

Student Read Aloud

1 A Fat Cat

letters: a b c d f h i m n o r s t	sound: a as in cat	special word: a or A
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A fat cat.

A fat cat and a rat sat on a mat.

A rat on a bat on a cat in a hat on a mat.

2 A Big Pig

letters: p g j w	sound: i as in pig	special word: a or A
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A big pig.

A big pig had a wig.

A big pig in a wig did a jig.

Student Read Aloud

3 Bug on a Rug

letters: u e l k	sound: u as in bug	special words: The the of
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The big bug on the rug.

Hug the bug but not on top of the rug.

The bug had a mug of milk on top of the rug.

4 Dot

letters: f o h	sound: o as in dog	special words: a the of
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Dot had a pot of milk.

Dot sat on the log in the fog.

Dot and the dog had a lot of fun in the fog.

Student Read Aloud

5 The Pet Hen

letters: w v l	sound: e as in hen	special words: was to
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The hen went to the dam.

The vet had to let the net get wet.

The hen was wet. The net was wet.
The vet was wet.

6 Fox on the Box

letters: x v w	sound: o as in fox	special words: I have
-------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------

The fox will have to get off the box.

Fox and I jump on the lid.

Fox and I have a den. Fox is in the den. I am in the den.

Student Read Aloud

7 I Can Run

letters: y j g	sound: u as in bug	special words: with too
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I can sit. I can yell too.

If I hop and jump, I get hot.

I run with the dog. I hop with the dog. I jump with the dog too.

8 The Picnic

letters: L J Y P	sound: i as in big	special words: go said for
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“Let us go on a picnic.”

“Yes, let’s have a picnic,” said Jet and Jim.

“The picnic was fun,” said Tom to Pat. “It was fun for us too,” said Jet.

Student Read Aloud

9 My Pup

letters: H M E D	sound: oo as in roof	special words: name like my play
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His name is Yap.

I like to play with my pup. Yap likes to jump.

Dad soon gets Yap from the roof. Yap sits in my room.

10 John and His Fox

sound: e as in pet	special words: John he very
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John had a pet fox.

The fox had a very big sip of milk.

John had a very soft rag doll. He had a pot of red jam too.



Student Read Aloud

1x Ann and Mal

letters: l n h e g j p	sound: a as in cat	special word: A or a
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A bat and a cap.

Can Mal get Ann's jam?

Ann has Mal's bat. Ann has a hit.

2x Tom Cat and Jim Rat

letters: o s t w	sound: i as in big	special word: A or a
---------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------

A lid and a tap.

Dad taps Tom Cat. Kim is glad.

Tom Cat will not nip Jim Rat.

Student Read Aloud

3x The Mud Hut

letters: u f m	sound: u as in bug	special words: the of
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A big lot of mud.

Mum and Dad lift up the mud.

Yes, it is a mud hut! It is a snug mud hut!

4x Ants at the Camp

letters: w u h f	sound: o as in dog	special words: of the
---------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------

Max and Lin swim in the pond. It is cold.

But lots of big ants get on Max's bun.

The frog hops on the gum nuts.

Student Read Aloud

5x The Big Mess

letters: u w z	sound: e as in hen	special words: was to
-------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------

Liz was stuck.

Nick went to get Sam to help.

Meg went to help Sam and Ted and Liz and the pig to get up from the mud.

6x The Sick Dog

letters: x w j	sound: o as in fox	special words: I have
-------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------

I have a dog. I have Buff.

I told him to fix Buff.

The vet told Buff to sit still. Buff was told not to run and jump.

Student Read Aloud

7x The Land of Zond

letters: z w	sound: u as in bug	special words: with too
-----------------	-----------------------	----------------------------

Miss Grunt is a big pig.

The goblins and Red Ned get stuck too.

Zack and Red Ned have to sit with Bold Bob and Miss Grunt.

8x The Bus Stop

letters: q u	sound: i as in big	special words: go said for
-----------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------

It had to stop for help.

“Go to the second track on the left.”

‘Honk,’ went the red bus. “Quack, quack,” said Deb.



Student Read Aloud

9x The Billabong

sound: oo as in roof	special words: name like play billabong tree
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Flip and Nat like the moon.

A wombat digs on the bank of the billabong. The wombat's name is Tess.

Tess and Tran like to play in the cool gum tree.

10x Cat and Kitten

sound: e as in pet	special word: very
-----------------------	-----------------------

Kevin ran into the room.

“A box with a blanket!” said Kevin.

Trot did not jump on Moll. Kevin and Viv felt very glad.

Student Read Aloud

11 The Animals

sound: oo as in roof	special words: who are you
-------------------------	-------------------------------

“Who are you?” “My name is Dan,” said the dog.
“I can peck food very well,” said Hanna the hen. Hanna was old.
“You have a lot of food to peck,” said Con to Hanna.
“You can sit very still,” said Hanna back to Con. “You are a very big animal too.”

Student Read Aloud

12 My Lost Bear

sound: e as in be	special words: find please ring bear love
----------------------	--

Let me tell you his name. It is Tom. Tom has a pink ribbon on his neck.

I love my bear and he loves me. I love to play with him.

He likes to play but he can not swim. Can you please not let him get wet.

Who will find my bear for me?
If you find him please ring me up.

Student Read Aloud

13 The Frog and the Fly

sound: y as in by	special words: looked want good dinner goodbye
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“I like to have a fly for my dinner,” said the frog. “Can I find a fly by the pond?”

“You look like a good fly,” said Fred. “Do you want to play?”

But the fly looked at Fred and said, “No, frog, you want to have me for dinner!”

“The very fat frog can not fly up in the sky.” “Goodbye frog. Goodbye.”

Student Read Aloud

14 The Girl and the Boy

sound: er as in sister	special words: girl boy come brother little
---------------------------	--

“I can jump very well,” said the boy. “I can jump and skip,” said the girl.

“I have a little brother,” said the girl. “His name is Nipper.”

“Come and see my dog,” said the boy. “And come and see my big sister too.”

“It is good in the sun with you,” said the girl. “I like it too,” said the boy.

Student Read Aloud

15 Tall and Small

sound: all as in tall	special words: she her then their no
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Tim was a tall boy. Pat was a small girl. Tim was Pat's tall brother. Pat was Tim's small sister.

"Please, no!" said Pat. Then she ran to get her doll from the wall.

Then their mum said, "Who upset you, Pat?"

"Tim said he will hit my doll with his ball. I am too small to stop him." Then Tim felt very bad.

Student Read Aloud

16 Buns and Eggs

sound: oo as in cook	special words: they your together do
-------------------------	---

“Put your big hat on the hook,” said Bill to Pam. “Please do not cook with your big hat on.”

“I do not want to look at the cook book,” said Pam.

Bill got a pan and six eggs. “I will cook the eggs by myself,” said Bill.

Then Bill cooked the eggs by himself. They did not cook together. But they had their dinner together.

Student Read Aloud

17 The Fish

sound: sh as in fish	special words: them much away give live
-------------------------	--

They fed them fish food from a box.
They did not give the fish too much.

“They will not live if you give them too much food.”

But then Trish and Zac went away from the fish tank. And their little brother took the lid off!

“Stop the cat,” said Trish. Together they yelled, “No, Kit! Go away, Kit! Go away!” Then Kit ran away.

Student Read Aloud

18 Dad and the Kids

sound: ing as in sing	special words: keep yard hated silly
--------------------------	---

He hated their dog barking. “Keep that dog away from me,” he said.

“It’s not much fun,” said the kids, “having to keep the dog away from Dad, and having to go to the yard.”

The dog’s barking was sad. The dog looked at Dad. “Oh boy, you do look very sad,” said Dad.

Soon Dad felt bad. He felt silly telling the kids to keep the dog in the yard.

Student Read Aloud

19 Mark and Mars

sound: ar as in Mark	special words: space ready when what
-------------------------	---

When they got to the park, they looked up. In the dark sky was Mars.

When Mark was much older, he got a job on the Dart. The Dart was a space ship.

He did get rid of the sparks. He was still going to Mars! What luck!

When he was ready to finish, he said, "Number six calling control, number six calling control. I am ready to come back."

Student Read Aloud

20 Wombat

sound: ay as in day	special words: now don't here Mr Mrs Ms Master
------------------------	---

Now Ms Wombat, what are you doing today? Do you like hay?

Master Wombat, you will love this hay too. Stay here and play. Don't go away.

Mr and Mrs Wombat, let's dig in the yard. The clay is ready now. Don't say it's too hard. It is dry and soft.

What a lot of fun we are having! Several wombats and I, playing together and digging tunnels in the clay.

Student Read Aloud

11x The Forest on the Hill

sound: oo as in roof	special words: says they after
-------------------------	-----------------------------------

“You can play in the hut but not in the forest.”

Bec yells at him to stop, but Jack will not stop. Soon Bec runs into the forest after him.

Soon they get to a rotten old tree trunk and Jack yells to the rabbit, “Rabbit, rabbit, play with us.”

“Yes,” Dad says, “have fun in the hut but not in the forest. If you get lost, I will get very upset.”

Student Read Aloud

12x The Land of Pink Trees

sound: e as in be	special words: magic look good
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If you dip a bucket into the well, you can find very good stuff.

He loves the look of the ring and he picks it up.

To find the tunnel, you must stand next to the rock and rub the magic ring you have with you.

It was fun to visit the Land of Pink Trees. But Sam likes to be back in his land too.

Student Read Aloud

13x My Dinner Stinks

sound: y as in by	special words: them hate
----------------------	-----------------------------

“But a fly must have grubs and bugs,” Fry’s mum tells him. “They are good for you.”

But Fry will not try the bugs. “Yuck!” he says. “I hate bugs.”

He looks for eggs, plums and mandarins too, but he cannot find them.

Fry sniffs at the dinner. He licks the fattest grub. It is good. “Yum!” he says. “I like it.”



Student Read Aloud

14x My Big Brother

sound: er as in sister	special words: does than that
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Sandler is a lot bigger than me, but I still like to play with him.

I get upset and I want to cry. I go to my big sister Alison, who hugs me.

Sandler wins the badminton. But he does not tell me that I am a bad player.

“Little brother,” he tells me, “you are fun to play with. You are quick and clever.”

Student Read Aloud

15x A Present for Dad

sound: all as in tall	special words: there money
--------------------------	-------------------------------

There are a lot of fantastic stalls there.
I love the mall.

She hands me the money that she got
from Mum, and she runs off with her
pals.

The hats are silver and gold and I like
them, but they are too small for Dad.

I find my sister. She looks at the tools.
She loves them. Dad will love them too.

Student Read Aloud

16x The Kidnapped Fairy

sound: oo as in cook	special words: evening fairy kidnapped
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In the evening, I cook my dinner and then go for a stroll on a track by a little river.

The fairy looks very sad. She tells me an evil goblin has kidnapped her sister.

“Who’s there?” he says. He stands up and drops the ring and the cup.

The goblin is still in the forest and cannot find us. The sisters are very glad to be together.

Student Read Aloud

17x The Spilt Milk

sound: sh as in fish	special words: floor bottle tumble
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Dad has given us money and told us to get fish, carrots and a big pumpkin.

The butter falls off its shelf onto a rack of plums, and a plum lands on a man's foot.

The bottles tumble off the shelf and hit the floor with a crash. Milk splashes onto the boss's socks.

The boss sits up. He looks at the radishes and the spilt milk. Then he looks at us and grins.

Student Read Aloud

18x The Silly Singer

sound: ing as in sing	special words: friend high
--------------------------	-------------------------------

“Let’s go and play on the swing. And we can try to hit old cans off the rocks.”

She is swinging very high and singing a silly song.

“Do you want to try a shot?” my friend says to the girl. He offers her his tennis ball.

The girl nods and says, “Yes, it was just a misunderstanding. We can all have fun together at the park.”

Student Read Aloud

19x The Dark Barn

sound: ar as in Mark	special words: torch scared
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Martin does not like the look of the barn, but his older sister Marg wants to play in it.

With the help of Marg's torch, they look into the dark, and they spot an old car.

"Are you scared?" he says. For a bit, Marg does not reply. Then she tells Martin she is ready to go.

Marg grins. "For a little boy, you are very bold. I'm glad you are with me in the barn."

Student Read Aloud

20x The Holiday

sound: ay as in day	special words: house time Ms
------------------------	---------------------------------

In the evening, Kesh wants to play with her mum, but her mum never has much time.

It's a big trip, but they get to Fray's River at seven o'clock – just as the sun is setting.

Ms King and her boy Bart, who live next to the holiday house, come to the picnic too.

The holiday helps Mrs Cray get better. By the end, she is very well and is playing a lot with Kesh.

Student Read Aloud

21 The Woodpecker and the Tugboat

sound: ch as in chug	special words: beak chirp chew home baby
-------------------------	---

Chip, chip, chip, went the woodpecker's beak. She was chipping away at a big branch.
Chirp, chirp, chirp, went the baby woodpecker. He was sitting in the tree.
Chug, chug, chug, went the tugboat, all the way home. "All the way home to get my lunch," said the tugboat.
Chew, chew, chew, went the man. "Yum, yum! This sandwich is good food for me."

Student Read Aloud

22 The Rabbit Wants a Carrot

sound: -y as in happy	special words: hugged came money see only
--------------------------	--

Then Jenny's dad came to the garden to see Jenny and her rabbit.

"I love Bunny," said Jenny, "but he has no food. If we don't give him food soon, he will not live. He is only a baby."

"I have no money," Jenny said. "All I have in my money box is ten marbles."

"Yes, I can carry them," said Jenny. She looked happy and hugged her dad. "Now we must hurry to the shop."

Student Read Aloud

23 The Girls and the Ball

sound: wh as in when	special words: scared feel nice voice one friend
-------------------------	---

Libby feels angry when Janet runs away, but soon she feels sad and a bit silly. She has no one to play with.

Today, Libby has a soft, sad voice. “Whenever you won’t play with me, I feel sad.”

“Why won’t you play with me?” Libby asks Janet. “I am scared,” says Janet. “You are not nice to me.”

Janet wants a friend to play with too. She likes the soft voice which Libby has now.

Student Read Aloud

24 The Cat, the Dog and the Vet

sound: aw as in paw	special words: tree that there some
------------------------	--

One Sunday, there was not that much to do. Hawker was getting hot in the sun.

Hawker went to the park. On the lawn, he saw a dog. Hawker was ready to play.

The vet said, “I can fix your paw and your claws, but you must not stand on them today.”

Hawker got better. The next day, it was still hot. “I will go to that park,” he said. “There are some cool trees there.”

Student Read Aloud

25 Tom and Ben

sound: -ed as in barked	special words: safe our time
----------------------------	---------------------------------

Tom called his dog Ben. “Ben is my friend,” said Tom. “We love playing in our yard.”

“I do not want to play today,” whispered Tom. “I am sick. Stay by my bed, Ben.”

Ben was a good friend to Tom. Every time Tom felt scared, he wanted Ben. Ben was big and strong. His bark was big and strong too.

“Woof,” barked Ben. “You are safe with me.” They played and chatted in the park all day long.

Student Read Aloud

26 The Eight Frogs and the Snake

sound: igh as in night	special words: snake bite cried croaked out talk were eight water
--------------------------------------	---

“Get out of the water,” he hissed, “and go away – unless you want a fight.”

“I want the pond to myself. If you don’t get out, I might bite you. So be out of my way before I hiss eight times.”

“It is very bad for us,” they croaked. They went to an old frog called Nick. Nick often had good things to say when the frogs were upset.

He hopped to the pond and in a big voice he cried out, “Come here, snake. We want to talk.”

Student Read Aloud

27 Tabitha and Thug

sound: th as in thing	special words: bone mouth game down road chase both
--------------------------	---

Tabitha had a home next to the park. If Tabitha wanted to see Thug, she ran down the road to the park.

Tabitha went to grab the bone in her mouth, but her mouth was too small. The bone was too thick.

“If we both want to be happy, we must play a game that we can play together,” meowed Tab.

From then on, this is what they did. They played a game that they both liked. It was called chase-the-ball.

Student Read Aloud

28 Love

sounds: ow as in blow ear as in earth	special words: reach spoke bird seed again warm above sang
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In the early days of Earth, the wind sang, “I can blow hard, I can blow soft.”

And the water sang again, “I will flow across the land and sink into the earth to reach the seeds below.”

With all this love from above and below, fish and lizards began to grow... Then came birds and cats and dogs and things.

When Earth was ready, love spoke again... We slowly learned to farm the land, to catch the wind and collect the sun.

Student Read Aloud

29 The Owl and the Clown

sound: ow as in how	special words: made flew mean corner four laugh whole
-----------------------------------	--

“Do you mean it made you laugh?” asked Mum.
“A bit. But it made me think, too.”

In the play, there were four children. They
were called Andy, May, Kathy and Carlo.

Then the owl with the big wings flew down
again. Owl said, “No, you did it, Carlo. You!”
Then he flew back to his corner.

“The whole play went like this,” said Meg. “I
laughed when the mean things were done to
the clown. But the owl scared me a bit.”

Student Read Aloud

30 Jessica

sound: ee as in tree n't as in didn't	special words: toy really answer about son replied because
--	---

She told her mother how she felt about toys...
 "I just don't like my toys!" But her mum
 answered, "I don't have time at the moment."

She went to stay with a friend of her mum's.
 The friend had a son called Lee.

"There are no boys or girls in my street, and I
 really like having someone to talk to!"

"But you may not like being with me very much
 because I have no toys for you to play with."
 Jessica looked so happy. "I don't like toys one
 little bit," she replied.

Student Read Aloud

21x Living on Puddle Farm

sound: -le as in apple	special words: pony ride rope
---------------------------	----------------------------------

There are seven farm dogs, a flock of chickens and a pony as well.

Then we saddle him up, so I can go for a ride. It is so much fun to sit in the saddle and ride Chester across the farmland.

She is a bit too small to ride Chester by herself. So, when she wants to have a ride, I hold on to Chester with a rope.

The pups got bigger and wanted to play. They left their mum's box.
Stumble...wobble...tumble...bump...all the way across the room.

Student Read Aloud

22x Camping at Wither Bay

sound: th as in that	special words: other mother
-------------------------	--------------------------------

Wither Bay Camp is not far from Uncle Harry's farm. He is my mother's brother.

After that, we pretend that the crabs and starfish are visiting from other planets.

But my mother says lollipops are bad for you. She gets cross at Uncle Harry. Mum wants us to have snacks like apples, nuts and carrots.

We press the sand into big, smooth humps. Then we gather lots of glossy shells to stick onto the sandy humps.



Student Read Aloud

23x Nonna Maria

sound: -ed as in landed	special words: life new Saturday
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In Italy you say *nonna* for *grandmother*. So I call her Nonna Maria.

Whenever I visit Nonna Maria, she tells me what life was like when she was a little girl in Italy.

On Saturdays, Maria's dad lifted the boxes of olives up into the cart and took them to the market to sell.

She can fix plants and animals when they get sick. She just loves fixing. She does not like spending money on new stuff!

Student Read Aloud

24x Hardy the Stray Kitten

sound: -ed as in stayed	special words: were father
----------------------------	-------------------------------

When Hardy was little, he lived with his mother, his brothers and his sister under a farmhouse.

Then he saw that there were other kittens and a mother cat too. Jack got up and told his father.

Seeing Jack upset, his father felt sad too. Jack's father said that the best thing to do was to deliver the family of cats to the animal shelter.

But, after several weeks of living in the animal shelter, they began to relax and seemed pleased to be there.

Student Read Aloud

25x Matilda

sound: -ed as in looked	special words: word wild where
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What Matilda loved, best of all, was being with animals. Being with animals helped her to feel happy and relaxed.

When her family went camping, Matilda met a wild kookaburra and a wild lizard.

She sat still to see what the foxes did, and where they went. Matilda saw that they ran softly but quickly.

A kookaburra came to her, then a kangaroo. She did not say a word. She just sat there, looking at the animals. She was trying to understand them.

Student Read Aloud

26x The Twins

sound: tch as in catch	special words: tiny school two watch
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I am not going to have just one brother and sister; I am going to have two new siblings.

Mum and Dad have named the twins Kofi and Femi. I get to hold Kofi and I watch him stretch his tiny arms and legs.

But one or two days a week, Dad picks me up from school, and we go to the park to kick the football on the way home.

Kofi looks happy when I sing silly songs. And Femi grins when I play peek-a-boo. They are lots more fun now.

Student Read Aloud

27x The Athletics Carnival

sound: th as in think	special word: class
--------------------------	------------------------

Ethan had been practising high jump. He was practising for an athletics carnival at school.

Ethan reflected, “The class has never practised high jump, so everyone is a beginner. If I try, maybe I can be as good as the others...”

Mr Atherton and Ms Smith dragged out the big mat. They set up the bar. It was time to start. Ethan was feeling jittery.

“What?” His mum looked astonished. “Yep,” said Ethan, “I came second in high jump at the athletics carnival today.”

Student Read Aloud

28x What *Can* I Do?

sound: dge as in bridge	special words: ask more
----------------------------	----------------------------

I like dropping things from the bridge and watching them splash in the water below.

“Oscar, you cannot play with the tools unless I am with you!” “Can you help me then, Dad?” I ask.

I get jars and packets out of the fridge and mix them all together in a big pot. The result is mushy, green sludge.

I can see that Mum and Dad are trying to say yes more often. They do give me more freedom. I am being more sensible, and it’s fun to do more of the things I want to do!

Student Read Aloud

29x Dragon Magic

sounds: ang as in bang eng as in length ong as in long ung as in lungs	special words: know young
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I had been longing for this night. I felt ready. I wanted to know what my spell was going to be.

Lengths of golden rope marked out the spot. Splendid red silk hung from the trees.

The songs sped up. Some dragons looked to the sky as they sang. Others flung flower petals at me.

It takes several summers and winters for young dragons to develop perfect control of their power. This is what the dragon elders say.

Student Read Aloud

30x The Long Trek

sound: al as in always	special words: fire sore before
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Both kids loved going camping and they always begged to go back to Bald Hill Camp.

But before long, the track got very steep. Their legs were getting sore, and they stopped for a drink.

“Let’s cross the creek and take that track,” said Angus.

“Alright,” Hana replied happily.

Until, there it was, in the shadowy light of the evening – the camp fire! How happy they were to be back. They had hot milk with a choc-chip muffin, and went to bed.

Student Read Aloud

31 Kate and Mate

sounds: a-e as in cake ou as in out	special words: any many magic birthday head ghost
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Kate loved to do magic tricks. She invented many of them herself. Her friends often heard her call out, “Come and look!”

Sometimes, when they looked at her, she didn’t have any legs! Sometimes her head seemed to be missing!

Kate’s dad’s name was Bob. It was Bob’s birthday. He was fifty. He baked a round cake to have with his friends.

“What’s up Dad?” she said. “Have you seen a ghost?”

Dad frowned. “I have seen that robot. I saw it take my cake — the one I baked. I want it back in the house. And I want it now!”

Student Read Aloud

32 The Boat

sounds: oa as in boat u as in bush	special words: squeal near aboard music idea through wonderful finally
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They found an old rowing boat. It was near their tent, under a bush on the river bank.

“Yes! Yes!” squealed Amber. She was delighted at this idea. Old Toad gave a croak.

They floated the boat, and Jeremy called, “All aboard!” They travelled through many wonderful lands.

They heard the beautiful music of crickets and bees. And always the wind blew their ship to wonderful ports. Finally, their bush holiday was over.

Student Read Aloud

33 On the Hill

sound: i-e as in bike	special words: turn juice know great curling blue
--------------------------	--

“Well, one thing I love,” said Jeremy, curling up his toes, “is sitting by a fire on a cold day. I love to feel it warm me, and I love looking at the flames.”

“They can be such beautiful colours: sometimes red, sometimes gold, sometimes pink, sometimes yellow, sometimes even blue. And I love the way they go flick, flick, flicker, flick.”

“It’s my turn now,” said Joe, “to say what I like. I love to munch ripe red apples full of juice.”

“You know, Joe, this is really fantastic,” said Jeremy. “It’s great sitting on this hill and talking about life – and all the things we like.”

Student Read Aloud

34 The Cat and the Fish

sound: o-e as in note	special words: wrote wrong once thought would could should
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Once upon a time there was a boy cat called Bloke. Bloke was asleep. His friend Hope was a girl dog.

Hope wanted the bone, but she thought it would be wrong to take the fish from the tank in Bloke's home.

Bloke was very keen to reach the fish and was getting some rope. Hope thought they should do something else. "Hey, Bloke!" she called. "Come and smell this rose."

Bloke and Hope ran home again. Bloke's owner wrote a note. Now they could get the cans. Hope loved the bone and Bloke loved the cat food.

Student Read Aloud

35 Dolly Duck

sound: ea as in head	special words: used more knew walk kind
------------------------------------	---

Dolly was a duck. She had a white head and a brown body. Dolly liked toast. She used to dip it in water before she ate it.

As Dolly walked away, the thread became longer and longer. The sleeve looked dreadful.

But Pushkin followed the thread. It led all the way to Dolly's yard. There she was, upset, sitting on her nest. Pushkin was a kind man and did not yell at her.

They didn't know that she really liked toast more, until one day they saw her pecking some at the kitchen door. Then they knew. After that, they always cooked the bread for her.

Student Read Aloud

36 Captain Hornblower

sound: or as in sort	special words: sailor wait eat sea tied first other
------------------------------------	--

His first name was Gordon. He had been on ships for many years. He became an expert sailor, the best sort.

His ship would stop at interesting towns and let people go ashore for three or four hours to explore the shops and other sights.

One morning, Lord Hornblower was sitting on his porch. Mrs Hornblower kept saying, "Gordon, eat your pork with your fork, not with your fingers."

Lord Hornblower simply adored going to sea. Sometimes he felt bored while waiting for his next shipping job.

He had a sailor's coat which he liked to put on. He tied his special coat with a cord.

Student Read Aloud

37 The Flying Doctor Service

sound: ew as in crew	special words: service work station nurse mind touch people injured accident hour worried
------------------------------------	---

Some people live on farms and faraway places. What happens when they are very sick or badly injured?

Doctor John Hewson worked for the Flying Doctor Service in the Northern Territory.

The news of his accident had been sent by radio from Lewis's family. They lived on a distant cattle station in the far north-west of the Northern Territory.

The doctor grew worried. He knew that there were only a few hours left before dark.

Just as night was falling, the plane touched down.

Nurse Joan had some jelly beans for Lewis to chew, to make him feel better. This took his mind off his sore arm.

Student Read Aloud

38 David the Duck

sound: ie as in pie	special words: behind imagine teased mother father surprise caught enough
-----------------------------------	--

David went towards the quacking. Soon he realised that it was coming from behind the bush.

There, to his surprise, he spied his brother Jordan with his feet caught in a trap, crying bitterly, "I'm going to die! I'm going to die!"

It was the loudest quack you could imagine. Way back at the farmyard, Mother Duck pricked up her ears.

"I tried to open the trap but my beak is not strong enough. That's why I quacked for help."

No one ever teased David again about his loud quack. "Good boy, David," said Mother Duck and Father Duck.

Student Read Aloud

39 Silas the Cat

sound: oi as in coin	special words: cover roar mice trouble careful gone move quiet ache
------------------------------------	--

Once upon a time there were three sweet little mice called Matthew, Matilda and Michelle.

One day, all their food was gone. They very quietly lifted the little mouse house door and peeped out into the kitchen.

“I’ll creep across the floor as carefully as I can, run up the leg of the table, and slip onto the table top.”

Silas slept on, his paws covering his ears.

Then the trouble started. Matilda slipped in a little bit of oil. Her tail sent some coins flying onto the floor. Clink! Clink! Clink! Silas leapt up roaring.

Her legs began to ache terribly, but she knew that any move could mean death.

Student Read Aloud

40 Shawn and the Go-Kart

sounds: ea as in heat ur as in burn air as in hair	special words: engine celebrate manager race junior fortunately half
--	---

The manager had to read the list of races for the day. “Yes,” he told Claire, “there is a race for beginners at one o’clock.”

An hour and a half after that, he was about to get into the seat of a go-kart. He could feel the heat of the engine.

He had a real flair. The manager asked him to come back again the next Thursday – to drive with a team of junior champions.

The manager asked Claire if Shawn could join the club. She agreed. That evening, Shawn and Claire celebrated with a feast of peaches and cream.

Student Read Aloud

41 Timothy Comes to Stay

sounds: u-e as in cute ue as in blue g as in cage	special words: old-fashioned brought two early metres country minute Melbourne towards caused
---	--

Luke played the flute and Susan sang. They lived in Melbourne in a cute little old-fashioned brick house.

Then, one day in June, the postman brought them a letter from Timothy Blue. They were very excited. Sue kept pointing at the page.

The next day, the day of the visit, they woke up very early. There were six hours to wait!

Then at last it was twelve-o'clock. Fifteen minutes later, still no Tim. Now they started to feel worried.

This idea made Sue feel better. They hopped into their orange car and headed along the road towards Tim's place in the country.

"Don't breathe the fumes," said Tim, worried that he had caused all this trouble. He could smell the fumes two metres away.

Student Read Aloud

42 The Bear Next Door

sounds: ai as in rain kn as in knee ph as in photo	special words: Queensland stared face disappearing miserable favourite although noticed group actually
--	---

Two bears, called Philip and Faith Bear, lived in a country town in Queensland, on the main street near the train line. Philip and Faith had never actually met Brown Bear, although they had seen him often enough.

He never smiled, never talked, and always stared at them while they played. If they stared back, Brown Bear ran away.

There were huge puddles everywhere and they couldn't wait to play their favourite game, "Who can jump the biggest puddle?"

They hurried to see what was happening and saw a group of four or five bigger bears disappearing around a corner.

But Philip and Faith had not noticed Brown Bear's miserable face with tears rolling down. Nor had they noticed that one knee was bleeding from a scratch where it hit the drain.

Student Read Aloud

43 Ling Goes to China

sounds: are as in care oy as in boy	special words: deciding curious Sydney nothing sauce China Chinese
--	---

Ling had been in Australia for only two years. She came from China. The Doyles knew that sometimes, when there was nothing much to do, Ling felt sad.

After about four months, the Doyles' kitchen shelf had soy sauce, black bean sauce, oyster sauce and chilli sauce.

One sunny spring morning, Clare and Floyd were deciding what to do for the day, when a loud banging sounded on their door.

The Doyles went to Sydney Airport to wave Ling goodbye. But it felt really strange. Ling now looked sad. What was there to say?

After about twenty minutes, Ling started to look around her. She was curious about the other passengers... Some passengers were old, some were young, some were Chinese, some were American.

Student Read Aloud

44 Cindy's Trip to Perth

sounds:	special words:
c as in ice er as in fern	Adelaide world couple special believe always

Tracy and Cindy lived in Adelaide. Across the road lived Bernard. The girls had become friends with Bernard long ago.

Tracy was glad to have Bernard for a friend, because Cindy was going away for a couple of weeks.

They had a meal at Bernard's place. Bernard served fish and lettuce. Getting to know each other was special.

Bernard quietly brought her some tea with ice, which he knew she liked. Cindy just grunted and Bernard couldn't really see her face... Tracy had always been her best friend.

Tracy and Bernard couldn't believe their ears. Was this their best friend Cindy talking? First she was sad and quiet. Now she was angry — what was the world coming to?

Student Read Aloud

45 Sir John and the Bear Brothers

sounds: ir as in bird gu as in guess	special words: delicious Brisbane cafe autumn parents menu comfortable
---	--

One autumn, when the leaves were falling from the trees, Patrick Bear and his brother Guy were travelling on the bus into Brisbane city.

“Well... okay,” he said with a smile. They chose an outdoor cafe nearby... Patrick and Guy waited for him to tell them his name. But their guest just looked at the menu .

The Bear brothers couldn’t believe that any parents would call their baby “Sir John”, but they thought it would be rude to say so.

But Sir had noticed Patrick’s angry face. Sir felt uncomfortable, and mumbled, “Maybe I should be getting along now...”

Sir John really enjoyed Guy’s soup. He gobbled it down, making quite a lot of noise. Then he lifted his bowl and drank what was left. “Delicious!” he said, holding up the bowl for some more.

Student Read Aloud

46 Arthur and the Crayfish

sound: ire as in fire	special words: Murray grey surface pause quarters build seize month heart litre piece rough
-------------------------------------	---

One summer morning by the Murray River, Arthur the drover was camped with his tent... Arthur's horse slowly chewed her way through the rough grass over the fence.

He kept silent, although his heart was beating with excitement. There was a large grey water rat, dragging the unwilling crayfish to its doom!

Arthur admired the furry hunter, who must have dived to the bed of the river, seized the cray, and held his breath till he reached the surface... He was about three quarters of the way across.

He had to build a fire. Luckily he had a large pot – ten-litre size – just right for cooking crays... He was going to eat the entire beast, but something made him pause and think.

Arthur put some pieces of cray into a bag and made his way across the water... The old man told this story at least fifteen times that month.

Student Read Aloud

47 The New Year Party

sound: wor as in work	special words: wandered Hobart Michael tyres audience suitable
--------------------------	---

Hamish and Michael lived in Hobart. On New Year's Day, the first of January, they went to a party.

He urged everyone to come outside and watch him drive. The group followed, and soon saw Alex drive off at high speed – with a squeal of tyres.

Alex saw that he was losing his audience. He decided not to drive away anymore, but just to drive back and forth in front of the house.

Nobody could find anything suitable. By this time, Alex was actually screaming. Things were getting worse.

Just then, three little children wandered down the street. They were carrying balloons. Alex asked for their balloons, but the little ones wanted to keep them.

Student Read Aloud

48 The Inconvenient Puncture

sound: ure as in puncture	special words: television pollution famous science bicycle university usual shriek
---	--

Professor Emily Greenhope had become famous for her discovery of several plants that were thought to be extinct... Jason was studying first year science.

The figures showed that pollution was getting out of control and supplies of fuel were running out. Petrol was so expensive that most people were riding bicycles.

“But it’s just possible,” continued the professor, “that there may be some bankweed still surviving near Dark Water Creek, only thirty-eight kilometres from the university.”

He had been in such a hurry, he wasn’t riding as carefully as usual... But, oh no, he glanced at his bike and realised the front wheel had a puncture.

“You found it!” she shrieked, and hugged him. He wasn’t expecting that, and forgot to hug her back. That evening, the professor was being interviewed on television – next to Jason.

Student Read Aloud

49 The Grass is Greener

sounds: ous as in famous ious as in devious wa as in wash	special words: preparation explanation pension concession qualify bought cautious scene
---	--

But she still needed years of schooling before she would be qualified for a computing job.

Concession prices were for pensioners and school children over thirteen... On the day, she bought a ticket for the very first show and couldn't wait for it to start.

They didn't seem to be cautious at all – there was not even a net beneath them. But she knew they were very serious about safety.

They were humorous too – everyone laughed. After the show, Mary was desperately curious about life behind the scenes.

All she could see were circus people working quietly, cleaning rows of seats, raking sand and sawdust, washing cages, and feeding animals... “For every hour in the show, there's another six hours of practice and preparation.”

Mary was grateful for the explanation and wandered down to the beach.

Student Read Aloud

50 The Wisdom of Solomon

sounds: wr as in write tion as in fraction sion as in pension	special words: sword court woman women
---	--

When there were serious disputes among the people, it was his job to be the judge and make decisions – to decide who was wrong and who was right.

One morning, the court of King Solomon was in session... Two women came to him, causing a disruption. One was holding a baby wrapped in white cloth.

“Silence,” commanded the king. “I shall hear one woman first and then the other.” One said, “O King, I live in the same house with this woman.”

Solomon turned to one of the guards, saying, “Bring me a sword.” The sword was brought.

The people who had been watching this case gasped with horror. They had never heard their king command such a cruel action.

Soon the whole population heard what had happened in the court of King Solomon.

Student Read Aloud

51 Paul's Principle

sound: au as in Paul	special words: company particularly young cautious opportunity suspicious ghastly behaviour harmony enormous anxious desperate
------------------------------------	--

Kay was nearly eight. To Paul she seemed enormous. Sometimes she would get furious over small things and tell him off.

Paul learnt to be cautious in the company of his big brother and sister... This was particularly true when it came to playing with Kay's and Ross's toys.

Naturally the safest solution was to wait till Ross and Kay were out. Although Paul usually felt anxious about their possible return, he nevertheless decided that the risk was worth it.

Whenever he could, Paul seized the opportunity to command Ross's space craft. Destination? Mars, Venus, or some sector of the galaxy where no one has gone before.

Ross had grown suspicious of Paul. One ghastly day, Paul was caught in the act by a furious Ross.

The parents were desperate to bring peace and harmony into their children's play. As a result, they made a rule of household behaviour.

Paul made up his mind that if he should ever have sons or daughters of his own, he would have a rule that they treat each other kindly, right down to the youngest and smallest.

Student Read Aloud

52 The Dirt Track

sound: ought as in bought	special words: lounge precious silence shoulders exciting anxious successful disbelieving
---	---

Alistair was eleven. Hour after hour at weekends, he would sit in his lounge room, his eyes glued to the window.

When they raced, each fought desperately to win. Alistair just loved this. It was so exciting to watch.

Screaming engines. Wow! Suddenly... a terrifying screech of metal, and awful crunching sound, then total silence.

Alistair couldn't believe his eyes. Jeff and Cam were uninjured, although this seemed impossible. He watched as they looked anxiously over their motorbikes.

Again the boys tugged and tugged unsuccessfully. Alistair could see them trying out different ideas to get the motorbikes apart, but none of them worked.

Alistair believed that he could help. He had a precious tool kit bought by his dad... "I'll help you," he announced. The boys stood up and looked disbelievingly at the eleven year old.

Cam's father grabbed his boy by the shoulders and shouted, "I thought I told you not to muck around with motorbikes when you ought to be doing your Saturday morning jobs!"

This incident was the beginning of Alistair's long career of riding motorbikes. It was also the beginning of a firm friendship between Alistair and the two older boys.

Student Read Aloud

53 Athlete Pete

sounds: e-e as in Pete u as in music	special words: honest sympathise ancient twilight pursuit conscientious gymnasium coherent gruelling eccentric
---	--

They always seemed to be about virtues: honesty, integrity, compassion, perseverance, commitment, and so on... Hugh knew that he was considered a good and conscientious pupil, and usually he was.

“Perhaps they should channel their energies into athletic pursuits! With all those legs they must be, or at least could be, champion athletes.”

Now his mind raced. Ideas came in from left, right and centre. Now to write them into something coherent.

However, I did hear once of an eccentric centipede who made her home on a kerosene tin, which was placed on a concrete slab in a hot, somewhat ugly corner of an old garage.

“Indeed, I sympathise with your love of music. However I am the chief. I have long experience. I judge that, with your build, together with four weeks of serious training at the gymnasium, you would do well for us.”

Then, in his mind’s eye, he saw the gruelling weeks of training. No, he couldn’t accept. It would kill him.

Having performed this great duty, Pete felt that his life was more meaningful. He had contributed to the life of the whole centipede tribe.

These days, Pete is ancient (one hundred and eight in centipede years). In the twilight, young centipedes often gather round to hear his stories of centipede life.

Student Read Aloud

54 Meeting the Challenge

sound: a as in path	special words: precarious conscious bruise stomach triumph squad efficiency quality manoeuvre area apparently immediately humour Homo sapiens
-----------------------------------	---

“Is that the eleventh or twelfth bruise on my bottom?” she moaned.
“Nothing ventured, nothing gained,” she muttered through gritted teeth.

This triumph was now three days past... It bothered Judy that the sky was overcast and threatening, and that the weather forecast warned of the danger of high winds in mountain areas.

He always said that *homo sapiens* should use their extraordinary gift of brain power to solve problems. Inspired by this thought, Judy immediately became the problem solver.

For Judy and her companions, their memory of the remainder of that day had always retained a dreamlike quality – a scene from an adventure movie.

With remarkable efficiency, emergency services swung into operation – helicopters in the air, police on the ground, and the dog squad for good measure.

After a precarious and lengthy manoeuvre, the helicopter positioned itself so that a crew member could descend to Judy’s father. He was only half-conscious and suffering from hypothermia.

His body was cold and grey. He was scarcely breathing. Judy felt petrified at the sight of him. Then an unexpected thing happened.

The fact that she had apparently remained so calm, kept them calm. “Just as well no one had x-ray vision,” Judy chuckled later to herself, when her sense of humour had returned. “I’m glad they couldn’t see the butterflies in my stomach.”

Student Read Aloud

55 Transported

sounds: ear as in earth y as in myth	special words: beautiful buildings cello colours decisively capsule celebration Beethoven
From as early as he could remember, Chris had been learning the cello... He liked the sounds it made – deep, strong and beautiful.	
At first, everything was dark grey and black. Next, outlines of trees and buildings became obvious... Finally, as the sun rose higher, warm golden colours appeared.	
It formed the shape of a cylinder. This was most peculiar. Then the strange light weaved its way across the room towards him, slowly but decisively.	
Chris's capsule glided through the wall of his house as though no wall existed. Then up and away; the city swirled underneath him and was gone!	
"I'm supposed to be feeling terrified and doing something about defending myself," he thought, "but I've never felt as safe as I do right now." Meanwhile his cello was triumphantly playing one of his favourites, Beethoven's <i>Song of Joy</i>.	
Still the oppressive silence weighed heavily upon him. Chris yearned for the stillness to be broken. His breath was being squeezed from him.	
A thunderous peal of symphonic notes burst forth, harmoniously, joyfully. Chris felt transported. A feeling of warmth and celebration wrapped itself around him.	
Chris found himself back in his practice room. Everything looked remarkably normal. But he felt a new courage. He would never be the same again.	

Student Read Aloud

56 David and Goliath

sound: i as in find	special words: occurrence warrior soldiers armour honour courage fields poured seized quality descend
David worked alongside his older brothers. He went with them into the fields to help guard their father's flocks.	
"Please go to the camp, take this bread to your brothers, and find out what is going on." Tears poured down Jesse's wrinkled old face as he watched his youngest son depart towards the field of battle.	
David found the enemy armies camped on the tops of two hills, facing each other. The noise was overwhelming. He jostled his way through the ranks, trying to find his brothers.	
"This battle is for a soldier who is strong, courageous, experienced and wise. It will be a trial of all these qualities."... "Young David, I admire your courage."	
The king commanded that his own armour and sword be brought for David to wear. But David, who knew in his heart that all people must fight their own battles in their own way, graciously refused.	
He came to a stream and bent down. He selected five smooth stones and dropped them into his bag. A hush descended on the two camps.	
David seized the giant's own sword and, with one swift blow, put an end to the mighty fighter. The greatest warrior of the Philistines had been killed... Shocked by this unexpected occurrence, the Philistines turned and ran.	
In time, David was given command over one of the king's armies. He was widely honoured for his bravery and achievements.	

Student Read Aloud

57 Excavations

sounds: war as in warm o as in only	special words: wholly whether courage archaeology mountain ancient scholar efficiently camouflage fascinated awkward essential
---	--

Cambridge University – Department of Archaeology, Excavation site #17, Old Volcano Road, Svensen Fiord, Norberg.

There are other writings too – poetry, philosophy and so forth. Our amazing good luck is that the casket has been wholly preserved.

Translation work has begun. Progress is slow, and it will be several years before scholars of ancient Icelandic completely decipher the texts.

Carlo and I are absorbed, fascinated and inspired by their lives. What astonishes us is their dedication to what some scholars translate as “the courage of love” and others translate as “the love of courage”.

Our day of rest began with a peaceful dawn. It is essential for the health of mind and body.

In fact, they had ropes tied under their arms. These ropes were camouflaged to be the same colour as the mountain. There was a ledge at the front of the tunnel.

No sooner had the taunts reached Blagward’s ears, than he left his two prisoners, Thum and Glor, in his lair. He’d catch this next lot and soon show them whether he was smart or not!

Blagward normally flew with ease and agility, but in the thick vegetation of the mountainside, he was somewhat stumbling and awkward.

Working speedily and efficiently, we threw down a net. The terrified young prisoners climbed out. Then, half pulling and half carrying them, we made it to the mountain entrance.

Student Read Aloud

58 Andrew and Diana

sound: ie as in chief	special words: regular valued assumed organised weird tongue introduced enthusiastic irritably heavily
-------------------------------------	--

Up to this time, Andrew didn't particularly think about life. He just lived it. He had a mum and a dad and his chief memory was of a new baby sister.

"G'day little mate! I'll show you where to go. It's not too good being lost on your first day, is it?" Andrew felt a sense of relief as the man took him by the hand.

It was easier for Andrew to put up with the kids – and the teachers – thinking he was a bit weird, than for him to admit to having no dad on his first day.

Each day after school, Andrew played there with some high school students. He liked them and they liked him. His tongue certainly worked freely at these times.

Andrew introduced Diana, and his mum said how pleased she was that they lived close by. When his mum went inside, Diana said, "Your mum's so friendly. Is your dad here?"

She was nice – cheery, kind, enthusiastic and energetic. Andrew couldn't believe what was happening. Diana simply assumed he was a regular guy and included him in everything.

"Andrew doesn't play," said Billy irritably.

"Of course he does. He's fantastic!" Diana said. Billy looked at Andrew in disbelief. She threw the basketball to Andrew, not giving him time to think. He caught it expertly.

A few minutes later, six of them, including Andrew and Diana, were heavily involved in a game. Andrew slotted in, just like that! "Zone defence! Zone!" he yelled.

The players were enthusiastic and dedicated. In a very short time, it was as though Andrew had always been an accepted and valued member of the team.

Student Read Aloud

59 Lost and Won

sound: o as in won	special words: official collision vaguely knowledge circumstances unison dumbfounded echoed region champion mischievous
----------------------------------	---

Top runners from every district were vying to be zone champion, the fastest girl in the whole region – an area comprising hundreds of schools.

The starter's gunshot echoed across the park, and they were off! Some bolted ahead. Some got blocked. But most moved in unison like a flock of birds.

"The flag lady is talking to me," she said to herself dumbfounded, "even though I'm way past her."

She was almost running into them and had to sidestep to avoid a collision... But she was now about tenth. "Always make the best of whatever circumstances you are in," she could hear her mother's often-stated advice.

He sounded as if he were fully satisfied with that knowledge – as if it did not matter what the rest of the world thought. But the brothers were not so easily satisfied.

"She's a cheat!" declared Nathan angrily, referring to the official on the hill. "She just wanted her school to win!"

In a daze, Mary vaguely saw and heard the trophy being awarded to another girl.

After this, she was more careful not to believe just anything that was said about people. She became especially careful not to automatically believe gossip about her friends.

He saw how loyal she was to him – how hard it was for others to mischievously make Mary think bad things about him. One evening after dinner, Mary said to her husband, "You know I always used to call that zone final competition *the race I won and lost*. But now, when I realise how much I have learned from the whole thing, I think I will call it *the race I lost and won!*"

Student Read Aloud

60 The Facts of Life

sound: ch as in chord	special words: devastated succeeded peculiar determined poem extraordinary traveller journey appreciate inferior creature jealousy emotional occupy
-------------------------------------	---

As Nicholas's name was called, he rose nervously – yet almost defiantly. He was determined to make his speech a good one.

The poem had an extraordinary effect on Nicholas. Long after the teacher had finished, Nicholas sat anchored to his chair, the words of the poem echoing in his head.

“Why,” asked another traveller, “do you waste the last of your energy, old man? Since your life's journey is about to end, what's the point of using your remaining time to build a bridge which you will never use?”

Yet, she took over his house, his parents' hearts, she used all his things, and meanwhile she treated him like some kind of inferior creature. Nicholas was hurt and angry.

Yet over the months and through all this emotional turmoil, from somewhere deep inside, the word *jealousy* struck a chord in his memory.

He'd been to the football. He was feeling in a great mood because the Eagles had won. Astrid for once wasn't occupying his mind.

Astrid had been devastated by her father's prison sentence... There had been an appeal against her father's sentence, but no one knew how long it would be until he was free. Now the appeal had succeeded.

Astrid's peculiar behaviour at Nicholas's place stemmed from the stress she was under... Nicholas felt a tightness in his chest as his parents told him how much they appreciated his decent treatment of Astrid during this awkward and painful time.

“*Your* journey will end with the ending day; You never again must pass this way; You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide – Why build you the bridge at the eventide?”