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Grace

Unit 6 Reader

Skills Strand
GRADE 1



560L

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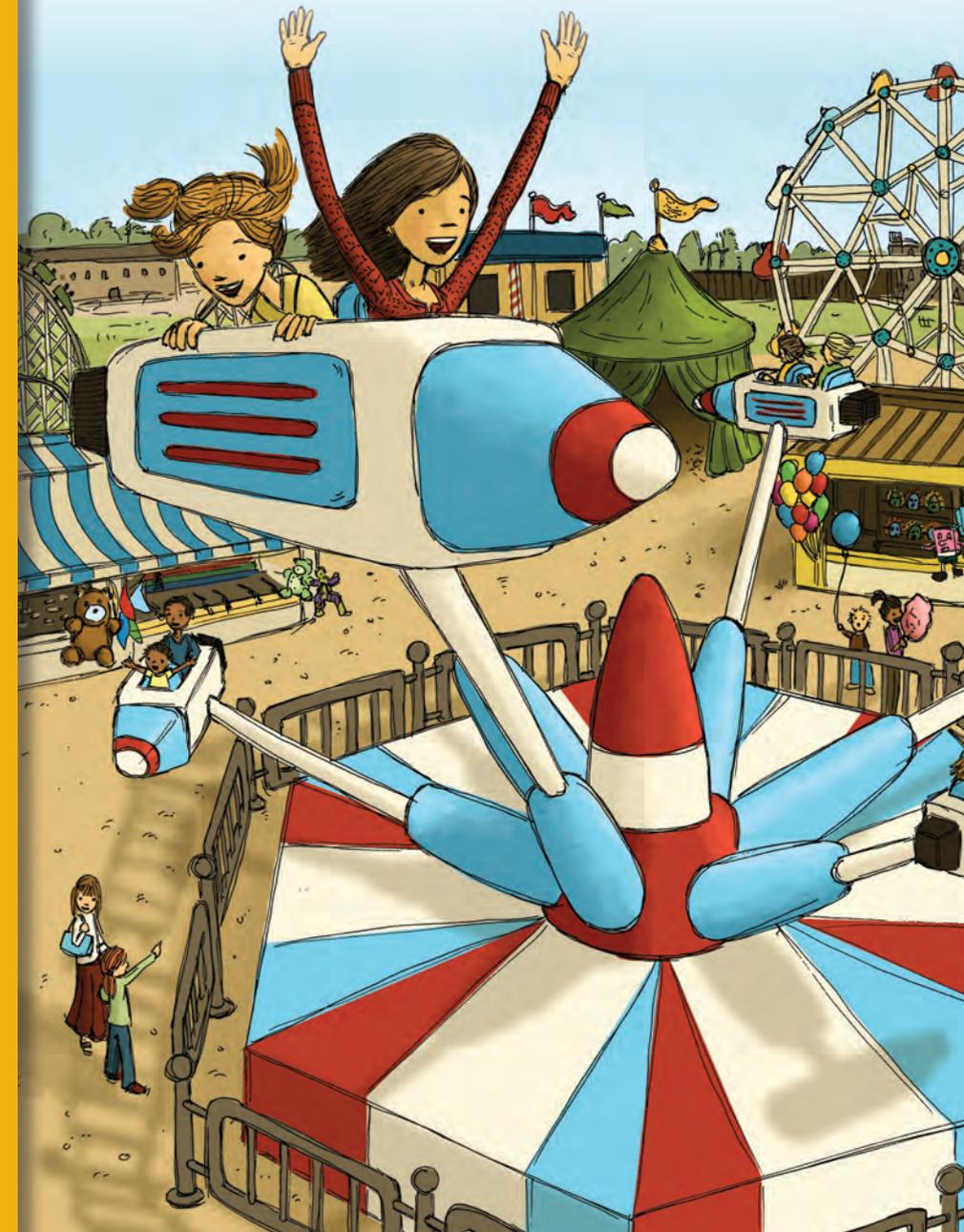
GRADE 1 Core Knowledge Language Arts®



Skills Strand

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Code Knowledge assumed at the beginning of this Reader:

Vowel Sounds and Spellings:

/i/ as in *skim*
 /e/ as in *bed*
 /a/ as in *tap*
 /u/ as in *up*
 /o/ as in *flap*
 /ee/ as in *bee*
 /a_e/ as in *late, wait, day*
 /i_e/ as in *time*
 /o_e/ as in *home, boat*
 /u_e/ as in *cute*
 /oo/ as in *soon*
 /ool/ as in *look*
 /ou/ as in *shout*
 /oi/ as in *oil*
 /aw/ as in *paw*
 /ar/ as in *car*
 /or/ as in *for*
 /er/ as in *her*

Consonant Sounds and Spellings:

/p/ as in *tip, tipping*
 /b/ as in *rub, rubbing*
 /t/ as in *bat, battling, asked*
 /d/ as in *bid, bidding, filled*
 /k/ as in *cot, kid, rock, soccer*
 /g/ as in *log, logging*
 /ch/ as in *chin, itch*
 /j/ as in *jog, gem, fringe*
 /f/ as in *fat, huff*
 /v/ as in *vet, twelve*
 /s/ as in *sit, hiss*
 /z/ as in *zip, dogs, buzz*
 /th/ as in *thin*
 /th/ as in *then*
 /m/ as in *swim, swimming*
 /n/ as in *run, running*
 /ng/ as in *king*
 /h/ as in *ham*
 /w/ as in *wet*

/l/ as in *lamp, fill*
 /r/ as in *rip, ferret, wrist*
 /y/ as in *yes*
 /sh/ as in *shop*
 /x/ as in *box*
 /qu/ as in *quit*

Tricky Words:

a, I, of, all, some, from, word, are, were, have, one, once, to, do, two, who, said, says, was, where, why, what, here, there, he, she, we, be, me, they, their, my, my, you, your, because, could, would, should, down, today, yesterday, tomorrow, how, picture, stagecoach

Other:

two- and three-syllable words
 punctuation

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Code Knowledge added gradually in the unit for this Reader:

- Beginning with "Mister Spencer and the Rabbits": the sound /s/ spelled 'c', 'ce', and 'se'
- Beginning with "The Band": the sound /n/ spelled 'kn'
- Beginning with "The Soccer Game": the sound /w/ spelled 'wh'
- Beginning with "Grace the Jester": the sound /ng/ spelled 'n'
- Beginning with "Whisper": Tricky Word cow

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GRADE 1

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Mister Spencer and the Rabbits

Grace Spencer's dad has a farm. Her dad is a farmer out in the Midwest, where the land is flat and the soil is rich.

In the spring Mister Spencer plants corn next to the farmhouse. All summer long, he takes care of the corn. By the end of the summer, the corn is ripe. Then Mister Spencer harvests it and sells it. That is how he makes a living.

Mister Spencer has a garden, too. In his garden he plants eggplants, beets, sprouts, and peppers.





Mister Spencer has had some problems with rabbits. They crawl under the fence, hop into his garden, and munch on his plants. When Mister Spencer sees the rabbits in his garden, he gets mad as a hornet. He shakes his fist and shouts at the rabbits.

Grace and her sister Jill like the rabbits. Grace says they are cute. She tells her dad to be nice and let the rabbits be. But Mister Spencer can't stand those rabbits, and the Spencers need the plants in the garden to feed them in the winter.

Last summer, Mister Spencer got a dog to force the rabbits out of his garden. The dog's name is Pepper. He is a black dog. He sleeps out in the barn.



When Pepper came to the farm, he gave the rabbits quite a scare. They were in the garden, munching on sprouts. Then Pepper came charging out into the yard, barking. The rabbits took off! They raced back into their hole as fast as they could.

Pepper ran to the rabbit hole and went in as far as he could. He started digging with his paws. But it was no use. It was a deep hole and he could not get down to where the rabbits were.

Mister Spencer was sitting in the living room at the time. He could tell what Pepper was up to. He smiled. “Good dog!” he said. “Good dog! I bet those rabbits will munch on sprouts somewhere **else** next time!”



The Picnic by the River

Last summer the Spencers had a picnic by the river. They had a picnic basket filled with food. It was stuffed with all sorts of good things: chicken wings, ham, grapes, chips, and cupcakes.

Mister Spencer set the picnic basket down. Grace and Jill went for a swim in the river.



After their swim, the children raced back to the spot where the picnic basket was. When they got there, there were ants marching down the side of their picnic basket. The ants were marching off with some of the food! The Spencers had set their basket down next to the center of a big anthill!

“Yikes!” shouted Grace in a loud voice. “Who asked those ants to this picnic?”

Mister Spencer picked up the picnic basket and brushed off the ants. Much of the food was in plastic bags, so it was safe from the ants. Grace and Jill rinsed off the grapes after they brushed off the rest of the ants.



The Spencers sat down and ate their picnic lunch. This time they sat far from the center of the anthill.

After lunch, Mister Spencer asked, “Should we pack up our stuff and get back to the farm?”

“Not yet,” said Grace, and glanced back at the anthill.

She smiled and slipped some bits of cupcake and ham into her pocket. Then she ran to the anthill. She set the bits of cupcake and ham on the ground next to the anthill.

“There!” she said. “That will be lunch for the ants. I think ants are cool when they are not crawling on our basket!”



Ants

The next week Grace came running home after class. “Mom!” she said as she raced into the kitchen. “We got an ant farm for our classroom! It’s made of plastic so you can see into it. You can look inside and see what the ants are up to. You can see them when they take bits of food back to their nest. It is so cool because you get a glimpse into the lives of ants.”

Her mom smiled and nodded. She was glad to see Grace filled with excitement.

Grace went on, “Miss Francis says that ants are insects. All insects have six legs. Bees and termites are insects, too! But they are not as cool as ants! In fact, some ants can lift objects that are one hundred times bigger than them.”



“Cool! What else did Miss Francis tell you?” asked her mom.

“Ants have a queen but not a king,” Grace said. “The queen is the top ant. She is the boss. The rest of the ants feed her and take good care of her.”

“I like the sound of that!” said her mom.

“But it’s a hard life for her,” said Grace. “She has to make lots of eggs. So she has to be deep in the center of the anthill all the time.”

Grace stopped to inhale. Then she asked, “Mom, can I run out in the yard and look for ants?”

“Yes, you can,” said her mom. And out Grace ran.



The Band

Grace and Jill are in a band. Grace toots on her trumpet. Jill toots on her slide trombone.

When the children started out, they did not sound too good. Grace and her trombone sounded like a sick moose. Jill and her trumpet sounded like a flock of geese.

The two of them made quite a racket.

It was so bad that Mister Spencer would yell, "I can't take it!" Then he would run out of the house and hide in the barn.

But, since then, the children have gotten a lot better, just as Mister Vance said they would. Mister Vance is the band master. He spends a lot of time with the children, helping them get better.



In the spring there is a band concert in the park.

Mister Vance gets up on the bandstand and waves his hands. The band starts belting out a jazz song. They sound good. Grace hits the notes on her trumpet. Jill's trombone sounds good, too. The drummer is drumming up a storm. The band is **knocking** it out of the park.

Mister Vance has a big smile on his face. He is proud of Grace and Jill.

Mister Spencer smiles, too. He has gotten tired of spending so much time in the barn.



The Yard Sale

Grace went to a yard sale. There were lots of things for sale at the yard sale. There were books and games and shells. There was a long coil of rope, a **kn**apsack, and a lamp. There was a rack of pants and dresses. There was a bin filled with forks, spoons, and **kn**ives for the kitchen.

Grace spent some time looking at the books. She found one that she liked and one that was perfect for Jill. There was just one problem. She did not have the cash she needed to get her book and the one for Jill. She would have to make a **choice**.

Grace saw that she would have to get just one of the books. But which one should she get? She looked at her book. Then she looked at the book for Jill. In the end, she dropped her book back in the box.

Grace went to see the man who was having the yard sale. She said, “I would like to get this book.”

“Did I see you looking at two books?” said the man.

“Yes,” said Grace, “but I can’t get two with the cash I have. So I would like to just get this one for my sister.”

“Well,” said the man, “you are in luck! We are having a sale for sisters who are not selfish. That sort of sister gets two books for the price of one! So run back and grab that book that you liked!”

Grace was thrilled. She ran back and got the book.



The Storm

There is a big storm on the farm. Dark clouds have blocked out the moon and stars. Thunder booms in the darkness. Gusts of wind sweep past the barn.

Grace is in bed with the book she got at the yard sale. She is not scared of the thunder. In fact, she likes it. She sleeps better when there is a storm. But Jill is not as brave as Grace.

Just as Grace is drifting off to sleep, her sister yells in a scared voice. Grace jumps out of bed and runs into Jill's room. Jill is sitting up in bed. She is weeping and grabbing her legs. She winces when the thunder booms. Her knees knock when the wind gusts.



“What’s the matter, Jill?” Grace asks, kneeling next to the bed.

“I’m scared!” says Jill.

Grace hugs her sister and sits next to her on the bed. “It’s just a summer storm. We will be safe inside the house.”

Her big sister’s words make Jill feel better. The hug helps, too. But there is still one thing that has her scared.

“The ducks!” she says. “Will they be safe out in the storm?”

“Yes,” Grace says. “Those ducks are smart. When the thunder booms, they scamper off and take shelter. They will be just fine.”

Jill smiles and says, “I am glad the ducks have a safe place to run to in the storm. That makes me feel better!”



Dark Clouds and Wind

The next morning when the Spencers wake up, the sun is out. Larks sing in the treetops. Socks and pants hang on the line. It seems like the perfect chance to have a picnic.

The Spencers sit down next to the house and munch on their lunch. As they finish up, Mister Spencer glances up and sees dark clouds off to the west. The smile on his face fades.

“What’s the matter?” Jill asks.



“It looks like there’s a storm off to the west,” says Mister Spencer.

The clouds get darker and the wind picks up.

“I don’t like the look of it,” Mister Spencer says to his wife. “Let’s pack up and take the children down into the storm shelter, just to be safe.”

The Spencers pick up their picnic things. They stuff the food in the picnic basket. Grace grabs the cups and napkins. They take the basket down into the storm shelter.



The storm shelter is like a basement. It is a safe place where the Spencers can take shelter in a storm.

Once they are down in the shelter, Mister Spencer starts to lock up the shutters.

“No!” Grace shouts. “Not yet! Pepper’s still out there!”

Mister Spencer darts out of the shelter to get the dog. Soon he is back. He is dripping wet, but he has Pepper in his arms.



In the Storm Shelter

The Spencers are down in their storm shelter. Outside the shelter, the storm has started. The wind gusts. Thunder cracks and crashes.

Down in the shelter the Spencers can't tell how bad the storm is. But the Spencers will be safe down in their storm shelter. Their storm shelter can stand up to strong storms.

When the thunder booms, Jill grabs her mom's arm. "I expect it," she says. "But still, it scares me!" Her mom hugs her.



When it sounds like the storm is finished, Mister Spencer peeks out.

“It’s safe,” he says.

The Spencers step outside. Mister Spencer checks the barn. It is fine. Grace and Jill pick up some pots that were **kn**ocked off the porch by the wind.

“Things look to be in good shape,” says Mister Spencer.

“Good!” Mom says. “Let’s sit down and finish our picnic!”



The Visit

The Spencers are on a trip to visit their Gran. It's a long car ride from the farm. Their dad drives in the morning. Then their mom drives after lunch. Grace and Jill feel like the trip will never end.

At last, they get to Gran's place. Grace and Jill run up to their Gran and hug her.

"It's so nice to see you!" says Gran.

"Gran," Jill says, "can we run down and swim?" After the long car ride, the children need some exercise.

Gran smiles. She grabs her **kn**apsack and points to the flip-flops on her feet and says, "I'm all set!"



Grace and Jill get dressed for swimming. They rub sunscreen on their arms and legs. Mister Spencer helps them rub the sunscreen on their backs.

Once the sunscreen is on, Grace and Jill run down the path to the cove. When they get there, they wade in, yelping as the cool waves crash past them.

Grace and Jill splash and ride the waves. They dig for crabs and pick up shells. They toss a frisbee back and forth. They munch on snacks and sit in the sun. It's fun to visit with Gran.



The Soccer Game

Grace has a soccer game this weekend. It is a big game. If she and her pals win, they will be the state champs.

At the game Grace sees her pals Jane and Kim **Knox** and their dad, Mister **Knox**.

“All set for the big game?” Mister **Knox** asks.

“Yup!” Grace says.

“Good!” says Mister **Knox**. “We can win if we bring our ‘A’ game!”

Grace and Mister **Knox** slap hands.



In the game, Grace starts off with a run of bad luck. She keeps missing the net, no matter how hard she kicks.

One time she takes a shot but the keeper blocks it. One time she takes a shot but the shot is off target. One time she shoots but gets **knocked** down and skins her **knee**.

“Arg!” Grace yells. She sits on the grass and pouts.

“Hang in there!” yells Mister **Knox**.

“Get back in the game!” yells her dad. “A quitter never wins, and a winner never quits!”



Grace **w**himpers for a bit, but then gets up and brushes herself off.

She runs and makes a nice pass to Kim **K**nnox out on the left wing. Kim makes a pass back to Grace in the center.

Grace has a shot! She swings her leg. Thwack! This time her shot is strong and on target. It shoots past the keeper and into the net.

“Yes!” shouts Mister **K**nnox.

“Nice shot!” yells Mister Spencer.

Kim and Jane and the rest of her pals run up and hug her. Jane lifts her up. **W**hile they are hugging Grace and jumping up and down, the horn sounds. Time has run out! The game is finished. Grace and her pals are the state champs!



Supper

Grace invites two of her pals from soccer to visit her house for supper. They are twin sisters. Their names are Kim and Jane **Knox**.

Grace and her mom spend the morning cooking. They gather fresh greens from the garden. They cook two chickens in a big pan. They bake fresh corn muffins and a cake.

Grace gets to crack the eggs and mix the cake. Her mom lets her help **whip** up the frosting, too. And, best of all, she gets to lick the spoon **when** the frosting is finished!

At six a car drives up and toots the horn. Mister **Knox** is at the **wheel**.

“That’s them!” Grace shouts. She runs out to meet her classmates.



They sit down for dinner.

Kim **K**nox cuts the chicken with her **k**nife. “Yum!” she says. “This chicken is the best! It’s so much better than the stuff our dad makes!”

Jane nods. She would tell Grace how good the chicken is, but her mouth is stuffed with chicken.

“Save room for cake!” Grace says.

After supper Grace brings in the cake she and her mom made. She helps her mom slice up the cake.

“Ooo!” says Kim. “What sort of cake is it!”

“Red velvet!” says Grace.

“Yum!” says Kim. “Can we visit next weekend, too?”



Grace the Performer

Grace jumps out of bed and gets dressed. She slips on striped **k**nee socks, green pants, and a green top.

Next Grace gets out her make-up. She rubs some **w**hite make-up on her face. Then she gets out red lipstick for her lips. She slips on a wig and pins a hat to the wig. The last thing she adds is a big red nose.

Grace is getting dressed up to be a mime. There are lots of fun things to do at the park this week. Today Grace will perform for lots of children. Her job will be to make all the children in the tent at the park smile. But she can't tell jokes. Mimes do not tell jokes. In fact, mimes do not use words at all. They have to keep mute at all times. That is **w**hat makes the job a hard one. But that is **w**hat makes it fun, too.



Grace starts off with a bike trick. She stacks up a bunch of cups. Then she jumps them with her bike. The children cheer and Grace honks her bike horn.

Next Grace grabs a rose and waves it at the children in the stands. Oops! It's a trick rose with a hose in it. Some of the children get wet!

At the end of her act, Grace gets up on a rope. She takes three steps on the rope. Then she acts like she is slipping. Whoops! Grace slips and lands sitting on the ground with a clunk and a thump. But it is all part of the act. Grace has a big, soft pad roped to her back.

The children cheer. They like the mime and her act. Mom, Dad, and Jill are sitting in the stands, too. They clap and yell the loudest of all.

Grace smiles and waves. She thinks it's fun to be a mime and perform!



The Frog Jumping Contest

There is a frog jumping contest at the park this week, too.

“Did you get a frog for the contest?” Ken asks. Grace nods. She sticks her hand in her bag and grabs her frog. The frog sits on her fingers.

“Cool!” Ken says. “What’s his name?”

“It’s a she!” says Grace. “Her name is Hopper.”

“I got one, too,” says Ken. “His name is Legs.” Legs has longer legs than Hopper.



Grace and Ken take their frogs to the starting line. They set the frogs down. The starter shouts, “On your mark! Get set! Hop!”

“Jump!” Ken yells. “Jump!” Legs hops off.

Hopper jumps, too, but she jumps off to the side.

“No, Hopper!” Grace yells. She runs and grabs her frog. Then she sets her down with her face pointing at the finish line.

Hopper hops off. This time she is lined up and on target.

Ken and Grace chase their frogs down the track. The frogs are fast. It is a close race.



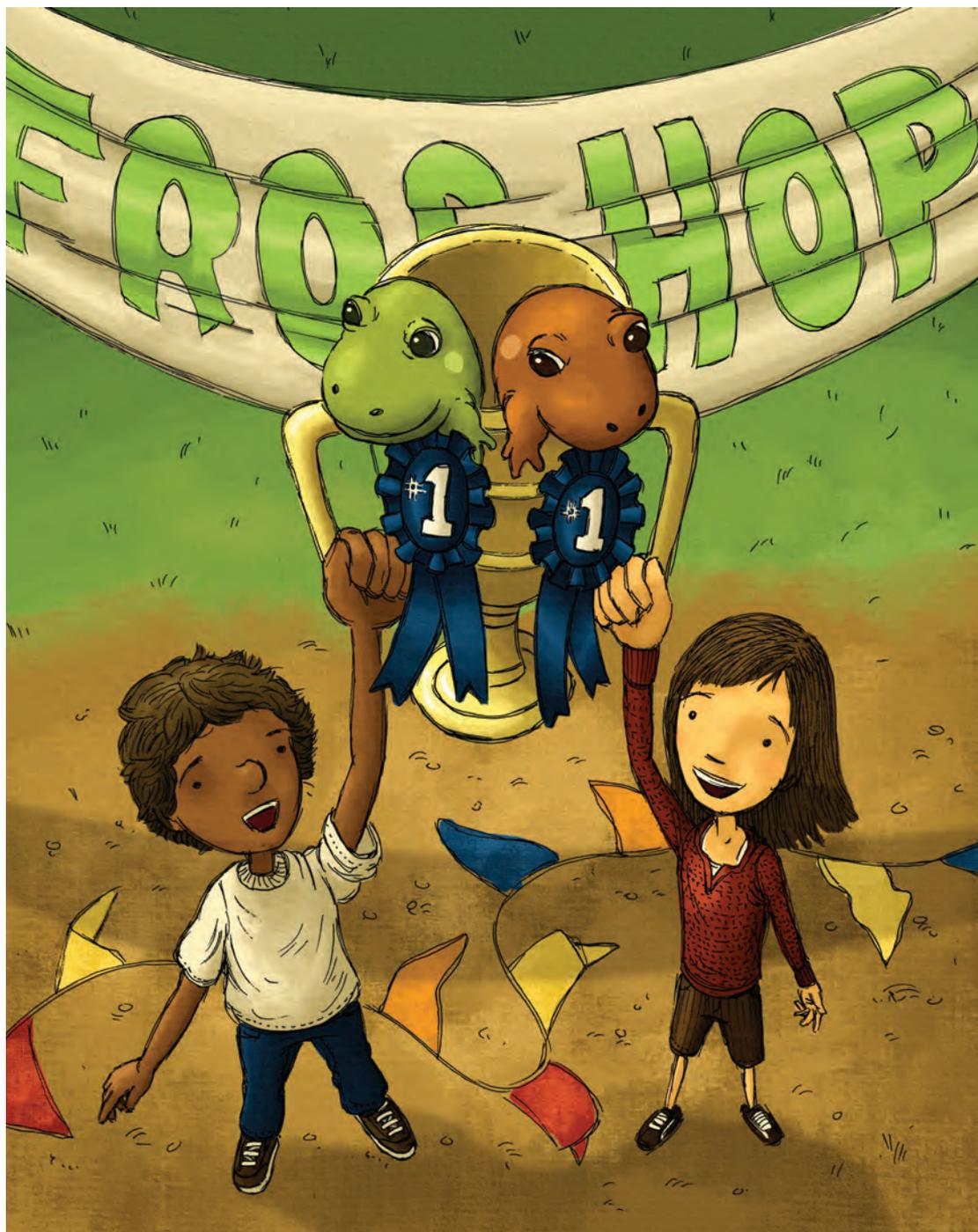
The two frogs cross the finish line at the same time.

“Did Legs win?” Ken asks.

“Did Hopper win?” Grace asks.

“We have two winners!” says the man at the finish line. “Hopper and Legs crossed the line at the same time. They will share the prize!”

The man hands Grace and Ken a cup for their prize. Grace plops Hopper in the cup. Ken adds Legs. Then they hoist the cup up and shout, “Here’s to the champs!”



The Spinning Wheel

There are lots of fun rides and games at the park this week. Grace and Jill like to ride the Spinning **W**heel. The Spinning **W**heel is a ride with six arms. The arms spin round and round and lift up. It is fun to ride.

“Jill!” Grace yells as the **w**heel starts to spin, “I dare you to keep your hands up **w**hile you ride, like this!”

Soon they are **w**hizzing and **w**hooshing and shouting and yelling. Grace keeps her hands up till the ride ends. Jill keeps her hands up for a **w**hile, but not all the time.

“**W**hoo-hoo!” shouts Grace.

“Look at me!” shouts Jill. Her cheeks are **p**ink with **e**xcitement.



When they get off the Spinning **W**heel, they run and check out the games. Grace shoots hoops **w**hile Jill tosses darts at a target. Jill wins a prize!

“Let’s have a snack!” says Grace. The sisters get a big tub of buttered popcorn. They share a corn dog and a **d**rink, too. The food is good.

When they are finished, Jill asks, “Should we ride the Spinning **W**heel one last time?”

“No,” Grace says. “After all that food, it would not be safe. I **t**hink I would get sick!”



Buster the Pig

There are contests at the park, too. Grace is at a livestock contest with her dad. **W**hen a livestock contest is held, farmers bring their best sheep and pigs and hope to win a prize.

“Look at the size of that pink pig!” Grace says.

“His name is Buster,” says a teen in a **w**hite tank standing next to the pig. He is rubbing the pig’s flank with a rag. “And my name is Rod.”

“**W**hat are you doing to him?” Grace asks.

“I’m grooming him,” says Rod. “Buster needs to look his best so he can win the top prize. Would you like to help?”



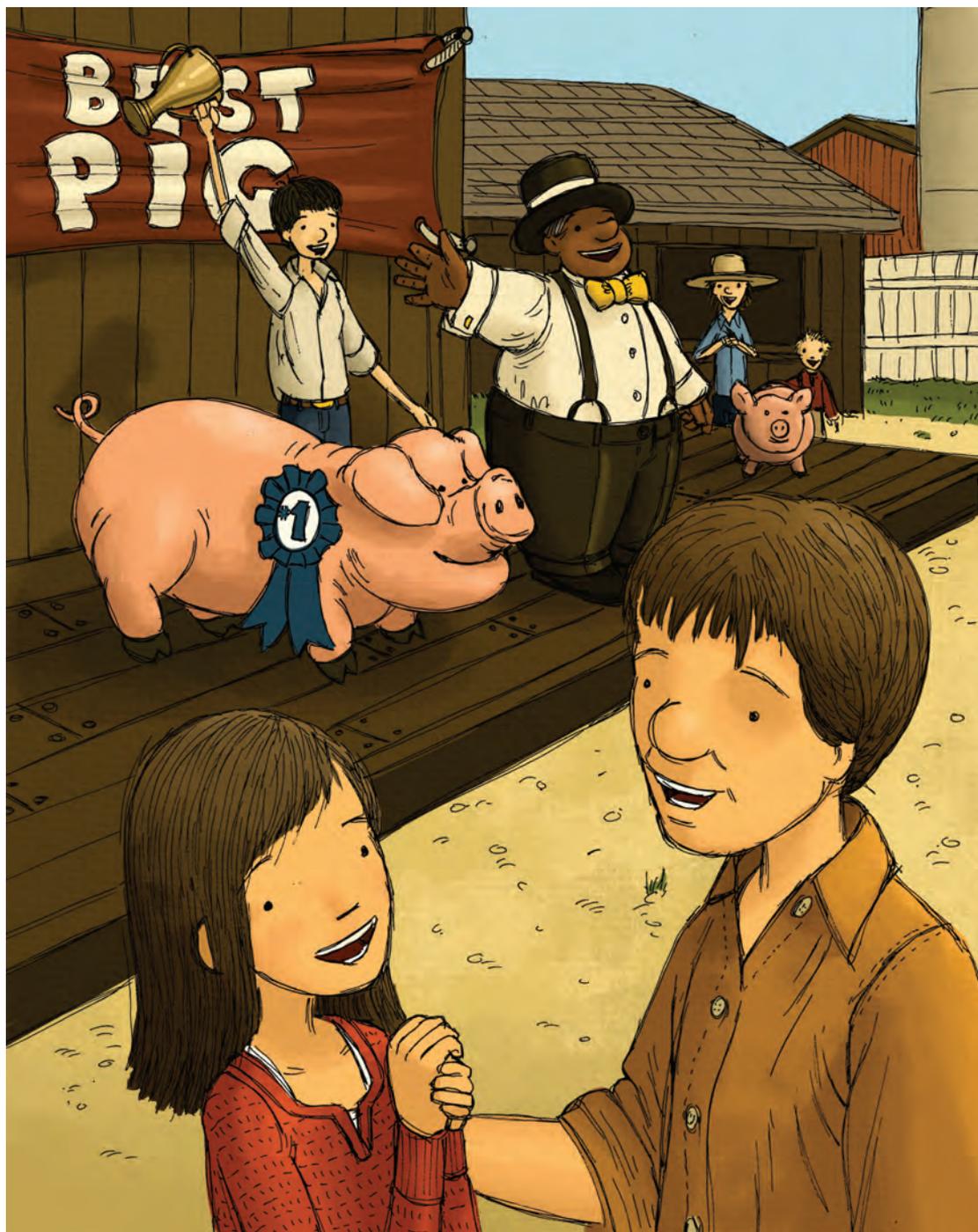
When it's time to take Buster out into the ring, Grace rubs him under his chin. Buster likes this so much he **oinks** and **whimpers**.

There are lots of pigs in the ring, and they all look good. A man in a black hat inspects the pigs. His job is to pick **which** pig he **thinks** is best. That pig will be the winner.

“I hope Buster wins!” Grace says.

The man looks at the pigs one last time. Then he points a **finger** at Buster and hands the top prize to Rod.

“Yippee!” says Grace. “Buster is number one!”



Whisper

Grace and Jill like to visit the livestock contest. There are lots of fun things to do there.

In one barn, they see a man cutting wool off a sheep. They feel the wool the man has cut from the sheep. It is soft. The man tells them that the wool can be used to **knit** hats and scarves and mittens.

Jill gets to milk a cow. She likes to see the milk shoot out of the udder and splash in the bucket.

Grace picks up a rabbit. The rabbit is cute with lots of fuzz.

Then Grace sees chicks that have just hatched out of their eggs! She picks one up and pets it. She **thinks** the chick is the softest thing she has ever petted.



“Are the chicks for sale?” she asks.

“Yep,” says the man.

“Can I bring this one home?” Grace asks. She looks at her mom and dad.

“It’s fine with me,” says her dad. “But you have to take good care of her.”

“I will, I will!” says Grace.

Mister Spencer hands the man some cash. The man plops the chick in a box and hands Grace the box.

In the car, Grace asks, “**W**hat should I name her?”

“Snickers!” says Jill.

“**W**hizbang!” says Mom.

“Gem!” says Dad.

“No,” says Grace. “I will name her **W**hisper!”



The Harvest

Mister Spencer must harvest his corn **when** it is ripe. He can't let it spoil. It's a big job. Sometimes he has to hire helpers to help him bring in the harvest.

Grace likes two of the helpers her dad hires. Their names are Hank and Cedric. **When** they finish twelfth grade, they plan to be farmers like Mister Spencer.

Mister Spencer gets out his big combine and fills the tank with gas. Then he starts it up. It sends up a puff of black smoke. The combine is loud. But it is good at cutting down corn.

Mister Spencer drives the combine in the morning. After lunch, he lets Hank and Cedric drive. They drive the combine back and forth until all of the corn is cut down. Grace rides with them part of the time.



When they are finished with the harvest, **H**ank spots **w**hat looks like a rock sticking up out of the ground. He bends down and grabs it.

“What is it?” **C**edric asks.

“I think it’s a **ch**unk of a pot,” says **H**ank. He dusts it off with his **f**ingers and says, “It could be a relic from a long time back in the past!”

Back at the house, **H**ank hands the pot shard to **G**race. “Here,” he says. “This is for you. We can’t tell, but we **th**ink it could be a relic.”

“Thanks!” says **G**race, with a smile. Then she runs to get **H**ank and **C**edric some corn muffins. They sit on the steps and munch on the muffins.



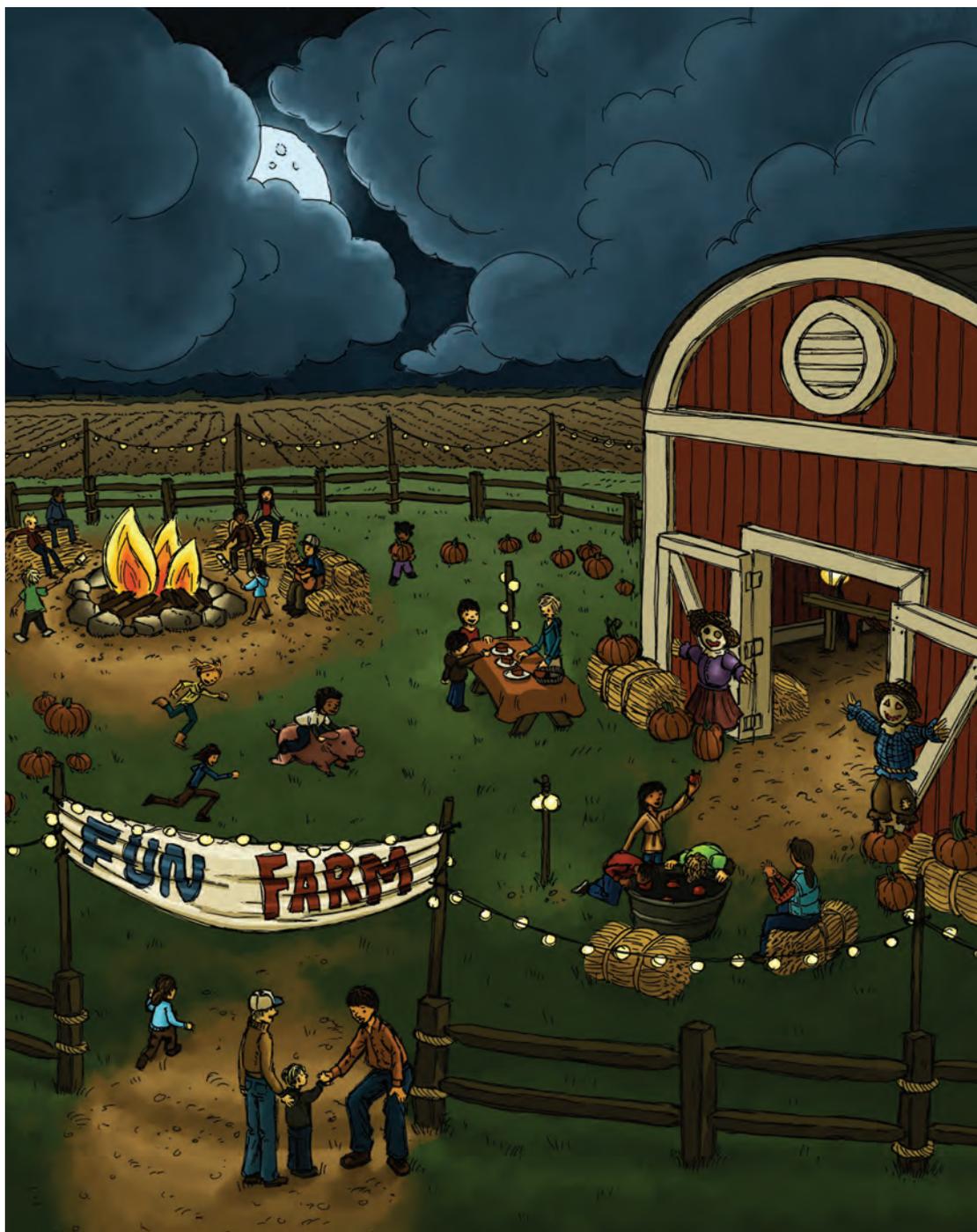
The Harvest Marvel

After the harvest, the Spencers had a Harvest Fest on their farm. A bunch of children came.

“Have fun!” Mister Spencer said to the children. “And look out for the Harvest Marvel!”

“What’s the Harvest Marvel?” one of the children asked.

“There is a legend that farmers have passed down for a long time. At the Harvest Fest, someone dresses as the Harvest Marvel to celebrate all of the crops and good food we harvest in the fall. It’s a tribute to thank the Harvest Marvel for the harvest. Looking out for the Harvest Marvel can be the best game at the Harvest Fest!” said Mister Spencer.



The children pondered this for a bit and then skipped off to get snacks and drinks. Time passed, and they had forgotten to look out for the Harvest Marvel—until something or someone stepped out of the darkness next to the barn. It was hard to tell what it was. Its arms and legs were wrapped in corn husks. It had a pumpkin on its face as a mask.

“Greetings!” shouted the Harvest Marvel, jumping up and down. The children did not recognize the voice of the Harvest Marvel, and could not tell who or what the Harvest Marvel was.

They were spooked and started to run.

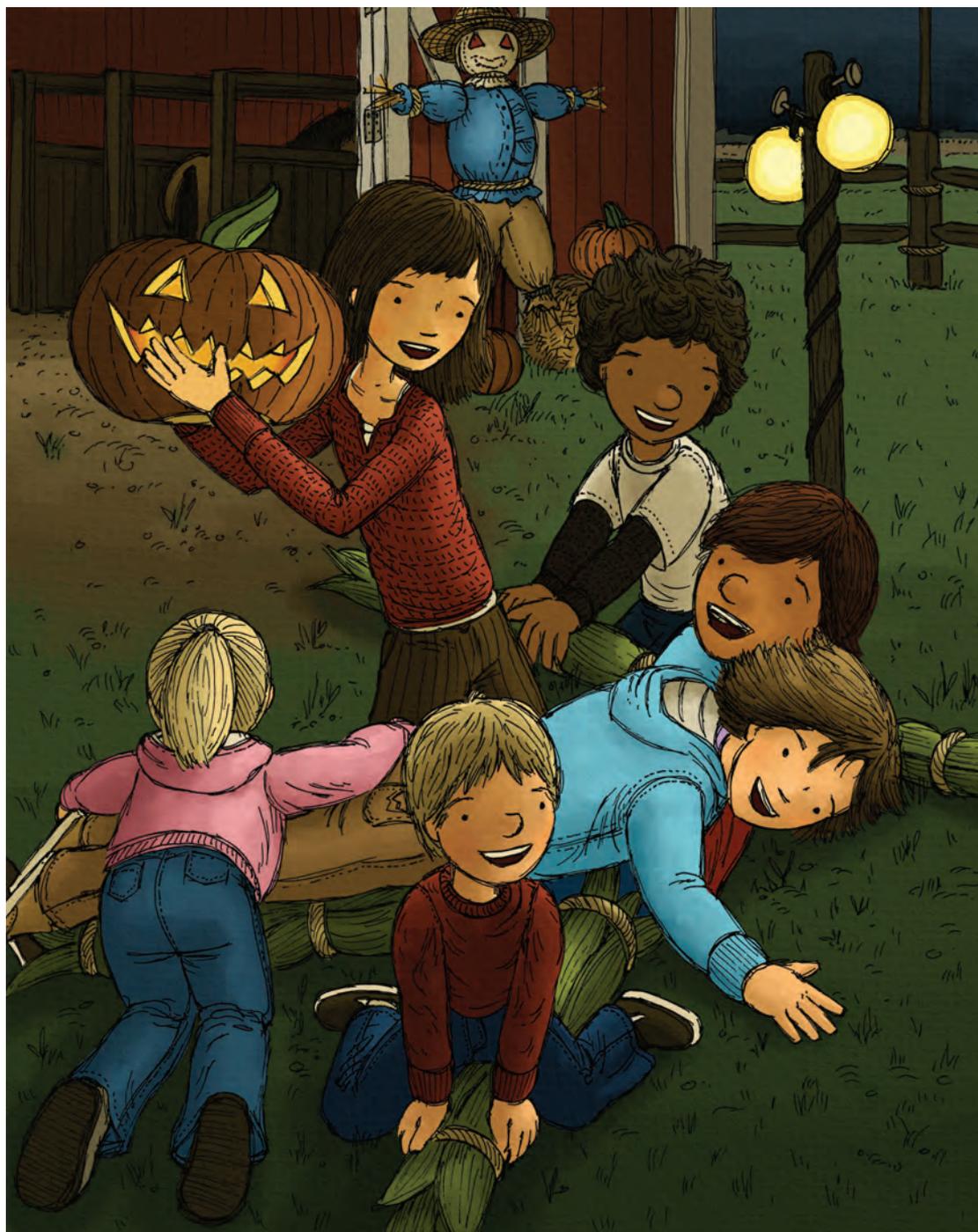


Grace started to run from the Harvest Marvel, too. But then she spotted a jacket on the Harvest Marvel, under the corn husks. She recognized that jacket.

Grace ran up to the Harvest Marvel and tagged it. By accident, she **knocked** the pumpkin mask off of the Harvest Marvel.

“See!” Grace yelled. “It’s just **Hank!**”

When the children saw that the Harvest Marvel was just **Hank**, they ran up and jumped on top of him. **Hank** and the children were all smiles.



The Jumping Fish

Today Grace and Jill are at the lake with their mom. They are bump-bump-bumping on top of the waves.

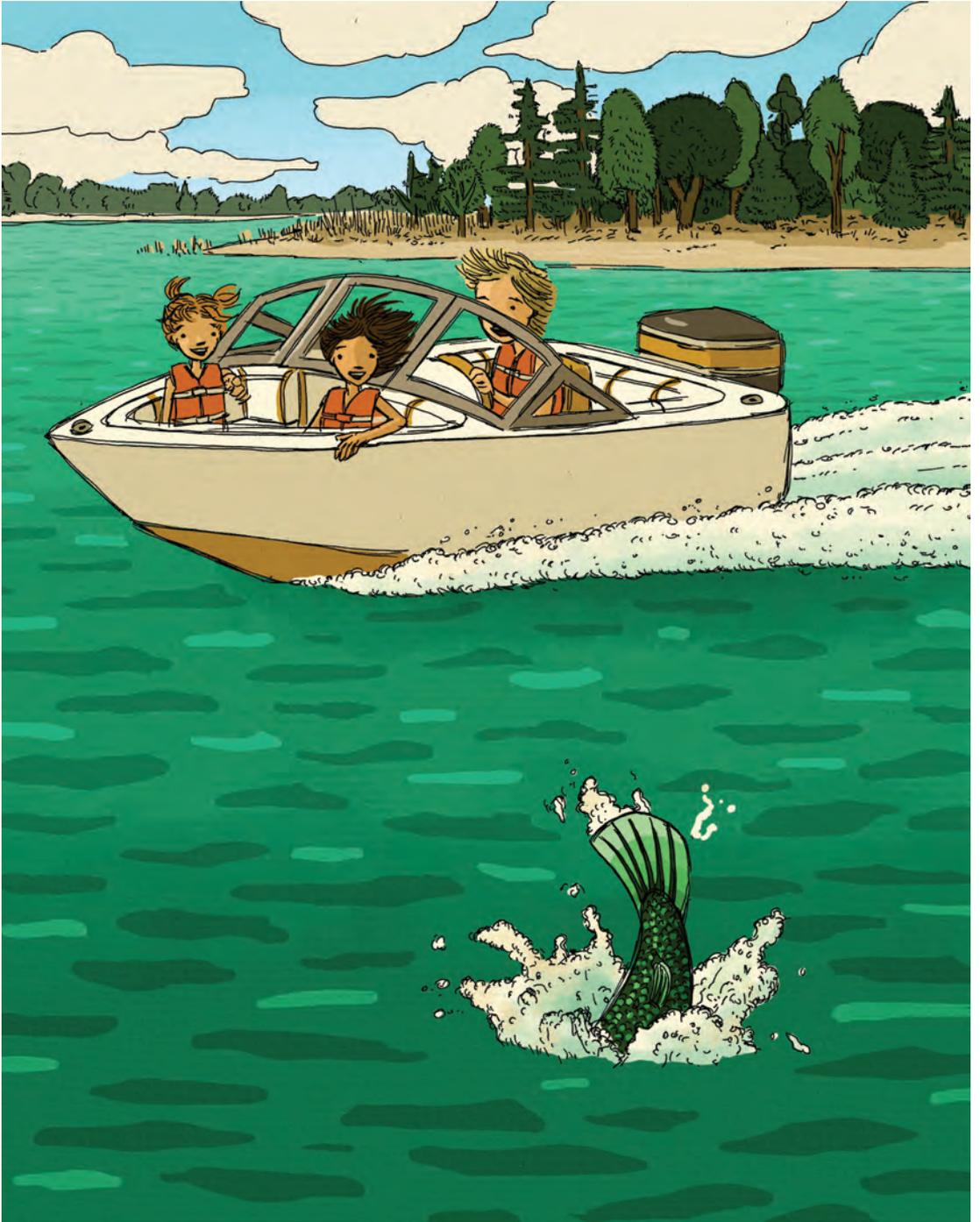
Grace can feel the wind on her face. It is so strong it makes her blink and squint.

“Look!” Grace says. She points at a big green fish that has jumped up next to them. The fish twists. Then it flops back into the lake, with a big splash.

“That was cool!” Jill says.

But the fish is not finished. It jumps up and makes a big splash, once, twice, three times.

“I think she likes us!” says Jill.



After a **while**, they steer back to the dock. Grace grabs a rope and tosses it onto one of the poles on the dock. Jill helps her tug on the rope. Then they jump out.

The Spencers sit down on a **blanket** and have a picnic next to the lake.

“Mom,” Grace asks, “**why** do you think that fish was jumping next to us?”

“Well,” says their mom, “I think the fish was scared by the loud sound we made when we went past, and that’s **why** it jumped.”

“No!” says Jill. “That fish liked us! That’s **why** she jumped. She was jumping for us, so we would see **what** a good jumper she is!”

Grace smiles. **What** her mom said makes sense to her, but she likes to think that the fish was jumping for her, and for Jill.



Snakes

Grace is in Miss Vincent's class. She has to make a speech on snakes. She takes out a picture of a snake. Then she starts her speech.

“Have you ever seen a snake at the zoo?” Grace asks. “Have you ever seen a snake in your backyard? Were you scared **when** you saw it? Well, snakes can scare you, but they are cool, too. Just do not get too close!”

“Snakes have fangs in their mouth and scales on their skin. Lots of snakes shed their skin from time to time. **When** they get too big for their outside skin, they twist out of it. Here is a snake skin I found in my backyard.



“Snakes make their home in dark holes in the ground. But they like the sun, too. **W**hen the sun is out, snakes like to coil up on rocks and let the sun shine on them.

“Snakes do not order a sandwich for lunch. They do not like sweets or nuts or chips. They are hunters. They hunt for mice and rats and frogs. If a snake catches a mouse, that will keep it fed for a long time. It will not need food for the rest of the week.

“Snakes are fun, but if you see one, take care. It’s not safe to grab a snake, or to get too close to one. Snakes have sharp fangs and they can bite you!”



About this Book

This book has been created for use by students learning to read with the Core Knowledge Reading Program. Readability levels are suitable for early readers. The book has also been carefully leveled in terms of its “code load,” or the number of spellings used in the stories.

The English writing system is complex. It uses more than 200 spellings to stand for 40-odd sounds. Many sounds can be spelled several different ways, and many spellings can be pronounced several different ways. This book has been designed to make early reading experiences simpler and more productive by using a subset of the available spellings. It uses *only* spellings that students have been taught to sound out as part of their phonics lessons, plus a handful of Tricky Words, which have also been deliberately introduced in the lessons. This means that the stories will be 100% decodable if they are assigned at the proper time.

As the students move through the program, they learn new spellings and the “code load” in the decodable Readers increases gradually. The code load graphic on this page indicates the number of spellings students are expected to know in order to read the first story of the book and the number of spellings students are expected to know in order to read the final stories in the book. The columns on the inside back cover list the specific spellings and Tricky Words students are expected to recognize at the beginning of this Reader. The bullets at the bottom of the inside back cover identify spellings, Tricky Words, and other topics that are introduced gradually in the unit this Reader accompanies.

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