



Animal Stories

By Enid Blyton



Black Bibs



Once upon a time, at the beginning of the New Year, the little brown house sparrows noticed that the starlings were growing beautiful green, violent and purple colours in their feathers. They saw that the little robin had put on a much brighter orange waistcoat, and that the blackbird seemed to have dipped his beak in gold.



‘Why?’ they said to the starlings. ‘Why?’ to the chaffinch,
and, ‘Why?’ to the blackbird.

‘Because spring is coming!’ they all answered, ‘We shall
soon be looking for our wives – and we like to be dressed
in our best then!’



Why don't you do something about it, sparrows? Cock and hen sparrows are exactly the same in the way they dress! You might at least try to dress a little differently in springtime, so that when you go wooing your mates they may think you look handsome!



‘That is a good idea,’ said the cock sparrows. ‘We will go to Dabble the elf and ask her if she’ll use her dyes to colour our feathers a bit!’





So, they flew off to Dabble.

She was indoors and the house was shut. The sparrow hopped up the path, and were just going to ring the bell when one said, 'We haven't yet decided what colour to ask for.'



‘We’ll have red vests,’ said
big cock sparrow.

‘Silly idea!’ said another. ‘We
don’t want to look like those
stuck-up robins.’

‘Well, let’s have yellow tails
and green beaks,’ said
another.

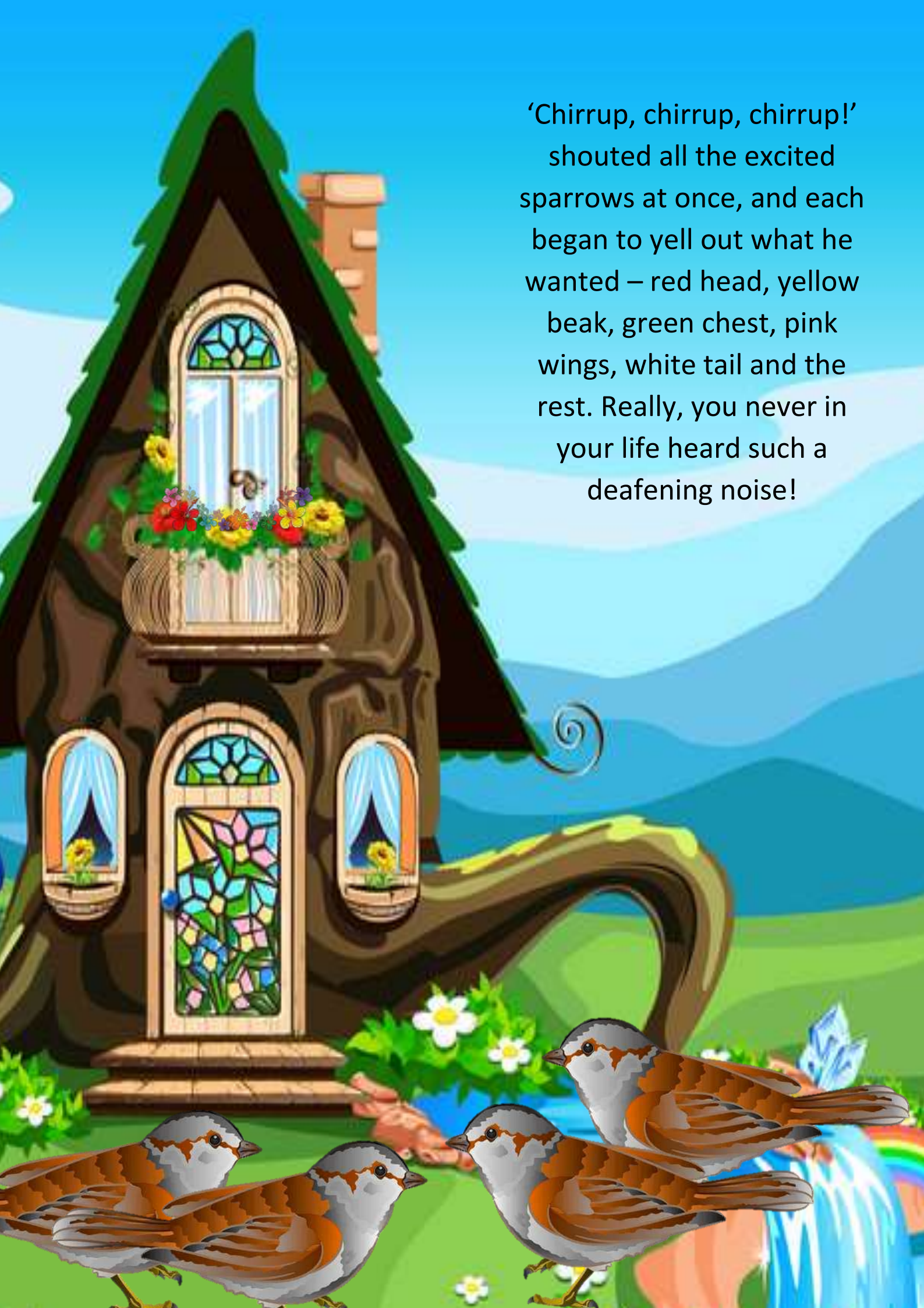
‘And be laughed at by
everyone!’ screamed a
fourth sparrow. ‘No, we’ll
have blue wings and blue
chests – very smart indeed.’



‘I want pink legs, I want pink legs,’ chirruped another.

‘Be quiet and don’t be silly,’ said the one next to him. ‘Do you want to look as if you’re walking on primrose stalks? They’re pink too.’

‘Chirrup, chirrup, chirrup!’
shouted all the excited
sparrows at once, and each
began to yell out what he
wanted – red head, yellow
beak, green chest, pink
wings, white tail and the
rest. Really, you never in
your life heard such a
deafening noise!





Dabble the elf was having a snooze on her bed. She woke up in a hurry and wondered what the dreadful noise was. She opened her window and looked out. Her garden was full of screeching sparrows, pecking at one another and stirring up the dust.

‘Be quiet!’ said Dabble.

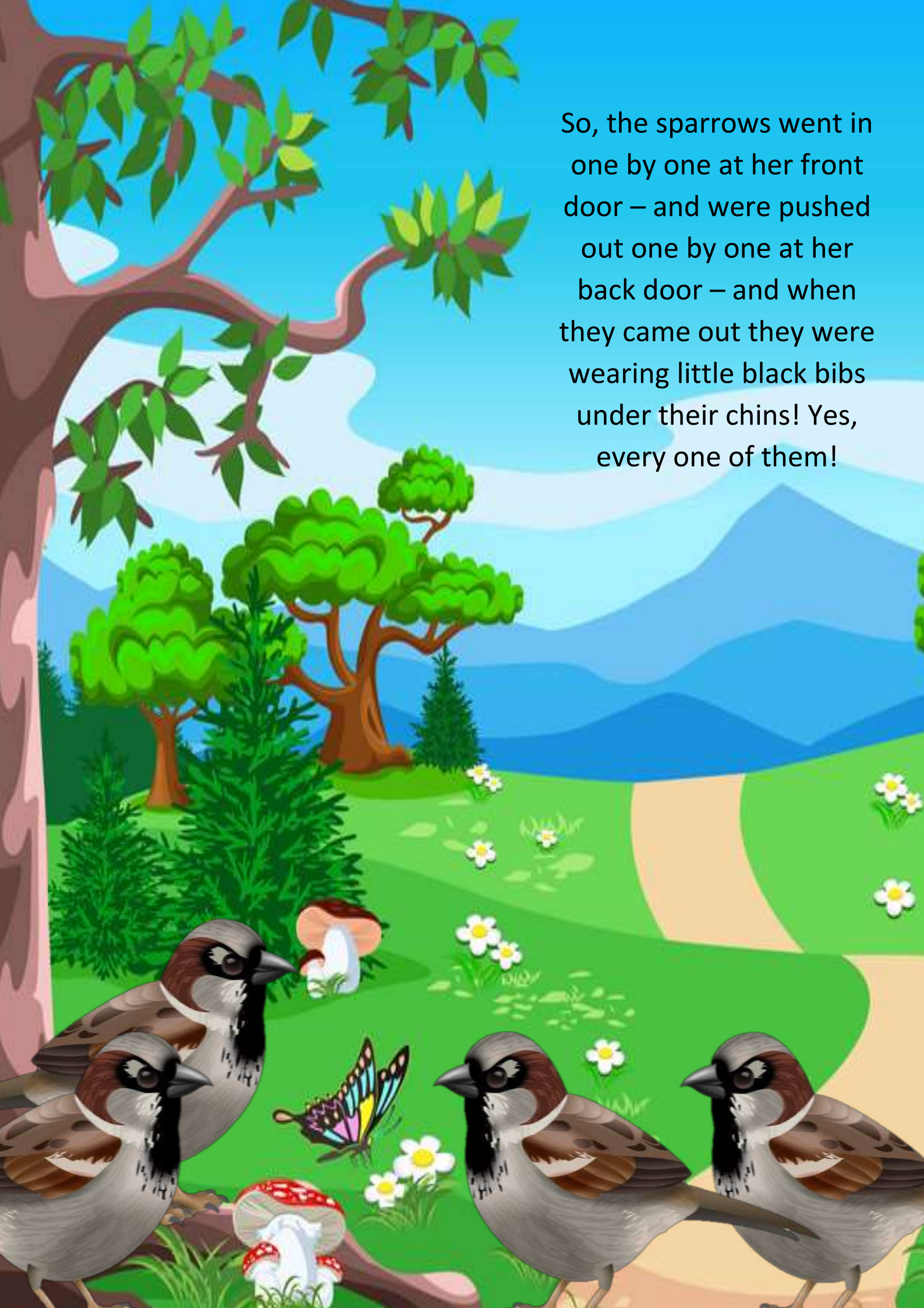
‘Chirrup, chirrup, chirrup,’
screamed the sparrows.
Then they caught sight of
Dabble and shouted at her
loudly: ‘We want to ask you
to give us something that will
make us look different from
the hen sparrows – blue legs,
or pink wings – or
something.’



'Oh, I'll give you something,
all right!' said Dabble crossly.
'Come in, one by one.'



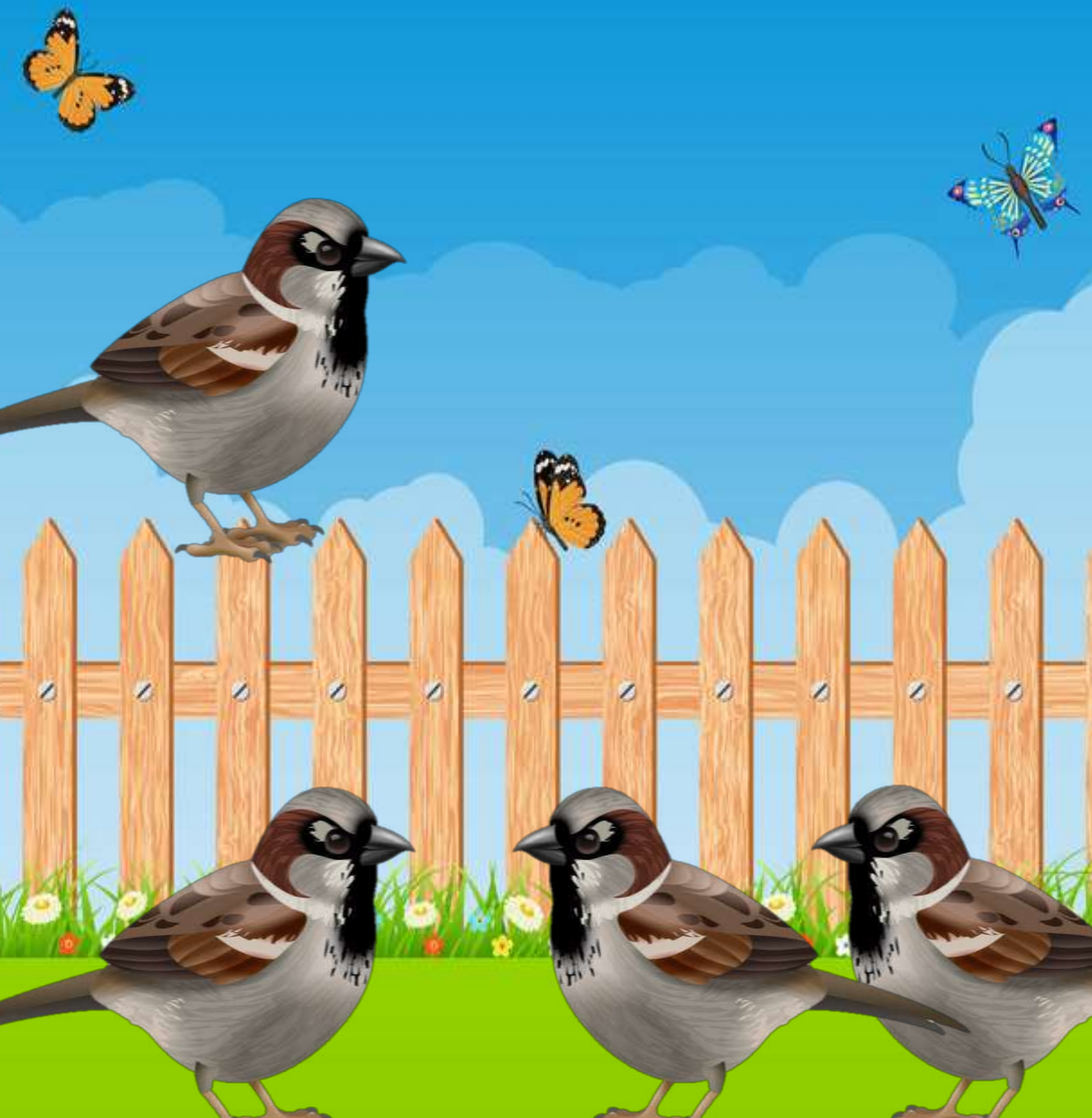
So, the sparrows went in one by one at her front door – and were pushed out one by one at her back door – and when they came out they were wearing little black bibs under their chins! Yes, every one of them!



‘Babies! Quarrelsome babies, that’s all you are!’ said Dabble, shutting the door on the last one. ‘And babies wear bibs – so you can wear them too!’



And it's a funny thing, but since that day every cock sparrow has to wear a black bib under his chin in the springtime. You look and see!





Animal Stories

By Enid Blyton

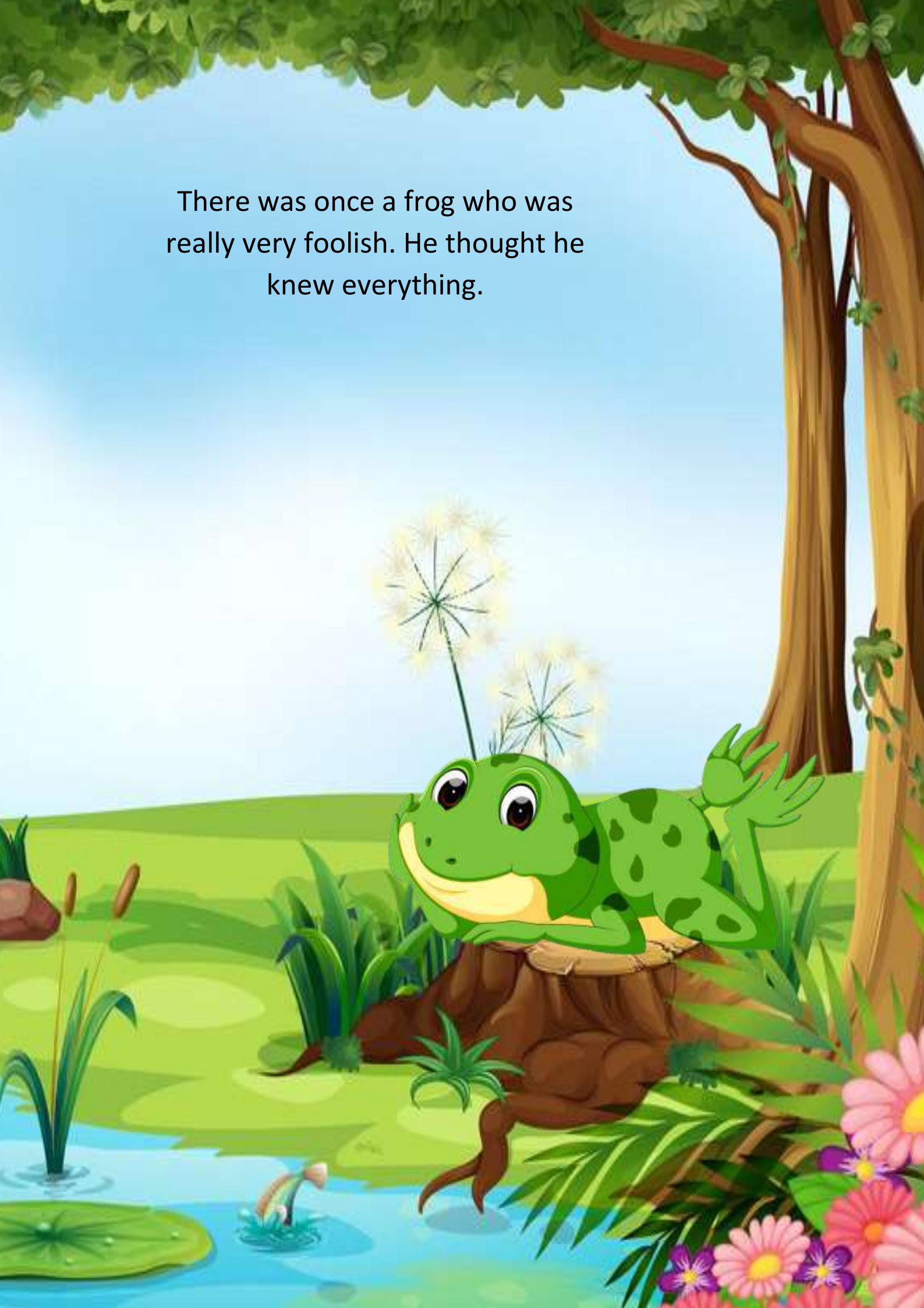
The Foolish Frog



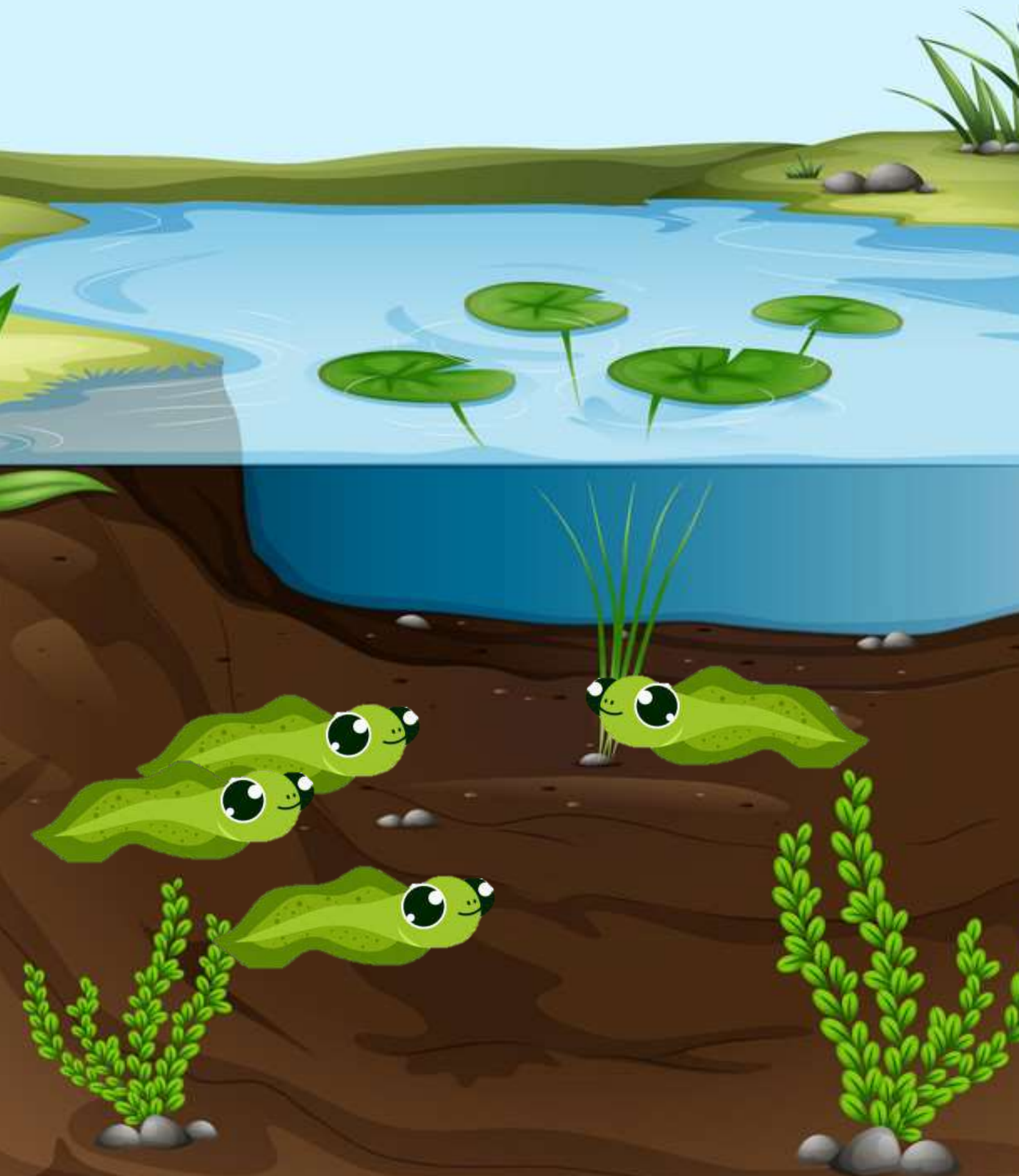
THINK
DIGITAL ACADEMY



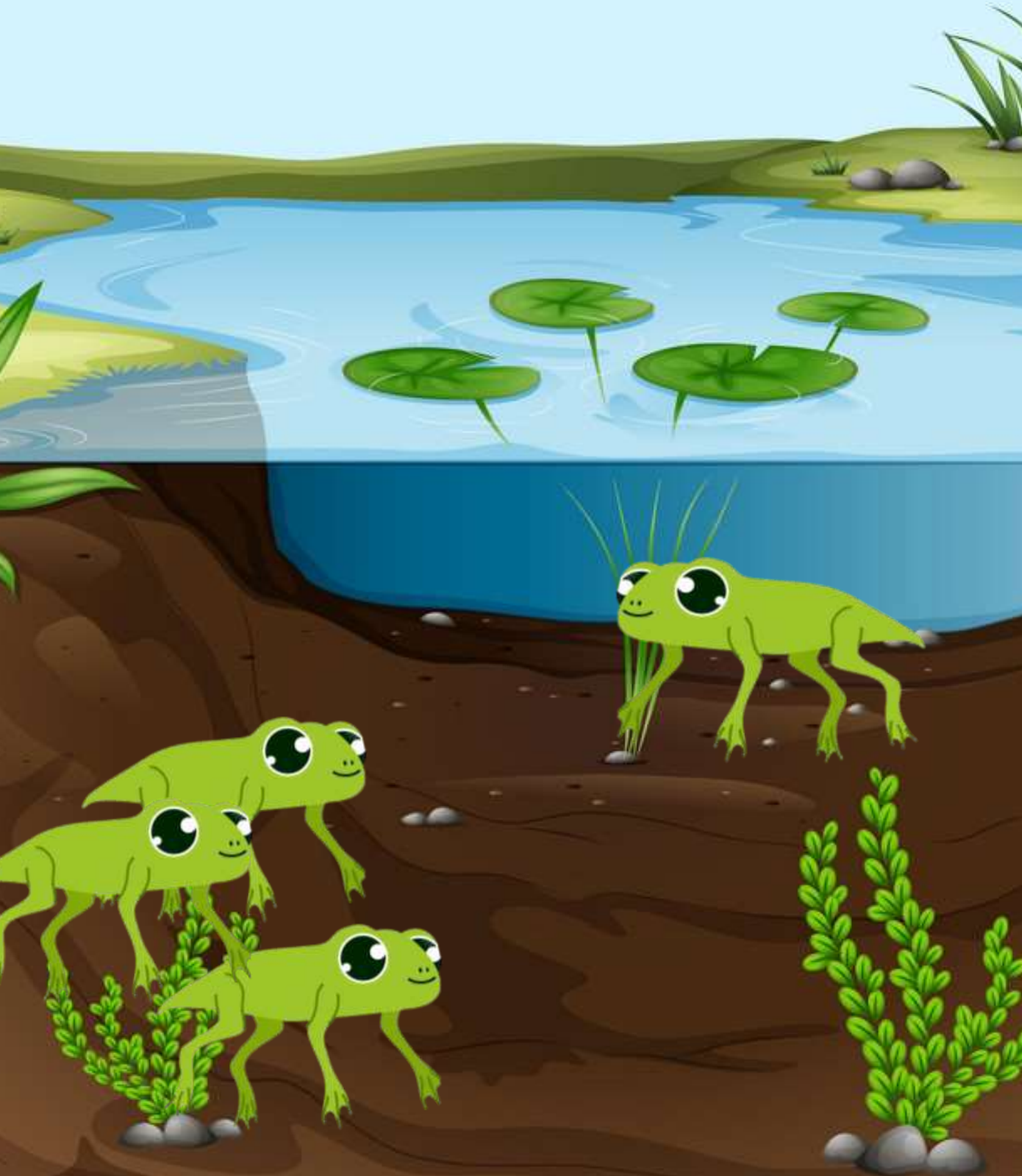
There was once a frog who was really very foolish. He thought he knew everything.



When he was a tadpole he swam around telling everyone what nasty leggy things frogs were ...

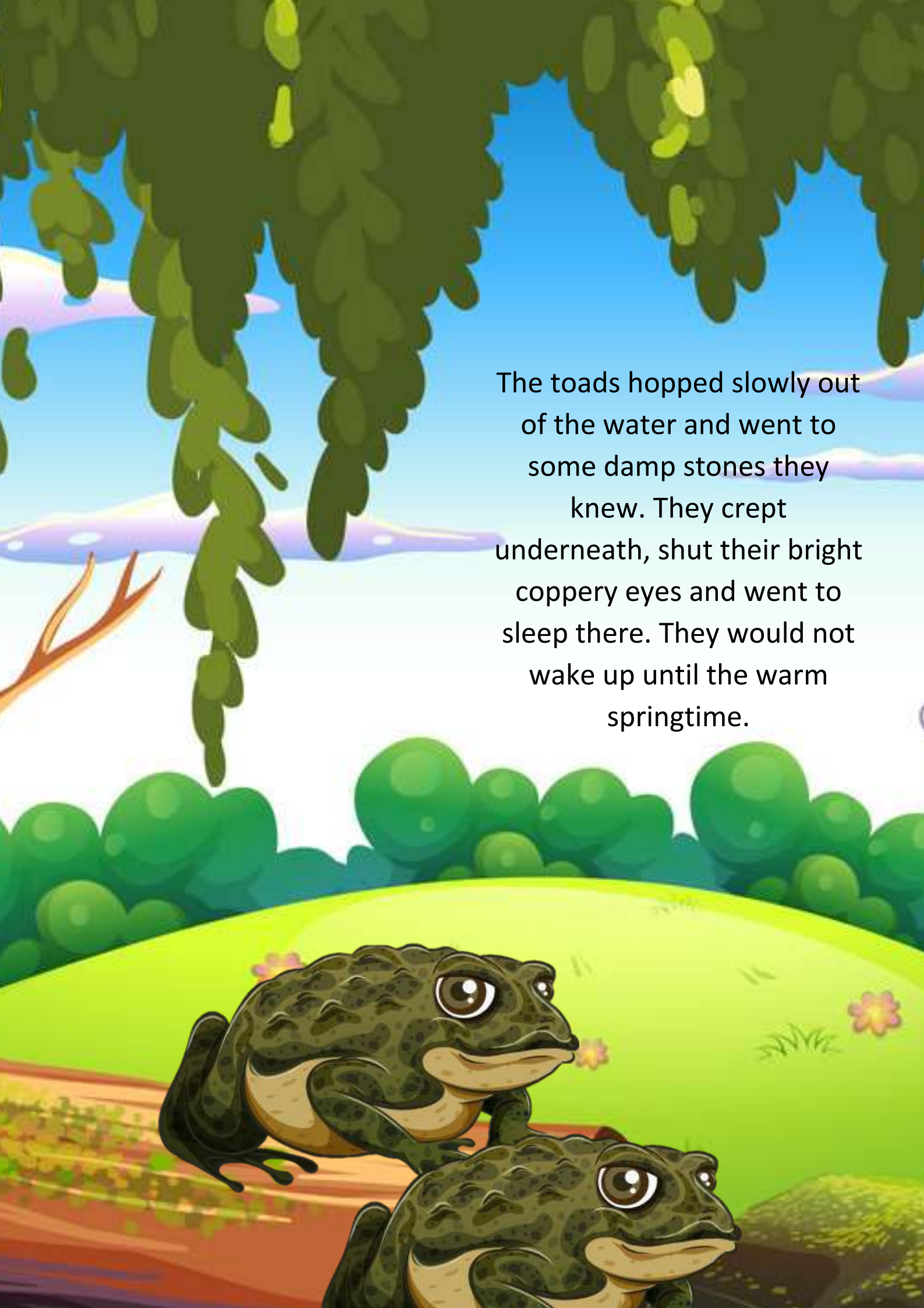


... but even when he found that he was growing into a frog himself that didn't make him ashamed of his foolishness! No, he just went on being as boastful and as stupid as ever.



In the autumn, when the nights were frosty, the frogs began to think of going to sleep at the bottom of the pond, head downwards in the oozy mud.

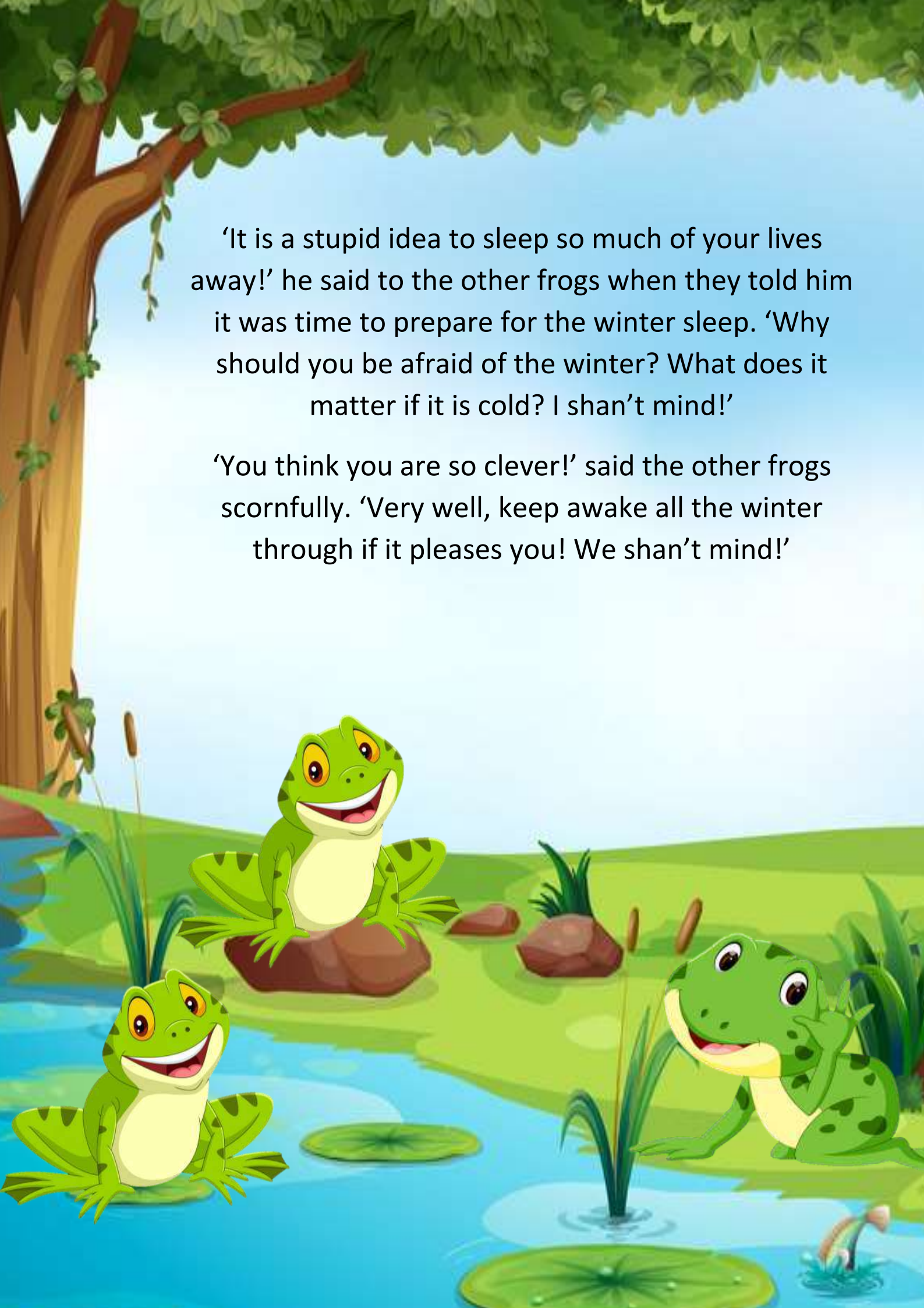




The toads hopped slowly out of the water and went to some damp stones they knew. They crept underneath, shut their bright coppery eyes and went to sleep there. They would not wake up until the warm springtime.

But the foolish frog thought it was a waste of time to sleep through so many months. He didn't want to snooze under a stone. He didn't want to sleep in the mud at the bottom of the pond. No, he wanted to be up and about like the rabbits and the mice!





‘It is a stupid idea to sleep so much of your lives away!’ he said to the other frogs when they told him it was time to prepare for the winter sleep. ‘Why should you be afraid of the winter? What does it matter if it is cold? I shan’t mind!’

‘You think you are so clever!’ said the other frogs scornfully. ‘Very well, keep awake all the winter through if it pleases you! We shan’t mind!’

So, they left the foolish frog, swam down to the bed of the pond, tucked themselves into the mud and were soon sound sleep. They forgot the cold, they forgot the lack of lies and grubs – they slept peacefully and happily.



But the foolish frog still swam about in the pond.
He wondered where the flies had gone that used
to skim on the surface, and which tasted so good.



He climbed out of the water and went to look for some in the ditch. But there were no flies, no caterpillars, no slugs to be found. The little frog felt very hungry.



He went back to the water and swam around sadly.

Perhaps it would be a good idea after all to go to sleep. It wasn't much good being awake and hungry!



‘Well, I’ll go and have a nap in the mud,’ said the foolish frog at last. ‘But I shall not sleep all the winter through, as the others do. No, at the first possible moment, when the sun is warm, I shall wake up and enjoy myself again!’



He was soon asleep. He slept all through the month of December, and all through January. Then there came a warm spell.



The sun shone on the pond and the frogs felt the warmth and stirred in their sleep. The foolish frog woke right up. Ah! How warm the water felt! Surely the winter was over!



He swam up to the surface.
It was lovely in the
sunshine.



He swam down to the mud and woke up all the other frogs.

‘Come!’ he said. ‘The winter is over! The sun is shining. Wake up and come and play.’



But the oldest frog, after he had taken one look out of the water, swam back to the mud.

‘Take no notice of the foolish one,’ he said.
‘Winter is not over. This is just a warm spell. It will be colder than ever soon. Bury your heads in the mud again, brothers and sisters, and go to sleep.’

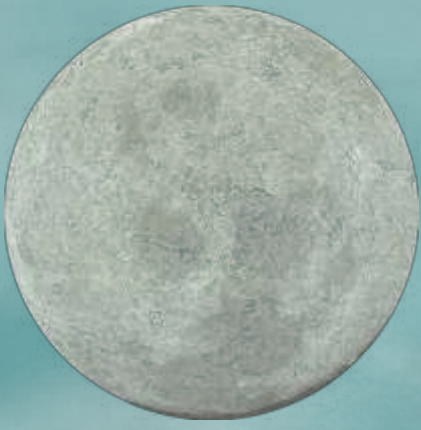


The frogs obeyed him – all but the foolish frog, who was very angry. He swam up to the surface by himself and enjoyed the warm sunshine ...




...but, when night came, and the sun went, something strange happened to the pond. The water became hard instead of soft, and icy cold. The pond was freezing! The water was turning into ice! The frog did not know what was happening and he was frightened. He swam around, but every minute it became more difficult.





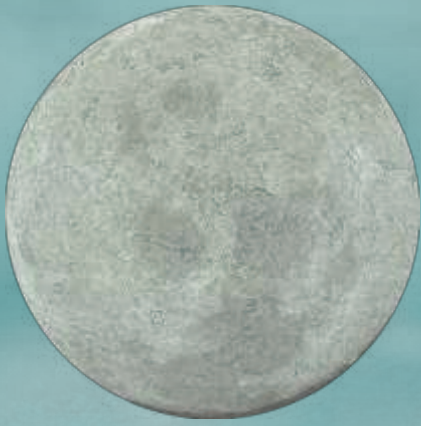
The moon came out and shone on the freezing pond. It shone on the poor foolish frog, now held tightly in the thickening ice. The frog opened his mouth and croaked mournfully.





A wandering hedgehog heard him and was surprised. A frog croaking at this time of year! How could that be? He peered about and saw the frog in the ice. He pattered across the hard pond and breathed down on the trapped frog.






‘Friend, you are in a bad way,’ said the hedgehog. ‘You will be dead by morning unless I can help you. If I lie down by you I may melt the ice a little. Then you must struggle hard and kick out with your legs, and maybe you will get free of the ice.’





The heat of the hedgehog's body thawed the ice a little and the frog found that he was able to move around. He kicked out strongly with his legs and managed to get free.

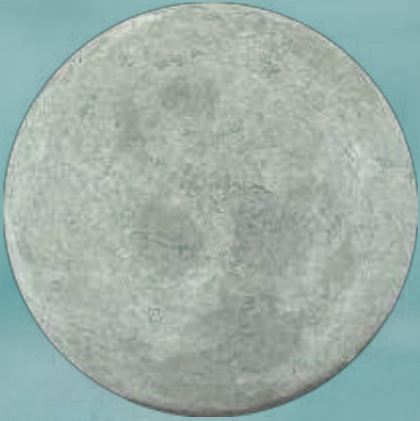




In a second he was hopping on the icy pond, and away to the bank beside him.

‘There is an old stone here in the ditch,’
said the kindly hedgehog. ‘Get under
that and sleep for the rest of the winter,
frog. You should not be awake now.’





'Thank you,' said frog humbly, for once really ashamed of himself, and very much frightened at his narrow escape. He crept under the stone, shut his eyes and fell soundly asleep.



He was awakened by the croaking of the frogs in the pond. It was springtime now, and they had all awakened in excitement, glad to think the warm days had come again. They wondered where the foolish frog had gone.



‘I expect he got frozen into the ice and is dead,’ said the oldest frog scornfully. ‘He was foolish enough for anything!’

That made the foolish frog very angry. He hopped out from under his stone and stared rudely at the old frog.



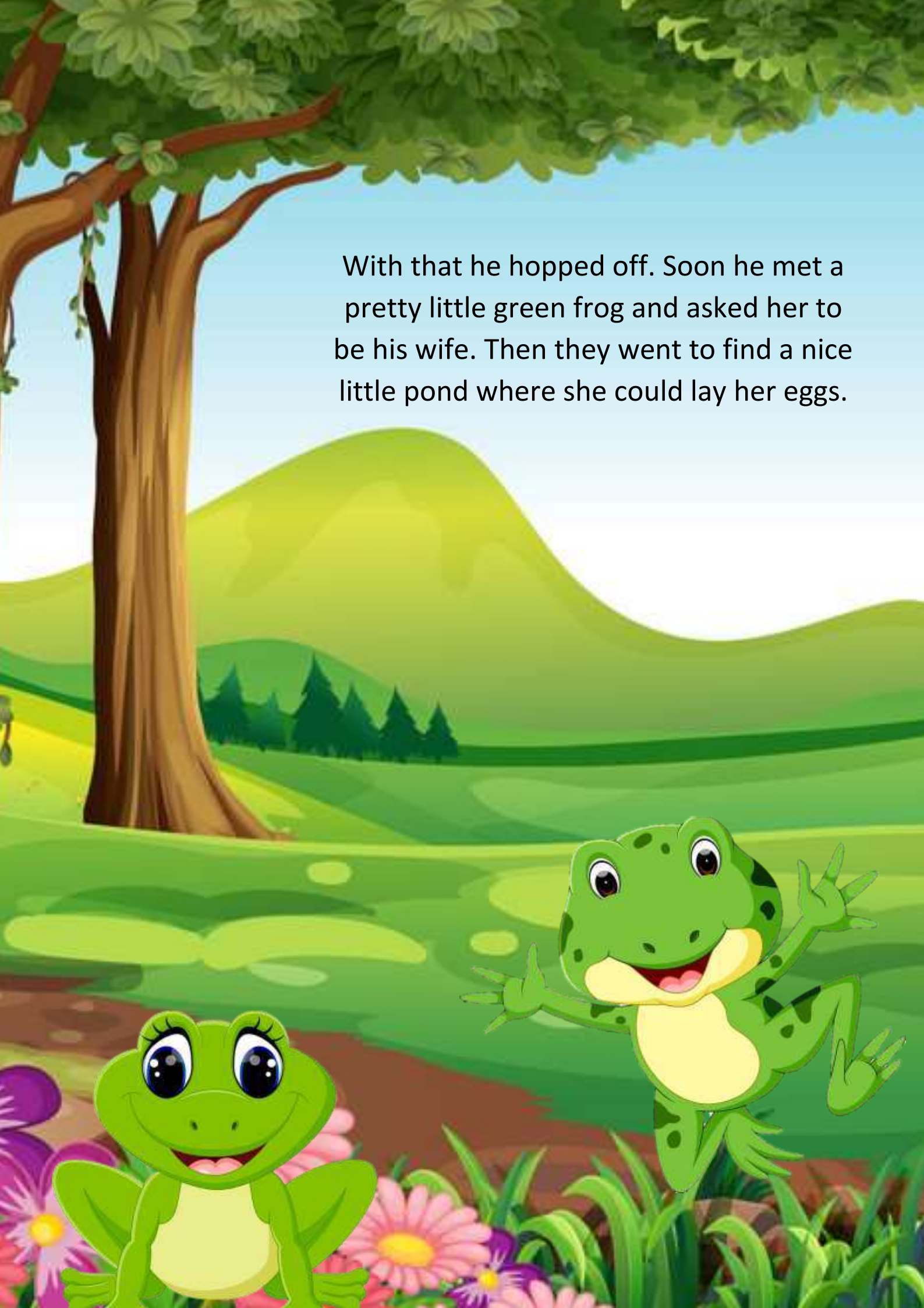
‘No, I was not frozen into the ice,’ he croaked untruthfully. ‘I had a very much finer winter than you did!’

‘Oh, there is the foolish frog after all!’ croaked all the other frogs in surprise. ‘Come into the pond and play, brother. Choose a nice wife for yourself so that she may lay you eggs to grow into tadpoles!’

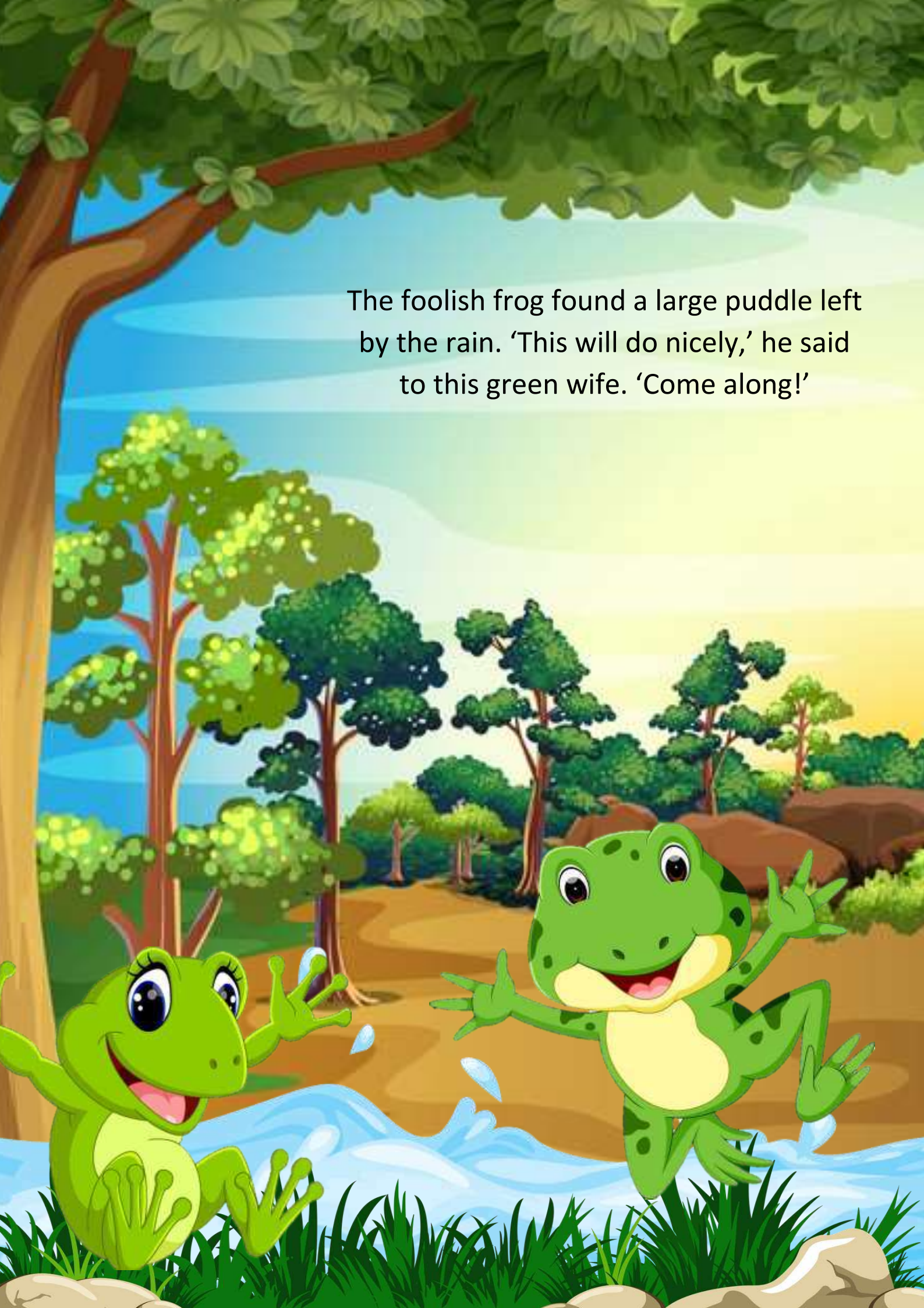


‘I shall find a little pond where no other frogs are!’ said the foolish frog. ‘My wife shall lay her eggs there, and we shall know that all the tadpoles in our little pond are ours! We shall teach them not to speak to or play with your tadpoles!’




A vibrant, cartoon-style illustration of a lush green landscape. In the foreground, a green frog with large, expressive eyes and a yellow belly sits on a bed of pink and purple flowers. In the middle ground, a pond with lily pads is visible, with another green frog with a yellow belly and black spots on its back, sitting on a rock and waving with its front legs. The background features rolling green hills, a line of dark green trees, and a large, leafy tree on the left side. The sky is a clear, light blue.

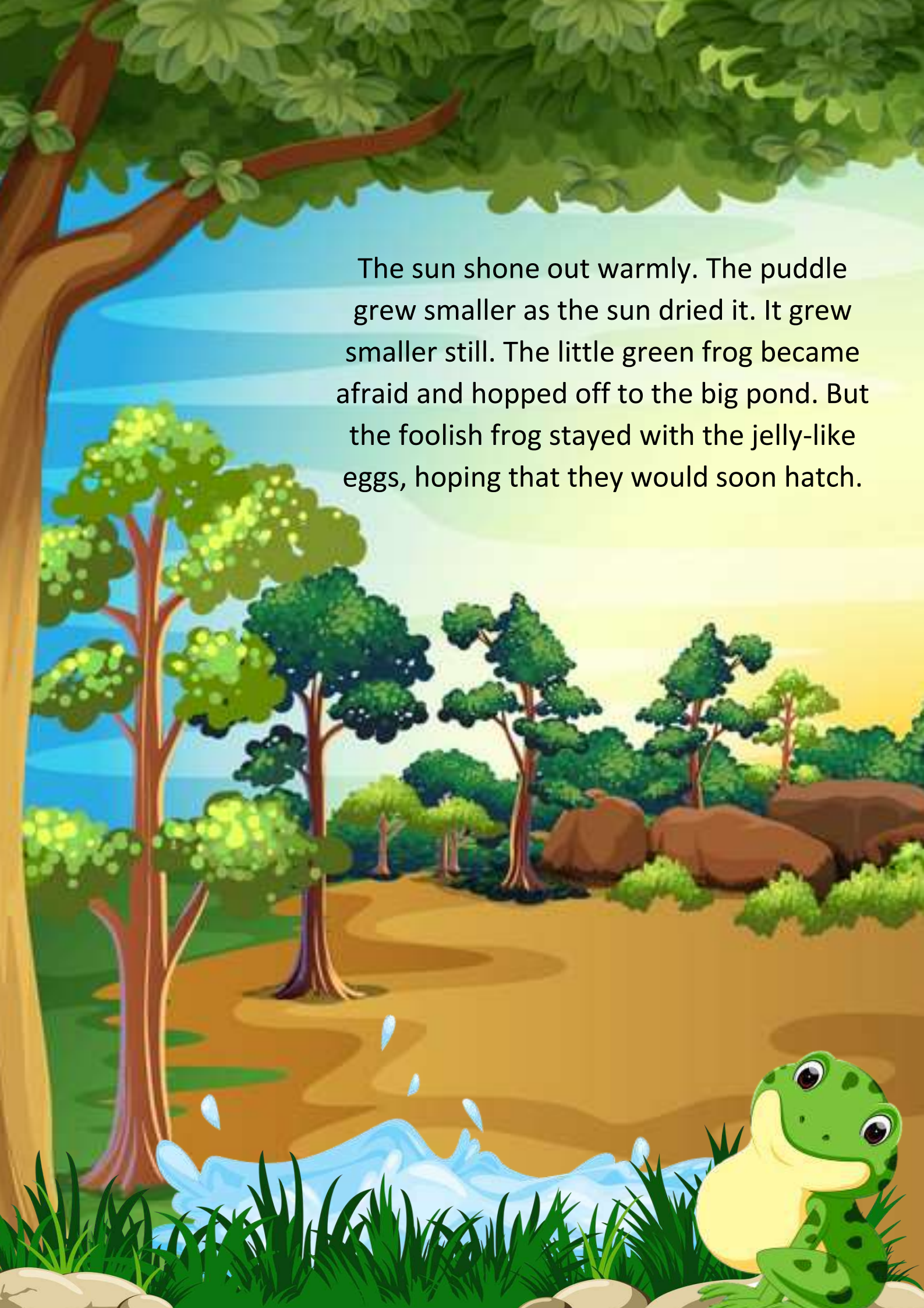
With that he hopped off. Soon he met a pretty little green frog and asked her to be his wife. Then they went to find a nice little pond where she could lay her eggs.



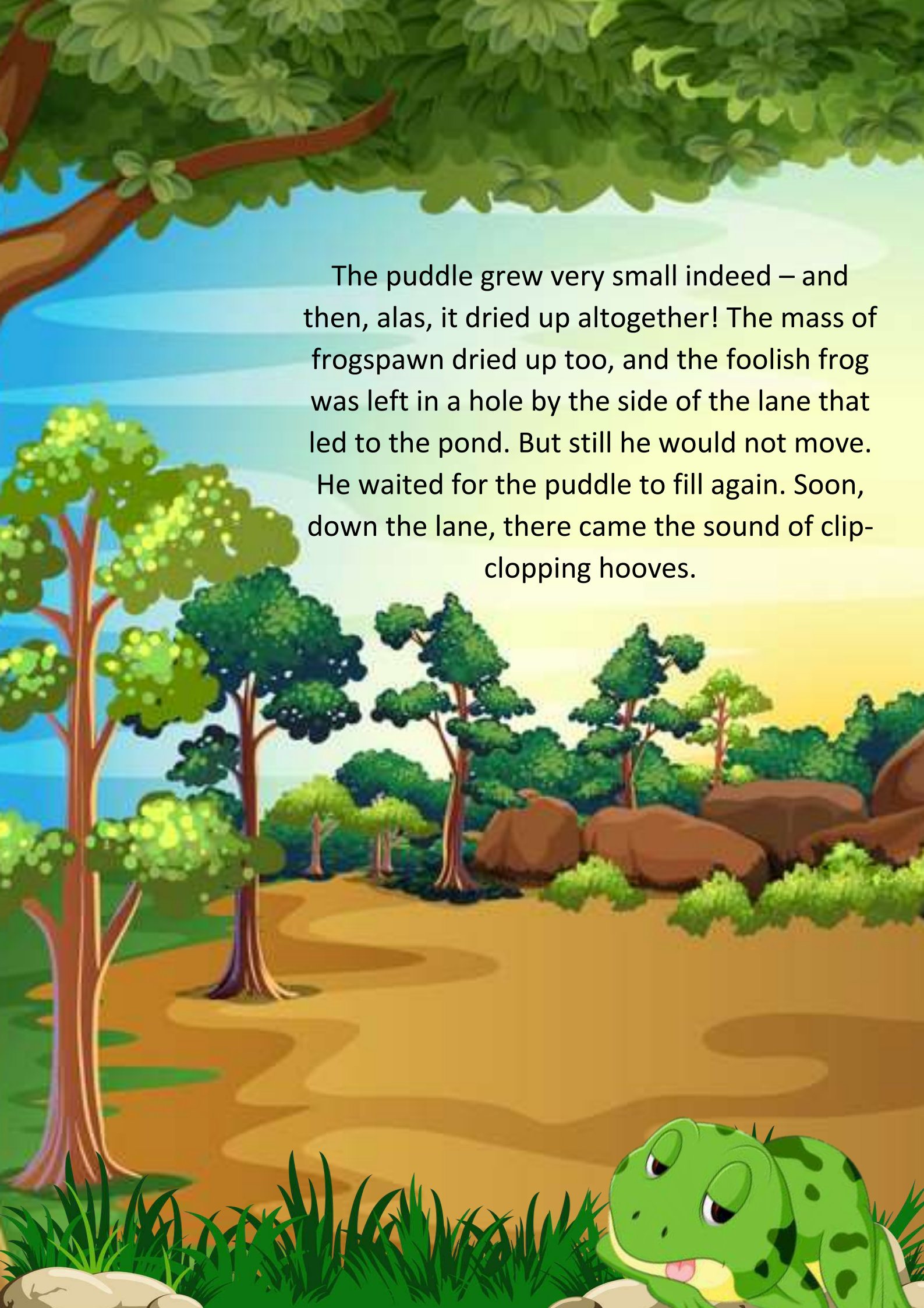
The foolish frog found a large puddle left by the rain. 'This will do nicely,' he said to this green wife. 'Come along!'



The little green frog laid many eggs in the puddle. The two frogs lived there contentedly, though all the toads and frogs that passed laughed at them scornfully.

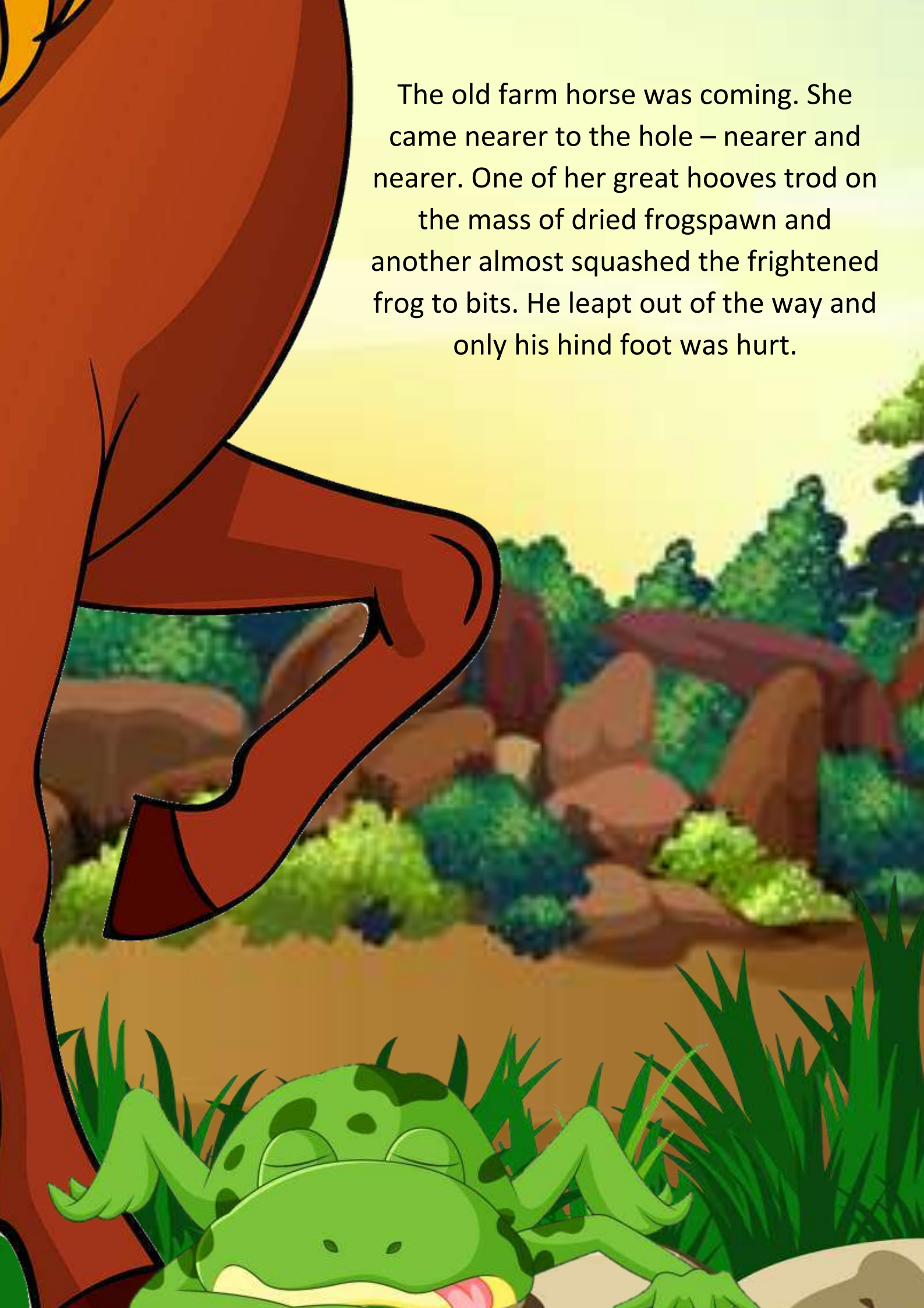


The sun shone out warmly. The puddle grew smaller as the sun dried it. It grew smaller still. The little green frog became afraid and hopped off to the big pond. But the foolish frog stayed with the jelly-like eggs, hoping that they would soon hatch.

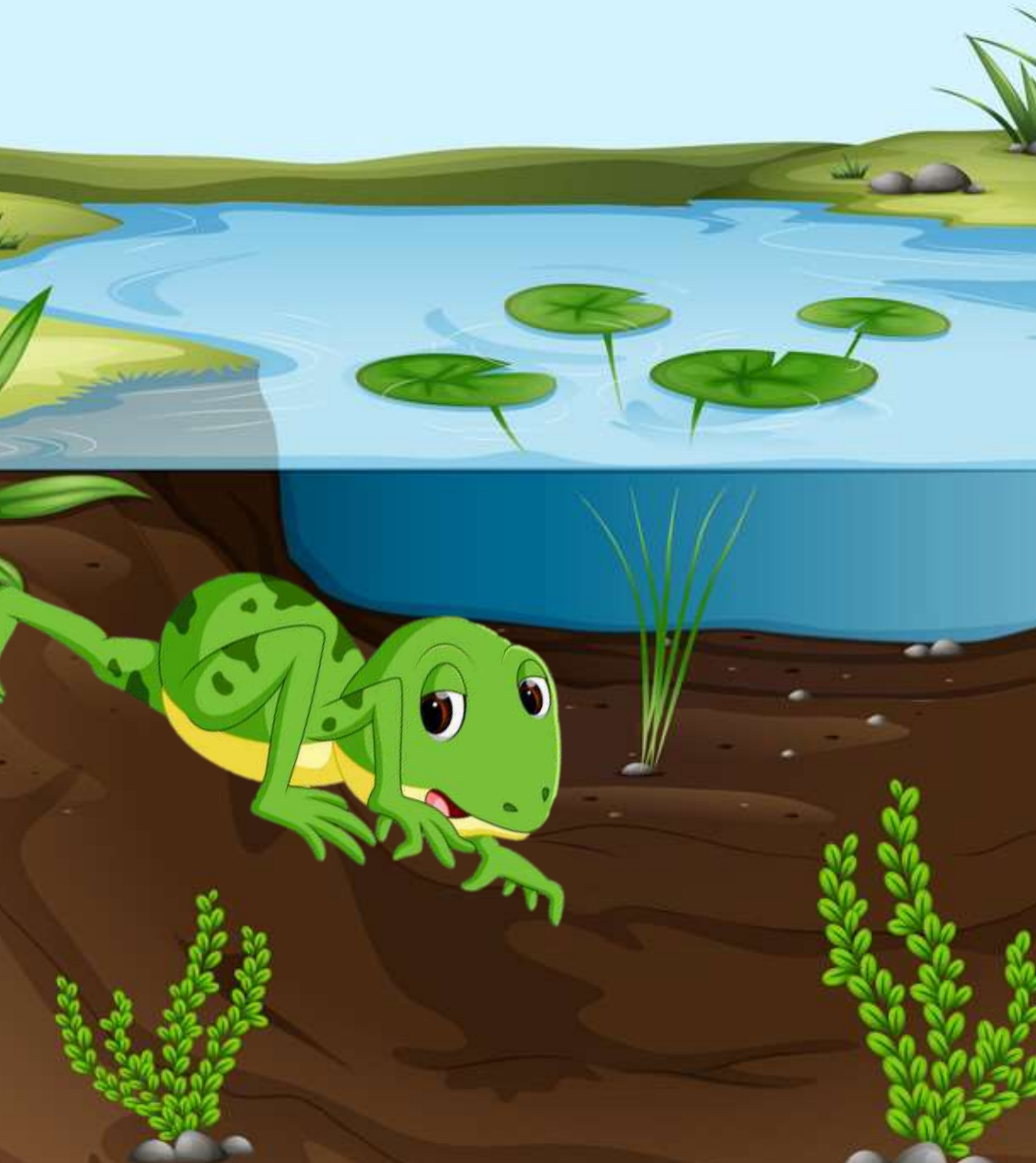


The puddle grew very small indeed – and then, alas, it dried up altogether! The mass of frogspawn dried up too, and the foolish frog was left in a hole by the side of the lane that led to the pond. But still he would not move. He waited for the puddle to fill again. Soon, down the lane, there came the sound of clip-clopping hooves.

The old farm horse was coming. She came nearer to the hole – nearer and nearer. One of her great hooves trod on the mass of dried frogspawn and another almost squashed the frightened frog to bits. He leapt out of the way and only his hind foot was hurt.



Full of fear he hopped away to the pond and leapt into the cool water. His foot hurt him and he had lost his eggs – they would never hatch now. He was ashamed and miserable.



‘Here is the foolish frog back again,’ croaked all the others. Well, brother, did your eggs hatch into tadpoles in that puddle? Have you told them not to speak to our young ones?’



The foolish frog said nothing. He sank down to the mud and lay there, his foot aching.

I am indeed foolish, he thought to himself. I thought I knew everything, but I knew nothing, I will be humble in future and listen to what the others say.



Now he is no longer proud and foolish. He does what he is told. He listens to the older frogs. He is becoming wise and humble. Soon he will no longer be known as the foolish frog.



But you will always be able to tell him by his left hind foot. It got better but it grew crooked, so if you see a frog with a foot like that you will know that he once was the foolish little frog!



A stylized lightbulb logo where the bulb is a circle with radiating lines, and the filament is a vertical line with a rainbow gradient. The word "THINK" is written in a large, teal, sans-serif font, with the letter "I" being the same rainbow gradient as the filament. Below it, "DIGITAL ACADEMY" is written in a smaller, brown, sans-serif font.

THINK
DIGITAL ACADEMY

