

STORY 42

words we know

careful race juice

happily early finally

know knew towards

sailor waiting again

strange large gentle

smile surprise realise

light might frighten

brought thought half

quiet behind enough

reaching happening stumbling

STORY 42

new sound

ai as in rain

kn as in knee

ph as in photo

Look through the story. Find some words with the “ai” sound, and say them aloud. Then do the same for the “kn” and “ph” words.

special words

Queensland stared face
disappearing miserable favourite
although noticed group actually

Learn how to say each special word.
See if you can find each one in the story.
Then you are ready to read the story.

FITZROY READERS STORY NUMBER 42

The Bear Next Door



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Two bears, called Philip and Faith Bear, lived in a country town in Queensland, on the main street near the train line.



Next door lived Brown Bear all alone. Philip and Faith had never actually met Brown Bear, although they had seen him often enough.

Philip and Faith thought Brown Bear was very strange. He never smiled, never talked, and always stared at them while they played. If they stared back, Brown Bear ran away.



In fact, Philip and Faith thought he was a stupid bear who didn't know how to smile, and who ran away when they smiled. Philip used to say he had no brains.

One fine sunny Friday after a week of soaking rain, Philip and Faith were in a great mood. They could at last go outside and play.



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

As they skipped to the front gate, they heard strange noises. Shouts, laughs and squeals came from somewhere down the street.



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

At the same time, they saw Brown Bear. Something was wrong. Poor Brown Bear was kneeling by a drain.



He seemed to be in pain. The bigger bears had pushed Brown Bear into the water.

Never had Philip and Faith seen such a soaking, muddy bear. Brown Bear's jeans were stained and dragging on the ground. There was even some mud on his face which made his nose look extra large.



What did Philip and Faith do? They laughed! Brown Bear really looked like a clown stumbling into his little cream house.

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. In fact, in two minutes time, they had forgotten all about the bear next door.

The next two days were the weekend days, Saturday and Sunday. These were rainy days again, so Philip and Faith had to stay inside.



But on Monday, the sun was shining - great! Philip and Faith ran outside, keen to jump puddles - and find snails.

They were really enjoying running and jumping and hopping when, around the corner, came the same four or five bigger bears.



Before Philip had a chance to escape, the bigger bears grabbed him, shoved him into a puddle, rubbed his face in the mud, and then ran off - hooting with laughter.

Poor Philip Bear! He was cold, wet and muddy. And Faith was frightened. She ran to his aid. He had a pain in his knee - just where Brown Bear had been hurt.



They plodded into their house, crying. They slammed the door and locked it with a chain. Faith hugged Philip to comfort him.

Ten minutes later there was a gentle knock on their door, and a soft voice said, "May I come in? May I help?" It was a kind voice just at a time when Philip and Faith felt all alone, and needed someone kind to care for them.



Faith slowly turned the knob to open the door and what a surprise! Brown Bear was standing there with a huge jug of cocoa!

Brown Bear found a roll of bandage for Philip's knee, and cut some with a knife. Faith put it around Philip's leg and tied a knot.



Brown Bear lit a fire. The three of them sat in front of it gulping the lovely hot cocoa.

“I have always wanted to be your friend,” said Brown Bear, “but I was just plain scared - too shy to speak to you. I did not think the two of you would want to be friends with me.”



Philip and Faith looked surprised. “We thought you were a strange bear because you never smiled or spoke to us,” they said.

Brown Bear went on, “You two always looked so happy. I thought you'd never need me.”
“But you see, we do need you,” said Philip.



“Please be our friend. We feel bad to think that we did not help you when the horrible bears pushed you in the puddle. We are sorry. Please forgive us.”

The day finished happily. Brown Bear had two new friends and Philip and Faith each had one new friend. Faith took some photos.



All of them knew that from now on they would do lots of things together. Often they would phone each other just for fun.

THE END

STORY 42

words we've used

Queensland stared careful
face race noticed
disappearing really group
miserable favourite although
actually caused something

some new words

aim bait paid
brain snail quaint
knob knuckle knight
graph Joseph nephew

STORY 42

teacher's page

teacher, information from this page may be shared with students when you feel they are ready for it

How does English compare with other languages? Italian is often put forward as an example of a truly phonic (alphabetic) language. Some people suggest that Italian is an alphabetic language but that English is not. Certainly, Italian has fewer *special words* and fewer *extra sounds* than English.

In most Italian words, each letter represents its *basic sound*. For example: **amico**, **vino**, **bambino**. But it is a mistake to think that all the letters of written Italian represent their *basic sounds*. Italian does have some *extra sounds*.

Compare for example, the **z** sounds in **pizza** and **zucchini**. When the **z** is on its own, as in **zucchini**, it is pronounced like the English **z**. But when the letter **z** is written next to another **z**, as in **pizza**, the *extra sound ts* is represented.

The use of two or more letters together to represent an *extra sound*, not simply a blend of the basic sounds, is called a *digraph*. English has many more digraphs than Italian. But these are still rules of pronunciation. They govern over 90% of English vocabulary. English is indeed an alphabetic language.