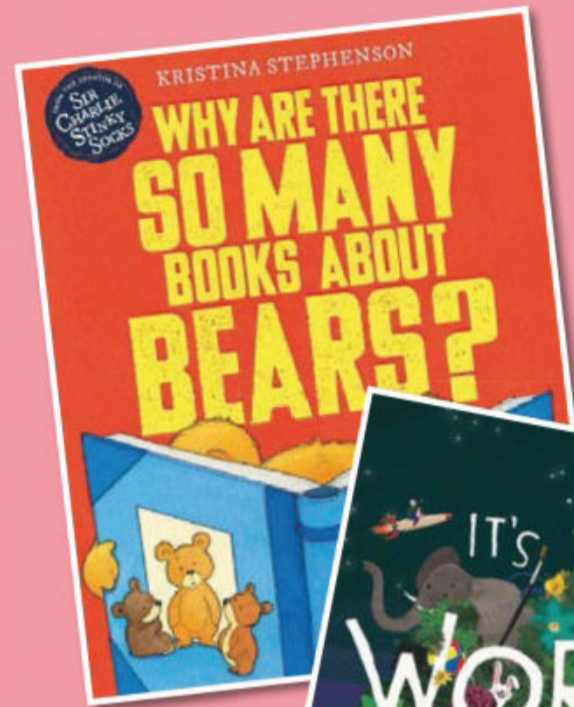
READ OUR TOY STORY IN YOUR NEXT ISSUE OF STORYTIME!

WIN

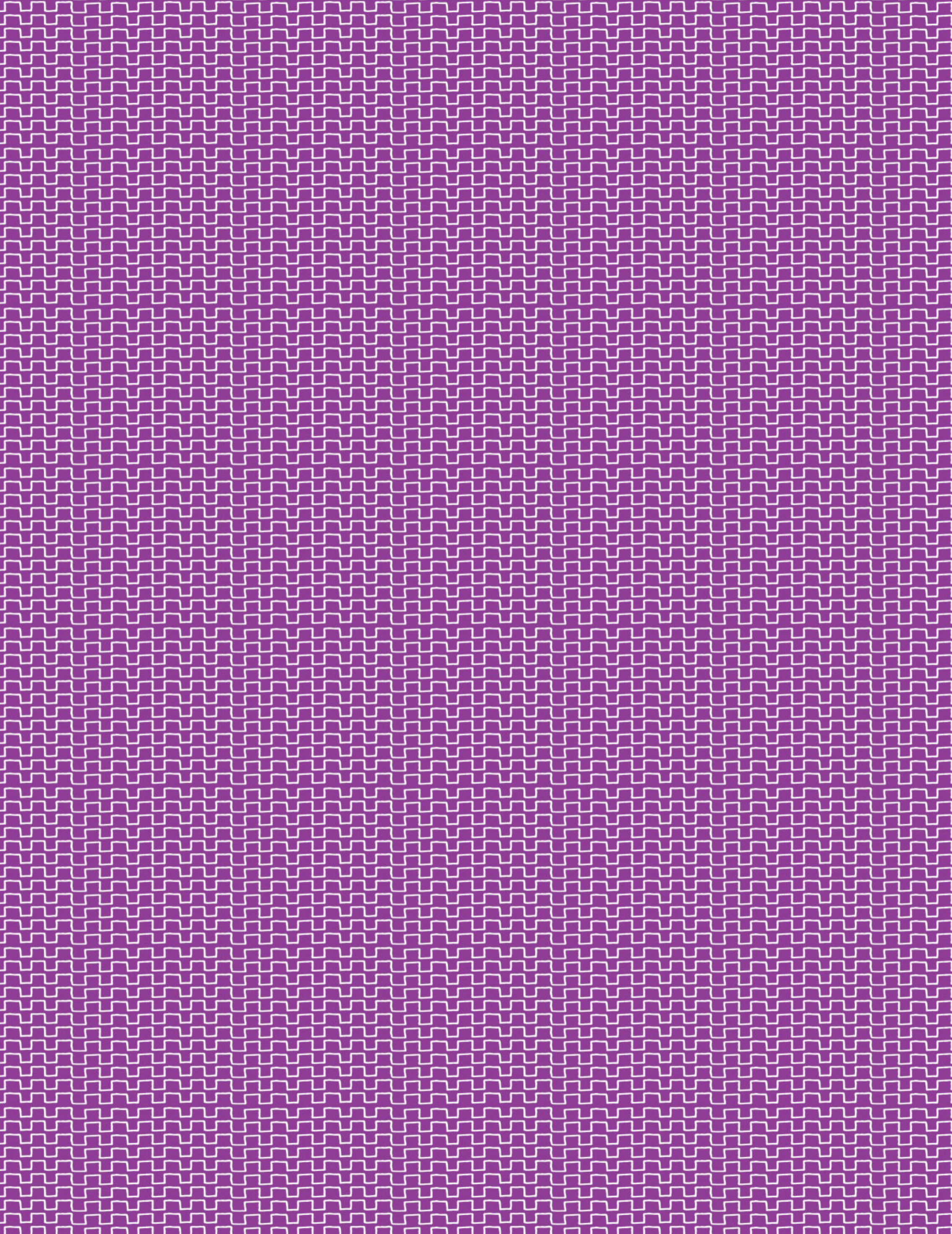
## COMPETITION!

Want to own these brilliant new picture books? Enter here for your chance to win:

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