



# English Language Arts

## Grade K

10-15 minutes  
per day

Listen and Learn

# Identifying Characters



A **character** is a person or an animal in a story.

When you are reading or listening to a story, ask:

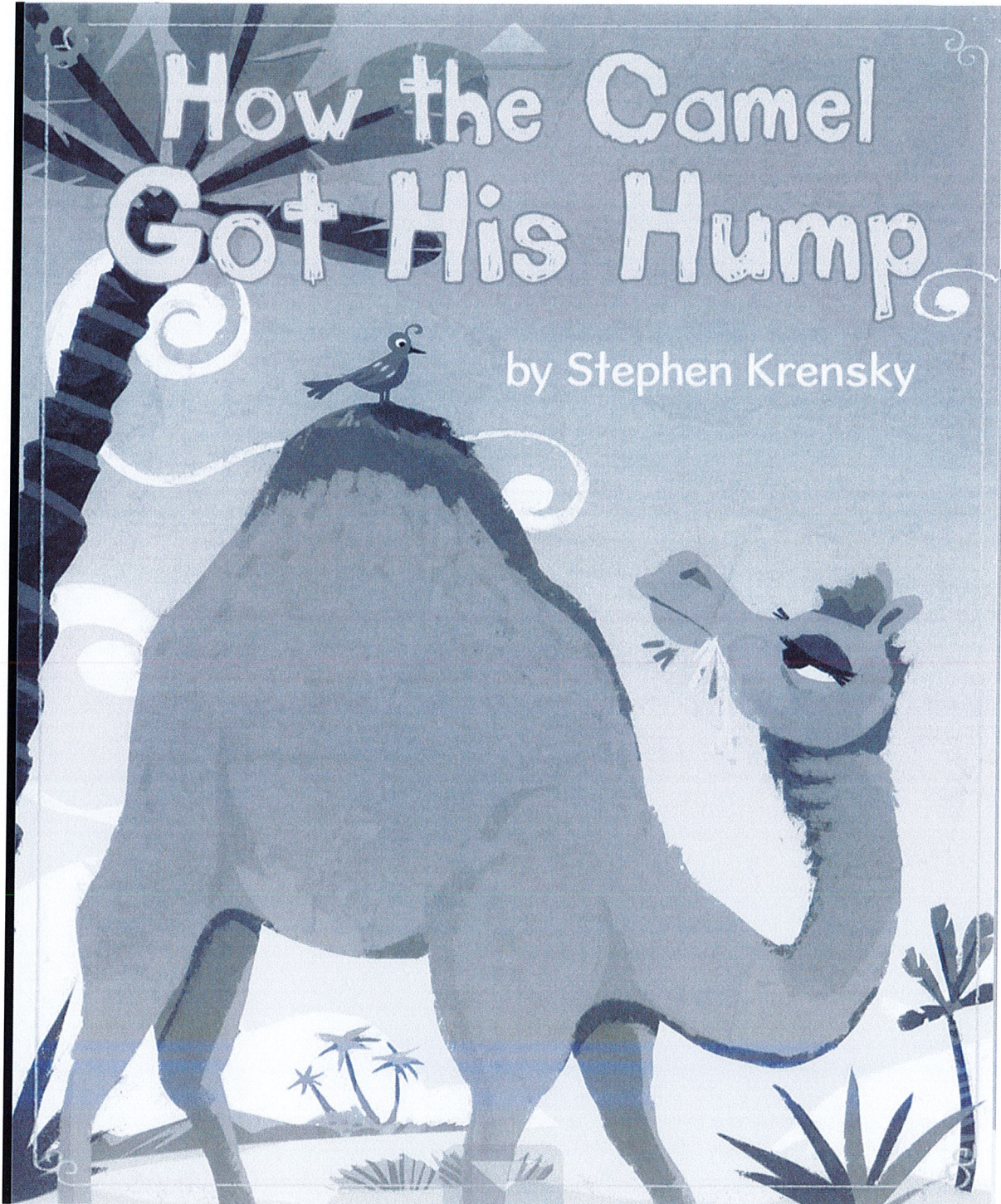
- What do the characters say?
- What do the characters do?
- How do the characters feel?

Asking questions about characters helps you understand the story.

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Part 1: Introduction • Lesson 2 41



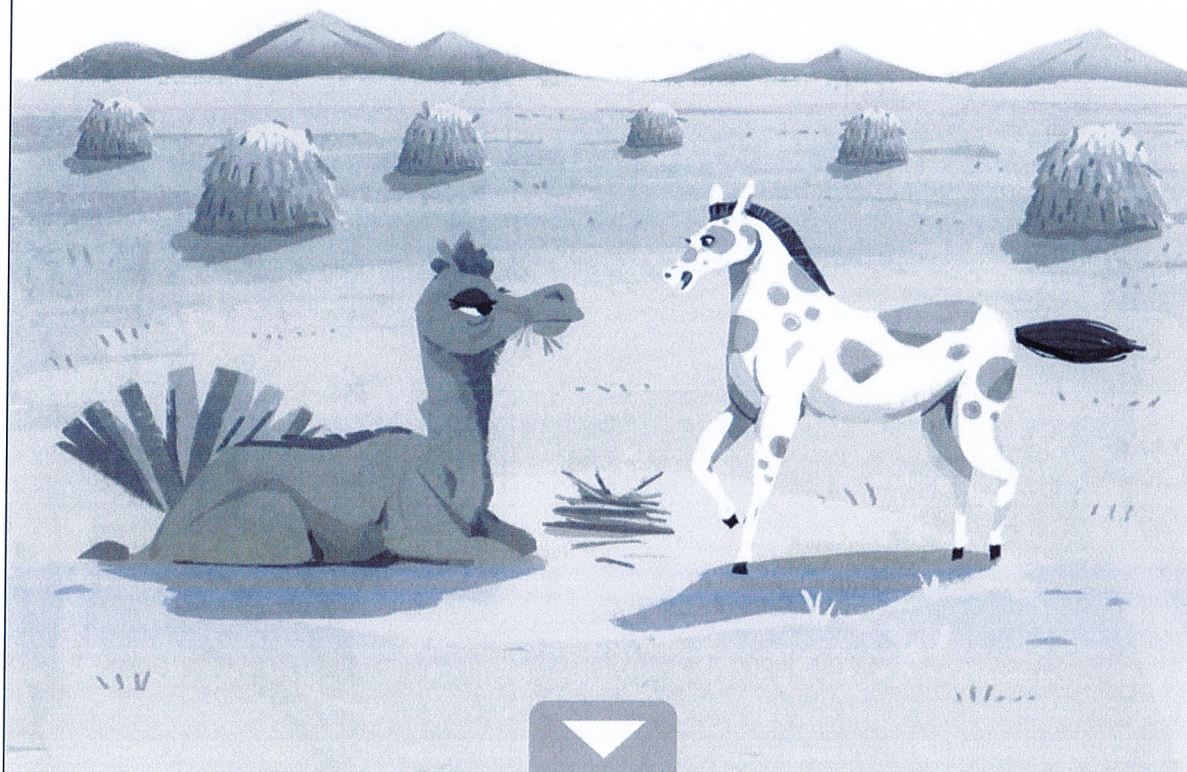




There was once a lazy camel that lived near the desert. He did not live alone.

“Help us **gather** the hay,” said a horse. “If we wait too long, the wind will blow it away.”

“Humph!” said the camel. He did nothing.





“Help us **collect** sticks for the fire,” said a dog. “Cold nights are coming.”

“Humph!” the camel said again.

“Help us plow the field,” said an ox. “We need to grow food.”

“Humph!” said the camel. He did nothing.







The next day, a genie came. He said, "I feel something is wrong. What is it?"

"The camel doesn't help," said the horse.

"We do all the work," said the dog.

The ox nodded. "He just stands around."

The genie said, "Let's see about that."







Then the genie appeared next to the camel.

“You need to change your ways,” he said.

“Humph!” said the camel.







“Is ‘humph’ all you can say?” the genie asked.

“Humph! Humph! Humph!”

“Very well. I will give you a ‘humph’ that you will always remember!” the genie yelled.







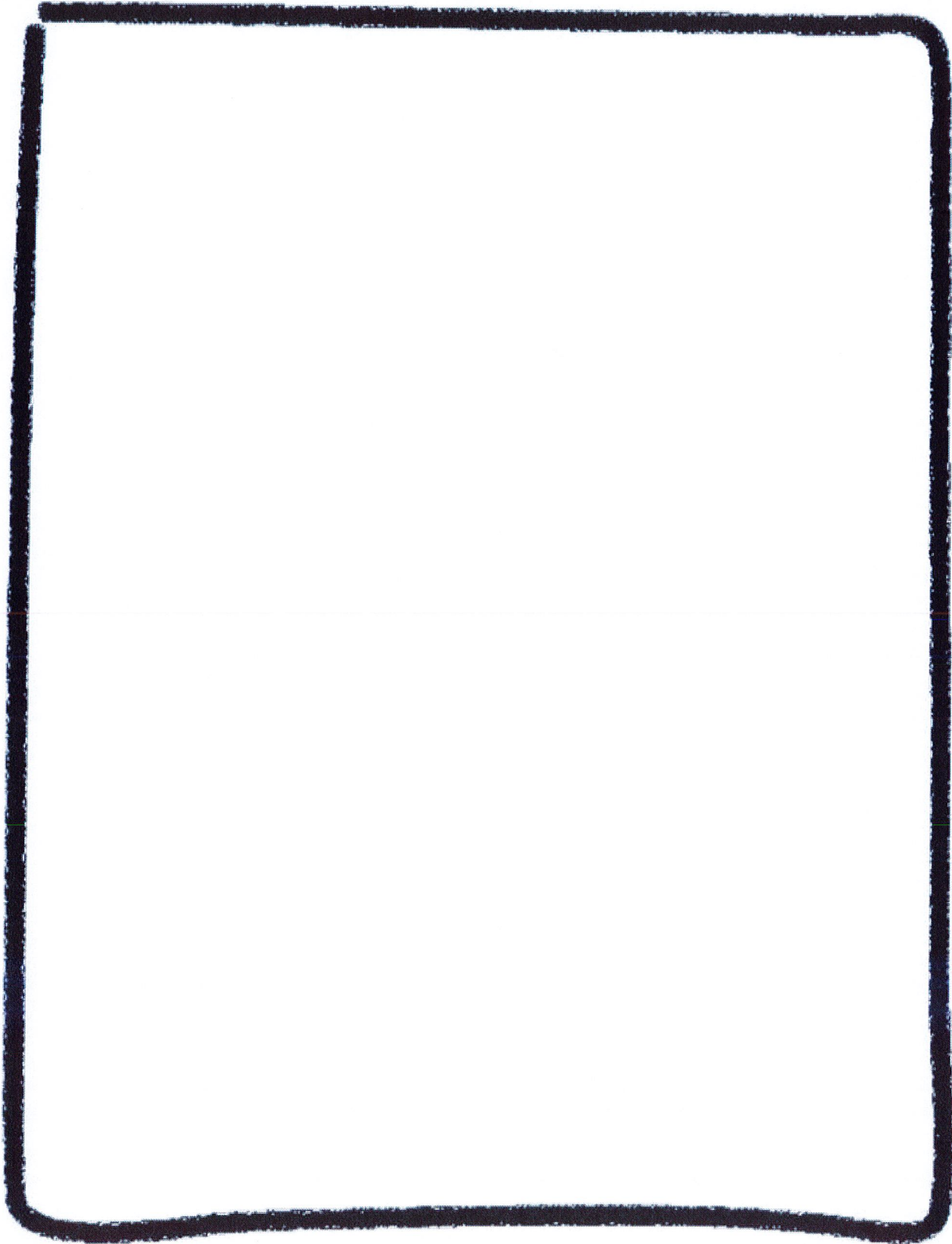
The genie waved his arms. The camel's back began to puff up. Soon, a big "humph," or hump, stuck out.

"From now on, your hump will remind you of one thing," the genie said. "You care only for yourself."

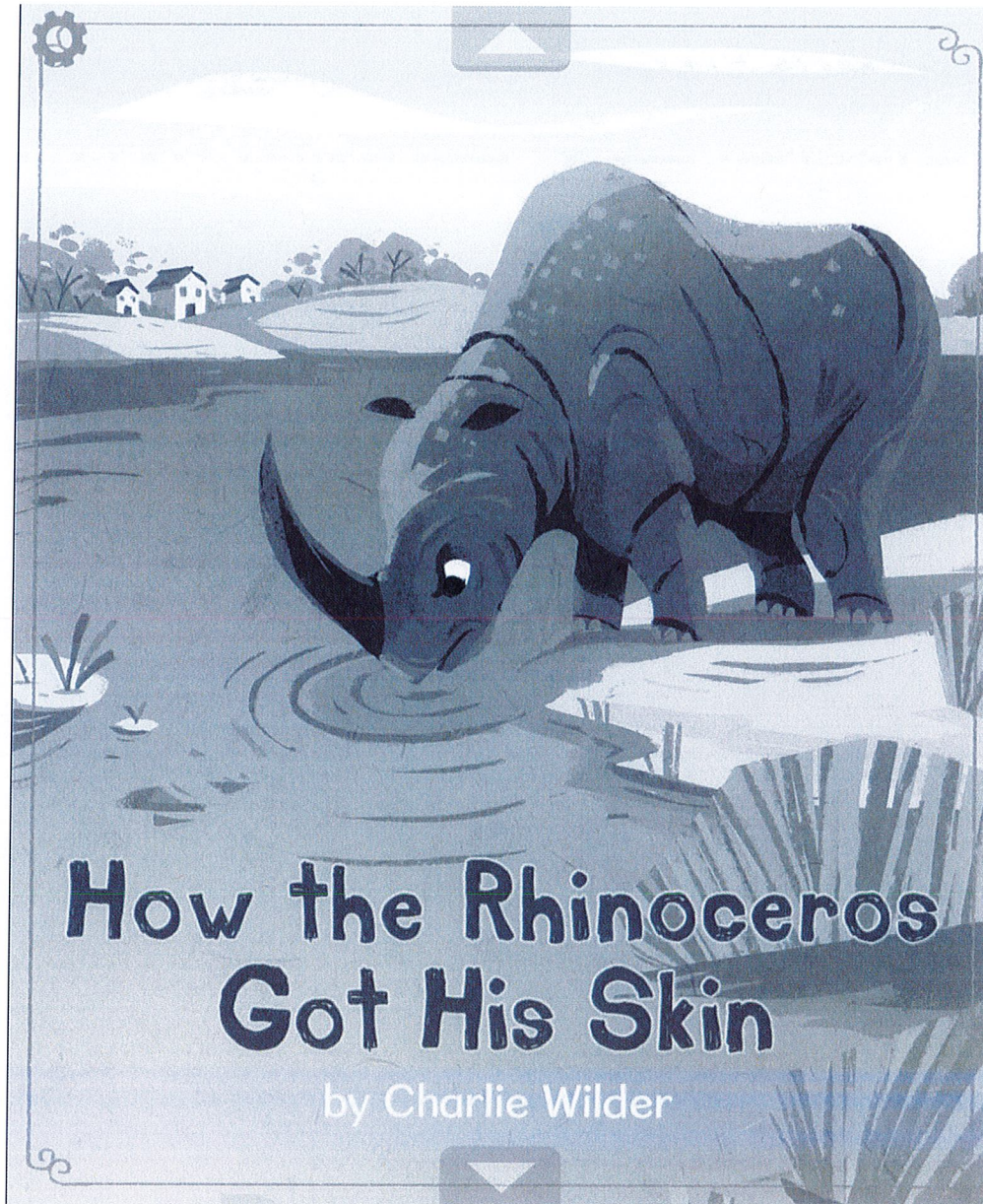
And camels have had humps ever since.



 Draw the main character.











One day a baker made a plum cake. "I'm so happy!" he cried. "It's perfect!"

But just then, a rhinoceros came along. He was big and did whatever he wanted. So he gobbled up the cake and moved on.

Only a few crumbs were left.





“You destroyed my perfect cake!” the baker shouted after him. “You will pay!”

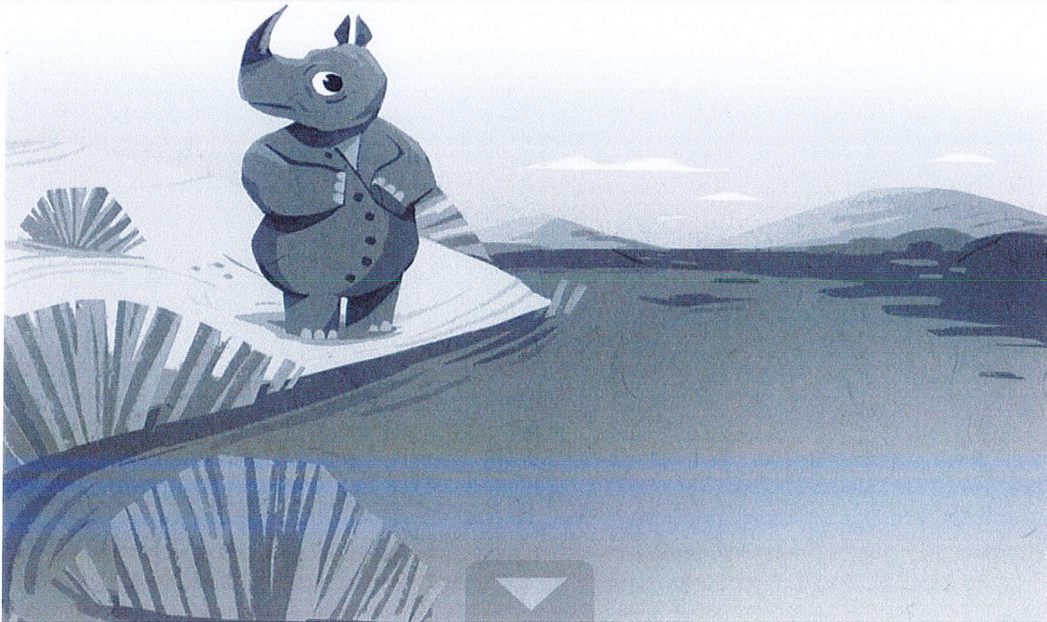






The next morning was hot, and the rhinoceros went down to the river. In those days, rhinos had **smooth** skin with buttons.

The rhino undid the buttons and took off his skin. Then he went swimming.







The baker saw the rhinoceros's skin lying on the ground.

"Hee, hee!" he laughed. He had an idea.

The baker gathered the cake crumbs from the perfect plum cake. He dropped them inside the rhino's smooth skin.





When the rhino came out of the river, he put his skin back on. His skin tickled. And it itched!

The rhinoceros rolled around. He rubbed against a tree. His skin got rumped and wrinkled.

But the itching did not stop.







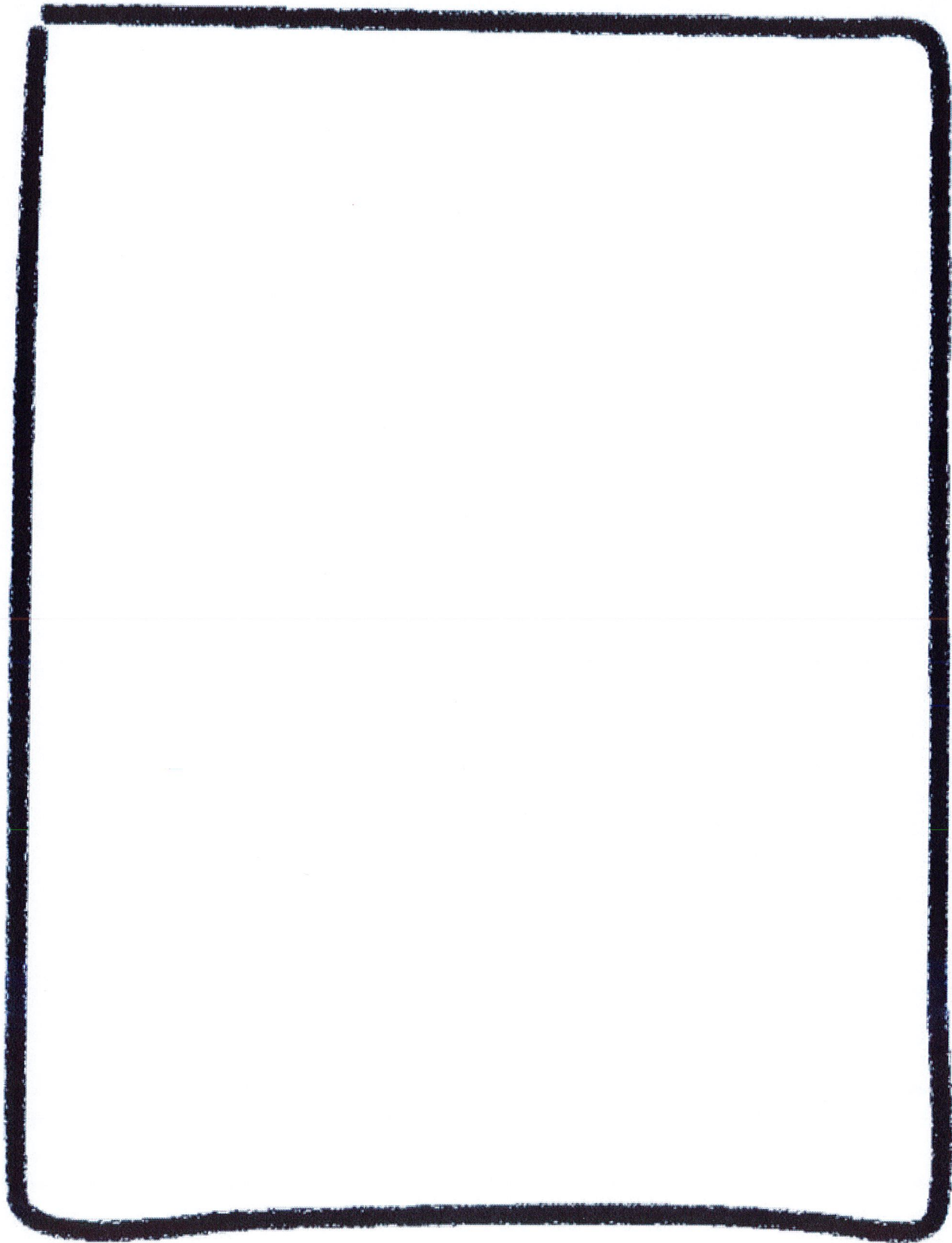
Soon, his rubbing broke off the buttons.  
The rhinoceros couldn't take off his skin  
anymore.

From that day on, every rhinoceros has  
had folds in its skin – and a bad temper, too.





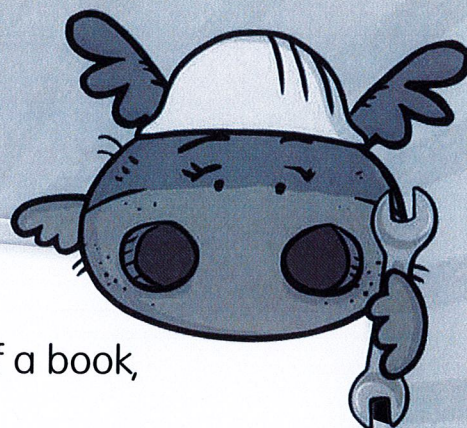
Draw or Write: What does the main character do?





## Listen and Learn

# Main Topic



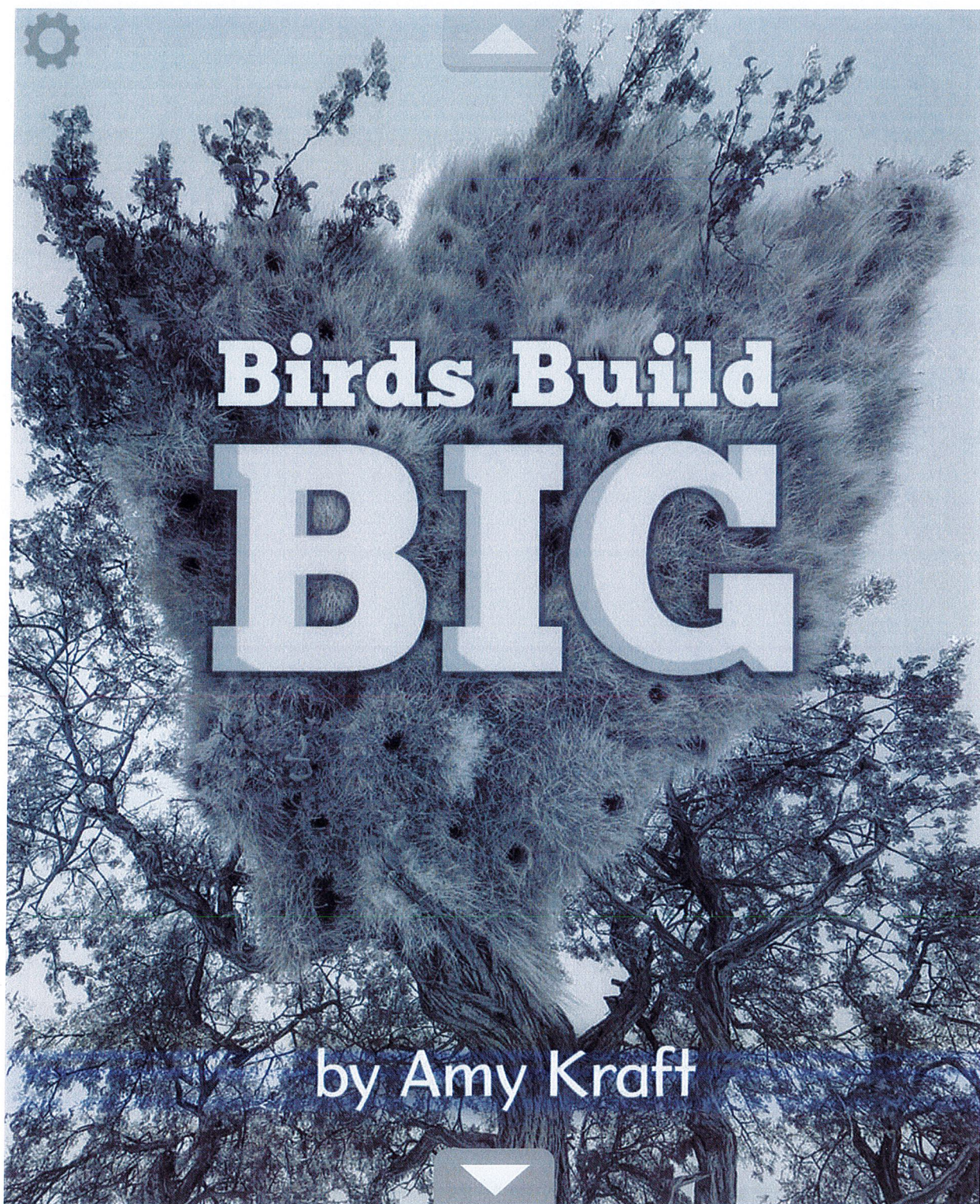
The **main topic** is what a book, or part of a book, is all about.

When you are reading or listening to an information book, ask:

- What is this book all about?
- What are the key details?

The main topic is what the key details are all about.









Have you ever  
been in an  
apartment building?  
It is a big building  
with many small  
homes inside it.



apartment building

Some birds  
make nests this  
way, too. They are  
called weaver birds.



weaver bird nest





Weaver birds live in the **desert** in Africa. These little birds build BIG nests. More than 400 birds might live in one nest!

Each bird family has its own room. The birds make tunnels to connect the rooms. The nest is like an apartment building.



This nest has many small rooms inside it.







Weaver birds work together. They use straw to make a nest. The birds stuff straw into the sides and bottom of the nest. This makes the nest bigger.

The birds work on a nest for years. One nest might be as big as your classroom!



Many weaver birds work together on a nest.







A big nest **protects** weaver birds and their eggs. Snakes and hawks want to eat the eggs. The sharp, spiky straw in the big nest keeps them away.



The spiky straw keeps the snake out.

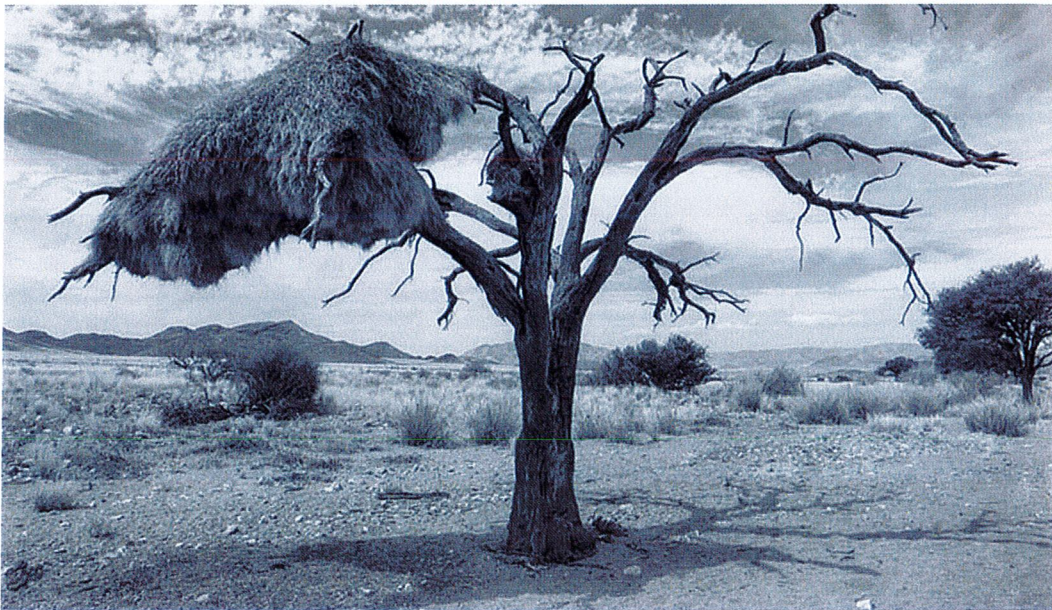






The big nest makes shade that keeps the birds cool. Feathers and grass in each room keep the birds warm. Rain runs off the **slanted** roof. The birds stay dry.

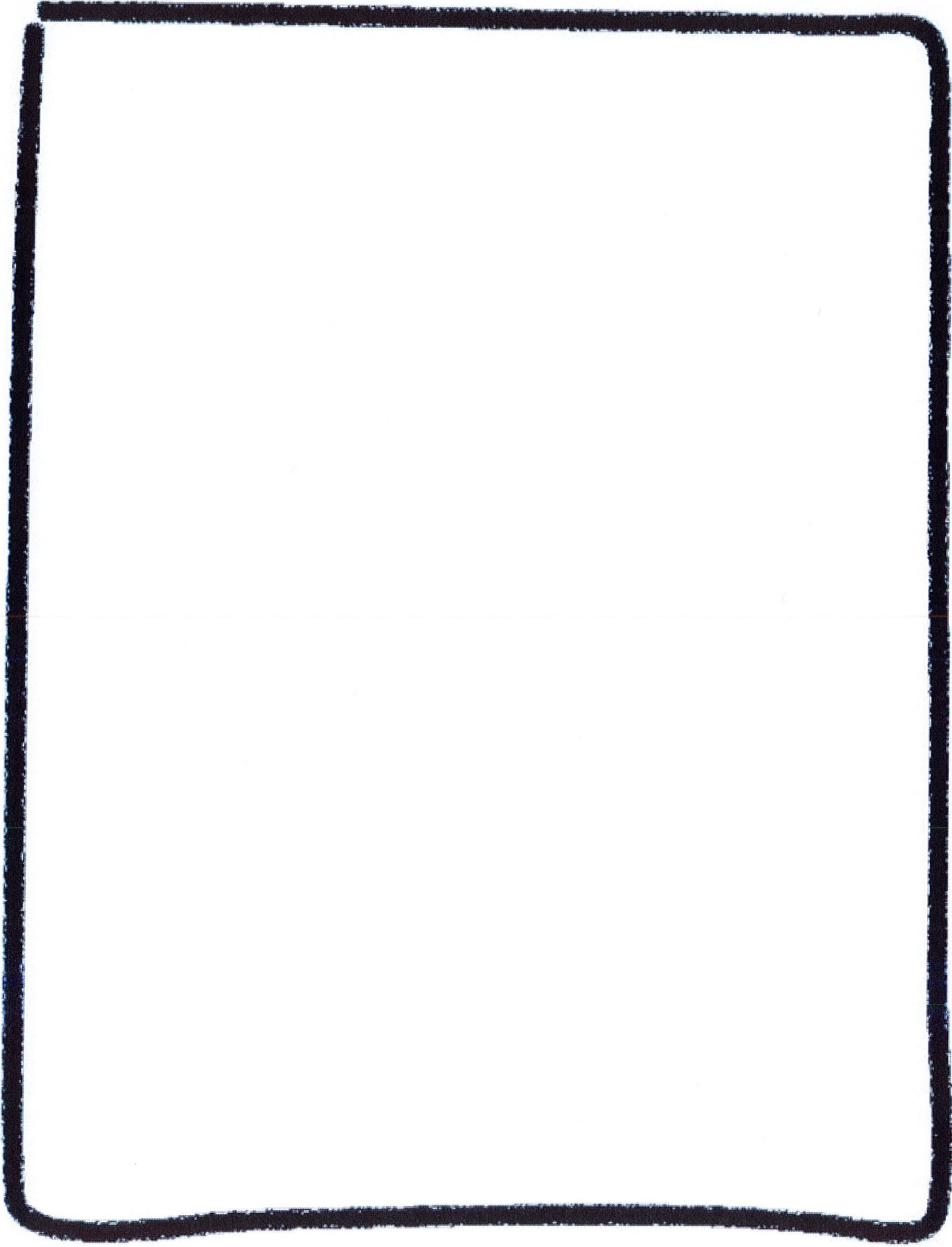
Weaver birds know how to work and live together. They know how to build big.



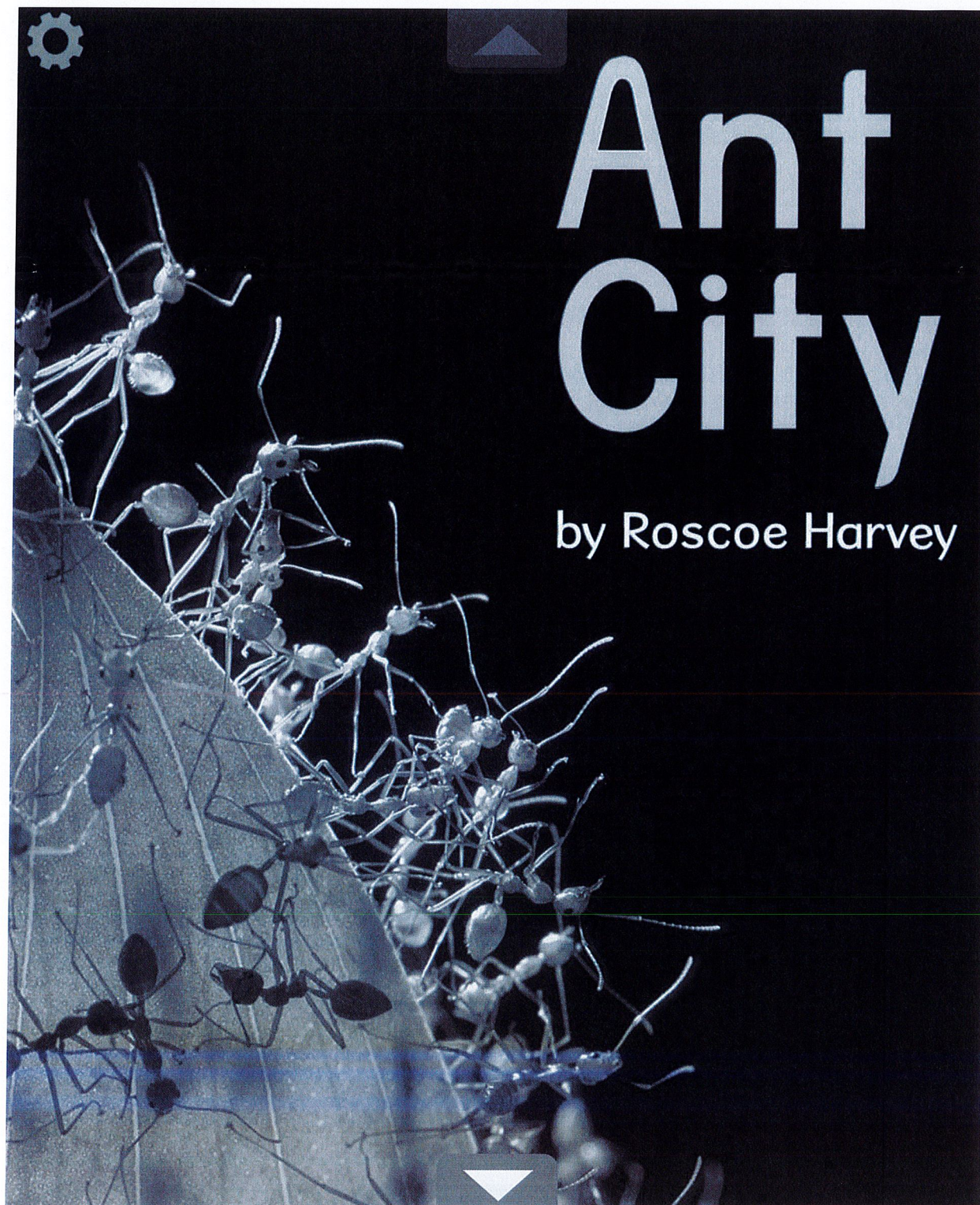
A big nest protects weaver birds.



 **Draw or Write: What is the story about?**











Would you look down or up to find a city of ants? In the **rainforest**, look up. An ant city might be in the trees!

Weaver ants build nests in trees. A nest can be as big as a soccer ball. An ant city might have 100 nests. A half million tiny weaver ants might live there.



There are two weaver ant nests in this tree.

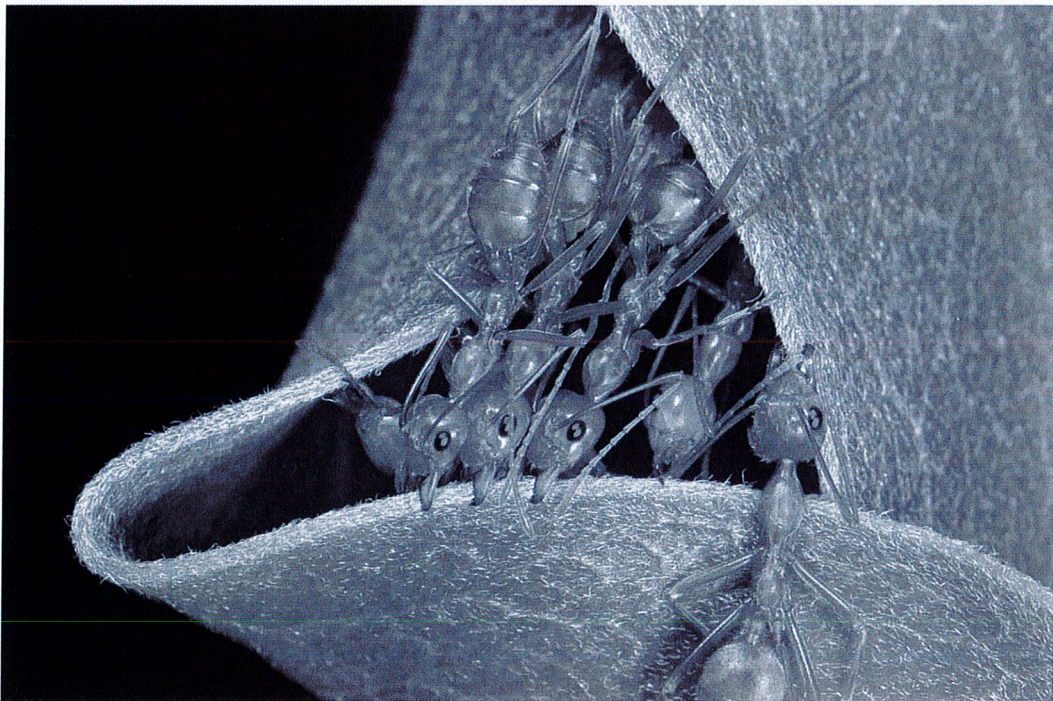






Weaver ants work in teams to build nests. The worker ants pull leaves together.

They use their mouths and legs. The ants are strong.



A team of ants works together.

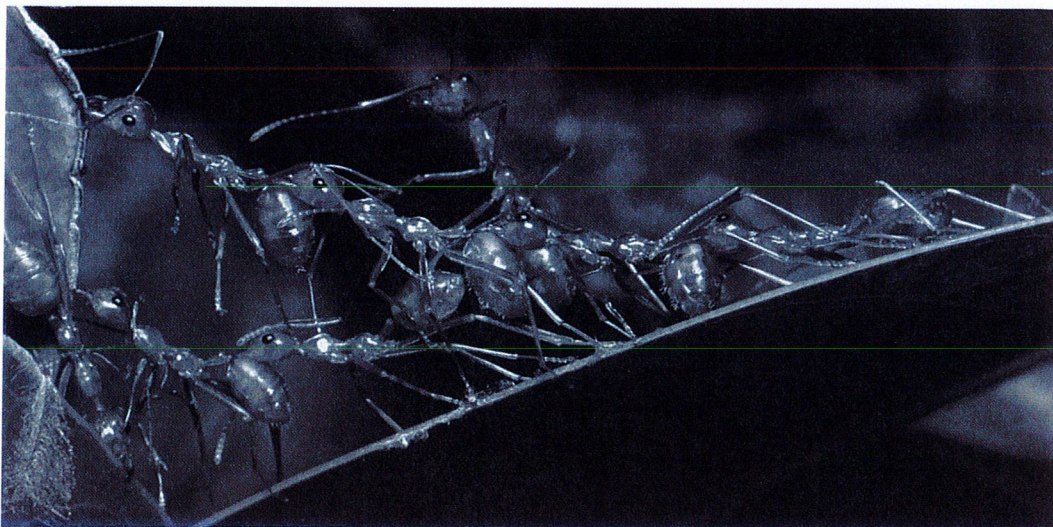






If a leaf is too far away, the ants crawl over each other. Each ant grabs the middle of another ant. They hold each other up. It is an ant **chain**!

More ants go across the chain to get to the next leaf. Then the ants pull the two leaves together.



The ants are making an ant chain.

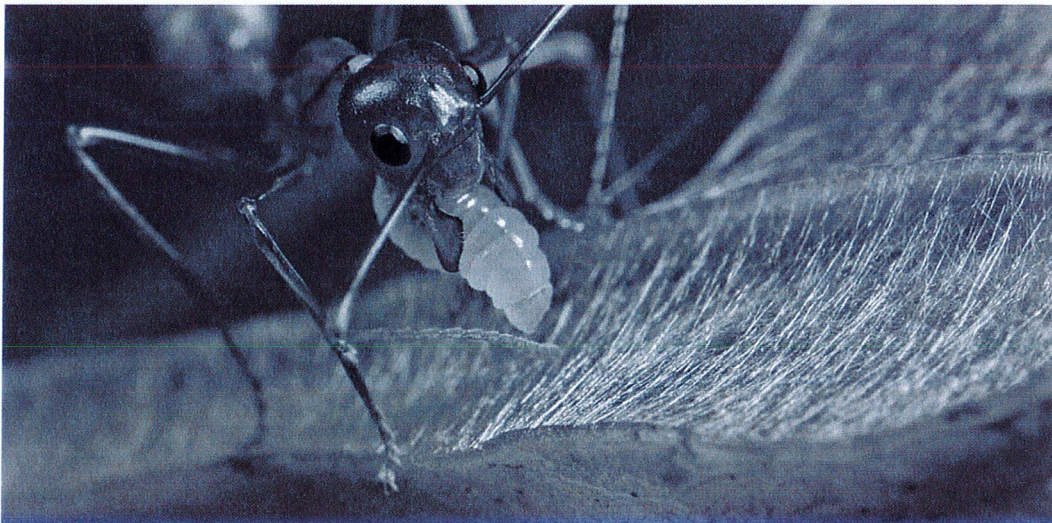






Now the worker ants wait. They need help. Soon other ants come. They bring worms that have hatched from ant eggs.

Each ant taps and squeezes its worm. The worm makes sticky spit. The spit is like glue. It sticks the leaves together. Leaves and spit make a good nest.



An ant squeezes a worm.





Each nest is part of a whole city of ants.  
The ants build an ant city in the trees.

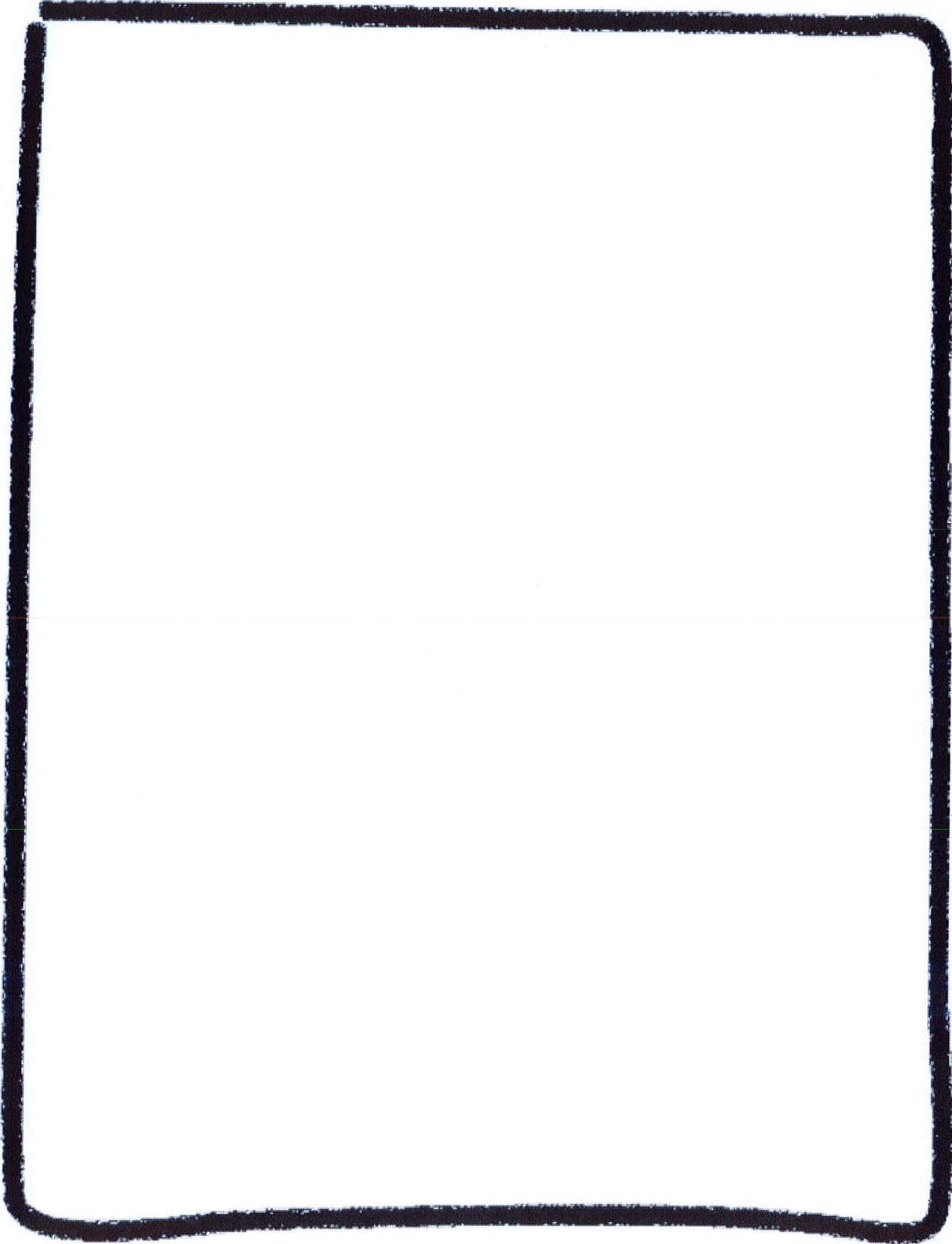


Weaver ants work together.





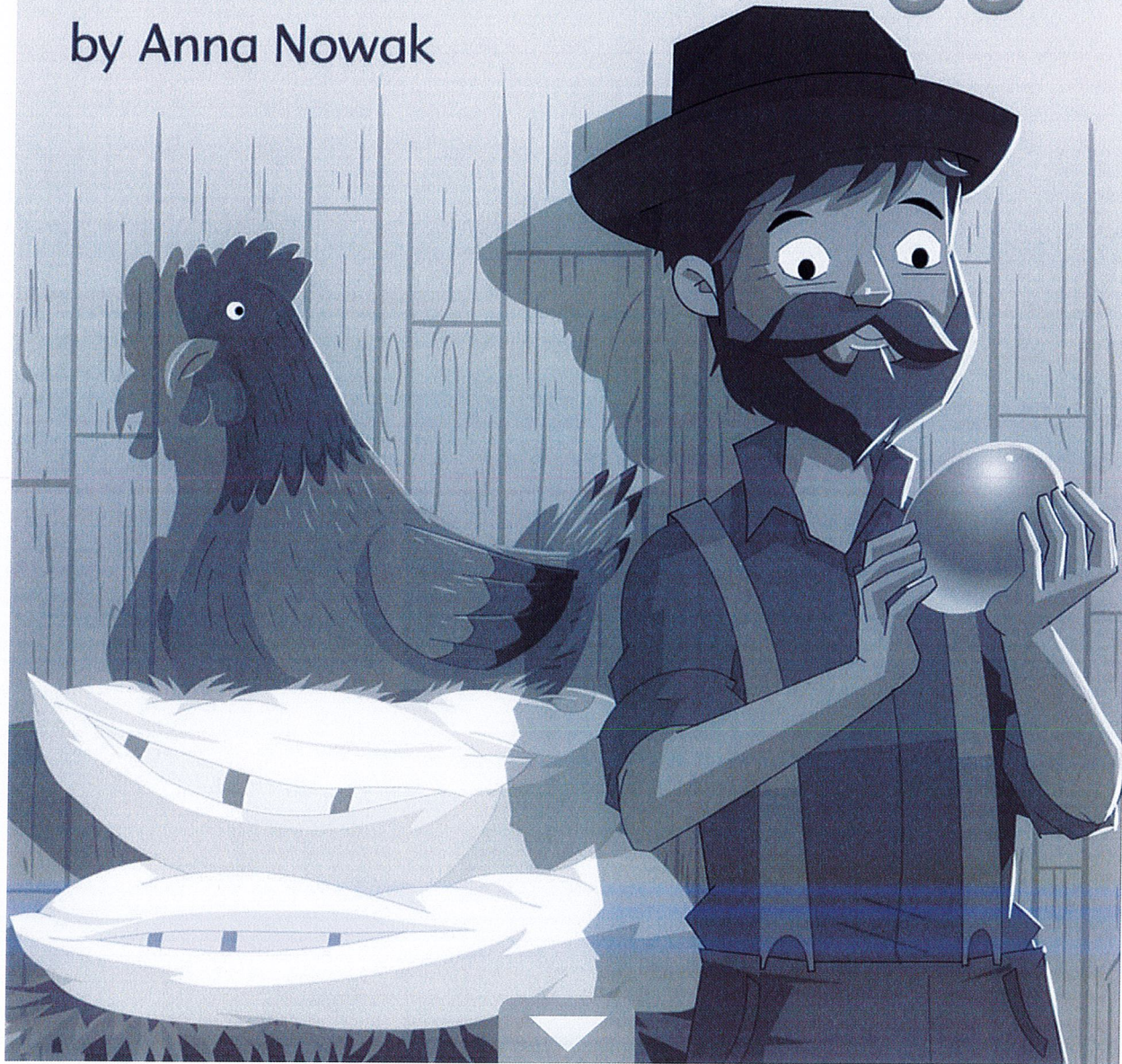
 **Draw or Write: What is the story about?**





# The Chicken That Laid the Golden Eggs

by Anna Nowak







Jasper was a gold **miner**. He went to Alaska to dig for gold. Jasper dug and dug. But he did not find any gold.

One day, Jasper found a chicken. Jasper said, “Maybe my luck is changing.”

Jasper’s luck did change! That chicken laid a golden egg!







“Gold! I found gold!” Jasper bragged.  
The other miners got mad. They had not  
found any gold.

The next day, Jasper’s chicken laid  
another golden egg. Jasper went to brag  
again. But the other miners did not listen.  
They had found a lot of gold.







Jasper was jealous. And he was greedy.  
He wanted more gold. Jasper yelled at the  
chicken. "I want ALL your golden eggs now!"

The next day, the chicken laid a new egg.  
This egg **BROKE** when Jasper grabbed it.

"This is not a golden egg! Where is my  
golden egg?" Jasper yelled.







Jasper tried being kind. He fed the chicken the fattest worms. He let it sleep in his bed.

But it was too late. The chicken laid an egg each day. But it did not lay any more golden eggs.







Jasper got tired of eating eggs. The eggs piled up. They got rotten and smelly. Jasper shouted at the chicken, “You must have more golden eggs! Lay them for me.”

The chicken squawked and flapped away. “Fine!” Jasper said. Then he went to sleep.







Jasper was hungry when he woke up. He looked for the chicken. He wanted an egg.

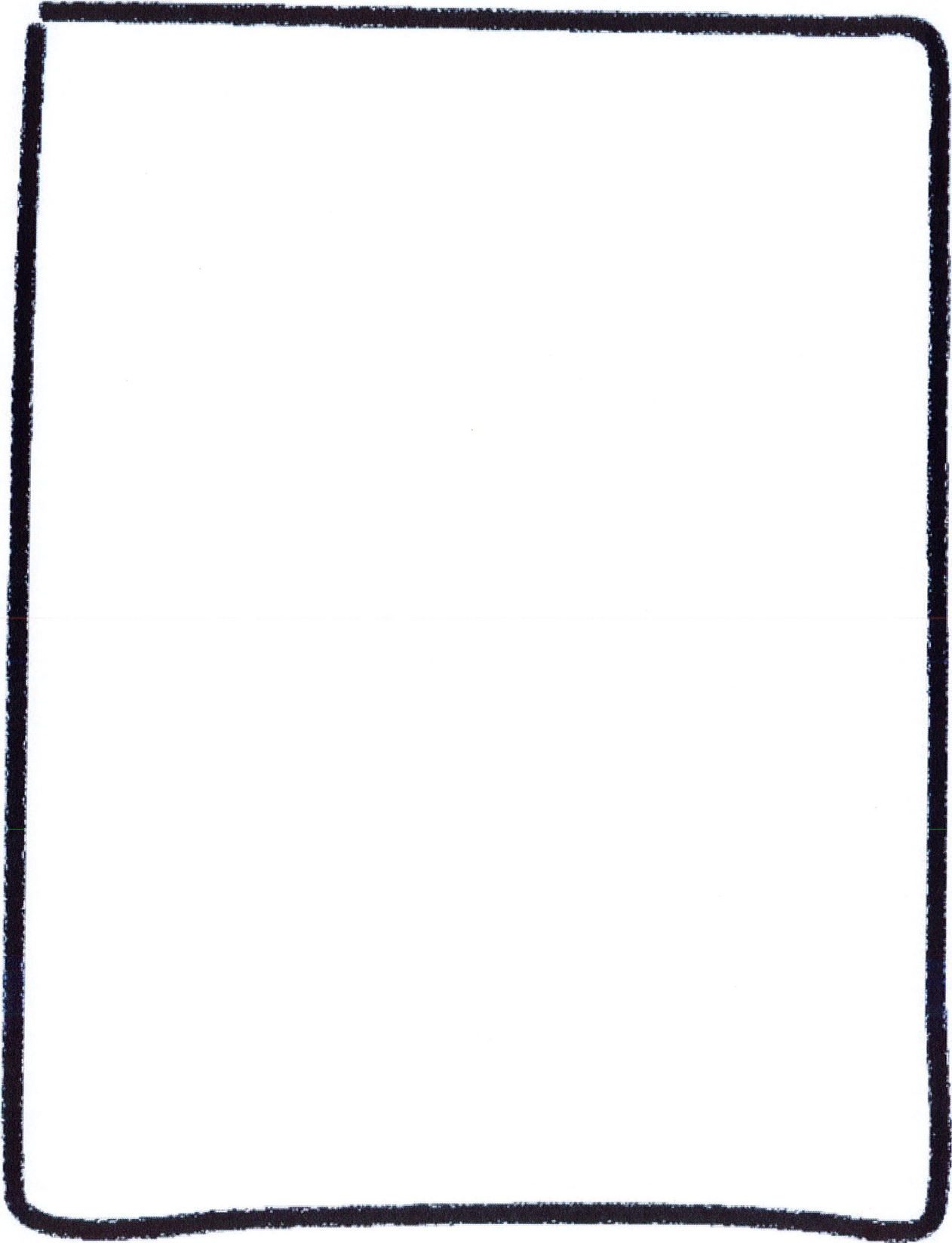
But the chicken had gone away. Now Jasper had no new eggs of any kind.

So he traded his two golden eggs for a ham sandwich and a train ticket out of Alaska.



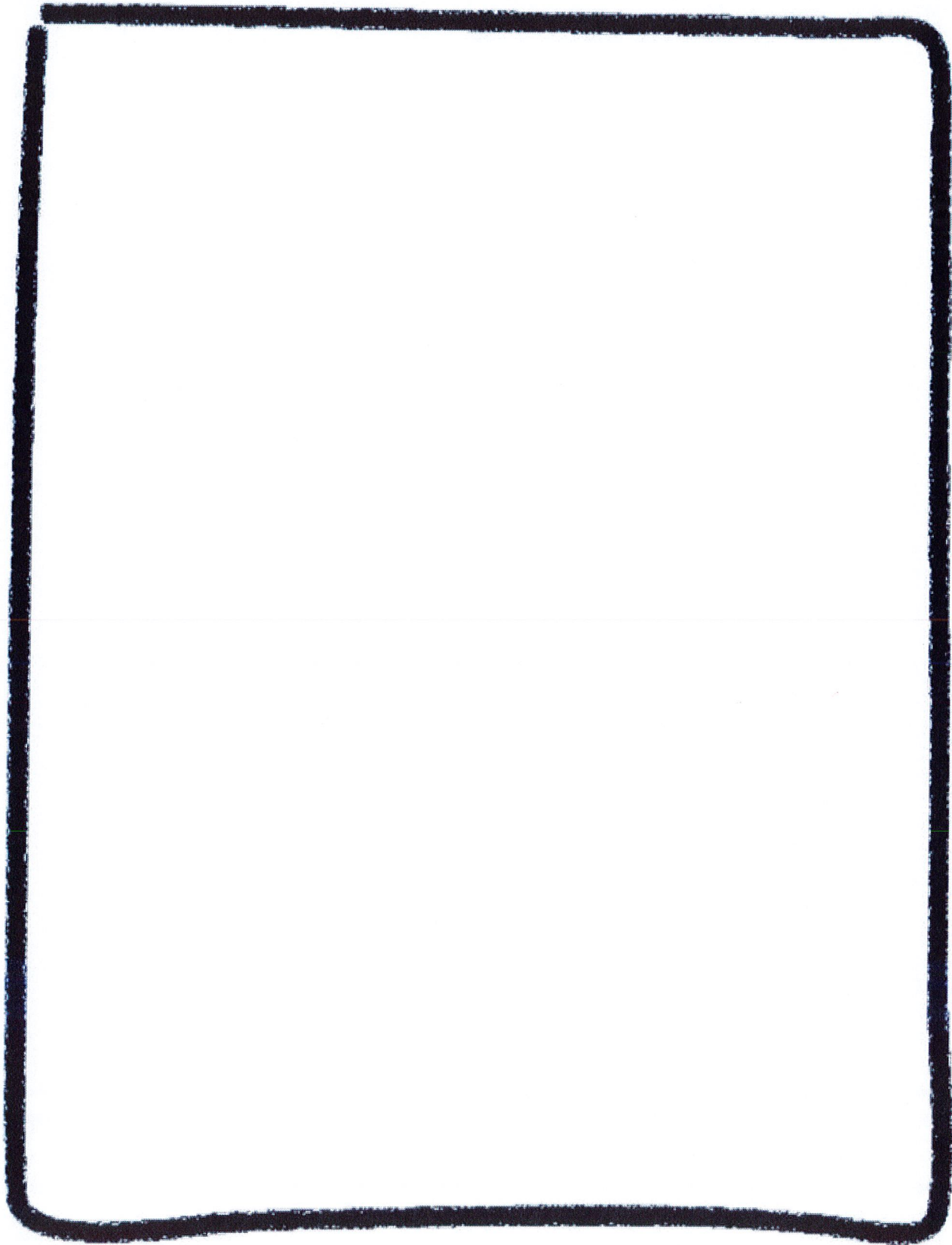


 Draw or Write: What happens at the beginning of the story?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick, dark border, intended for a student to draw or write their response to the prompt above.



Draw or Write: What happens at the end of the story?





Listen and Learn

# Identifying Setting



The **setting** is when and where a story takes place.

When you are reading or listening to a story, ask:

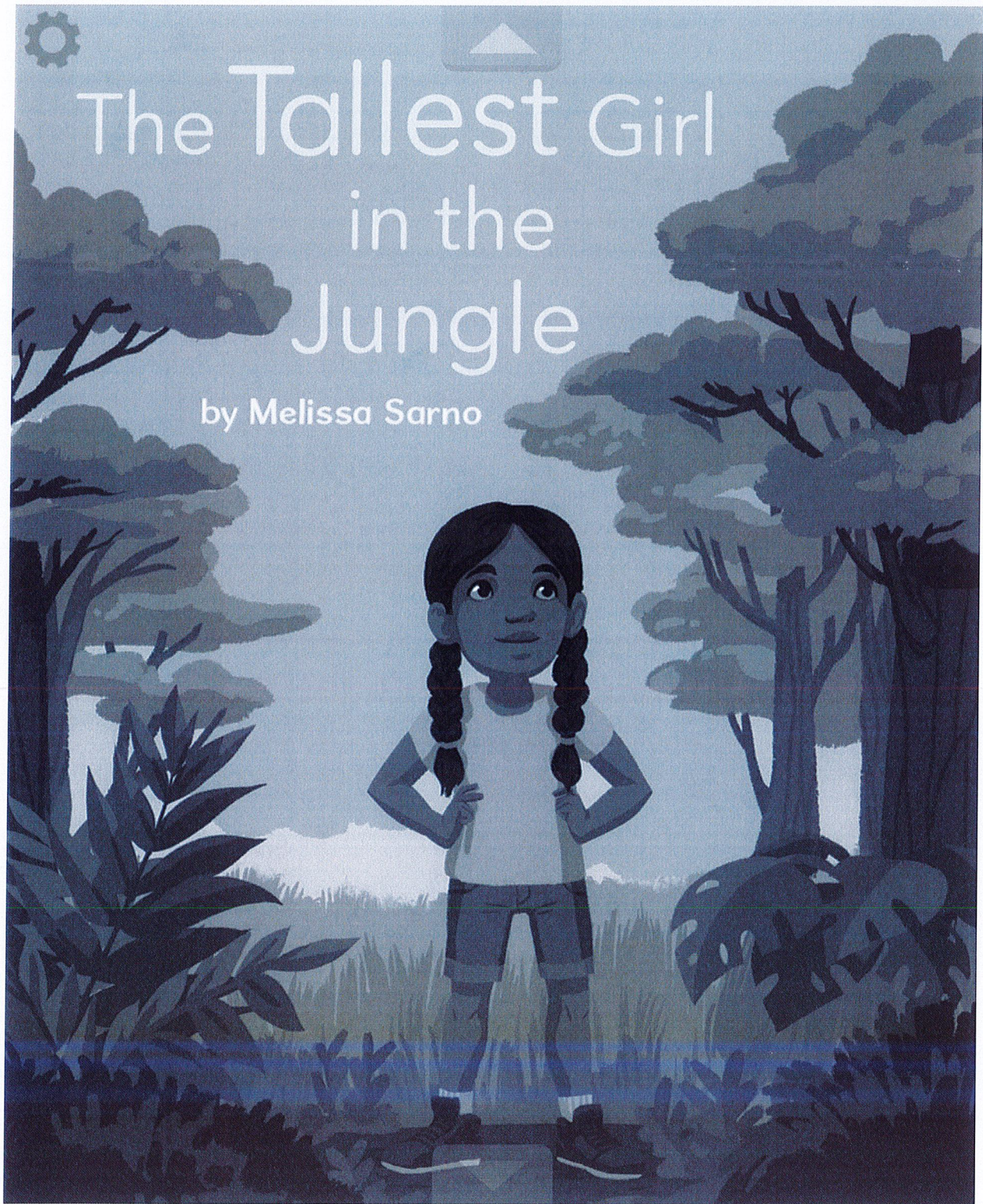
- When does the story take place?
- Where does the story take place?

Thinking about the setting helps you understand the story.

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Part 1: Introduction • Lesson 3 45









Ana was the smallest girl in her class.  
Her friends teased her all the time. “Ana, you are so short! We can not see you over the grass,” they laughed.

The tall grass tickled the top of Ana’s head.





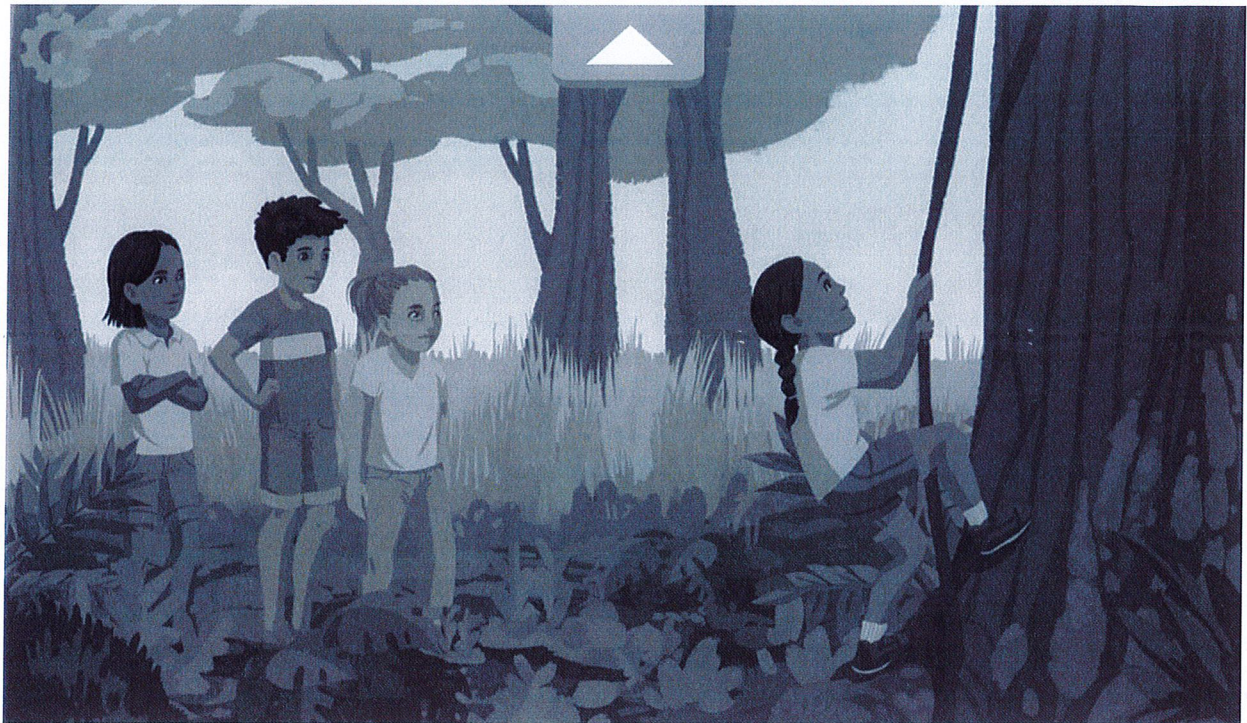


Ana frowned. She hated being teased for being small. She looked up at the sky and listened. Monkeys chattered. Birds tweeted. She wanted to join them. She wanted to be as tall as the **towering** trees.

Ana had an idea. “Wait until you see how tall I can be,” she called to her friends.







Ana stepped into the trees. She saw a long, thick hanging **vine**. She reached for it.

“What are you doing?” her friends asked.

“I am going to climb,” she said.

Ana grabbed the vine with her hands. She pulled herself up. She used her feet, too.





“Wow! Look at her go!” the kids shouted.

Ana was fast. Soon she was in the green leaves of the trees. Monkeys munched on coconuts as she went by. She saw giant fruits, large nuts, and colorful tree frogs.

“Look how high she is!” cried the kids.

“I will climb even higher!” called Ana.







Ana looked up to the tree tops. “Can I make it to the **canopy**?” she wondered. She took a deep breath. “Of course I can,” she whispered.

Ana climbed higher. She moved from branch to branch. Up and up she climbed.







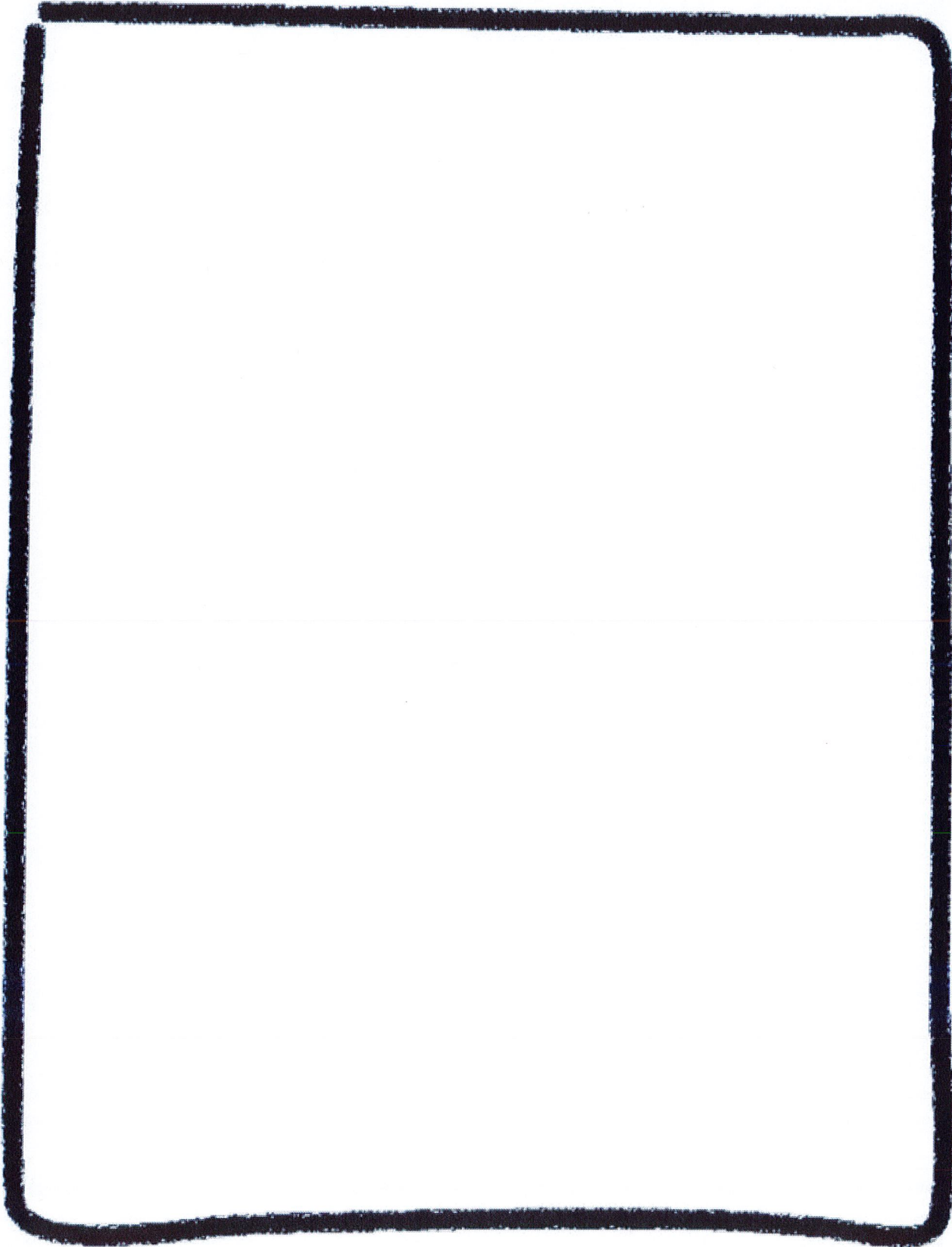
Soon Ana saw a bird with so many colors that it looked like a rainbow! She was in the canopy.

Ana waved and smiled. Her friends cheered. They could not tease her for being small now. She had done it. Ana was the tallest girl in the jungle!





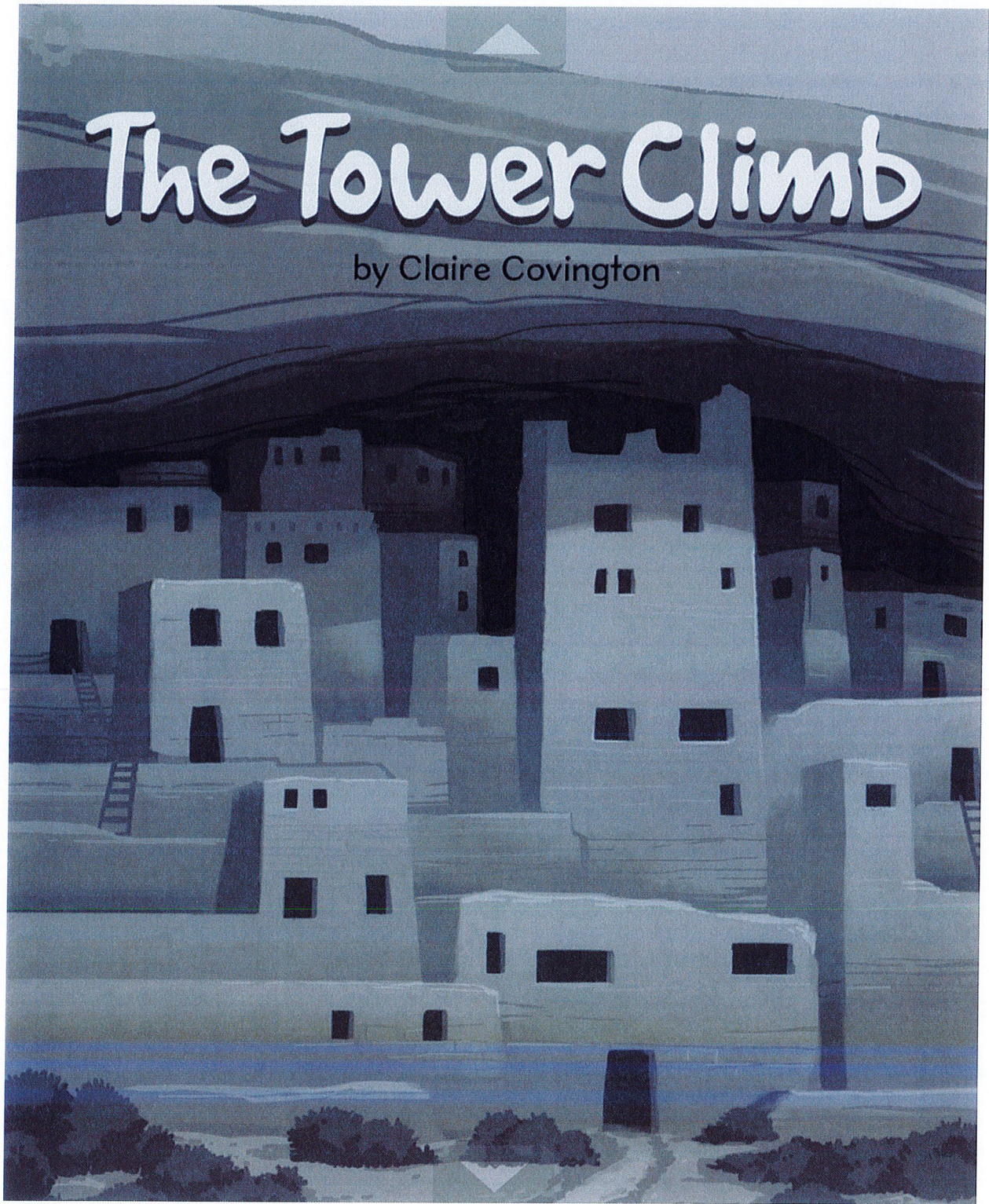
 **Draw or Write: Where does the story take place?**





# The Tower Climb

by Claire Covington

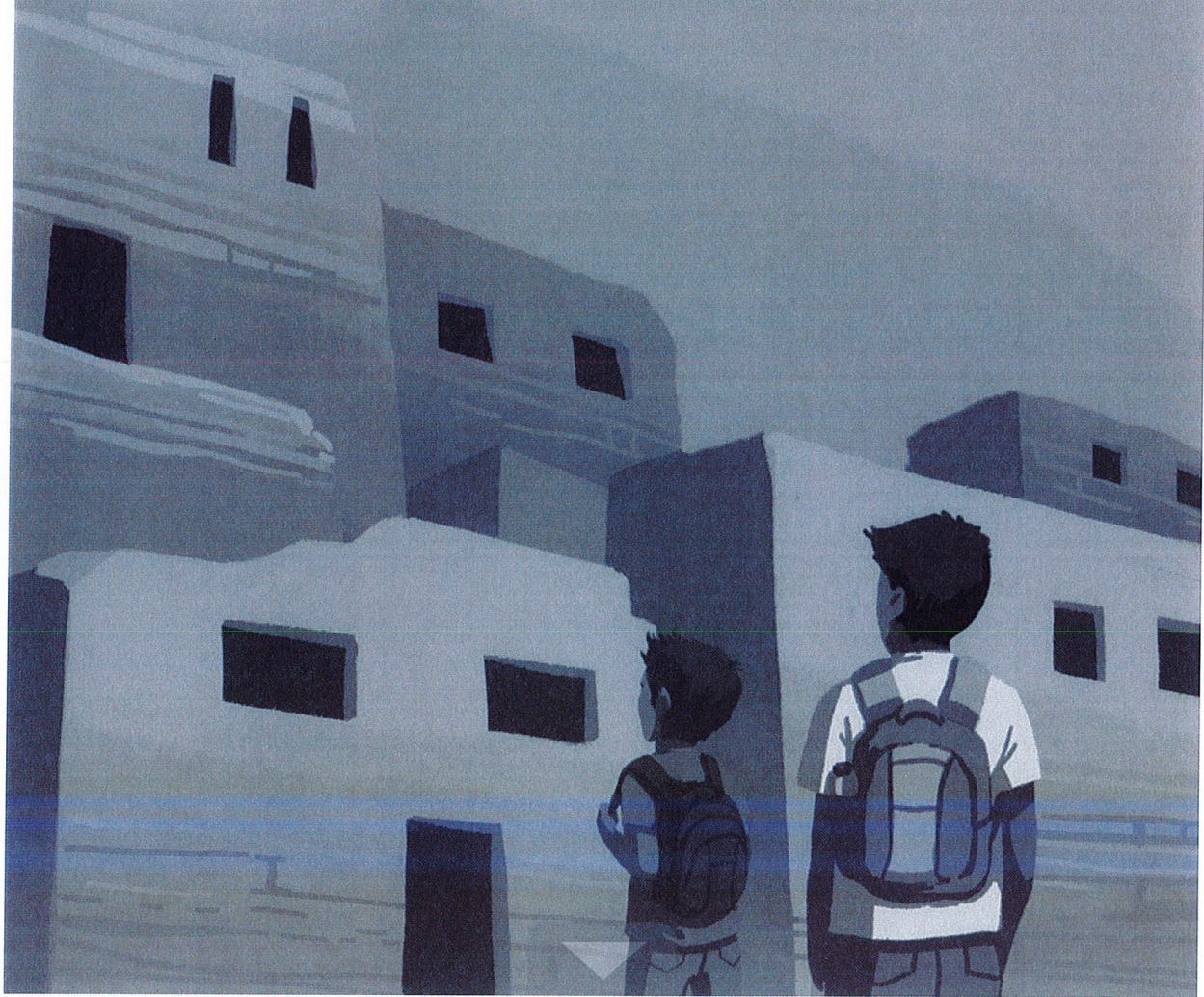






Hugo looked all around. He saw walls, tunnels, and paths dug into the cliff.

People had lived here long ago. Hugo and his dad loved exploring this place.







Hugo crawled into a tunnel. The tunnel led him up and up. Hugo saw a ladder. It went almost straight up! Hugo climbed.

Suddenly, Hugo felt the sun. He was in a high tower!







Hugo heard a tiny sound. He saw a little animal. “What is that?” he asked.

“It looks like a spotted owl,” said Dad.

Hugo frowned. “Look! The owl has a broken wing. Can we take it with us? We can get help at the bottom.” His dad said yes.







“It’s a long way down, Dad. How can I keep the owl safe?”

Dad said, “Well, the people who lived here long ago carried babies on their backs. They used flat boards or baskets.”

Hugo said, “I know what to do!”







Hugo got his backpack. He put the owl inside it. “Stay safe,” he whispered.

Then Hugo led the way down. He did not slip on the ladder. He did not bump the walls of the tunnel. He did not trip on the path.







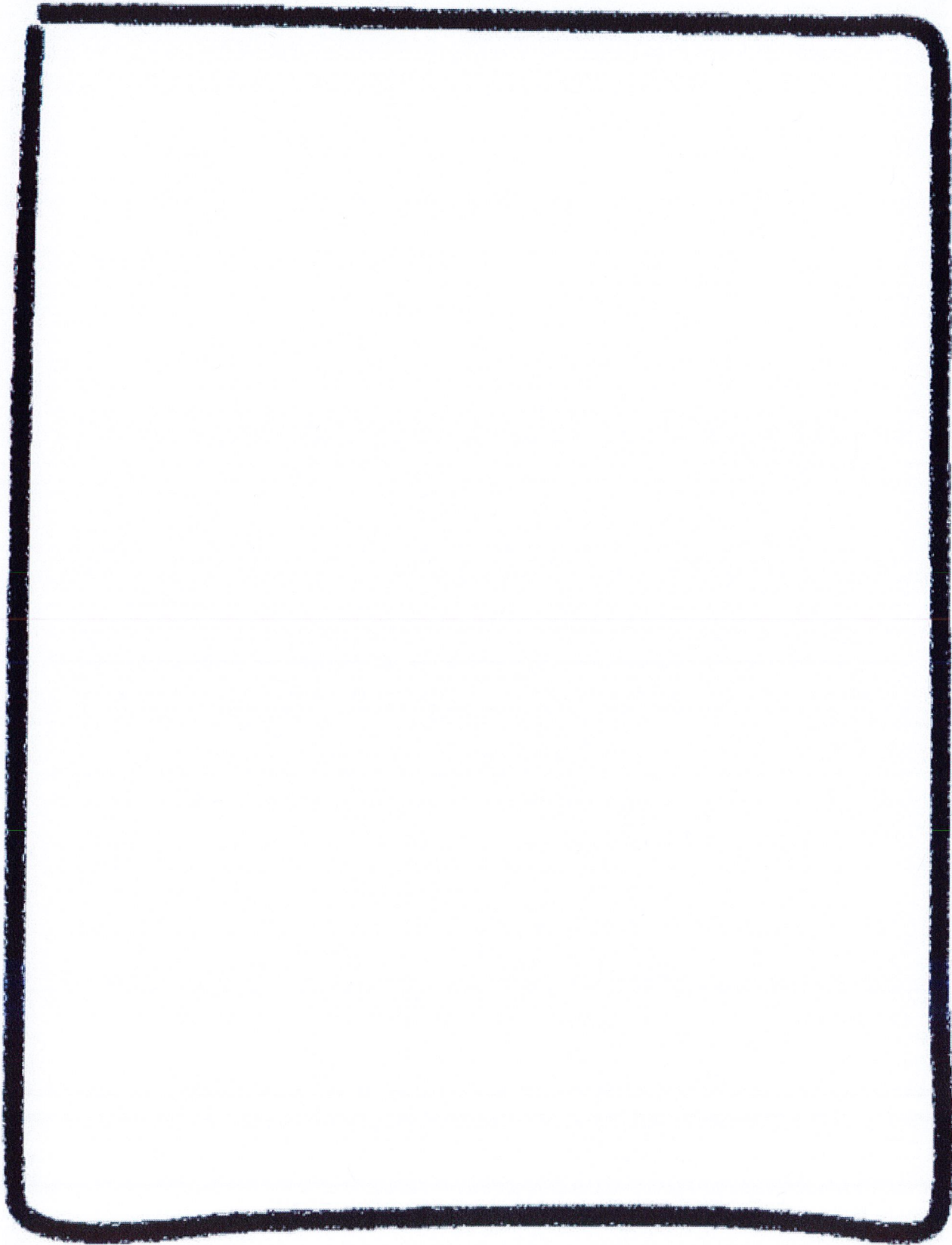
Hugo and his dad were at the bottom of the cliff. Hugo gently opened his backpack. The tiny owl was safe.

“Come on, little one. Let’s fix that broken wing,” Hugo said.



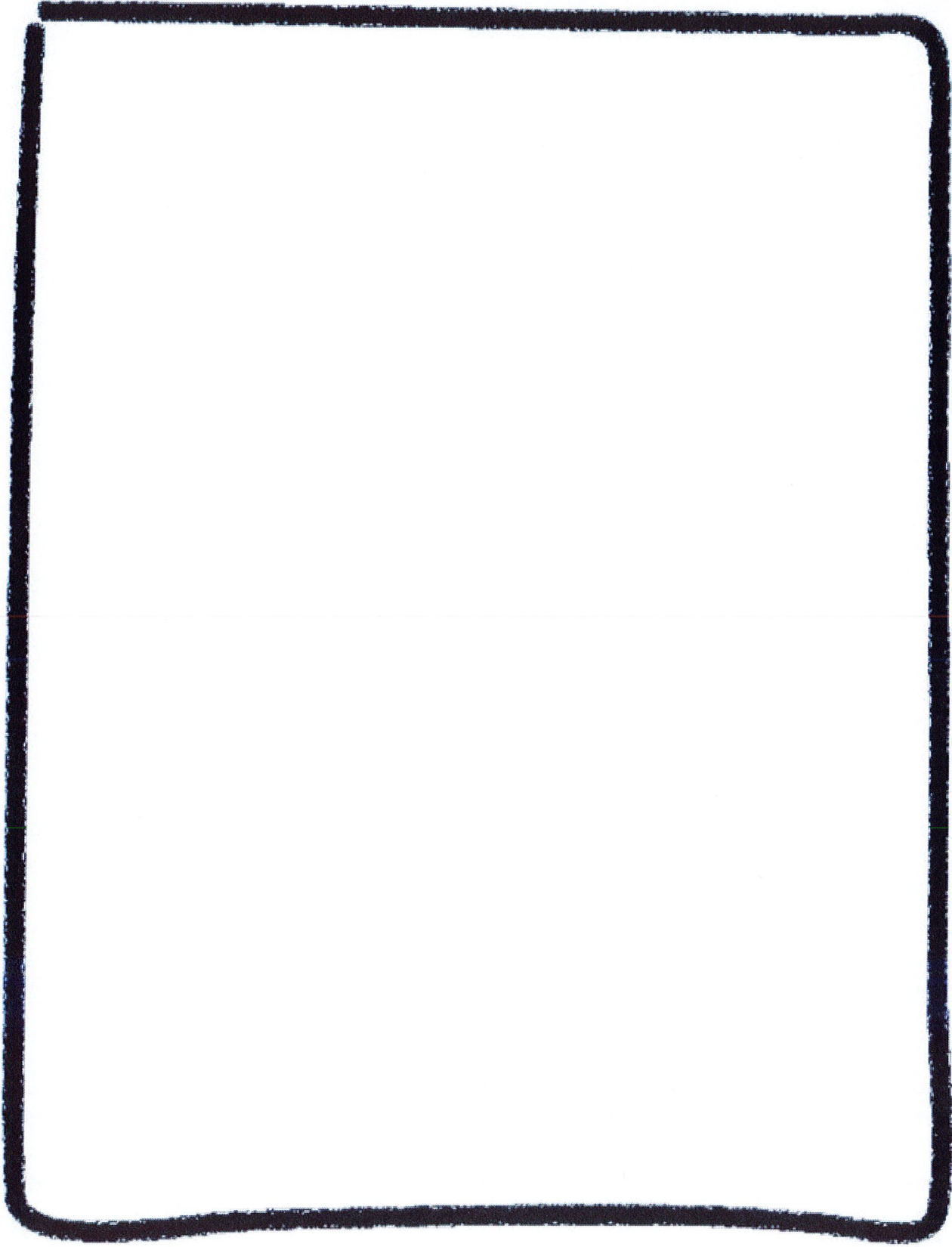


 Draw the main character.





 **Draw or Write: Where does the story take place?**





Listen and Learn

# Unknown Words



Sometimes you hear or read a word you do not know. You can ask questions about the word to find out what it means.

Here are some questions you can ask:

- What clues can I find in the other words?
- What clues can I find in the pictures?

Finding the meaning of new words can help you understand an information book.

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# Weird Animals

# Lungfish



by Rebecca McNulty





Have you ever heard of a fish that can survive outside of water? It sounds like something that is made up.

But one fish is able to do that. It has a special way to stay alive outside of water. It is the lungfish.



This lungfish is on land.







## Rainy Season

Lungfish live in Africa. Africa has a rainy season. It is a rainy, wet time of the year.

Lungfish live in small **lakes** called ponds during the rainy season. They swim and eat and rest like other fish.



This lungfish is in water.



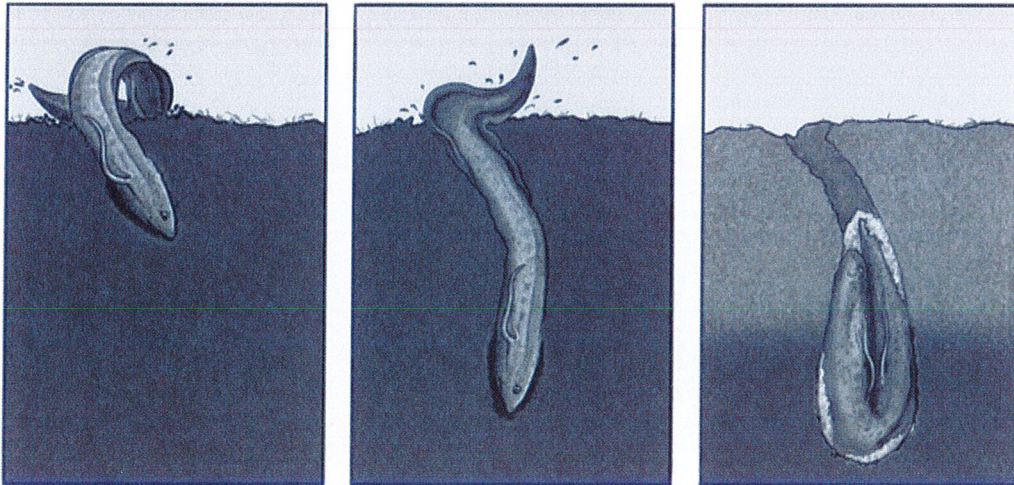




## Dry Season

Africa also has a dry season. No rain falls. Ponds dry up. That is when lungfish do something special.

Lungfish burrow into the bottom of the pond. They dig into the mud. They make a **cocoon** that covers and protects them.



A lungfish makes its cocoon in the mud.







## Resting in Slime

The cocoon is filled with sticky slime. It keeps the fish wet so they don't die.

Lungfish rest in the cocoon during the dry season. It lasts for half of the year. That is a long time to live without water!



A lungfish rests in its slime-filled cocoon.







## The Rain Comes Back

Then the dry season ends. Ponds fill with water. The cocoon melts away. It becomes soft and disappears.

The lungfish dig out of the mud. Soon they swim like other fish again!

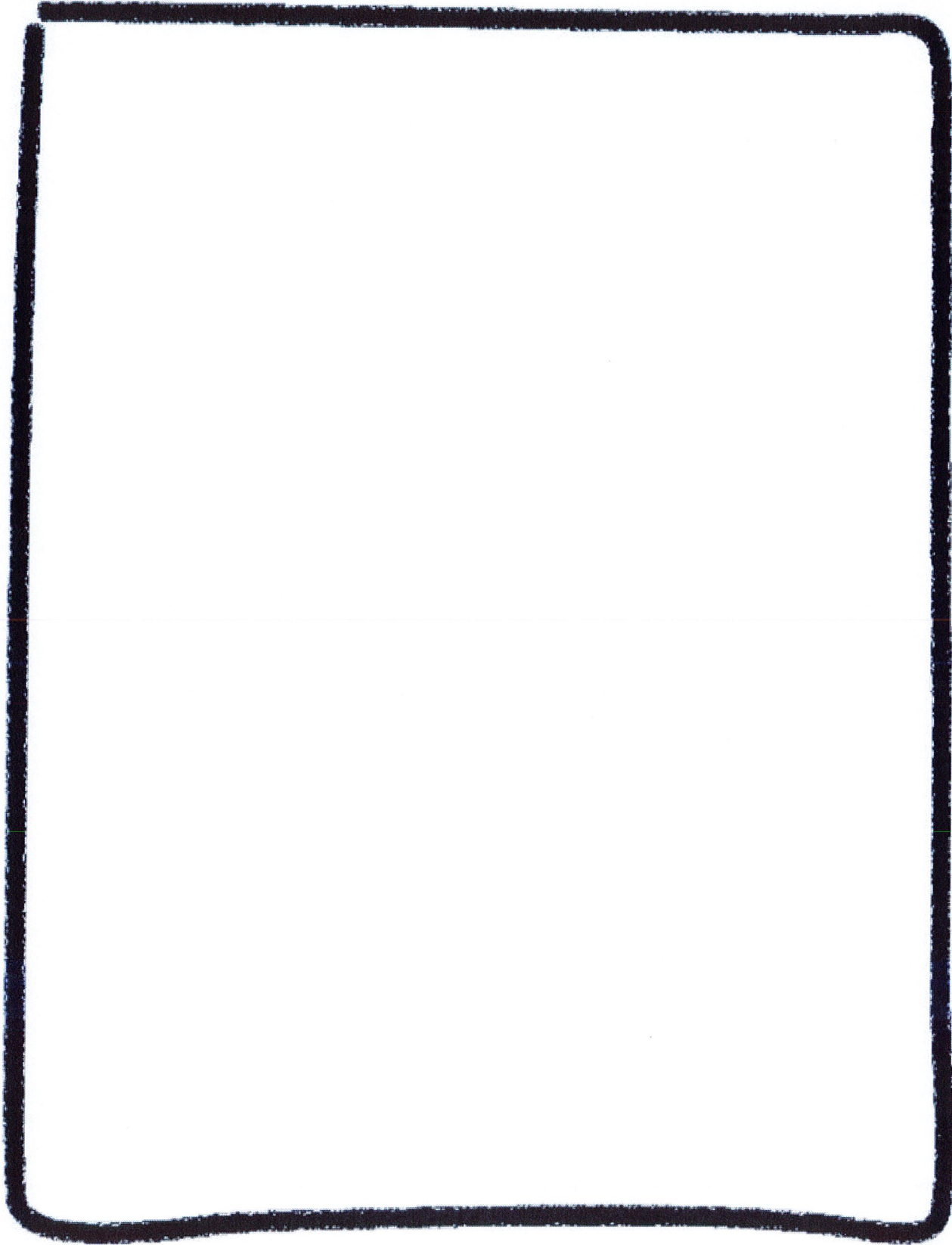


This lungfish is out of the mud.





 Draw or Write: What is the story about?







Weird Animals

# Wood Frogs



by Rachel Graham







Can you think of something that gets hard and freezes when it is very cold? Water turns to ice. But did you know some frogs can freeze, too?

Wood frogs freeze when it gets cold. Then, when it warms up, they warm up, too.



A wood frog can freeze when it gets cold.







## Finding a Safe Place

Wood frogs rest when they are frozen.  
They sleep all winter.

A wood frog finds a spot to rest in the fall. This place must be safe. The frog will stay there all winter.



This frog has found a good place to rest.







## Winter in Ice

Winter is cold. Lots of things freeze.

Ice can go all around a wood frog. It covers its whole body. Much of the water in a wood frog's body turns to ice. But the frog just sleeps.



Ice can go all around a wood frog.







## Frozen Frogs

A frozen wood frog feels hard like a rock. Its body stays very still. It does not move.

Wood frogs can stay frozen for a very long time.



This wood frog is frozen.







## Spring Warm Up

Spring comes. The frozen wood frog warms up. It starts to move again.

The frog hops back to the pond where it was born. It returns every spring. It eats, jumps, and swims until the next winter. Then it freezes again!

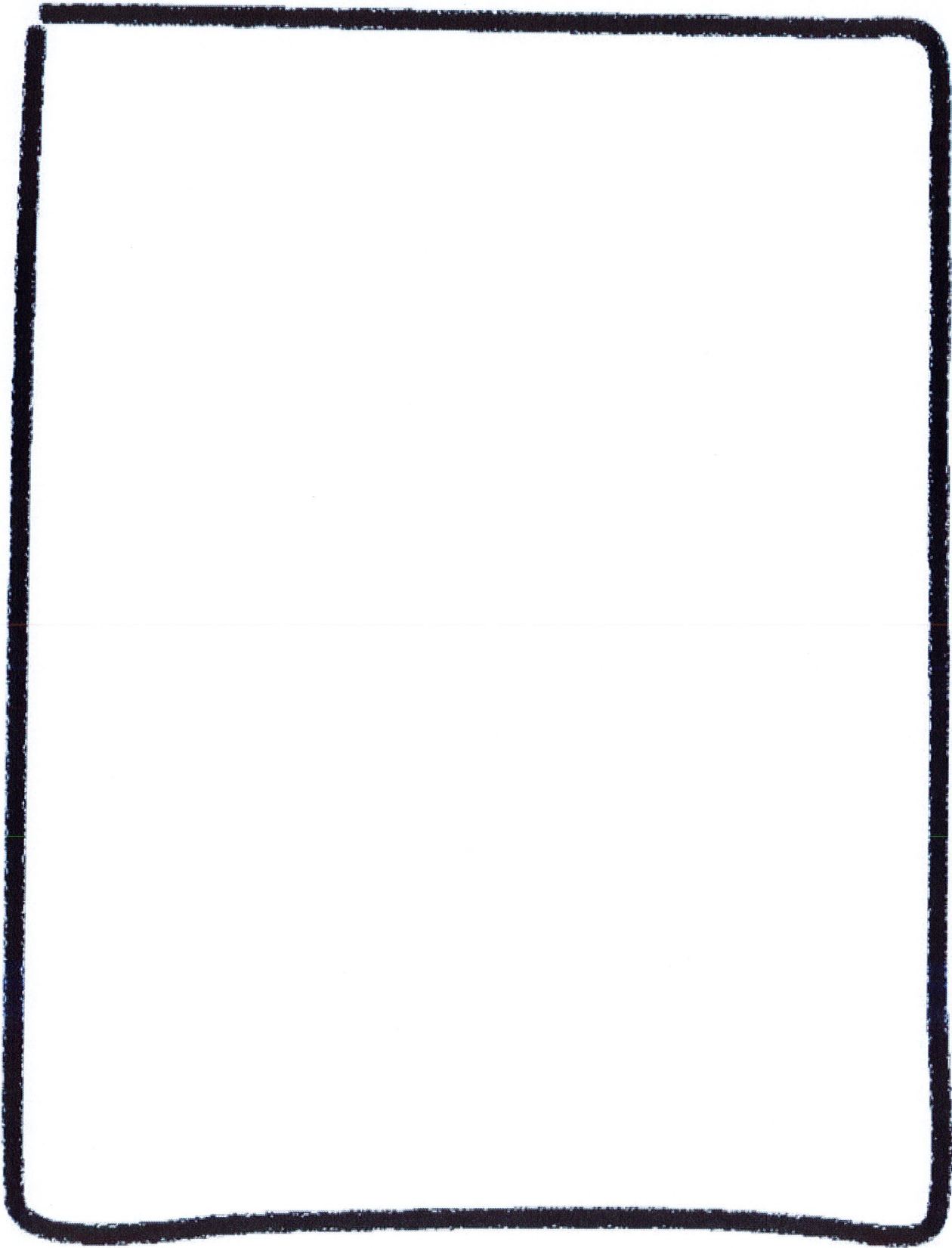


This wood frog is swimming.

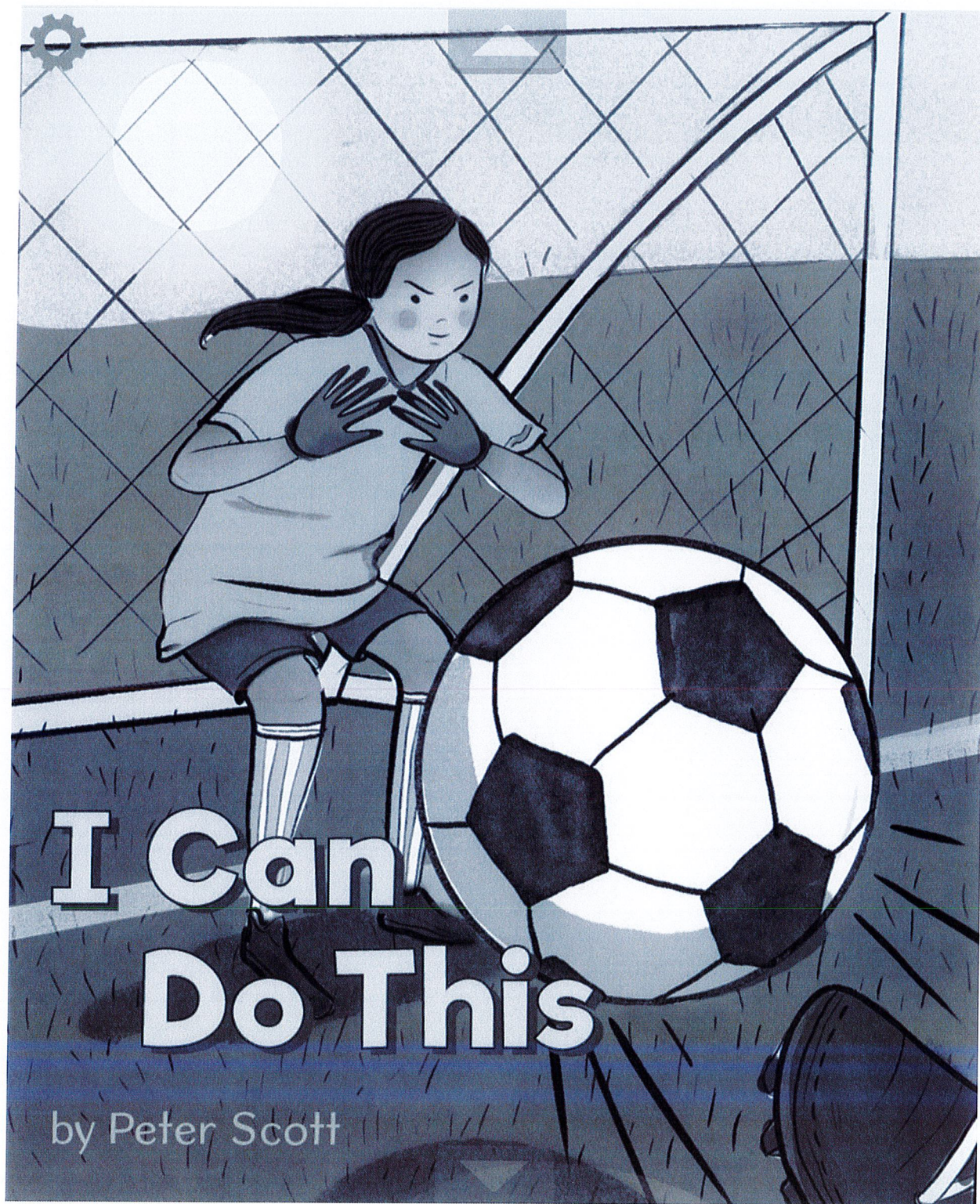




 **Draw or Write: What is the story about?**











“Abby, go in for Emma,” Coach said. “She is hurt.”

Emma was the team goalie. She could not play after she hurt her wrist.

“All right, Coach,” said Abby. She ran onto the soccer field. But she was **worried** about playing goalie.







Abby's team was the Wildcats. They were playing the Hawks. The Wildcats were winning by one.

The game was almost over. The Wildcats were excited. They could win!

"I can not let the Hawks score!" said Abby to herself.







Abby stood in goal.

“I can do this,” she thought. She had to keep the Hawks from scoring.

“Watch the ball,” Abby said to herself.  
“Don’t let it get past you.”







The game started again. The Hawks had the ball. They quickly kicked it up the field.

A player kicked the ball left, then right. Then she kicked it up high toward the goal.

Abby reached up. She punched the ball hard!







The ball bounced away from the goal. Abby could not believe it. She did it! The Hawks did not score.

The **whistle** blew. The game was over. The Wildcats won! The team cheered and ran toward Abby.

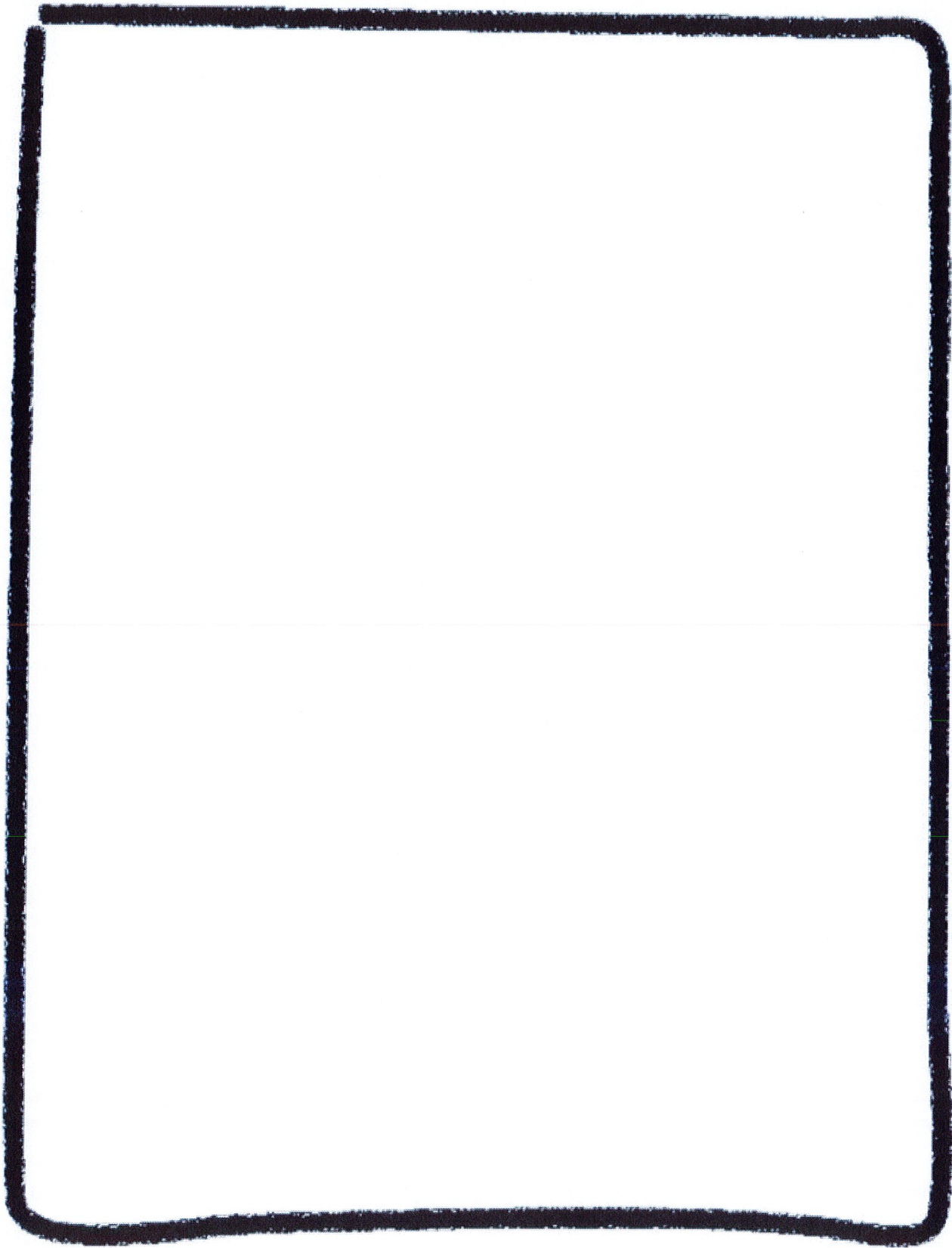
Abby smiled. Then she cheered, too.







Draw or Write: What does the main character do?





Draw or Write: What happens at the end of the story?

