

**BRING ON
SUMMER!**

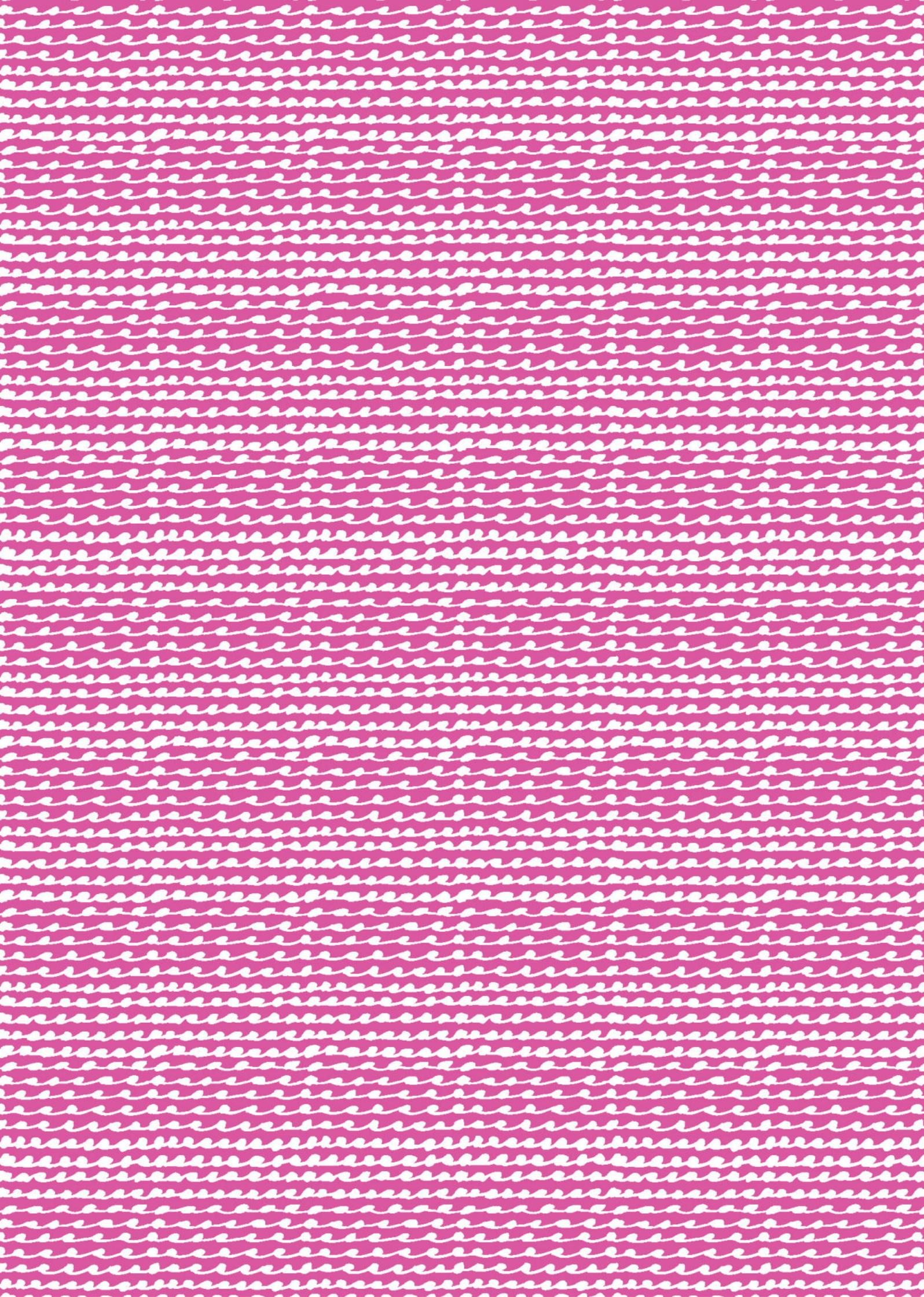
Storytime™



A FAIRY GARDENER! Olivia discovers the magic of mulch...

THE DOLPHIN

**The Opossum Finds Fire, Weighing an Elephant,
Wise King Knut PLUS A BRIDGE OF FISHES!**



DIVE DEEP INTO A SEA OF STORIES!

SUMMER HAS BEGUN!

So grab your shades, sip that iced
tea and let our pages transport
you to sun-soaked adventures!

THIS ISSUE BELONGS TO:

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Editor: Sven Wilson

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ILLUSTRATORS:

Dante Guerino *The Good Hosts of Bremen*

Silvia Biondi *The Mulch Fairy*

Pamela Wehrhahne *King Knut and the Tide*

Thais Mesquita *Weighing the Elephant*

Dago Baute *The Dolphin*

Alex Nguyen Studio *The Bridge of Fishes*

Aleksandra Szmidt *Her Mother's Daughter*

Daniela Martin Del Campo *The Opossum and the
Secret of Fire*

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Sail to an English beach, the capital of
China and a magical kingdom of trees!



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LET'S TALK ABOUT... FEELING HOMESICK!



When I feel homesick, I think of something that reminds me of home!

I tell myself that I won't feel like this forever!



Going somewhere new is an adventure... and coming home is wonderful, too!



FOR YOUR TOOLBOX

- ★ We feel homesick when we miss our loved ones, home comforts and familiar surroundings.
- ★ You might feel this way when you're on a school trip or a holiday without loved ones.
- ★ If you feel sad and lonely, remember that it is a feeling that *can and will pass*.

MIND WORKOUT: COMFORT IS KEY

One of the best ways to cope with homesickness is by bringing some things that **remind you of home**. Why not take your favourite teddy, pyjamas or blanket with you on your next trip? The sight (and smell!) of a favourite item can be very comforting. You might like to take a small picture of your loved ones, too. They could write a little message for you to take to remind you that they are still there for you. Talking to a family member on a phone or device can help as well!

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

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For back issue bundles, just go to www.storytimemagazine.com/bundles and discover new worlds of wonders!



THE GOOD HOSTS OF BREMEN

The 'Four Musicians of Bremen' were napping in front of the fire when they heard a knock at the door.

"Who can that be?" yawned the cat. She, the dog, the rooster and the donkey got up and opened the door a crack.

A pale face stared in at them. The animals recognised one of the robbers that they had driven out of the house with their 'music'!

"Er, hello!" the robber stammered. "I ran away and got lost in the woods! I'm really wet and cold – may I please come in?"

The animals had a discussion while the poor fellow shivered on the doorstep.

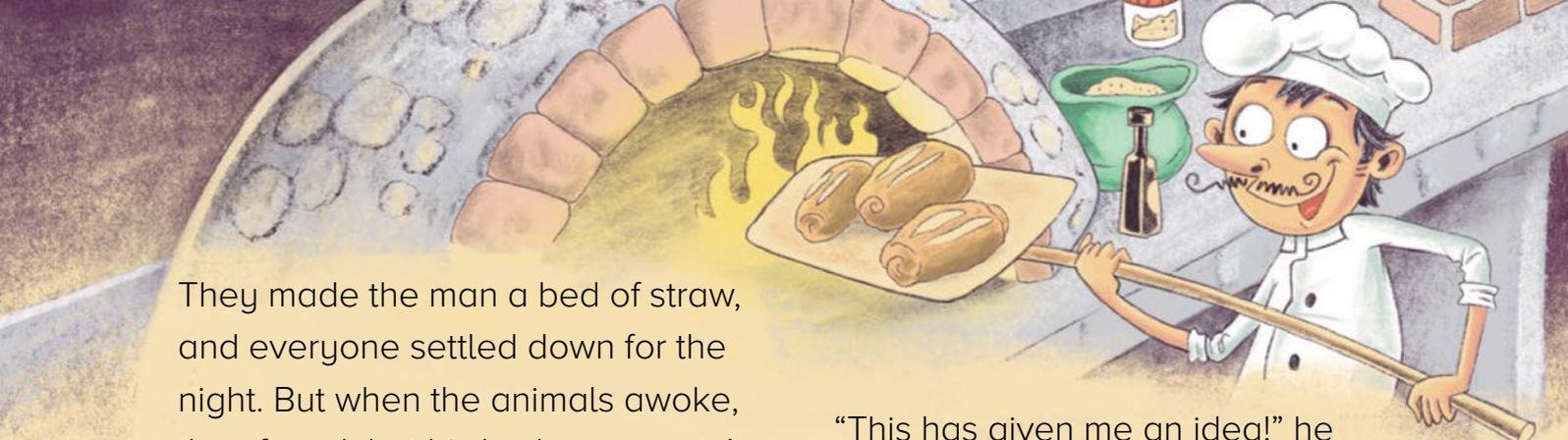
"Can we trust him?" hissed the cat.

"He needs help," growled the dog, "and he certainly seems sorry!"

The donkey said, "We were lucky to find shelter, so surely we can't turn someone else away!"

"You can come in," the rooster told the robber, "but mind your manners!"





They made the man a bed of straw, and everyone settled down for the night. But when the animals awoke, they found that his bed was empty!

“Where did that robber go?” growled the dog.



“We never should have trusted him!” spat the cat.

Then they heard a cheerful voice say, “Good morning! I’ve made fresh bread and pastries for breakfast!”

“How did you make this?” said the donkey as he chewed with his mouth full.

“Oh, I used to be a baker!” said the robber. “And a very good one, too!”

When breakfast was finished, the rooster tilted his head to the side.

“This has given me an idea!” he clucked. “Lots of people and animals need shelter on the way to Bremen – we should start a guest house!”

The other three animals agreed, and they got to work preparing their inn.

The donkey used his hooves to wash the sheets and blankets in a tub, and the dog pulled them over a washing line to dry. The rooster dusted every corner with his feathery tail, and the cat plumped up the pillows.

Word spread about the inn run by four animals – and the baker who made the best bread and pastries in town! Guests enjoyed staying there, and listened to musical performances in the evening! ★



THE MULCH FAIRY

Olivia had the perfect outfit to wear while tree planting! She put it on and admired herself in the mirror.

“You can’t wear *that!*” her mum said gently. “Your sparkly fairy princess dress might get ruined!”

She tapped the rainbow-coloured wings on Olivia’s back. “And these might get broken when we’re digging!”

Olivia waved her hands. “I’ll be careful! Oooh, I nearly forgot the most important part of my outfit!”

She put on her tiara and gave a little twirl. “Perfect!”

Mum sighed – Olivia didn’t take fashion advice from *anyone!*

Before they went out, Olivia slipped into her wellington boots, too. They were purple and glittery.



As they walked to the park, Olivia danced around her mum.

“How many trees are you going to plant?” she chattered. “I’m going to plant a hundred. No, a *thousand!*”



When they got to the park it was all muddy. Olivia didn’t mind – she had her wellies! She and mum stomped and squelched over to where some white pavilions had been set up. One had water and snacks, and there was another one where people could leave their bags.

“Hi, are you volunteers?”

That was a smiley lady with cool long braids. She wore a fluorescent yellow vest and was carrying a clipboard and pen.

“Yes, I’m Sarah, and this is Olivia. It’s our first time!”

The lady grinned. “Great! Can you fill out this form?” Olivia’s mum wrote her name and details and helped Olivia answer the questions. When they had finished, a man called everyone over.

There were lots of people Olivia recognised in the crowd – Rachid and Samir from her class, Mrs Merriweather from down the street, and Janey and Harper their next-door neighbours. She gave them a little wave!

“Okay, everybody!” the man said. “My name’s Tim, and together we’re going to make this park even better!” He pointed at dozens of spades which had been pushed into the dirt nearby. ➡





“Pick a spade that’s the right size for you and put on a vest from one of those bins!”

All the spades seemed ENORMOUS to Olivia, but she grabbed the smallest one she could find.

Then, she dug through the plastic tub of yellow volunteer vests. She chose one and put her arm through the wrong hole. It got tangled up with the wings of her dress, so Mum gave her a hand.

Then they had to walk all the way over to the other side of the park. There, they found big piles of stuff that looked like tree bark, and bundles of little baby trees scattered all over the ground.

“We’re going to plant lots of trees today!” Tim announced loudly.

“Here’s what to do...”

After they listened to the instructions, everyone got to work. They had to dig holes as deep as the blade of a spade, put a baby tree in the hole, and then stomp in the dirt around it.

“Make sure the trees are in there tight!” Tim said as he watched. “That way, they’ll grow up straight.”

Digging holes looked easy, but Olivia found it tricky at first. She had to push the spade into the soil with her foot, then pull on the handle to dig it out. She spotted something wriggling in the soil.

“Eugh! What’s *that*?”

Tim laughed. “That’s a *worm*, and they’re amazing! They eat dead leaves and things and poop out the soil that trees need to grow.”

From then on, Olivia picked up every worm she found.

She put them in a place where they could burrow back into the soil.

Olivia and her mum had planted a dozen baby trees (and stamped down the dirt around them) when Tim came over with a wheelbarrow full of shredded wood and bark.

“This stuff is called mulch!” he said with a wink. “It’s magical for helping trees grow. It stops grass from sprouting around them and keeps the soil moist. Worms will turn it into more food for the trees. Spread it around – you’ll be like a Mulch Fairy!”

Olivia did as he said. She made a ring of mulch around each little tree.

After a couple of hours, Olivia had dirt on her dress and her arms were aching. But other people were still digging and planting around her, so she didn’t give up.

A lady came over and smiled at her. “You’ve been working so hard – why don’t you come over and get some lunch?”

Mum and Olivia trudged back over the field to the pavilion where more volunteers were handing out containers of steaming food.

Olivia poked at her meal with the wooden fork she had been given.

“What’s this, Mum?”

“It’s chickpea curry. Give it a try!”

The girl put a forkful of curry and rice in her mouth and chewed. It was a bit spicy, but tasty! She nearly finished the whole container, because all that digging had made her VERY hungry!

Then, mum got a cup of tea and Olivia ate chocolate biscuits while chatting to Samir and Rachid. ➡



"I planted at least a hundred trees today," Olivia said proudly. "Maybe two hundred!"

"Really?" Samir said with a smirk.

"Let's have a tree-planting contest!" suggested Rachid.

The three of them ran back to their spades and began digging as fast as they could.

The problem was, they found it difficult to keep count and work out who had planted which tree as they were helping each other!

Before long, every tree had been planted. Their tiny trunks stuck up in a field covered with mulch.

Tim cleared his throat. "That's it!" he shouted. "We're done!"

A lady spoke up. "Thank you so much for coming out here today! The trees you planted will make this park green and shady and give shelter to all sorts of wildlife! Come back in spring to see leaves sprouting on these little trees!"

As Olivia was walking home, she asked her mum when spring would come, and when they could go tree-planting again. She was already planning what she would wear then... because Mulch Fairies take their jobs very seriously! ✨



DO IT!

Volunteering is a great way to help your community! Look for projects at your school or in your neighbourhood where you can lend a hand and get involved. It's fun, and you will help make the world a nicer place.



KING KNUT AND THE TIDE

Knut was a mighty king. He was the ruler of Denmark, but that wasn't enough for him. He wanted to conquer more land and show everyone that he was the greatest ruler of them all!

That is why he summoned an army of fierce Viking warriors and set out to invade England. They sailed across the sea in a huge fleet and stormed onto the English beaches.

The Anglo-Saxons who lived there tried to fight back, but they were no match for Knut's Vikings! After many battles, the people of Britain surrendered and accepted Knut as their king. He was pleased, because he now had two kingdoms and a reputation as a great warrior! ➡



He also conquered Norway and other bits of Scandinavia. To show off how powerful he was, he signed his letters as “King of all England and Denmark and the Norwegians and some of the Swedes”!

The English were worried about what it would be like to be ruled by a fierce Viking from across the sea. Luckily for them, Knut turned out to be a good and just king as well as a mighty warrior.

Under Knut’s rule, England became peaceful and prosperous. His throne room was filled with courtiers who helped him govern his lands – but there was a problem.

Some of his ministers were greedy and selfish. They always praised the king and told him how great he was.

They wanted to make him feel proud and arrogant, so that he would give them more land and gifts.

“Greetings to King Knut!” said one young nobleman as he bowed to the ruler. “England is lucky to have been conquered by you!”

A lady in a silk dress smiled at Knut. “You are so stylish and dignified. All the ladies think you are the handsomest man in the world!”

A lord decided that he had to do better to get the king’s approval.

“You are surely the greatest king and mightiest warrior of all. Even the emperor of far-off China would fear seeing the sails of your ships on the horizon!”



Knut was not impressed. “They only say these things because they want something from me!” he thought. “When I was a Viking, at least my friends would be honest!”

A young courtier with carefully combed hair really wanted to get Knut’s attention, so he came up with the grandest compliment of all.

“It is an honour to be in your presence!” he said, bowing so low that his hair swept the floor in front of him. “All people obey you, and the animals of field and forest too. Why, you are so powerful and respected that the sea itself would obey your commands!”

King Knut rolled his eyes.

“Is that so?” he snorted. “In that case, I think we should all take a trip to the seaside!”



An hour later, the king and his court were gathered on a windswept shore. The noblemen and ladies tried to stop their fine clothes from touching the wet sand.

The king told his servants to place his wooden throne at the water’s edge. He sat on it and stared out to sea. The tide was coming in... ➡



“Now, I am going to use my ‘mighty powers’ to command the sea itself!” he announced. His courtiers kept quiet and shuffled their feet.

“I demand that the sea stops where it is!” he roared as loud as he could. “The waves must not rise onto the sand or wet my royal feet!”

The court watched as the tide continued to roll up onto the shore. As the water went higher and higher, the waves came further up the beach and broke over the king’s shoes – and the courtiers’ shoes too.

“See?” King Knut said loudly. “Even the mightiest king cannot

command the wind or the waves. It does not matter what I say, the tide will rise and fall as it wants!”

The ruler has made his point: even a king should be humble, for there are things that he cannot control! ★

DID YOU KNOW?

Knut was a real person! He was a powerful Viking king who ruled over England, Denmark, Norway and part of Sweden in the 11th century CE. He was known as Knut the Great by his subjects and allies, and he had a reputation as a strong and just king. Knut died in 1035 CE and was buried in Winchester Cathedral.



YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...

In 43 CE the **Roman emperor Claudius** sent his legions to take over southern Britain. They conquered the Celtic peoples who lived there and made them part of the Roman Empire.

When the western Roman Empire collapsed in 476 CE, tribes from what is now northern Germany attacked Britain's shores. **They were called the Angles and the Saxons (or 'Anglo-Saxons')**, and they took over much of what is now England. (The country was named after the Angles!)

BRITISH INVASIONS

Knut wasn't the only person to invade what we now call England! Here are some other conquerors...

In 793 CE, Vikings from Norway and Denmark began raiding the Anglo-Saxons. **King Alfred the Great** was a Saxon leader who held them back for a while – you can read about him in **Storytime** issue 92.

Knut the Viking gathered a great fleet and invaded England in 1015 CE. After fourteen months of fighting, he captured London and was crowned as King Knut.

In 1066 CE, a lord from Normandy in France decided that he was the rightful king of England. Duke William invaded and defeated Knut's successor, Harald Godwinson, at the Battle of Hastings. **'William the Conqueror'** became the new monarch, and his lords were put in charge. That is why English nobles spoke French rather than English for hundreds of years...

RULERS AND REIGNS!

Do you know we have more than 900 stories available in audio, too? Scan the QR code to visit our Storytime Hub...



WEIGHING THE ELEPHANT

One day, a traveller from a distant land arrived in China. He wore richly embroidered robes and had a long and impressive beard!

“Where do you come from, stranger?” asked the harbourmaster.

The traveller smiled and said, “I come from far-off India. My master is a great rajah, and he sent me to give a magnificent gift to your emperor. I need a hundred of your men to help unload it!”

The harbourmaster was very curious. “This gift must be heavy, then!” he replied. “And very valuable!”

Dozens of dockworkers heaved a huge crate off the traveller’s ship and loaded it onto a cart pulled by twenty strong oxen.

A heavy creature was moving around inside the crate, and the harbourmaster saw something snake-like poke out of a hole.





The traveller drove the cart through China. Everywhere he went, people asked him what was in the crate.

He would just smile and say, "It is a surprise for your emperor!"

By the time the man arrived in the capital, the emperor had heard news about him and his enormous gift. The stranger was ushered into the imperial court, where the emperor and his ministers awaited him!

The traveller bowed deeply and said, "My master sent me here with a present, O great emperor!"

Servants opened the crate. The sides fell away to reveal a great grey beast bigger than any the ruler or his ministers had seen before!

"Its legs are as thick as tree trunks!" gasped the emperor.

"The animal's nose looks like a grey snake!" said his wife in surprise.

"Why, those teeth sticking out of its mouth are longer than my arm!" mused a minister.

The stranger laughed. "This precious beast is an *elephant*, and there are many in my country! My master sent it to you, in the hope that you and he might become friends."

The emperor thanked the man for the magnificent gift.

"This is the most interesting present I have ever received!" he said. "I will summon my wisest advisors to study it and work out how much it is worth!"

Messengers were sent out, and soon the cleverest men in China were at the emperor's court, poking and prodding the elephant. ➡



“How can we work out its weight?” asked the emperor. “We must know how heavy it is to measure its value!”

“Oh, that’s simple!” said one scholar as he adjusted his spectacles.

“We need to put it on a scale!”

“But we don’t have a scale big enough!” the emperor protested.

An old sage stroked his beard. “Why don’t we cut the animal up and weigh the bits?”

The emperor was shocked. “Certainly not, that would be wrong! I don’t want to do anything that could harm this incredible animal. Anyway, it would be worthless if it was dead.”

Then they heard a little voice. “I know how to figure it out!”

It was the emperor’s son!

The men in the room turned to the boy with great curiosity.

“What do you suggest?” asked the emperor.

“Easy! Just put it in a boat. The weight of this ‘elephant’ will push it down in the water, and you draw a line on the boat where the water comes up to.”



“But how does that tell us how much it weighs?” asked a sage tetchily.

“Simple!” smiled the boy. “Take the elephant out, and then start putting rocks in the boat. Stop when the boat is as low in the water as it was when the elephant was in it. Weigh the rocks in the boat. They will be as heavy as the elephant!”

“That is an amazing idea!” said the empress, beaming with pride. “You are so clever, my son!”

The scientists did as the boy said and worked out how heavy the animal was. It weighed more than four tons, and the emperor’s advisors concluded that it was very valuable indeed.

But even though the elephant was precious, the most valuable thing of all was the boy’s wisdom! ★

TRY IT!

The method that the emperor’s son described uses something called ‘displacement’. When a boat is in water, its weight pushes water out of the way, or ‘displaces’ it. Figuring out displacement is very important when loading things onto a ship – you don’t want to put too much in and sink it!



THE DOLPHIN

Alidor was a prince, and you might think that this would make him very fortunate indeed. The problem was, his parents had dozens of other sons and daughters as well!

The king and queen were so busy running around after their many children that they didn't pay much attention to young Alidor.

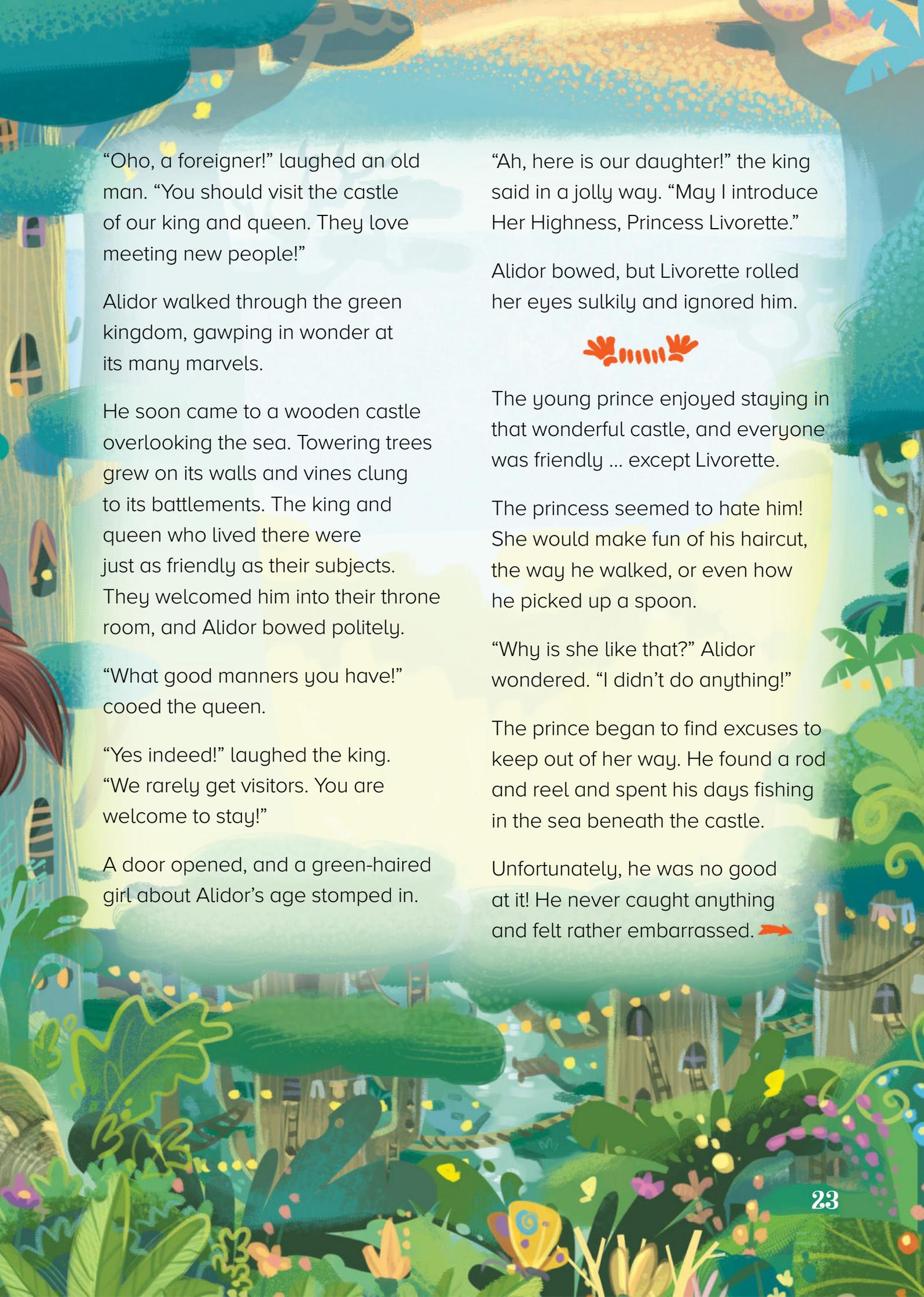
"They just don't have time for me!" he sighed to himself. "I think I'll go and find a new family to live with!"

One night, he packed a few things in his bag and sneaked out of the palace. No one noticed!

He wandered over high mountains, rolling hills and swift rivers until he found a great forest blocking his path. But Alidor had an adventurous spirit! He went into the dark woods, and after a few hours, he came across a village. Mighty tree trunks grew out of the roofs of the buildings, and some people even lived in tree houses high in the branches!

The people who lived there were like any other, except their hair was bright green. They greeted Alidor warmly.





“Oho, a foreigner!” laughed an old man. “You should visit the castle of our king and queen. They love meeting new people!”

Alidor walked through the green kingdom, gawping in wonder at its many marvels.

He soon came to a wooden castle overlooking the sea. Towering trees grew on its walls and vines clung to its battlements. The king and queen who lived there were just as friendly as their subjects. They welcomed him into their throne room, and Alidor bowed politely.

“What good manners you have!” cooed the queen.

“Yes indeed!” laughed the king. “We rarely get visitors. You are welcome to stay!”

A door opened, and a green-haired girl about Alidor’s age stomped in.

“Ah, here is our daughter!” the king said in a jolly way. “May I introduce Her Highness, Princess Livorette.”

Alidor bowed, but Livorette rolled her eyes sulkily and ignored him.



The young prince enjoyed staying in that wonderful castle, and everyone was friendly ... except Livorette.

The princess seemed to hate him! She would make fun of his haircut, the way he walked, or even how he picked up a spoon.

“Why is she like that?” Alidor wondered. “I didn’t do anything!”

The prince began to find excuses to keep out of her way. He found a rod and reel and spent his days fishing in the sea beneath the castle.

Unfortunately, he was no good at it! He never caught anything and felt rather embarrassed. →



“Nothing again?” Princess Livorette would jeer. “You must be the worst fisherman in the world!”

One day, though, when he tossed his hook into the waves, it caught on something. “At last!” he thought.

Alidor began tugging on the line. When his catch came to the surface, the prince discovered that he had hooked a dolphin!

“Ouch!” the animal squealed. “Please take this hook out of my mouth!”

Alidor was surprised to hear it speak, and gently removed the hook.

“I’m so sorry!” he apologised.

“Thank you!” chattered the dolphin. “In return for your kindness, I will grant you a wish!

Alidor thought of how Livorette made fun of him for never catching anything.

“Can you get me some fish so I can impress a girl?”

The dolphin gave a musical squeak, and fish of all kinds leapt out of the water and onto the beach! There were salmon, soles and turbot. Even oysters and scallops in their shells jumped out onto the sand.

Alidor thanked the dolphin before gathering up all the fish in a net and going up to the castle.

Livorette was by the gates when he came in. He grinned as he showed her the silvery fish that filled his net. The princess’s maids giggled, and Livorette was speechless!

The next day, he went down to the seaside to fish again. He sat on a tall rock and cast his line into the rippling waves.

However, the morning calm was interrupted by Livorette’s voice.

“So, this is where you have been hiding!” she shouted. “I bet you didn’t *really* catch all those fish yesterday!”

Princess Livorette’s tirade was interrupted by a loud grinding noise as the rock they were standing on suddenly lifted up. Both of them tumbled to the sand.

They saw that a stone tunnel had opened beneath the high rock, and out came a short and greenish woman whose hair was like seaweed. Her long and ragged robe dragged in the sand.

“Who was making all that racket?” the figure screeched. “It echoed all the way down to my underwater cave and woke me up!”

Livorette picked herself up and brushed sand from her dress. “I am Princess Livorette!” she said proudly. “My father is the king of the Green Realm!”

The old woman cackled. “Is that so? I am the fairy Grognette, and I do not care one bit for royalty. Since you have disturbed me, I will summon a storm which will destroy your land!” The wicked fairy gave a cackle. “It will only stop if your father sends both of you out into the sea!”

Grognette waved her driftwood staff, and a mighty wind began to blow. Leaden clouds gathered, and huge waves pounded upon the rocky shore.

As rain began to fall, Alidor and Livorette fled back to the castle to alert the king.

Gales blew through the forest, sending ancient oaks crashing to the ground. Lightning struck from the dark clouds, setting the woods ablaze. The people of the kingdom were terrified. →



The storm was as fierce as



SPOT IT!

Can you find all
of these things?
Tick them off
when you do!



Answer: There are nine leaves!

the fairy had promised!



How many flying leaves are there in this picture? Write your answer here!

In the castle, the king stared out of the window in despair.

“This storm is destroying my kingdom!” he cried. “Will it ever stop?”

“Dearest Papa,” Livorette sobbed, “this is all my fault! I angered a wicked fairy when I was making fun of Alidor... She summoned this storm as a punishment and will only stop it if this boy and I are sent out to sea to fend for ourselves!”

“Oh, woe!” the king cried. “I cannot do that to you children!”

Livorette spoke solemnly. “You must, papa. There is no other way.”

“I will keep us safe, Your Majesty,” promised Alidor. “I think I know someone who can help us!”

At last, the king decided to have a barrel made of strong wood for them to go to sea in.

“Neither of you can sail a boat, so you might be safer in a barrel,” he said. “It won’t capsize, even in the fiercest storm!”

So, Livorette and Alidor were sealed up in the sturdy wooden barrel, which was hurled into the ocean.

All at once, the storm ceased. The people of the Green Realm celebrated, but they were also worried about Livorette and Alidor, who were lost at sea.

Meanwhile the prince and princess found themselves tossed around in the barrel as it was thrown this way and that by the big ocean waves.



The movement made them feel seasick, but they did their best to cheer each other up. After many hours, the sea became calm.

“Help me get the lid off this barrel, will you?!” Alidor asked. Working together, they pushed the top off and looked around.

“We’re far out at sea!” Livorette wailed. “I can’t see land *anywhere!*”

“Don’t worry, I know someone who can help!” Alidor laughed. “Oh, my dolphin friend! Please come and help us!”

Livorette thought Alidor had gone mad, but then a sleek grey head poked out of the water. It was the dolphin that Alidor had caught the day before!

“Hello, kind human!” it chattered happily. “How can I help you?”

“Can you bring us back to land?” Alidor asked.

The dolphin agreed. Before long, he was nudging the barrel along through the sea, and both children enjoyed the ride as it bobbed up and down in the waves.

When they reached land, Alidor and the princess travelled to the Green Realm, and the king and queen hugged them both.

“I’m sorry I was so mean,” Livorette said to Alidor. “I was jealous about having another child in my castle. You have been kind, and even saved us when we were at sea!”

Alidor accepted her apology. “I know it’s not easy to share,” he laughed, “but it could be nice to have a sibling. The dolphin promised to take us on more adventures if we get along!” ★



THE BRIDGE OF FISHES

The Everlasting White Mountains of Asia were once ruled by a powerful king. He had a beautiful palace and many servants who catered to his every whim.

Among them was a young lady who came from the south. She worked hard every day, mopping the palace floors and chopping vegetables for the king's meals.



But in the evening, she would sit and stare at a distant snow-capped mountain that lay in her homeland.

“Oh, how I miss the Dragon’s Pool high on the mountain’s slopes, and the river that gushes from it!” she sighed as she watched the sun set. “I wish I had a son! One day, he might rule over all the lands that the river flows through!”

As she made this wish, she saw a cloud rise from the mountain. It drifted across the skies, coming closer and closer, until its mists touched the woman’s face.

Then it disappeared.

“What a peculiar thing!” she thought.

Nine months later, the lady had a beautiful baby boy. The king was not happy about this.

“There is no room in my palace for more children!” he complained. “You and the child must go and live above the palace stables instead!”

The little room above the stables was smelly. The neighing of the horses kept the mother and child awake at night.

But the little boy was kind and cheerful. When he was old enough, he helped to care for the animals.

He groomed and fed the horses and gently trained the young colts to be ridden. The king was pleased!

“Your son has a special way with beasts,” he told the mother. “I will make him the Master of the Royal Stables, and he shall be educated with my own sons!”

The servant’s son was taught writing, painting, poetry and archery. He was particularly skilled with a bow and arrow, but would only shoot at targets – never living things. ➡





The boy grew up to be a happy young man who was well liked in court. He was named East Light because of his sunny disposition!

He often went out riding with the king and his lords, and the ruler would boast about his stable master's skill at archery.

The monarch's own sons became jealous of East Light. "Our father likes him better than us!" the princes would grumble to each other.



After some years, the old king passed on, and his eldest son took the throne. On that day, East Light's mother came to his room.

"The new king is jealous of you – I heard a rumour that he will have you arrested!" she whispered. "You must go!"

East Light summoned his three closest friends. They saddled

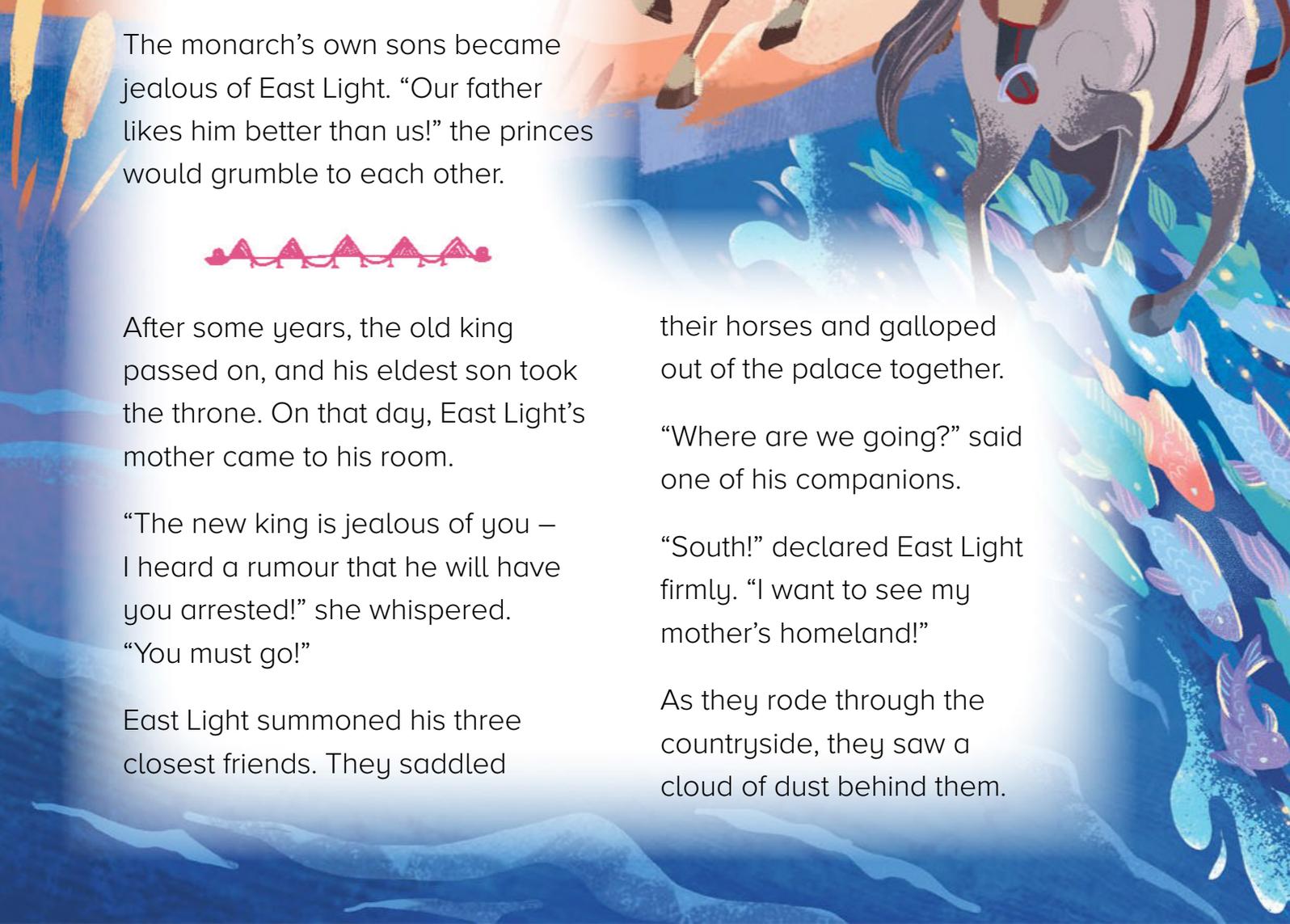


their horses and galloped out of the palace together.

"Where are we going?" said one of his companions.

"South!" declared East Light firmly. "I want to see my mother's homeland!"

As they rode through the countryside, they saw a cloud of dust behind them.



Sunlight glinted off metal helmets and the points of spears.

“The king’s soldiers are after us!” gasped one of East Light’s friends.

The four companions kept riding until they found themselves trapped by the curve of a swift-flowing river.

“There is no bridge!” said one.

“It is far too deep to cross!” fretted another as he stared into the water.

But East Light did not panic. He felt the warmth of the sun on his face, and he thought he heard a voice telling him what he must do.

With a dreamlike smile, East Light pulled one arrow after another from his quiver and shot them into the river. They disappeared beneath the surface with barely a ripple.

“What are you doing?” yelled one of his friends. “We are about to be

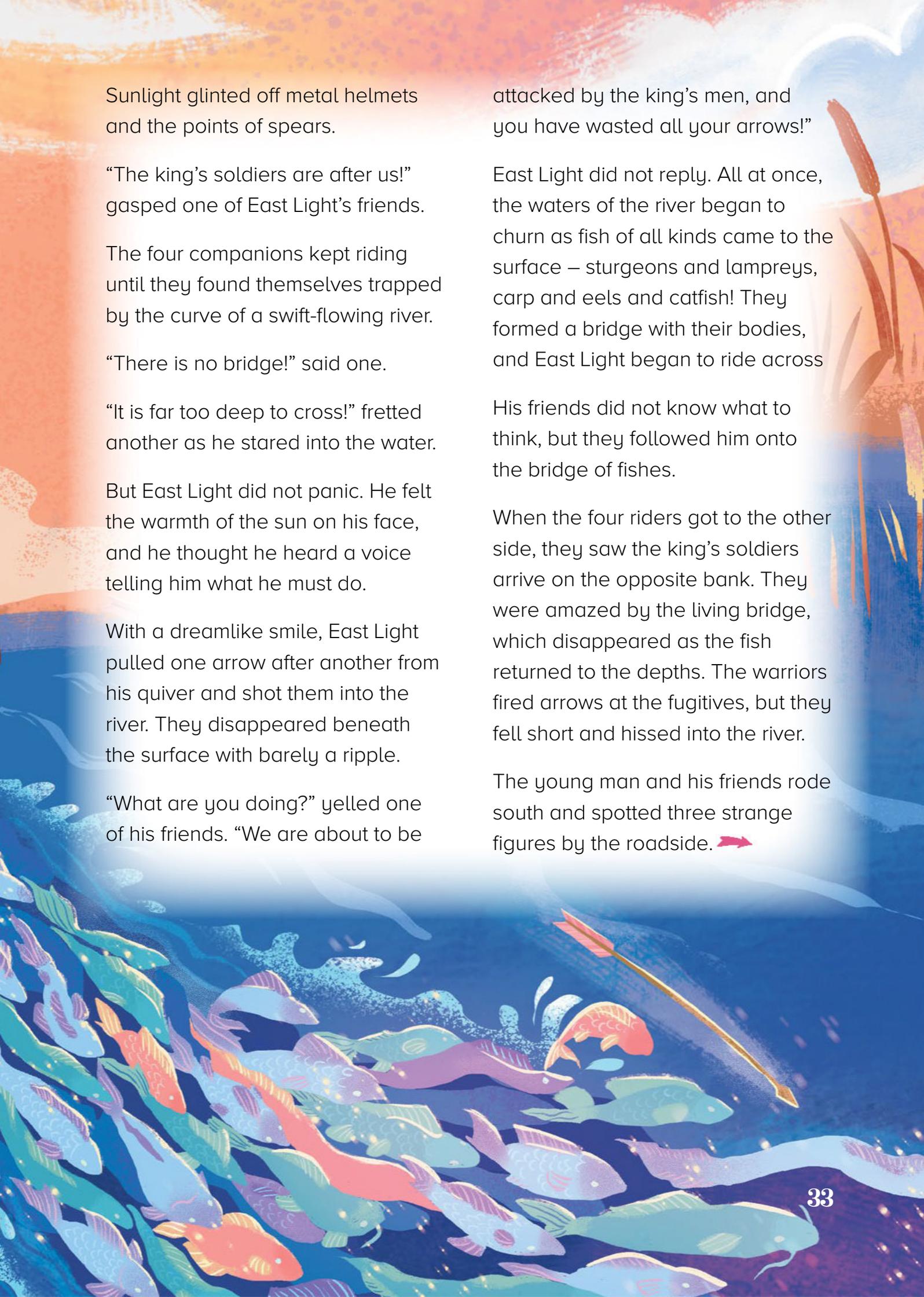
attacked by the king’s men, and you have wasted all your arrows!”

East Light did not reply. All at once, the waters of the river began to churn as fish of all kinds came to the surface – sturgeons and lampreys, carp and eels and catfish! They formed a bridge with their bodies, and East Light began to ride across

His friends did not know what to think, but they followed him onto the bridge of fishes.

When the four riders got to the other side, they saw the king’s soldiers arrive on the opposite bank. They were amazed by the living bridge, which disappeared as the fish returned to the depths. The warriors fired arrows at the fugitives, but they fell short and hissed into the river.

The young man and his friends rode south and spotted three strange figures by the roadside. ➡



One was dressed in clothes made of seaweed, because he was the chief of the hunters and fishermen who lived in that country. The second wore a tunic of hemp, and he represented the farmers. The third wore a silk robe – he was first among the nation’s nobles.

“Greetings, O East Light!” they called. “We have been waiting for you – will you become the king of this land?”

The men showed East Light and his friends the wonders of their country. There were green fields where wheat, rice, millet, beans and sugar cane grew plentifully. The folk they met were brave and courteous, and skilled riders and archers too.

The people invited the visitors to a great feast in their capital city, where food was served on beautiful plates and eaten with chopsticks. East Light was impressed.

“You are admirable folk,” he said, “and I would be honoured to be your ruler!”

The people cheered, and East Light was crowned as their king. His mother’s wish had come true!

He introduced fair laws and showed his people new ways of cooking and building houses. He even changed their hairstyles, for he introduced the wearing of the topknot!

His kingdom became known as Joseon, or Land of the Morning Calm. One day, it would become part of the country of Korea. ★



HER MOTHER'S DAUGHTER

This is a story about a girl who had several names. Her parents called her Joan – but when she got to kindergarten, there were too many Joans in her class! The teacher called her by her second name: Ruth.

Her family had their own nickname for her. When she was a baby, she kicked so much that they called her 'Kiki'!

Kiki's father, Nathan, was a kind man who worked for his family's business. Her mum, Celia, was clever and loving... but wasn't afraid of being strict if necessary!

They lived in Flatbush, New York, in the same house as her uncle and aunt. They were one of many Jewish families who lived in that area.

The street was a playground for the neighbourhood children. After their homework was done, they would run outside and play giant steps, jump rope, jacks or marbles. It was a lively place, and Kiki and the other kids would make up new games and talk about the brilliant things they wanted to do in the future. ➡



Kiki's mother was happy for her to play, but she also knew that studying was important.

"I didn't have the chance to go to college" she said one day. "You're a smart girl, and you should *definitely* go!"

Celia shared her love for reading with Kiki. One of the girl's favourite things was curling up in her mother's lap while she read tales about Winnie-the-Pooh! Listening to those stories was like going on a trip to the bear's home in the Hundred Acre Wood.

On Friday afternoons, Celia took Kiki to another magical place – the local library! Inside the covers of the books on the shelves were new worlds waiting to be discovered...

She was inspired by the heroines in her favourite books, who were

smart and strong-willed. Her mum was proud because she knew that good role models were important.

Kiki liked reading *Mary Poppins*, *The Secret Garden*, and *Nobody's Girl*, but *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott was her favourite.

"Jo in the story is just like me," she told Celia seriously. "She's smart and wants to do well, no matter what gets in her way!"

In books about Greek mythology, Kiki discovered Athena, who was a brave warrior and the goddess of wisdom and justice.

She also read about the real-life heroine Amelia Earhart, the first woman to fly alone across the Atlantic. If Amelia could soar across an ocean, then what could Kiki do?



Sometimes, Celia and Kiki would go for long walks through the busy streets of New York.

“There are lots of inspiring people in the world!” her mum said as they stared at the Statue of Liberty, which stands on an island off the coast of the city. “Emma Lazarus wrote a poem on that statue, which welcomes immigrants to our country!”

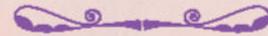
Kiki stared in wonder at the words carved into the bronze plaque:

*Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning
to breathe free.*

As they walked home, they passed some grimy and crumbling apartment buildings.

“Look!” her mother said as she pointed them out to Kiki.

“Many of the poorest people in New York live here. A lady called Lillian Wald visited them and made sure they had the medical care they so badly need. There are many kinds of heroines in real life!”



In summer, New York City became very hot and humid, so Kiki’s parents sent her to a summer camp in the wooded hills north of the city. Camp Che-Na-Wa had lakes and forests and log cabins to stay in. The smell of the trees, the sight of the sparkling lake and the freshness of the breeze made Kiki feel happy inside!

She learned to ride and canoe and water-ski at Che-Na-Wa, and she hung out with other Jewish children. Some of them were refugees from Europe, where they brought serious news about how Adolf Hitler, the new leader of Germany, was oppressing Jews like her. For Kiki, it was upsetting to think that humans could treat each other so badly. ➔





In 1942, the USA entered World War II against Germany and Japan. It was the most devastating conflict the world had ever seen. Kiki's older cousin Seymour joined the army, and Kiki kept track of the war's progress in the newspapers. People in Europe and all over the world were suffering terribly. Would her dear cousin be all right?

The answer came in 1945, when the USA used atomic bombs on Japan. The country surrendered and the war was over.

Kiki believed that the best way to prevent another war was through international cooperation and understanding. When she was thirteen, she wrote an article about the five documents that had helped humankind the most. The fifth one was the charter of the United Nations, which was set up so that countries could resolve their arguments by discussion and compromise instead of fighting.



When she got to high school, Kiki studied extra-hard because she wanted to get into a good university. But that didn't stop her from going out with friends or doing baton-twirling routines at school football games!





Kiki got excellent marks, and her counsellor told her that she would be accepted by many universities. Kiki's dream was to go to Cornell, where her uncle had studied. She sent off her application... and waited.

Then, one day, a letter arrived for Kiki. She burst into her mother's room, waving a piece of paper in the air.

“MUM! I got accepted into Cornell – and they're giving me a scholarship to help pay for it!”

Celia smiled proudly. She patted her daughter on the hand and said, “You will do great things! Always remember: love learning, care about people, and work hard!”

As she said this, Kiki couldn't help but notice that her mother seemed paler and thinner than usual.

“Mum, are you... sick?” she said, worrying.

Celia gave her a little smile. “Don't be afraid, dear. I'll always be proud of you – and I'll always be with you, no matter what happens!”

When she heard this, Kiki felt better. Her mother's words made her feel strong! She wanted to make the world a fairer place – for her mother, and all the women that would come after her! ✨



WHAT HAPPENED NEXT....

Ruth Bader got a scholarship to study Government at Cornell University and came top in her class. She then earned a degree in Law from Harvard Law School and Columbia University. Despite being one of only nine women in her class of 500, she tied for first place in her class at Columbia Law School.

When she married, she took the name Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

She went on to become a law professor and worked for the American Civil Liberties Union, focusing on women's rights. Ruth fought against gender discrimination in many cases. She then became a judge.

In 1993, Ruth was chosen as a justice of the Supreme Court, the highest court in the United States. She was the second woman (and the first Jewish woman) to serve on the court.

Ruth continued to argue for gender equality and civil rights and against sexism, leaving an indelible mark on legal history. She served for 27 years as a trailblazing jurist, defying stereotypes and breaking down barriers throughout her remarkable career.

THE OPOSSUM AND THE SECRET OF FIRE

This story takes place many hundreds of years ago, when animals could talk and all creatures lived in harmony.

Their ruler was the Great Opossum, who had clever, nimble paws and a fine furry tail. He knew many things, including the secret of turning the sap of the agave plant into a delicious drink called *pulque*.

He shared this treat at a big party, and all the animals of the world were invited.

The buffalo came, and the elk, and the lynx and the prairie dogs. Last of all came the humans, who at that time did not rule the Earth, but lived in nature like all the other animals.

On that day, the Great Opossum noticed that the humans looked ill.

“Why are you sniffing and sneezing?” the animal asked.



“It’s winter, and the wind is terribly cold!” the oldest human replied, shivering. “We aren’t lucky enough to have warm fur like other beasts. Could you get fire from the sun to keep us warm?”

The Great Opossum frowned. “But I thought you already *had* fire. Didn’t you find a flame when lightning struck a tree in the forest?”

The humans looked embarrassed. “Well, one night we all fell asleep... and when we awoke, the fire had gone out! We don’t know how to start it again,” admitted a little girl.

The Great Opossum knew that going on a quest for fire would be difficult and dangerous, but he wanted to help the poor humans.

“I will get fire for you,” he told the grateful people, “but you must use it responsibly!”

The Great Opossum prepared for his journey. He took his bedroll and cornbread and several gourds of his finest pulque!

When he was ready, he set off westwards, to where the sun went beneath the Earth each night.

The journey took him many days. He crossed mountains and rivers and swamps.

At long last, the Great Opossum came to a huge cave. This was where the sun went after it set. He waited until evening. ➔



The fiery ball came down from the skies and entered the cavern.

The Great Opossum knew that this was the entrance to the underworld. It was a dark and gloomy place inhabited by spirits.

When the Great Opossum sneaked up to the cave and peeked inside, he heard a frightening growl. It was Xolotl, the dog-headed guardian of the underworld.

“I smell something!” snarled Xolotl.
“Who’s there?”

The Great Opossum stayed perfectly still. Xolotl sniffed around a bit before giving up and going back into the underworld.

The Great Opossum sneaked past him, using his nimble paws and tail to scramble over rocks and roots. He travelled deeper into the underworld, following the sun.

After many hours, the Great Opossum entered a vast chamber. There he found the sun, which was hovering in the air. A fire god was feeding it coal to fuel its flames.

Taking a deep breath, the Great Opossum stepped forward into the light and bowed.

“Greetings!” he said boldly.

The fire god was surprised.

“What brings the Great Opossum to the depths of the underworld? You look too *alive* to be here!”



The opossum laughed. "Yes, I'm perfectly healthy. I just popped in to give you a present!" The creature offered the fire god a gourd of his best pulque.

The god took a big gulp and grinned. "This is *delicious!* Do you have any more in your bag?"

The fire god and the opossum shared many gourds of the tasty drink until the god fell asleep.

That was what the clever creature had been waiting for!

"Now I need a bit of wood to carry fire with!" the Great Opossum said to himself. He looked everywhere, but there was no wood to be found.

"What can I use instead?" wondered the Great Opossum. Then he saw his fine furry tail.

"I must do this for those poor humans!" he gulped as he put its tip into the flames of the sun.

It caught fire, and the Great Opossum sprinted through the dark caverns as fast as he could. At the entrance to the underworld he dodged past Xolotl, who was surprised to see an opossum with his tail on fire.

"Hey, stop!" he barked.

But the Great Opossum kept going. He ran through swamps and across mountains and rivers until he came to the place where the humans lived.

"Here is fire to keep you warm!" he said as he touched his flaming tail to a pile of dry branches. →



The wood began to burn, and the Great Opossum dunked his scorched tail in a cold stream.

The humans were ever so grateful! They huddled around the flames for warmth and dabbed ointment on the opossum's now-hairless tail.

But the Great Opossum's theft had not gone unnoticed! Loud footsteps shook the earth, and humans and animals covered in fear. The fire god and his four brothers had found out about the creature's theft and were determined to punish him.

"Where is the Great Opossum?" bellowed the fire god. Flames blazed in his eyes as he strode up to the humans.

The oldest human pointed a trembling finger at a body that lay by the fire, stiff and still.

"He isn't breathing!" said the fire god as he poked the Great Opossum's body with a stick. "He must have fallen unconscious after stealing fire from the sun!"

"It seems he has been punished already!" the other gods said as they turned and left.

When their footsteps faded into the distance, the Great Opossum shook his head and blinked – opossums know how to 'play dead'!

The humans invited him to sit by the fireside and fed him food cooked over the flames.

"Thank you for your gift!" they said.

"You're welcome!" he replied.

"But remember not to let it go out this time!" ★



STORYTIME PLAYBOX

Add up a duck's bill, work out what clever Knut is saying, create a colourful garden and write an article about someone you admire!

1 PULQUE PARTY!

The Great Opossum had a lovely time drinking pulque with the fire god.

How many gourds of the delicious drink can you spot in this picture?

Write the total here:



A duck and his family stayed at the guesthouse run by the Musicians of Bremen. They stayed for two nights and had breakfast twice. **Help the rooster work out how much the ducks have to pay!**

2 DUCK'S BILL!

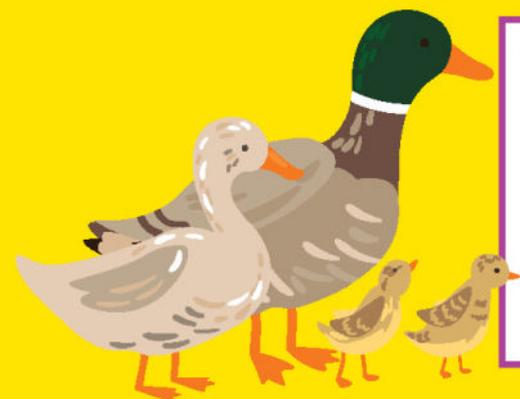
Staying in the guesthouse:

Adult: 3 pennies a night
Child: 2 pennies a night

Breakfast:

Adult: 2 pennies each
Child: 1 penny each

TOTAL BILL



3 CLEVER KNUT

King Knut was a wise ruler, but the letters in his message have been jumbled up... **Can you figure out what he is trying to say?**



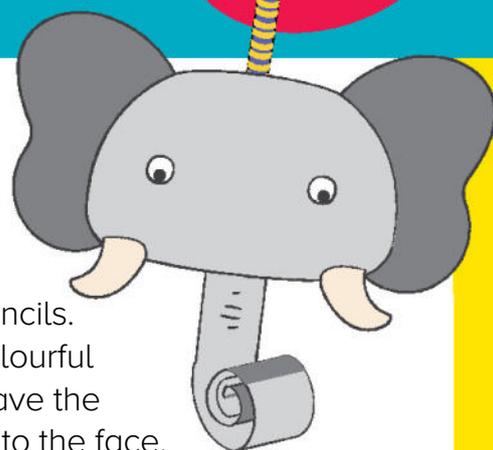
I CONTAN NOLTCOR HET ASE!

4 MAKE AN ELEPHANT!

This big grey beast has a secret: his trunk will stretch out when you blow into it!

ASK A GROWN-UP!

- You will need the elephant head template sheet (download it using the QR code below), coloured felt tip pens or pencils, a glue stick, a paper straw, googly eyes and sticky tape.
- First, print out the template sheet and cut out the head and trunk sections. Colour them in with your felt tips or pencils. They don't have to be grey – your elephant can be as colourful as you like! Colour in the trunk on the side that **doesn't** have the writing and markings on it. Then, stick the googly eyes onto the face.
- Now it's time to fold up the elephant's trunk. Crease along the dotted lines, and then put glue on the areas marked **GLUE**.
- Fold the right section of the trunk over the middle section. Then, fold the left section on top of the right section and press it down so the glue sticks.
- When the glue on the trunk is dry, tape it onto the back of the elephant's head so most of it sticks below the elephant's face, as shown.
- Put the end of the straw into the trunk's 'pocket' from the top. Stick it in place with tape.
- Flip the elephant head over so it's face-side up. Roll up the elephant's trunk from the end like a party blower!



TIP!

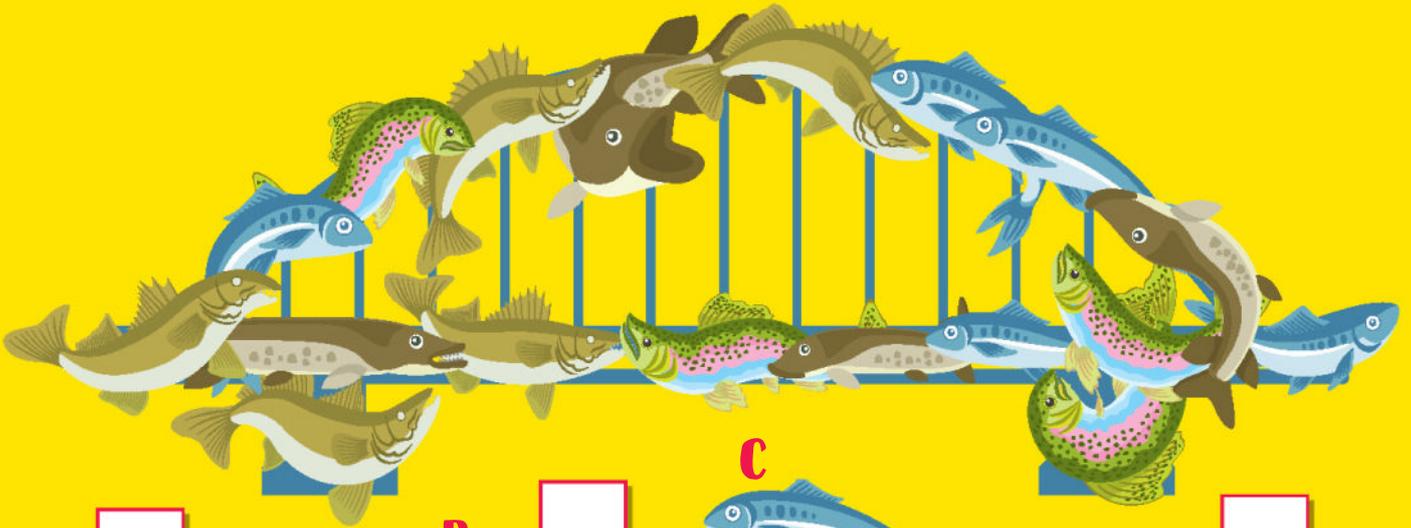
To extend the elephant's trunk, just blow into the straw. Air will fill the trunk, making it stick straight out!



Download here!

5 FISHY FIGURES

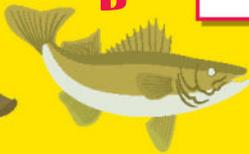
East Light wants to count all the fish on the bridge he rode across! **Count how many there are of each kind of fish** and write in the total number of each in the boxes below!



A



B



C

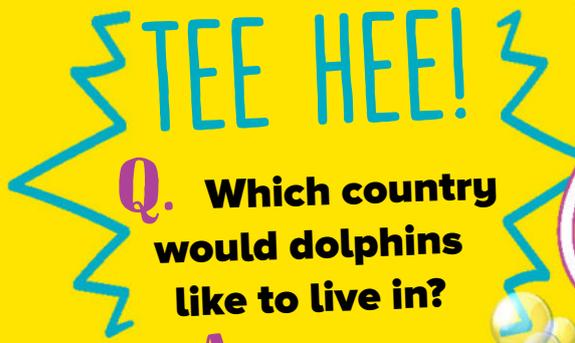
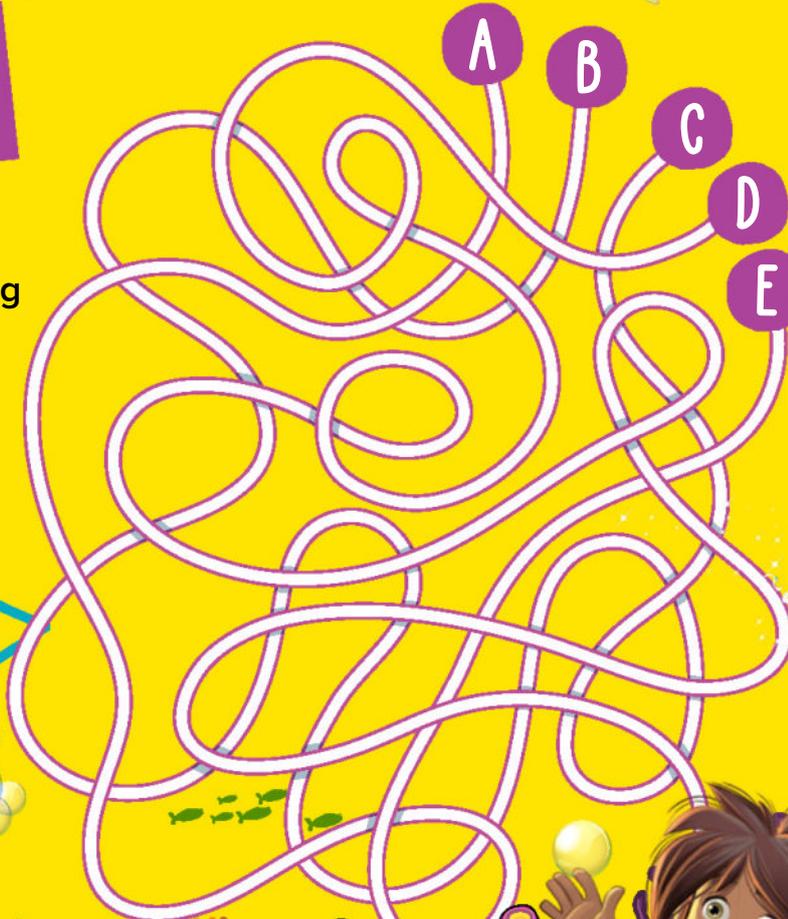


D



6 SEARCH AT SEA

The dolphin has heard Alidor and Livorette calling for help – but **which one of these paths** will lead him to them?



Q. Which country would dolphins like to live in?

A. Finland!



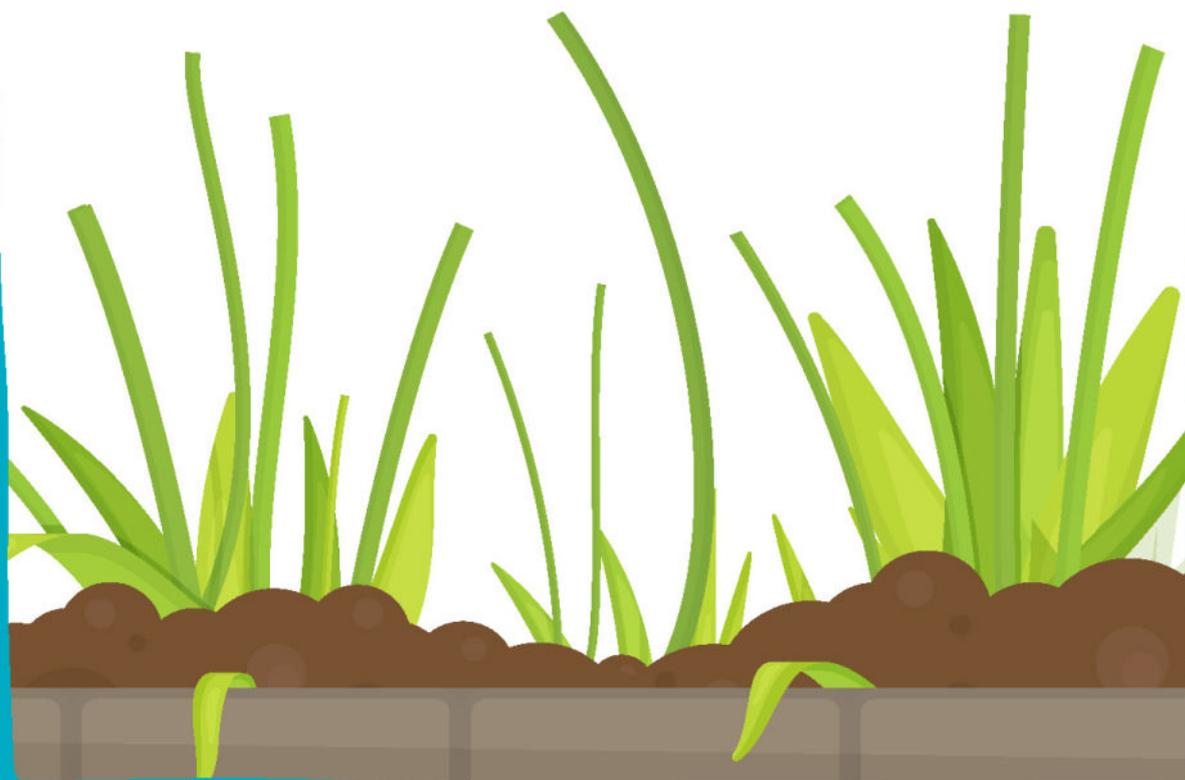
7

COMPLETE MY GARDEN

The 'Mulch Fairy' liked planting trees, but now she would love to see her garden blossom! **You can complete this image by drawing as many flowers as you like**, or download and colour in the flowers we have at this link! The most important thing is to make it colourful and truly special...



Download here!





DRAW A HEADLINE HERO!

Ruth Bader Ginsburg had lots of different heroines when she was growing up... but who inspires *you*? Draw them and write about what makes them awesome on the newspaper page below!

Newspaper Title 	
VOL. 172 - NO. 59	Date:
Headline:	
Picture:	
They inspire me because... _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Picture: EXTRA! EXTRA!
	Fun Fact 

ANSWERS: 1. Pulque Party! – there are 11 gourds. 2. Duck's Bill! – The duck has to pay 32 pennies. 3. Clever Knut – I CANNOT CONTROL THE SEA! 5. Fishy Figures – A, 4, B, 5, C, 5, D, 4. 6. Search at Sea – D.

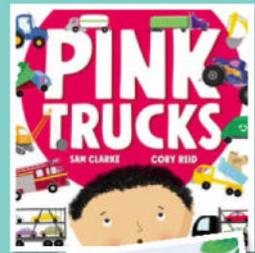
STORY MAGIC

BRILLIANT PICTURE BOOKS!

➔ **PINK TRUCKS** by Sam Clarke, illustrated by Cory Reid (Five Quills) is about a boy called Stink, who *really* likes trucks. But why can't he get a *pink* one? The book has a fun, dynamic layout and bright and cheerful illustrations which are very appropriate for a book that questions unspoken gender rules about colours!

➔ **BILLIE'S BUZZ** by Alison Brown (Farshore) stars a plucky little insect who is determined to win a pet contest. However, Billie is worried that people might not like her if they find out that she is... a bee! The artwork is charming and humorous, and the story itself has a touching message about being accepted for who you are.

➔ **PERLA THE MIGHTY DOG** by Isabel Allende, illustrated by Sandy Rodríguez (Bloomsbury) tells us his own tale in this gorgeously illustrated book (with a little help from his mum, who happens to be a famous novelist and poet). Readers will fall in love with this story... and Perla as well!



* 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.

STORY CLUB

FAIRY TALE BINGO!

Bingo is a fun game where players cross off items on a card – the first one to cross them ALL off is the winner. In this version, you play it while being read fairy tales!

GATHER YOUR FRIENDS!

To play, you need 2-4 players, one 'caller' who will read the stories, three fairy tales (which you can find in issues of **Storytime**) and a Fairy Tale Bingo card and pencil for each player.

You can download a sheet with four bingo cards on it using the QR code on the right. Print out the sheet and cut out the cards with a pair of scissors.

HOW TO PLAY:

Once all the players have their bingo cards and pencils, the caller starts reading a story. If the story mentions one of the things on your card, cross it out. When all the things on the card have been crossed out, shout 'BINGO!' If nobody has 'bingo' after the first story is finished, the caller begins reading the next story and the game continues.

Scan this QR code

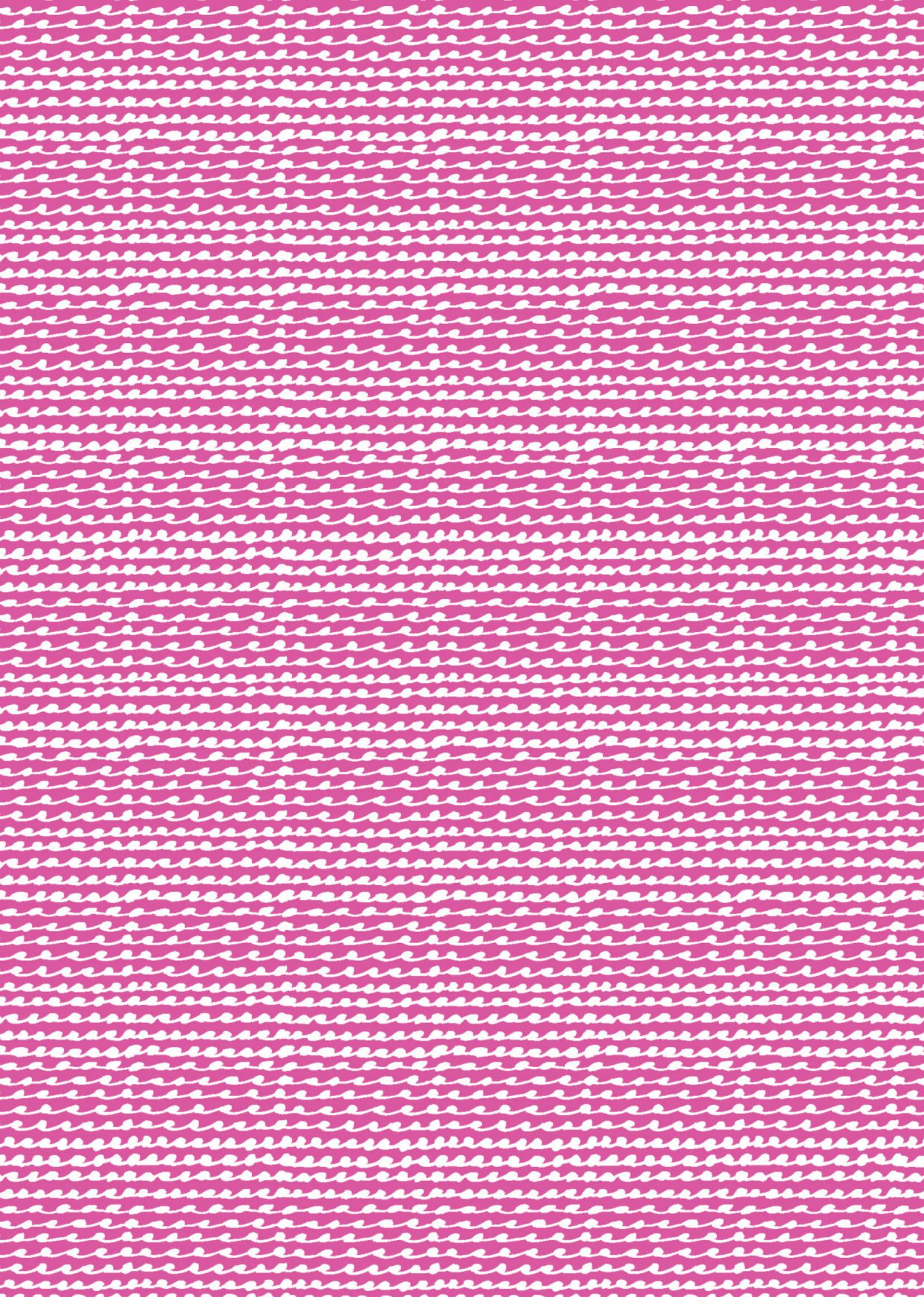
to download a set of Fairy Tale Bingo cards.



Next month, tell a tale with fun finger puppets!

Until then, enjoy the magic of stories, club members!





✓ READING ✓ COMPREHENSION ✓ WRITING SUPPORTS THE ENGLISH NATIONAL CURRICULUM

DIVE INTO AN OCEAN OF STORIES!

**100%
PLASTIC
FREE!**



SCAN THIS CODE FOR
FUN AND ACTIVITIES!



NEXT MONTH:
**YEMAYA
THE OCEAN
MOTHER**

