



I spy with my  
little eye...



I spy

Written by Jacqui Edwards. Illustrated by Amber Edwards.



# Learning to read

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SPELD SA Phonic Books support the teaching of reading by using a structured synthetic phonics approach. They are designed to build on the pre-reading skills of oral language and phonological awareness needed for reading success. The books support the learning of letter-sounds and blending in a sequential phonic order, helping students to develop their independent decoding skills. The books also contain limited high frequency words that need to be taught before reading the book. The questions and activities focus on increasing a student's vocabulary and fluency and encourage the student to make deeper connections with the author's message.

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## I spy (126 words)

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Before reading the book, use the practice page to:

### 1. Revise the alternative spellings for sounds

### 2. Teach the blending of letter-sounds in regular words

The student points to each letter or combination of letters, saying the sound they represent. Swipe left to right under the letters, saying the sounds quickly and smoothly together to read the word. *e.g. l-ay-s is 'lays'; s-p-y is 'spy'; l-ea-ve-s is 'leaves'; b-r-igh-t is 'bright'; b-oy is 'boy'.*

During single word practice, check that the student understands the meaning of the word.

If the student is having difficulty hearing the word when blending:

- repeat the sounds more than once in succession to help the student 'hear' the word
- model stretching the sounds together without pauses, *e.g. nnnnniiiiip, is 'nip'*
- use letter tiles and push them together while saying the sounds.

### 3. Teach the high frequency words

Tell the student the words and determine any 'tricky' parts by breaking up the word into its sounds. Many high frequency words will be able to be sounded out later as the student learns more sounds and how they are written.

## Reading tips

A combination of letters can represent a sound, such as in boat (b-oa-t), song (s-o-ng), fern (f-er-n), shout (sh-ou-t), or night (n-igh-t).

A sound can be written as different letters or letter combinations, such as the sound /ai/ in 'rain', 'play', 'make', the sound /ee/ in 'sleep', 'heat', 'happy' and the sound /ou/ in 'shout' and 'brown'.

A letter or letter combination can also represent different sounds, such as <ow> in 'how' and 'grow' or <y> in 'yellow', 'try' and 'mystery'.

Words can contain split vowel digraphs, such as in 'make', 'eve', 'bite', 'note' and 'tune'.

The suffix <ed> can represent the sound /d/ as in 'rubbed', /t/ as in 'packed' and /id/ as in 'landed'.

Words can contain schwa vowel sounds. The schwa is pronounced as an /uh/ sound, such as in, 'Nana', 'butter', 'across', 'the'. Explore with the student which part of the word has the schwa sound by breaking the word into its sounds. Take note of how the schwa sound is spelt.

## Practice page

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Set 9 includes words with alternate spellings for the sounds /ai/, /oi/, /i/, /ee/ and /ie/.

Practise blending sounds in words

<b>ay</b> /ai/	lays		
<b>oy</b> /oi/	boy	toy	
<b>ea</b> /ee/	leaves	eats	beak
<b>y</b> /ie/	spy	fly	
<b>igh</b> /ie/	bright		

Practise high frequency words

the	of	you	put
to	into	something	
little	eye	please	small
hatch	Oh		

# Vocabulary

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The words on this page can be used to help the student's comprehension before, during or after reading the book. Link the meanings of words with what the student already knows, show examples or have students act out the words.

- clues** – hints to solve the question
- spy** – watch or see secretly
- my little eye** – it rhymes with 'I spy' and is said as part of the game
- light** – not weighing much; opposite of heavy
- bright** – vibrant or vivid in colour; not dull
- hatch** – when an animal breaks out of an egg
- caterpillar** – a grub; a stage in the life cycle of a butterfly

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## Help with syllables

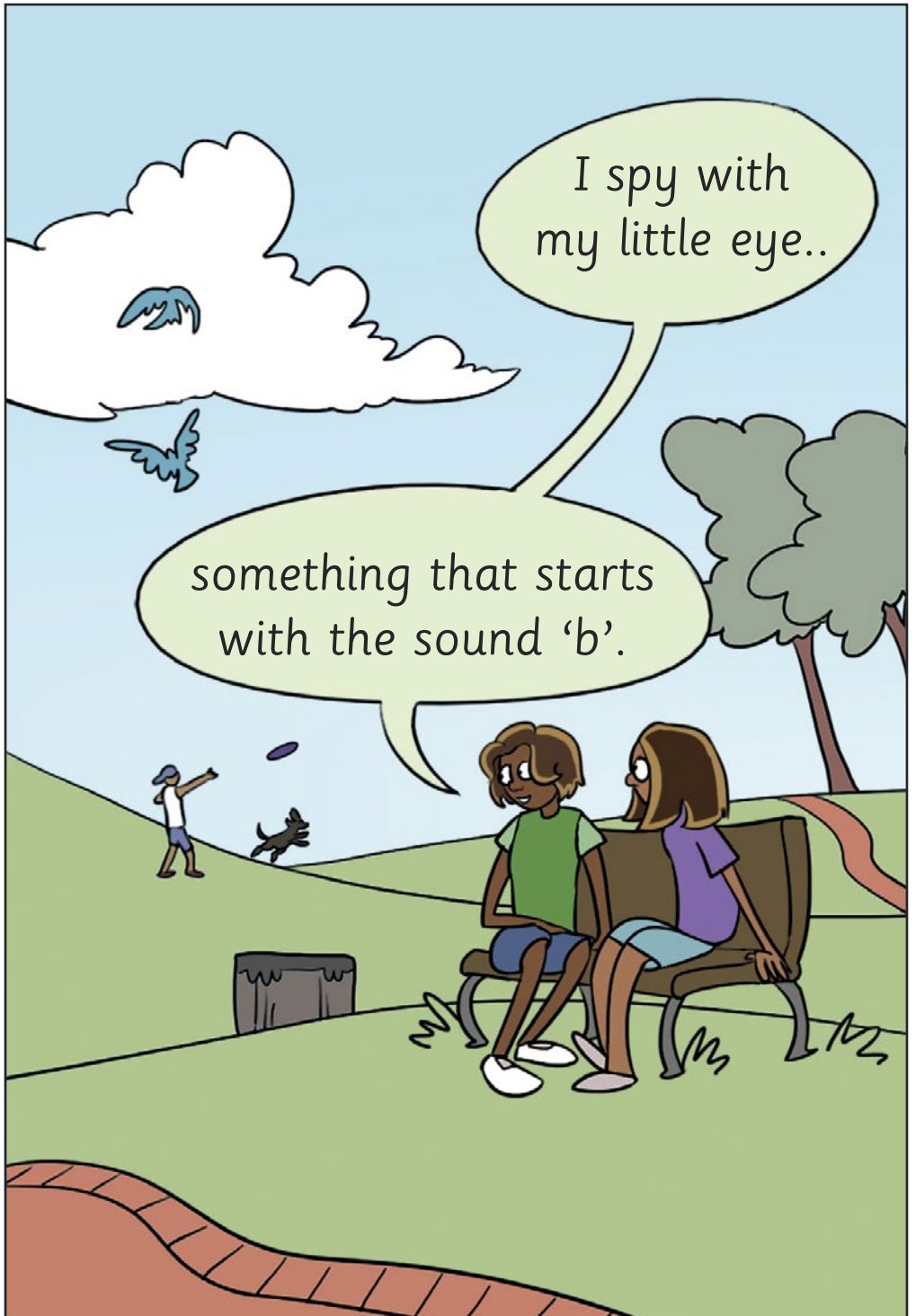
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butt/er/fly

some/thing

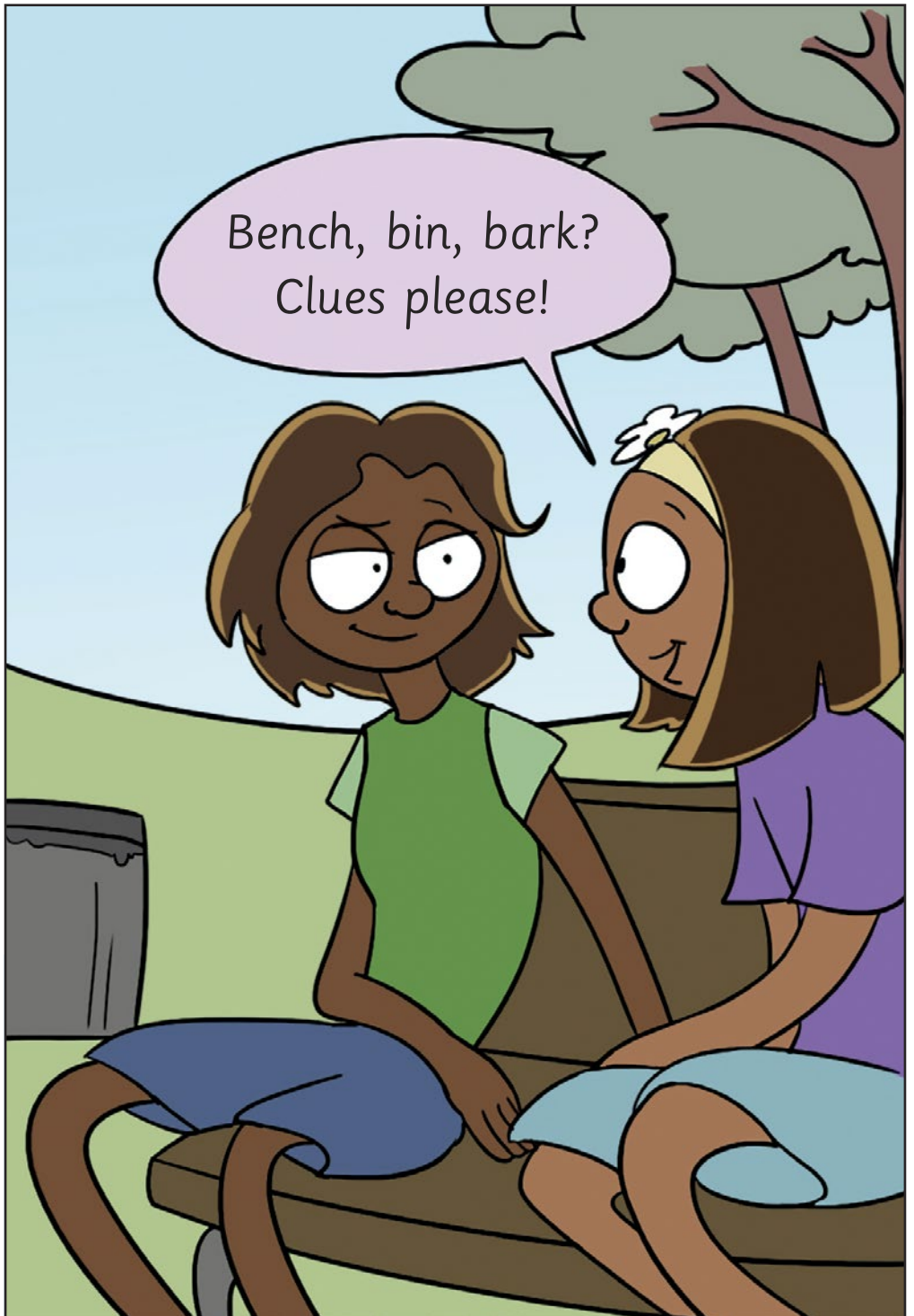
cat/er/pill/ars

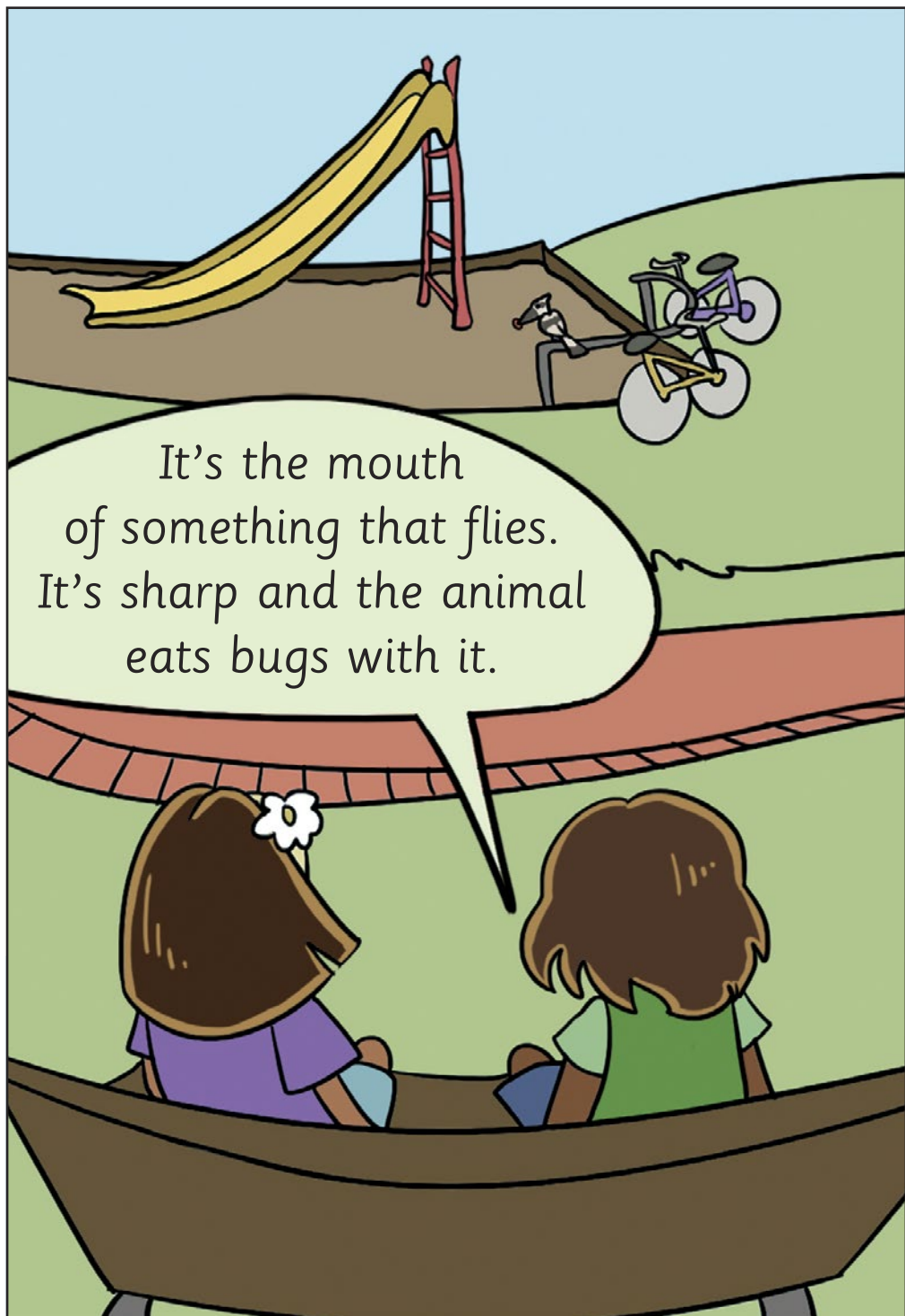
an/i/mals



I spy with  
my little eye..

something that starts  
with the sound 'b'.





It's the mouth  
of something that flies.  
It's sharp and the animal  
eats bugs with it.

A beak!

I spy with my little  
eye, something that starts  
with the sound 't'.

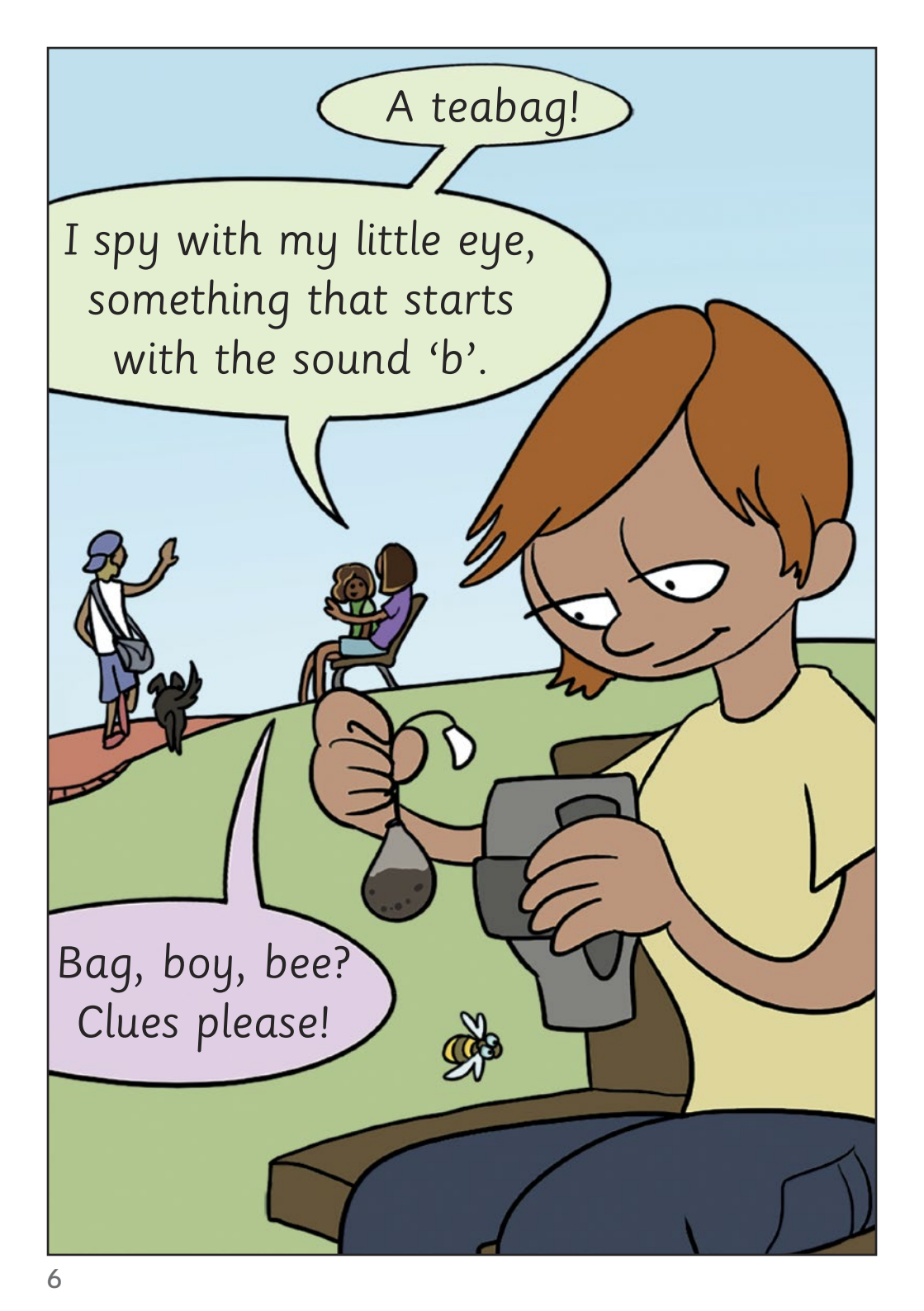


Tree, teeth, toy?  
Clues please!



It has leaves in it and it has a string. You put it in a cup or a mug to make a hot drink.



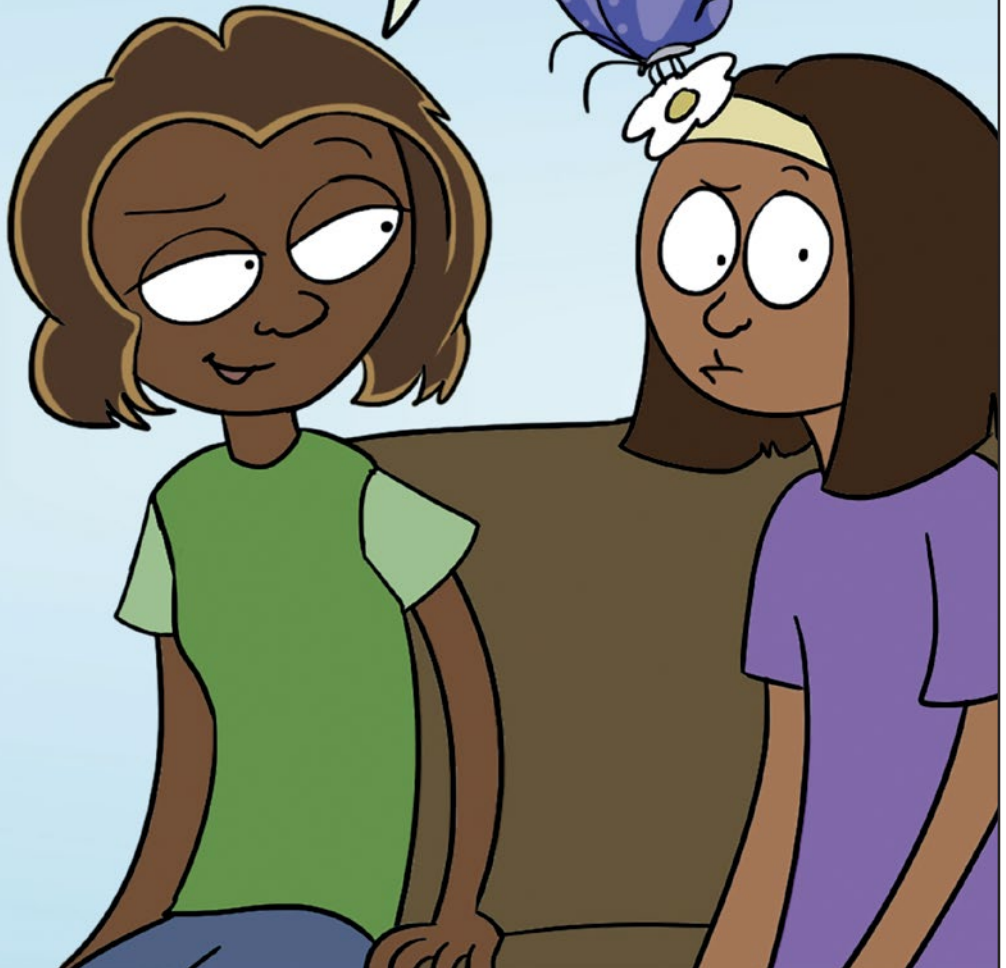


A teabag!

I spy with my little eye,  
something that starts  
with the sound 'b'.

Bag, boy, bee?  
Clues please!

It is small and light.  
It has bright spots and stripes  
on its wings. It lays its eggs  
on leaves that hatch into  
caterpillars.



Oh! It's a butterfly!



# From blending to fluency

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To develop fluency, the student needs to re-read the same book multiple times. Students might initially sound out every word and re-read every sentence but, with practice, blending will become more automatic. The fluency chart can be used to develop automaticity of blending by providing single word blending practice.

While reading the book, the student:

- blends the sounds of each unknown word in the sentence
- identifies and reads high frequency words
- re-reads the sentence from the beginning
- discusses the meaning of the sentence

When finished, the student needs to re-read the whole book and practise reading the same book until they can read at a steady pace with minimal sounding out.

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## Making connections - questions and discussion

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After the student has read the book, or the relevant page, ask them one or more of the following questions and discuss:

1. Explain how to play the game 'I spy' in your own words.
2. List the clues given to guess the word 'butterfly'. Would you describe it in the same way or differently?
3. The words 'spy' and 'eye' rhyme. Can you find another word in the story that rhymes with 'spy'? Can you find a word in the story that rhymes with these words: wing, boy, tea, light?
4. Find a word that has:
  - 3 syllables
  - 4 sounds
  - a digraph
  - a trigraph
  - 2 syllables
5. Choose something that you can see in the illustrations on a page in this book and play 'I spy' with a partner. Clues are not always included in the game, but it makes it quicker. Think of what clues you would give to help your partner if they needed it.

## Fluency chart

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or

tea

spy

has

that

beak

bugs

eats

lays

sharp

mouth

wings

clues

drink

light

spots

flies

string

bright

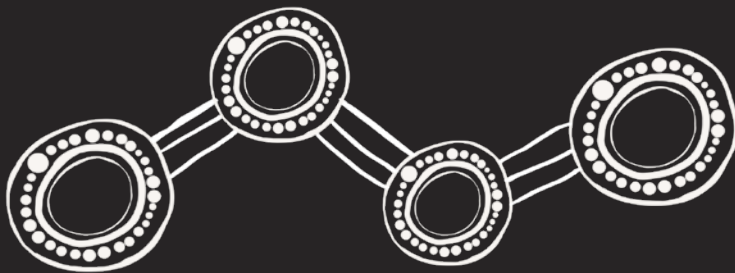
starts

animal

leaves

stripes

butterfly



## Cover artwork by Elizabeth Close

Elizabeth Close is an Anangu woman from the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara language groups in the APY Lands in outback South Australia. She was born in Adelaide and spent much of her upbringing in remote communities, learning her language and receiving cultural education.

*'This artwork represents the literacy and numeracy learning journey, and the path towards independent learning. The circles represent the collaborative learning and supports around children with specific learning difficulties, including children, schools, families, SPELD SA and others.'* **Elizabeth Close**, Artist.

## About this series

The SPELD SA Phonic Book Series complements the teaching of reading and writing using a structured synthetic phonics approach. SPELD SA aims to help Aboriginal students engage with phonic books by having characters, content and settings that reflect Aboriginal communities. In developing this series, SPELD SA has consulted with people who live and work in the Anangu, Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. We understand that the content, settings and characters may not reflect all Aboriginal people and their experiences but hope that Aboriginal students learning to read can find some familiarity in and connection with these books in their literacy journey.

Each set of books introduces a group of sounds for students to blend to read words. The books with a single star icon on the front cover contain a lower word count and less high frequency words. The books with two stars contain a higher word count, a greater number of high frequency words and/or more complex word structure. Please consider your student's ability when choosing a book for them to read. For a comprehensive explanation of the structure of the series, please refer to the SPELD SA website.

## Acknowledgments

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**Government of  
South Australia**

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SPELD SA is grateful for the contributions of volunteers for: consultation and project development; writing texts, comprehension questions, charts and games; illustrating, photography and graphic design; character development and cultural advice; speech and language advice. This is a wide community project, with talents, expertise and knowledge being shared for a common purpose – to improve literacy. Thank you all.

Book design by Tricia Smith Design, compilation and additional design by Janet Stone.

SPELD SA Phonic Books follow the sequence of letter-sounds used in the Jolly Phonics synthetic phonics program. The books can be used with other phonics programs.

- Set 1     **s, a, t, p, i, n**
- Set 2     **c, k, ck, e, h, r, m, d**
- Set 3     **g, o, u, l, f, b**
- Set 4     **ai, j, oa, ie, ee, or**
- Set 5     **z, w, ng, v, oo (book), oo (room)**
- Set 6     **y, x, sh, ch, th (think), th (that)**
- Set 7     **qu, ou, oi, ue, er, ar**
- Set 8     **y (sunny), a (apron), a-e (cake), e (female), e-e (eve), i (silent), i-e (kite), o (open), o-e (home), u (student), u-e (tune)**
- Set 9     **ay (play), ey (they), oy (toy), y (mystery), ea (dream), ie (chief), y (dry), igh (night)**
- Set 10    **oe (toe), ow (rainbow), ow (now), ir (bird), ur (turn), ew (few), au (launch), aw (paw), al (talk)**



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**SPELD SA**  
**Phonic Book Series**