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Lesson 11

Genre: Realistic Fiction

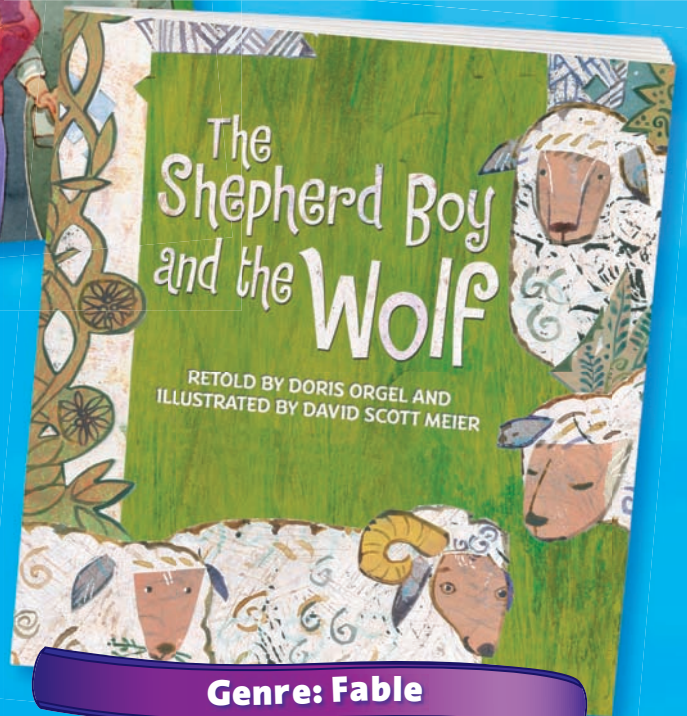
Loved Best

By Patricia C. McKissack illustrated by Yvonne Buchanan



The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf

RETOLD BY DORIS ORGEL AND
ILLUSTRATED BY DAVID SCOTT MEIER



Genre: Fable

Focus Skill

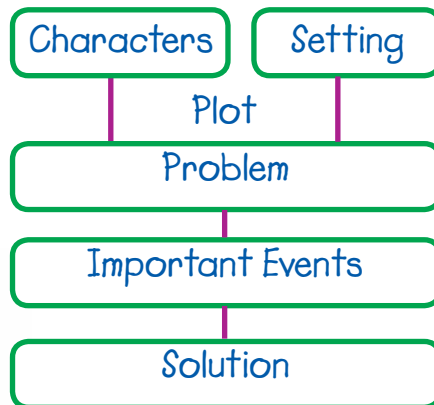


Plot

Remember that every story has characters, a setting, and a **plot**. The plot is what happens in a story.

The plot presents a problem and tells how the characters solve it.

Identifying the characters, setting, and plot in a story will help you better understand what is happening.



Tip

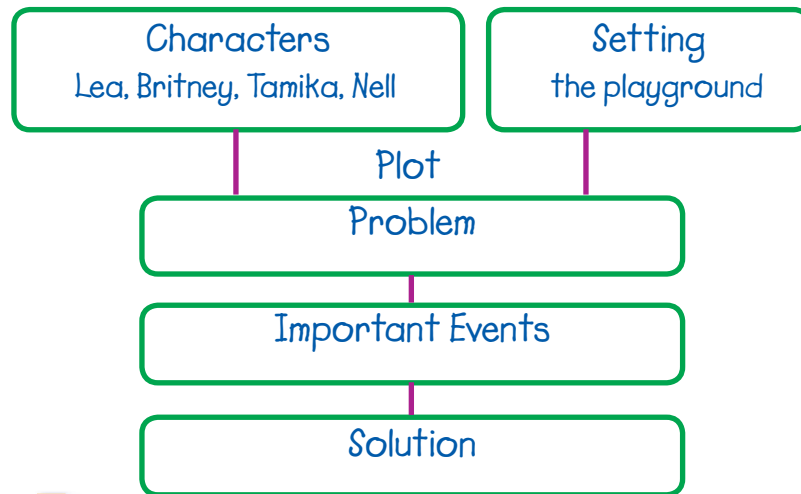
You can understand the plot by thinking about the order of events. What was the first important thing that happened? What happened next?

Read the story. Tell how to complete a story map like the one shown.

Lea and Britney wanted to put on a circus. On the playground, they asked Tamika and Nell to be in it. Nell said she would be a clown. Tamika said she would be a juggler. Lea said she would be the ringleader.

“No, I think I’d do a better job,” Britney said. They flipped a coin and Britney won.

“You’re really good at tumbling, Lea,” Britney said. “You can be an acrobat.”



Try This!

Look back at the story and the completed story map. How might the solution be different if Lea had won the toss?



Vocabulary

Build Robust Vocabulary

encouraging

brief

chuckling

soothing

sobbed

praised

Jacob's Journal

Monday, November 3

In the afternoon, I went to the playground with Gary, my big brother. We raced to the basketball court. Gary began **encouraging** me to practice my foul shots. For a **brief** time, all my shots went into the basket. Then Vince showed up, and I got nervous. He saw me miss about five shots in a row. I got upset when I heard him **chuckling**, but Gary's **soothing** voice told me to ignore him.



Friday, November 7

Today I entered the big foul-shot contest at the playground. All the kids stood in line on the basketball court. Vince took his shot before me. It went in! The crowd cheered. I was next. I shot the ball. It went up in an arc, but it bounced off the rim. I almost **sobbed**. I saw my brother, Gary, in the crowd. He **praised** me anyway. “Great try!” he called. That made me feel better.



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Word Champion



Your mission this week is to use Vocabulary Words in conversation with your friends and family. You may want to tell your friends about a time when you were praised for doing a good job. Each day write in your vocabulary journal the sentences you spoke that had the Vocabulary Words.

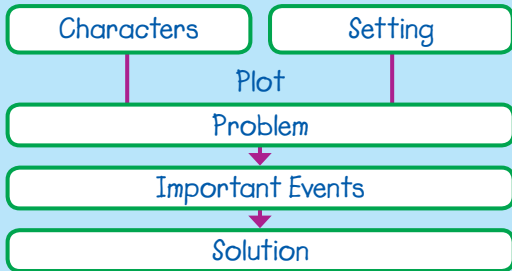


Realistic Fiction

Genre Study

Realistic fiction has characters and events that are like people and events in real life. Look for

- characters who behave as real people might.
- problems that are similar to problems in real life.



Comprehension Strategy



Use Story Structure to help you understand the problem and the solution of the problem.



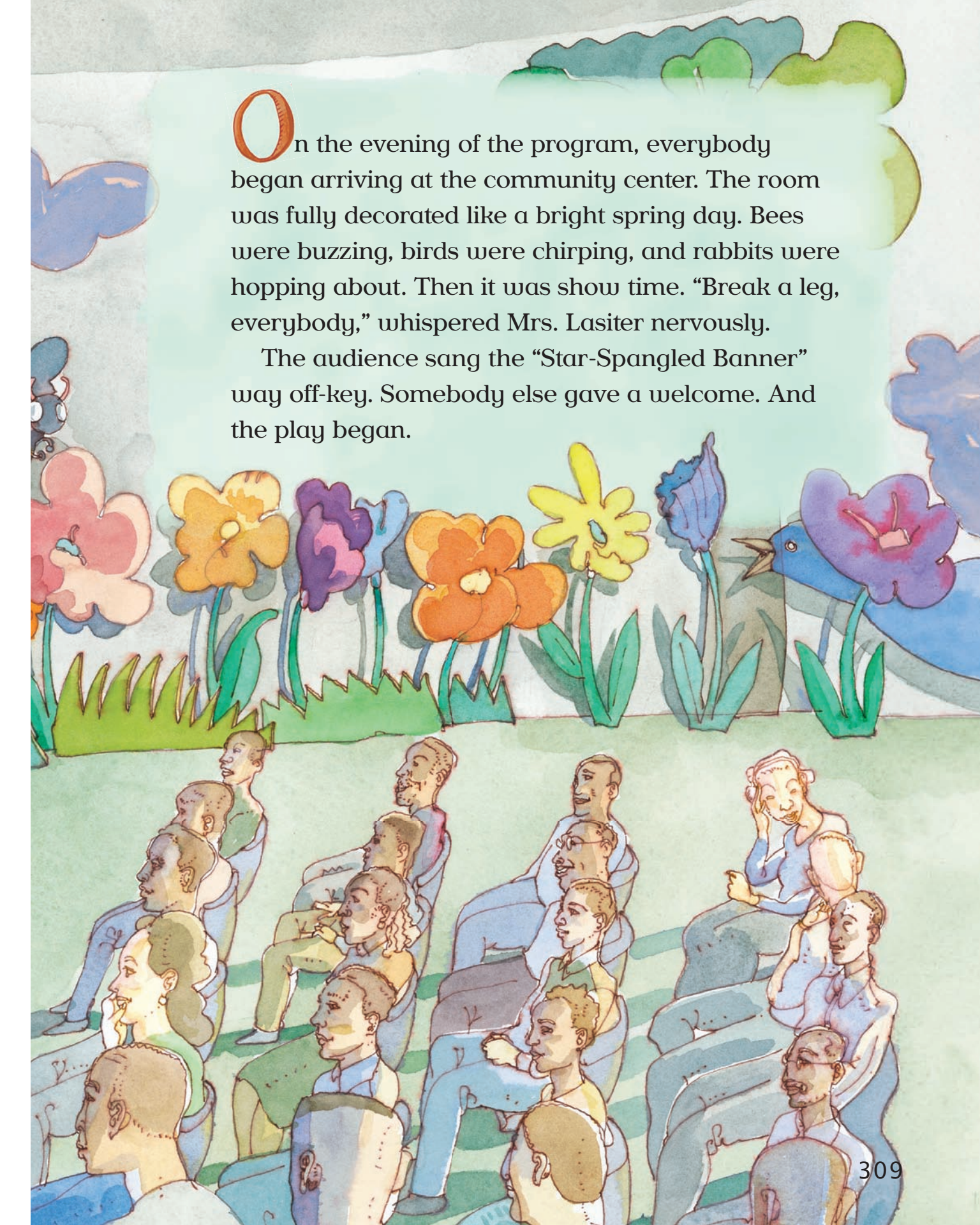


BY PATRICIA C. McKISSACK
ILLUSTRATED BY YVONNE BUCHANAN

Carolyn thinks that her parents should love her the best of all their children. After all, she has been around longer than her younger brother and sister, Josh and Dana! Recently, she has not been so sure that they do.

All three children have parts in a community play. Carolyn will recite a poem about a river. Mrs. Lasiter, the play director, has **praised** Carolyn for reciting her poem perfectly. Carolyn is sure that her performance will be better than Josh's bird or Dana's sunflower. When her parents see how wonderful she is, they will once more love her best.



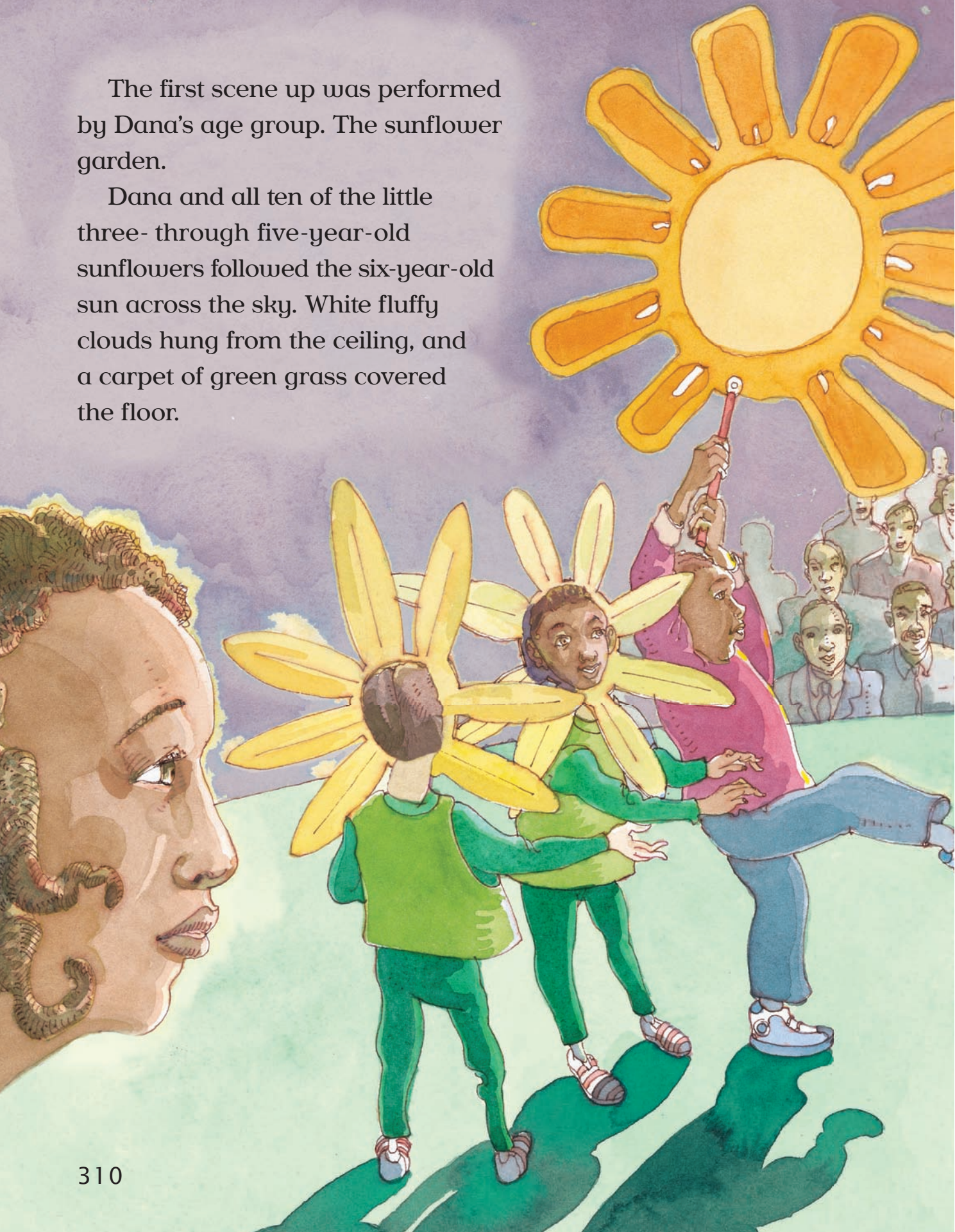



On the evening of the program, everybody began arriving at the community center. The room was fully decorated like a bright spring day. Bees were buzzing, birds were chirping, and rabbits were hopping about. Then it was show time. “Break a leg, everybody,” whispered Mrs. Lasiter nervously.

The audience sang the “Star-Spangled Banner” way off-key. Somebody else gave a welcome. And the play began.

The first scene up was performed by Dana's age group. The sunflower garden.

Dana and all ten of the little three- through five-year-old sunflowers followed the six-year-old sun across the sky. White fluffy clouds hung from the ceiling, and a carpet of green grass covered the floor.






Carolyn looked from behind the big sheet that served as a curtain. Mama was smiling as she watched little Dana lean toward the sun just as a real flower does.

Daddy was busy taking video, never missing a minute of it. Granddaddy was enjoying himself too. He was snapping pictures, one after the other. *She is cute, thought Carolyn. But wait until it's my turn. I'm going to blow them all away.*

When it was Josh's turn Carolyn could see Mama holding her breath, especially when it was time for Josh to sing. He was so good. Not one mistake. Daddy got so involved with listening, he almost forgot to start the camera. In fact Grandmama took over the video so Daddy could concentrate on Josh's performance.



At the end Josh stepped forward and took a bow. Everybody cheered and applauded. Carolyn applauded and yelled out a big, "Yo, bro!" Josh heard her and grinned. He'd never looked happier.

Wait till I do my thing, though, thought Carolyn.

There was a **brief** intermission while the set was changed. Then it was time for the older children. Carolyn lined up behind Greg Steward, who was the mountain. Debra Miller, who was the valley, and Janet Parson, who was the sky, were behind Carolyn.

Greg finished his poem. Then Carolyn heard her name announced. She stepped onstage like she had at practice many times. But this time, she didn't see the microphone cord and she tripped. People laughed, and that made her nervous.

She looked at the audience. There were so many people in the room. And they were all looking at her. It wasn't like practice, when kids were running around making noise and nobody was paying attention. Now every eye was on her, including Mama's, Daddy's, Granddaddy's, and Grandmama's.

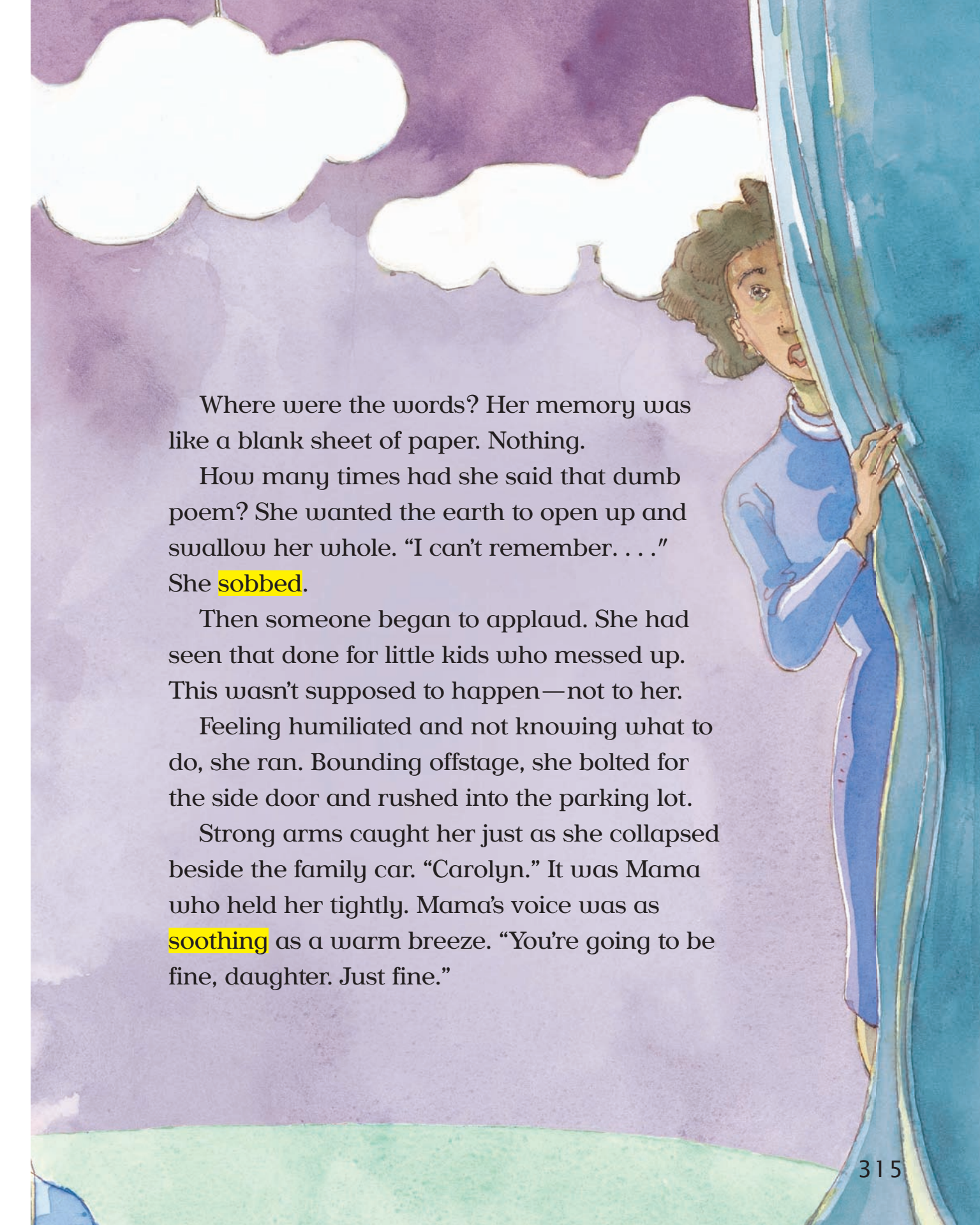


Carolyn searched for the first words of the poem, but she couldn't remember them.

"I am the river," Mrs. Lasiter whispered from offstage. Everybody heard her and they laughed again.

"I . . . am . . . the river," said Carolyn. The microphone squeaked and she jumped. More laughter.



A watercolor illustration of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved dress with white polka dots. She is peeking from behind a blue and white striped curtain on the right side of the page. Her expression is one of concern or worry. The background is a soft purple and lavender wash with white, fluffy clouds. At the bottom, there is a green wash representing grass or a field.

Where were the words? Her memory was like a blank sheet of paper. Nothing.

How many times had she said that dumb poem? She wanted the earth to open up and swallow her whole. “I can’t remember. . . .” She **sobbed**.

Then someone began to applaud. She had seen that done for little kids who messed up. This wasn’t supposed to happen—not to her.

Feeling humiliated and not knowing what to do, she ran. Bounding offstage, she bolted for the side door and rushed into the parking lot.

Strong arms caught her just as she collapsed beside the family car. “Carolyn.” It was Mama who held her tightly. Mama’s voice was as **soothing** as a warm breeze. “You’re going to be fine, daughter. Just fine.”

At that moment Carolyn's world seemed over. How do you go on when you've made such a mess of things? She couldn't stop crying. "I know I'm not loved most. But can you still love me at all after messing up?"

Mama sighed. "Where do you get such ideas? You are my daughter, and I love you very much."

Carolyn sniffed. "Just one very."

Mama didn't get it. "Carolyn, why are you so concerned about being loved the most and being the favorite?"

"Well, Janet Parson said she was her mama's favorite."

"For goodness sake, Carolyn! Janet is an only child."

Carolyn shrugged. "Well, I was the only child for four years. So I decided I was your favorite because you'd loved me longest. But then . . ." Carolyn's voice trailed off.





“Then what?” Mama was ready to listen. She leaned against the car with her arms folded. Carolyn told her everything.

“You treated Dana special when she was sick. But when I was sick, you didn’t make soup and pudding and sing to me.”

“You weren’t really sick,” Mama said, **chuckling**. “Remember the boy who cried wolf when no wolf was coming?”

Carolyn knew that story from school. “Nobody believed him when the wolf really came.”

Mama smiled. “And you shouldn’t pretend to be sick unless you really are. When you are sick, I’ll do the soup thing.”

“Okay.” Carolyn agreed she was wrong. “But,” she continued, “you put Josh’s paper on the refrigerator and fixed him a cake for getting the singing part. But you didn’t put my paper up there.”

Mama didn’t hesitate. “You’ve had your fair share of papers on the refrigerator. Josh is so shy. Things don’t come easy for him like they do for you. So when I saw him trying new things and getting a perfect paper, I thought he needed extra attention.”

Mama handed Carolyn tissues. Carolyn blew her nose on one and dried her eyes with the other. “I’m sorry,” she said.

Mama looked Carolyn in the eye. “I could never love one of my children *more* than the other. But all three of you are loved the *best* I know how.”



Suddenly a sunflower and a bird appeared around the side of the car.

“Don’t cry, Carolyn,” said Dana. “It will be okay.”

“Come on Carolyn. Don’t give up. You wouldn’t let me give up,” said Josh. “You’re our big sister, the only one we have.”



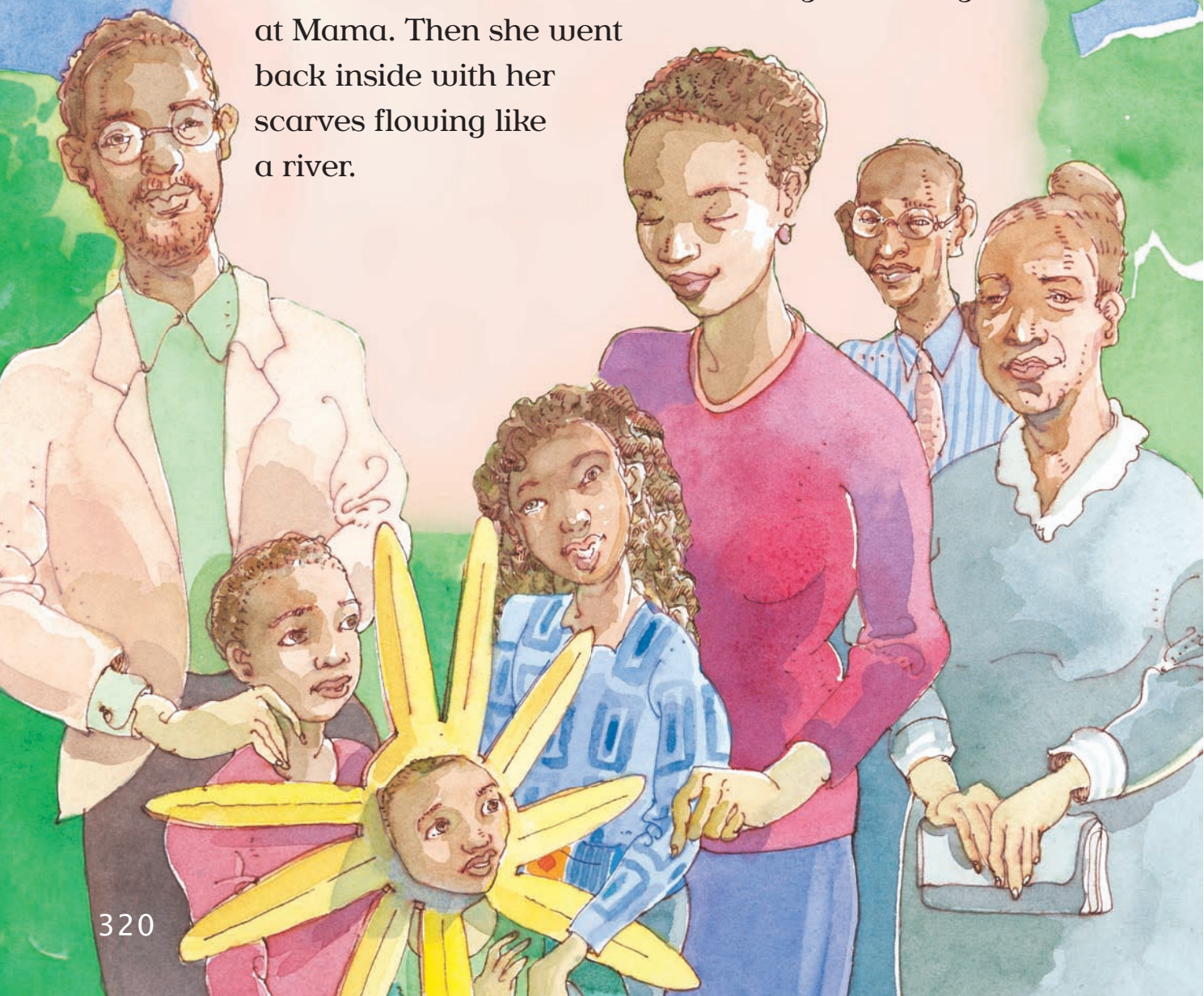
Just then Dad found them. And behind him were Grandmama and Granddaddy.

“Carolyn,” Daddy said, “do you think, maybe, you might want to try doing your poem again? Mrs. Lasiter said you could go on after the sky.”



Carolyn thought about it. Mama gave her an **encouraging** nod. “You know who’s loved best?” Carolyn said.

“No. Who?” the family asked.

“You are all loved best,” said Carolyn, winking at Mama. Then she went back inside with her scarves flowing like a river.



Think Critically

- 1 What is the problem in “Loved Best,” and how is it solved?  PLOT
- 2 How does Carolyn feel after she sobs onstage? CHARACTERS' EMOTIONS
- 3 If you were Carolyn, would you have tried to say the poem again? Explain. EXPRESS PERSONAL OPINIONS
- 4 How can you tell that the author thinks Carolyn is wrong to pretend she is sick? DRAW CONCLUSIONS
- 5 **WRITE** Write about a time when you did something brave.  SHORT RESPONSE

Meet the Author
Patricia C.

McKissack

Before Patricia McKissack became a writer, she was a listener. On hot summer evenings her family would sit on the porch and recite poems and tell stories. When she was older she realized that those stories helped her become a writer.

When Patricia McKissack grew up, she became a teacher. It was then that she realized there were not many books about African Americans. So she decided to write one. She thought that she would then go back to teaching or do something else. More than twenty years later, Patricia McKissack is still writing!



An illustration of a woman with glasses and a green sweater standing on a blue ladder. She is holding a paintbrush and painting a sign. The sign says "Meet the Illustrator Yvonne Buchanan". There are two other signs, one red and one blue, both with the name "Yvonne Buchanan" written on them. There are also two paint buckets on the floor, one blue and one red.

Meet the Illustrator
Yvonne

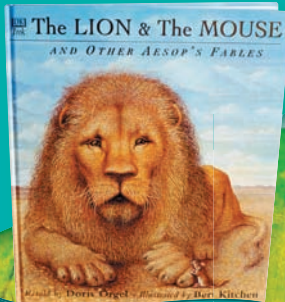
Buchanan

Yvonne Buchanan grew up in New York City. Once her mother bought her a pad of colored construction paper. That was the start of her career as an illustrator.

Yvonne Buchanan thinks that it's important for illustrators to know about other things besides art. She has won awards for illustrating children's books, but she has also recently begun to write for children. She enjoys storytelling and hopes to do more in the future.



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Fable

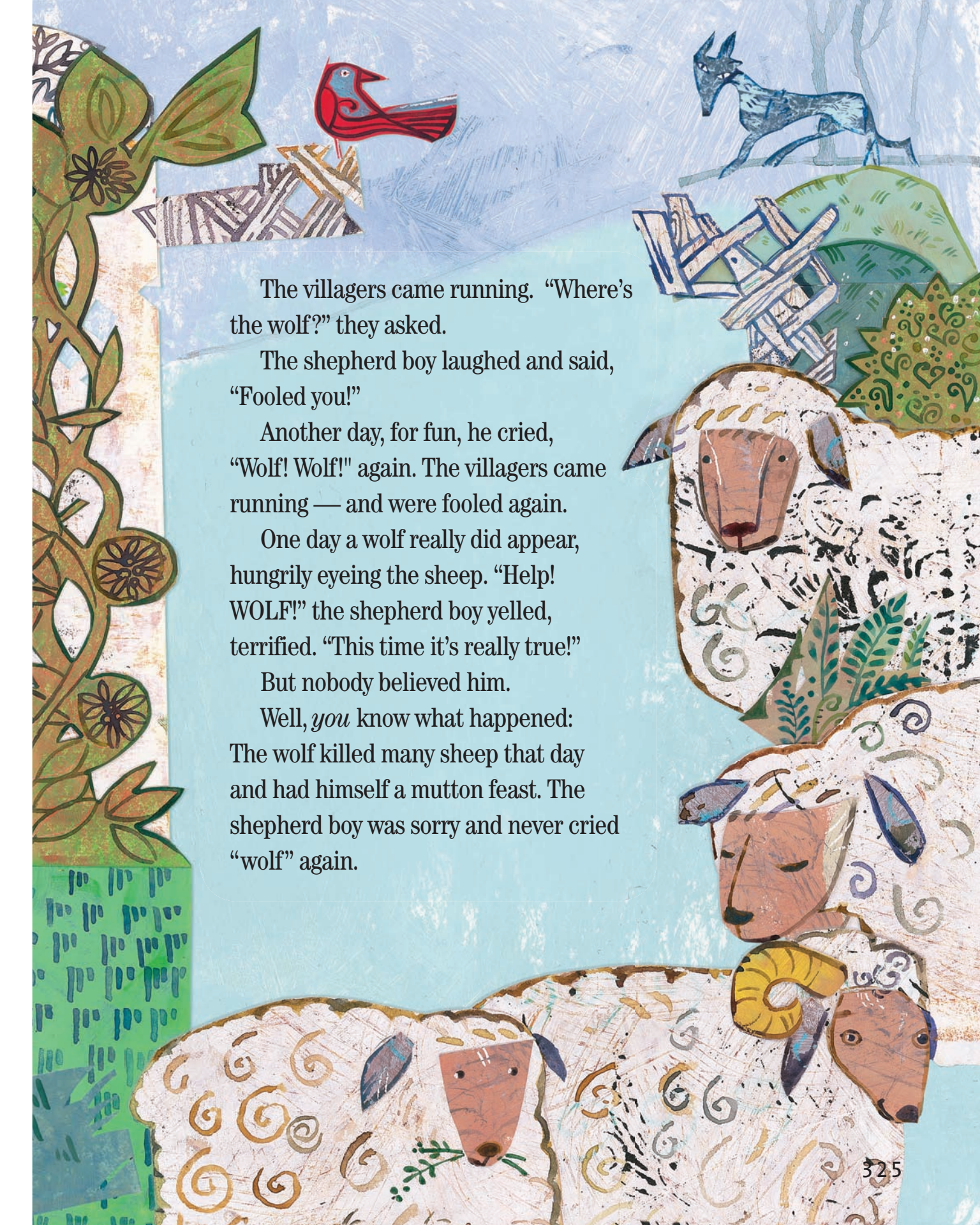
The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf

RETOLD BY DORIS ORGEL
ILLUSTRATED BY DAVID SCOTT MEIER

“All the sheep ever do is say ‘baa’ and munch grass,” thought the shepherd boy. He wished something would happen.

“I know: I’ll invent some excitement.” He cupped his hands to his mouth and shouted: “Help, a wolf is near!”





The villagers came running. “Where’s the wolf?” they asked.

The shepherd boy laughed and said, “Fooled you!”

Another day, for fun, he cried, “Wolf! Wolf!” again. The villagers came running — and were fooled again.

One day a wolf really did appear, hungrily eyeing the sheep. “Help! WOLF!” the shepherd boy yelled, terrified. “This time it’s really true!”

But nobody believed him.

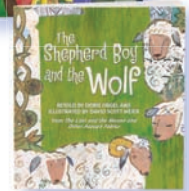
Well, *you* know what happened: The wolf killed many sheep that day and had himself a mutton feast. The shepherd boy was sorry and never cried “wolf” again.



Connections

Comparing Texts

1. How is Carolyn's behavior in "Loved Best" similar to the behavior of the shepherd boy in "The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf"?
2. What did you like about Carolyn's parents?
3. In what ways does the setting in "Loved Best" seem like a place you could visit in real life?



Vocabulary Review

Word Pairs

Work with a partner. Write each Vocabulary Word on a card. Place the cards face down. Take turns flipping over two cards and writing a sentence that uses both words. Read your sentences to your partner and decide whether the Vocabulary Words are used correctly.

Danny
sobbed
for a brief
moment.

encouraging

brief

chuckling

soothing

sobbed

praised

Fluency Practice

Partner Reading

Choose your favorite section from “Loved Best.” Take turns with a partner reading your sections aloud. Read each character’s words as if a real person were speaking. Give feedback after each reading.



Writing

Write a New Scene

Write what you think happens next in “Loved Best.” Use the same characters and setting, but think of new events to help you plan the next scene.

My Writing Checklist

Writing Trait

Voice

- ✓ I use words that tell how Carolyn feels.
- ✓ I use a story map to plan my scene.

