

Reading for Meaning

**Welcome to the Reading for
Meaning programme.**

**We hope that you will have fun
reading stories and doing activities
with learners.**

**Remember, nurturing and
supporting a child is important
for their physical, emotional and
academic development.**

**ZERO
DROP/OUT**

**Part of the Zero Dropout campaign working towards
halving the rate of school dropout by 2030.**

Reading
for Meaning

A trip to the stars

STORY GUIDE

STORY
20

EACH READER NEEDS...

The story

Pens or pencils

Paper

The Story



INTRODUCE THE STORY

Joseph lay in his bed with the full moon shining down on him, so bright it was almost hurting his eyes. It hung there in space, a huge ball shining out into the darkness of the sky. Behind it, scattered across that darkness, millions of stars sparkled like diamonds.



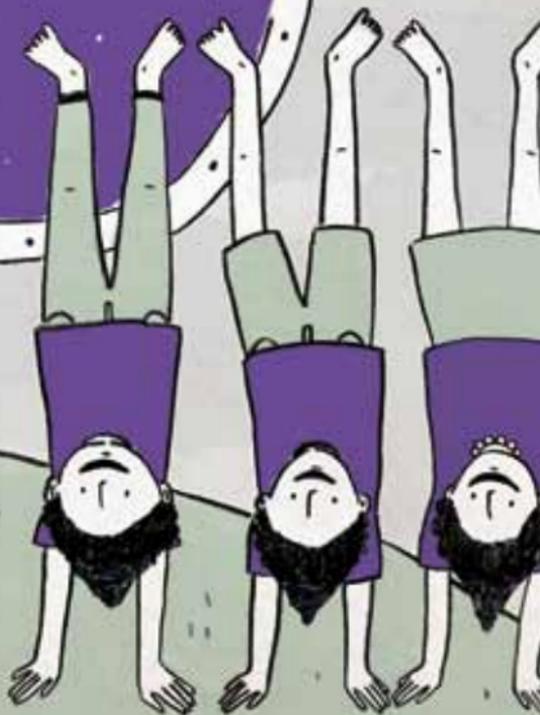
READ THE STORY...

Read the story aloud, with expression. Change your voice when different characters speak.

Pause briefly for commas, full stops etc. and between paragraphs.

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A trip to the stars



Joseph lay in his bed with the full moon shining down on him, so bright it was almost hurting his eyes. It hung there in space, a huge ball shining out into the darkness of the sky. Behind it, scattered across that darkness, millions of stars sparkled like diamonds.

His teacher had said there are no people out there, but Joseph was wondering about that. What if there were people, or other ... (he tried to think of a word) ... other creatures in space? What was it like up there, so far away among the stars? Would it be hot? Cold? Would he be able to breathe? Would any creatures from space be friendly or scary? Would he be able to talk to them?

A light streaked across the sky. Then it streaked again, this time brighter. It was coming towards Joseph, getting bigger and bigger. The strange thing is, he wasn't scared. He was just curious. What was this light?

Suddenly it was right there, just outside their house. Joseph's mouth hung open. What was it? He jumped up and ran outside. What he saw was a big shining ball, not much taller than him. As he stared, a hole appeared in its side. Suddenly Joseph felt himself being pulled into the hole.

Inside the ball, it was much bigger than it looked from outside. In fact it was huge. Joseph's mouth was still hanging open. He could see through a window that they were moving, flying up, away from the ground. In the moonlight, he saw the roof of his house, then the neighbours' roofs, then the whole village, getting smaller and smaller. Up up up they went. He saw the nearby farmlands, then the mountains on one side and the sea on the other, then the whole country, then the whole of Africa, then the whole of the world, as whoosh! they flew off into space.

Joseph heard a noise behind him. He turned from the window. And then he got a real fright.

Facing him were ... three pairs of feet! Looking down, he saw each pair of feet had a body that ended in a head. They looked like people, but they were upside down!

Then Joseph heard a sound, coming up from one of the upside-down heads. It sounded like words, but they weren't words he knew. Joseph listened very carefully. It sounded like "Oll-eh Phe-soj" "What?" thought Joseph. Then he took a deep breath and said out loud "Excuse me?" "Oll-eh Phe-soj."

Something about "phe-soj" made Joseph think "That sounds like something I know." Then he had what his teacher would have called a brain-wave. Can you think what it was? "Phe-soj" was "Joseph" backwards! And then Joseph thought again, about "Oll-eh". It was ... "Hello" backwards. He laughed "Hahaha" and in return he heard "Ah ah ah"

Then he had his second brain-wave of the day.

He flipped over, and stood on his hands. And guess what? The trick worked. Now that Joseph was also upside-down, the words they said sounded the right way around.

Standing on his hands was easy in space. Joseph settled down to enjoy the ride, and get to know the creatures better.

Their names were Jikki, Mikki and Tikki. They were from Gombo, a planet far from the earth, behind another sun. They were exploring space, looking for planets with friendly beings.

On Gombo, they did not look like humans, but in space they could take any shape they liked, and speak any language. So when they got to a planet, they could change their shape to meet and talk with whoever lived there.

“So did you think humans stand on their heads?” asked Joseph. His new friends looked very embarrassed. Then Jikki said “Well, I must admit we made one small mistake on our computer

when we came to Earth. We put a minus instead of a plus. So we ended up like this.”

“How many planets have you visited?” asked Joseph. The Ikkis looked even more embarrassed. Then Mikki said “Well, um, er, Earth is the first, really.”

Joseph was surprised. “So I’m the first alien you’ve met?” He thought for a moment then smiled and said “Don’t be scared. I won’t hurt you.” The Ikkis looked much happier.

Joseph turned back to the big window. They had just passed the moon, a big and shining ball. The sky looked like a deep pool, and the stars looked brighter than ever. “Tell me about space,” he said. Some stars were flashing. “Those are other suns,” said Mikki. Something whooshed past, leaving a shining tail. “And that’s a comet.”

They passed a shining planet with rings around it. “Earthlings call that Saturn.” Joseph was amazed. Suns, planets, comets - they were all

beautiful.

Then Joseph looked back and there saw the most beautiful planet of all. On it, he could make out the shape of Africa, green and brown, surrounded by blue sea. Yes, it was our home planet - Earth. Joseph suddenly felt homesick. He missed his family. "Please take me back," he said.

The Ikkis were surprised, but they did what he asked. Zooming back towards Earth, they promised to visit Joseph again soon, and take him on another ride through space. And do you know, I think they did.



WORD FOCUS

Ask the Readers to choose words that they find difficult and write them on a sheet of paper.

Ask them to use a dictionary or ask someone else at home what those words mean in their home language. Help them out if necessary.



SECOND READING...

Once you've worked out the meaning of the words, read the story again out loud.

Activities

WRITING SPACE LANGUAGE

In the story, the Ikkis are standing upside-down and when Joseph first heard them, they said “o-lleh phe-soj” They were talking backwards! Here’s a challenge: You are going to write your own secret message in space-language.

- 1** You will think of a message then turn each word backwards. eg. **sith si ckab ot ntofr**. Point out to Readers that they must say the sounds backwards.
- 2** Ask them to think of a secret message of a very few words (3-4 words).
- 3** They must write the words down, then read the message to themselves. Say

the message quietly and listen to the sounds in the words.



Then on a clean page, write the sounds out backwards, as a secret message.

A DIFFERENT ENDING

Ask the Readers to answer the following questions in their notebooks.

How did the story end?

Why did it end like this?

Where was he when he decided this?

Who was with him?

What if he hadn't decided that he was homesick?

What if Joseph had wanted to keep going?

What else could have happened?

Ending

Praise the Readers for their participation.

Ask if they enjoyed the story, and what they liked best. Tell them you enjoyed it too.

Say goodbye, and say how much you look forward to seeing them next time.

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