

THIS IS MY COW

Activity Book and Teaching Guide

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This program is designed to be used with the 2007 edition of *Letters and Sounds*, available for free download from www.standards.dfes.gov.uk or www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications; email: dfes@prolog.uk.com; phone: +44 (0)845-60-222-60

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Printed in the United Kingdom

Combining sounds and letter groups

It is suggested that you use either Synthetic Phonics *or* Inductive Whole-word Phonics.

Before introducing the word families, ensure the children understand the meanings of any difficult words. For example, for the words *harsh* and *harsher*, explain that the word means “unpleasant or not nice.” Give some examples of things that are harsh. For example, something rough, like dry grass and thorns can feel harsh to walk on; old rubbish can smell harsh. You could bring in some items that are harsh to touch, hear, taste, etc, for the children to experience. Explain that either words or actions can also be described as harsh. If someone tells you that they are not your friend, those words would hurt your feelings; those words are harsh. Pushing and biting other people are examples of harsh actions.

For the word *north*, you can explain that it describes a direction. Very briefly mention north, east, south, and west, and show where they are. Focusing on north, you can bring in a compass and discuss. Ask the children to list things that they can see that are north from where they are.

For the word *porch*, be aware that some children may use the word *verandah* instead. Explain that they are the same. Explain that *march* is both the

name of a month and a way of walking, as well as the walk itself. When *March* means the name of the month, it has a capital *M*.

Synthetic Phonics

The children should be regularly reviewing (revising) all letters/letter groups and sound combinations taught up to this point. This workbook focuses on combining the letter groups and sounds *ch*, *sh* and *th* with *or*, *ar*, *ur* and *er*. It’s especially important that these sounds are quickly reviewed (revised) before this lesson.

Practicing combining sounds for reading: Starting from the word *churn*, display one word at a time from the word family on page 2 for the children to see. Ask the children to look at each word. Have them go through the recognizing and blending process. Support the children by adding a sound button under each sound in the word as the

church thorn

children attempt to decode the letter groups or letters representing a sound in the word. *Sound buttons* are marks under each sound in a word. (A line under a letter group that makes one sound in a word and a dot under a single letter that makes one sound in a word, as illustrated at the bottom of the previous page. You can also refer to *Letters and Sounds* for more examples.)

For the word *churn* draw a line under the letter group *ch* just before the children attempt to decode the sound /ch/ in the word *churn*. Then a line under the letter group *ur* as the children attempt to decode the next sound /er/ in the word *churn* and a dot under the last letter *n* as the children attempt to decode the last sound /n/ in the word *churn*. Then work through the other words in the word family, working down the lists.

As the children become more confident and faster at recognising the letter groups and letters in words that represent a sound in a word, have them read the words without sound buttons, or ask them if they can add their own sound buttons to words from the word family.

Inductive Whole-word Phonics

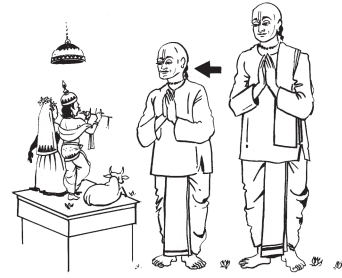
Discuss the meaning of any possibly unfamiliar words from this list. Then, go through the word families on this page using spell-say (c-h-u-r-c-h, church) and repeat for the first word of each list. See if the children can then read the rest of the words in the list. Use spell-say if needed. Have them read the lists from top to bottom, then bottom to top, and then pick random words and see if they can read them.

Word families

churn	sharp	short	north
church	sharper	shorter	torch
	shark	thorn	porch
	harsh	thorns	orchard
	harsher		
	march		
	March		

Match words to pictures

porch



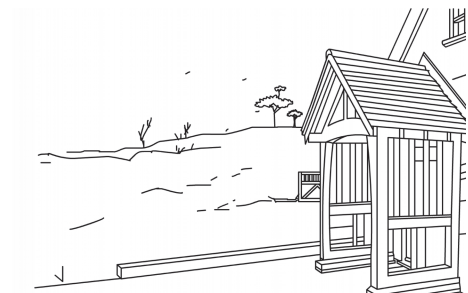
short



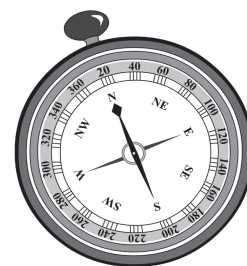
north



torch



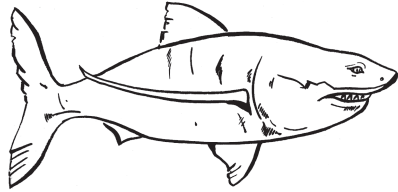
orchard



NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children read the words, using spell-say or sound-say. Then have them name the pictures and then draw lines that match. Help as needed.

Match words to pictures

march



church



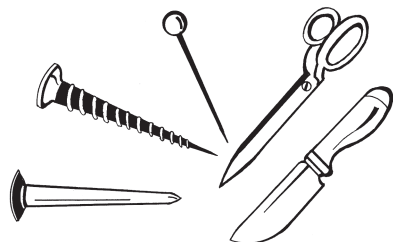
shark



sharp



thorn



NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children read the words, using spell-say or sound-say. Then have them name the pictures and then draw lines that match. Help as needed.

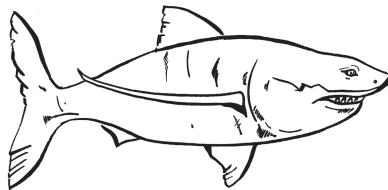
Write the missing letter group

ch

sh



chur_____



_____ark



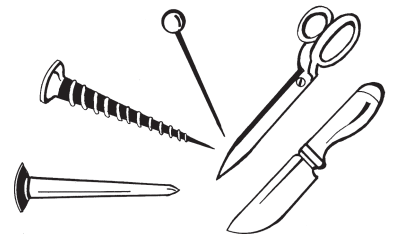
or_____ard



_____urn



mar_____



_____arp

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children describe and name the picture and then write *ch* or *sh* to complete the word correctly. Help as needed.

Sort words by letter group

thorn ship shark north Beth
wish bath shop then harsher

sh

th

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children read the words in the top box, using spell-say or sound-say. Then have them sort the words depending on whether they contain the letter group *sh* or *th* by writing the words in the correct balloons. Help as needed.

You can also use this page along with the next two pages. Photocopy the words on all three pages, or write them on cards, with at least three cards for each word. Ask the children to put each word into as many balloons as it will fit. Most words will fit into two balloons.

Sort words by letter group

never sharper churn curl shorter
church turnip harsher her burp

ur



er



NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children read the words in the top box, using spell-say or sound-say. Then have them write each of the words in the balloon that has the letter group the words contains. Help as needed.

Ask the children if they see a pattern in how these letter groups are positioned in the words. The letter group *er* is positioned at the end of the word, *ur* is positioned in the middle. Both letter groups share the same sound, /er/.

Sort words by letter group

harsh thorns porch orchard north
torch arm march short sharper

ar



or



NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children read the words, using spell-say or sound-say. Then have them write words in the balloon that has the letter group the words contains. Explain that one word (*orchard*) can fit in both categories and can be written in both balloons. Help as needed.

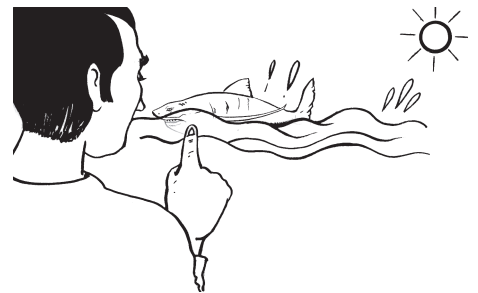
Her foot is full of thorns.



This is a big church.



The sunlight is harsh.



Look north! A shark!



Let us look in the orchard.



NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children read each sentence, using spell-say or sound-say. Ask them to describe the pictures, and then draw lines to match sentences to pictures.

a river

an owl

a

an

a kitten

an egg

a ball

an old hat

ax

ox

a jar

an oak

doll

boat



It is _____ dark, cool night. I put on _____

jacket. My sister and I go in the yard in the _____

moonlight. In the yard is _____ oak. We see

_____ owl. The owl sits on _____ egg.

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Suggest oral sentences or phrases with *a* and *an*. Ask the children to try saying *a* instead of *an* for words that start with a vowel (Such as “I saw *a* elephant.”). Discuss how doing this sounds awkward and difficult so we use *an* before these kinds of words instead. You can list the vowels and tell the children that we use *an* before words that start with those letters, or before words that start with those sounds. Go through the list of eight samples at the top of this page, and then have children fill in the other four boxes. Discuss the reasons for their choices. Then ask the children to fill in the blanks in the story with *a* or *an*.

Mark the correct word to complete the sentence

If it's too hard to
see in the dark,
you need a

☐ shorter.

☐ torch.

The winter is
harsher in the

☐ shark.

☐ north.

The men will

☐ march.

☐ harsh.

Her hair is fair and

☐ short.

☐ hard.

The thorn in his
foot is

☐ run.

☐ sharp.

She is running
in the

☐ sharper.

☐ orchard.

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: The children should choose the correct word to complete the sentence by putting a mark in the box next to the word.

Mark the correct letter group



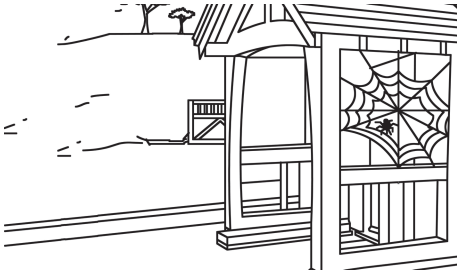
Yashoda will ch____n the butter.

☐

or

☐

ur



I see a cobweb on the p____ch.

☐

or

☐

ur



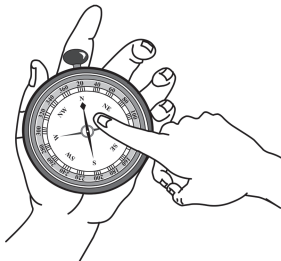
I can see the ch____ch!

☐

or

☐

ur



This is n____th.

☐

or

☐

ur



Her hair is sh____t.

☐

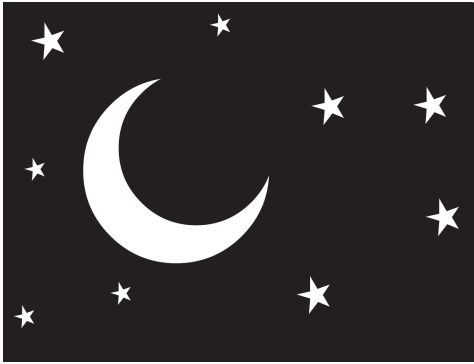
or

☐

ur

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children read the sentences, using sound-say or spell-say. For each sentence, ask them to decide what the missing word is from the sentence or the picture. Then ask if we should use *or* or *ur* to make the word. The children should then mark the correct letter group. You can help the children by writing other words from the same family on the board or by having them look at the word families on pages 2 of this book.

Mark the sentence that matches the picture



- ☐ The moonlight is not harsh.
- ☐ Put on a hat in the sunlight.



- ☐ Sita is a good singer.
- ☐ I pass the man a torch.



- ☐ She gathers all the coats.
- ☐ His top is too short.



- ☐ Her supper is hot.
- ☐ I do not go near the thorn bushes.

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: The children should mark the box that is next to the sentence which describes the picture. Point out to the children that *bushes* has the same /u/ sound as *bull*.

What do you think?

Can a mess be
harsh to look at?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Can a man run
north?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Will a torch feel
hot?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Did you ever see a
shark?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Can you march to
a park?

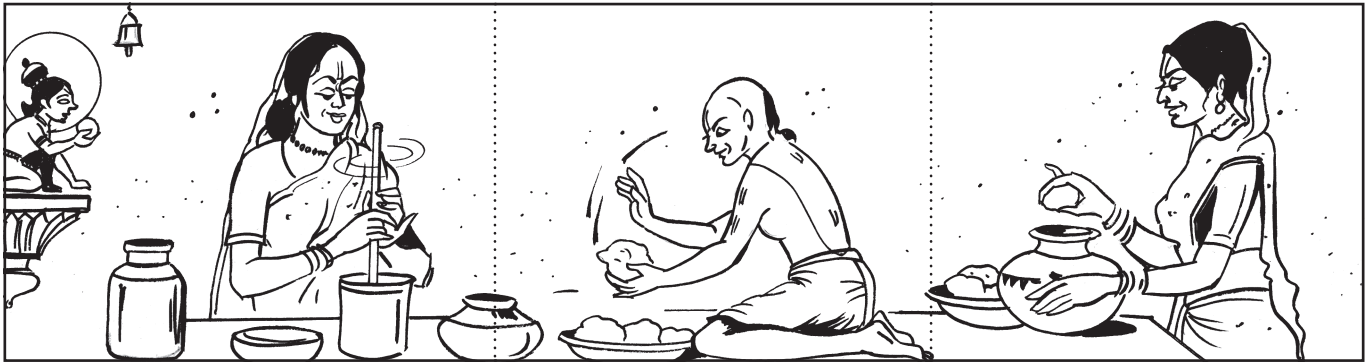
☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you visit a
temple in March?

☐ Yes ☐ No

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: The children answer *yes* or *no* to the question by marking the appropriate box. The questions do not always have a correct or incorrect answer. The focus is on reading the question. The child's answer and the reason for their answer can be discussed afterwards.

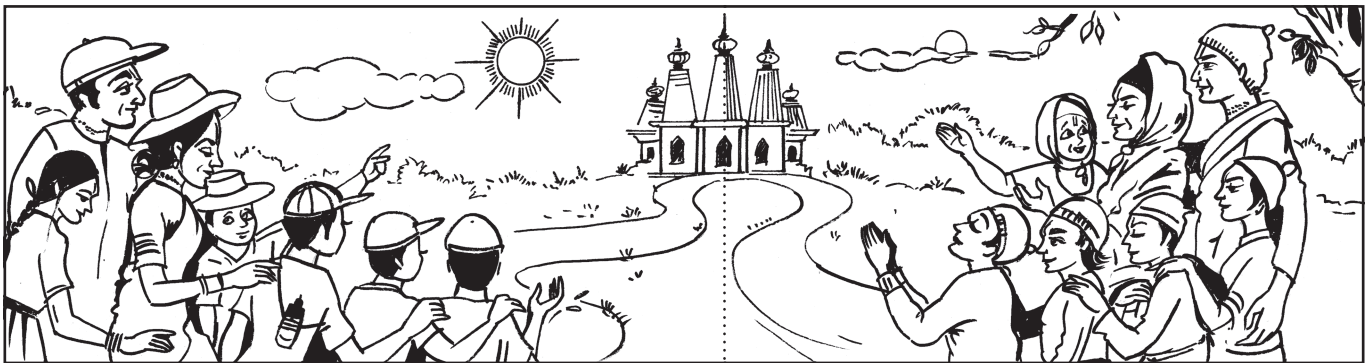
This activity can be used as a whole class exercise. Write a question on the board and the children can hold up a *yes* or *no* card to answer the question.



Mum churns the butter.

Then I gather the butter in a ball and pat it.

Mum keeps the butter in a jar.



In summer the night is short.

In winter the night is longer.

In the summer and in the winter,
we go to see Krishna in the morning.

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: This page is for extra reading practice. Using spell-say or sound-say when needed, read each of these descriptions of the pictures and have the children repeat. Finally ask the children to read each section on their own without your reading first. Discuss what is happening in the picture. For the first, you can discuss how butter is made, and for the second, how the days and nights change in the seasons.

CREATING THE ATMOSPHERE

Talk about cows, how they are considered one of our mothers. They are considered one of our mothers because, like our real mother, they provide us with milk. Discuss how cows not only give us milk which can be used to make many other preparations, but we can also use their urine, cow dung (manure) and even their skin when they die naturally. Explain that because cows give us so much, they are taken care of especially well, and in some countries they become like family.

INTRODUCING THE BOOK

Look at the cover. “Who do you think this story is about? What and who can you see?” Most children will recognize Ravi from the other books about this family. Explain that this book is about the same family that lives at Govardhana that we have read about before. “What is he doing? Ask the children to read the title.

Go through the book, discussing illustrations and text:

pp. 2–3: Ask the children what is happening in the picture. “What is the name of the cow?” Ask the children to find the name *Geeta* in the text. Ask them how many times the name *Geeta* appears in the text (twice). Ask the children to find the thorns and rocks in the picture and then ask them to find the words *thorns* and *rocks* in the text.

pp. 4–5: Look at the picture and ask the children who the boys are (Vikram and Ravi). Look at the sentence “Cow manure is pure,” and ask the children what two words rhyme in this sentence.

pp. 6–7: “On these pages it describes three things that Ravi’s family use cow manure for. What are they?” Ask the children to find Ravi’s family using the manure in these ways in the picture.

pp. 8–9: “Do you like carrots? Do you think Geeta will like carrot peels? What do you do with your vegetable peels at home?”

pp. 10–11: “What else do you think is in Geeta’s dinner that Ravi is mixing?”

pp. 12–13: Ask the children to find the words describing what Geeta is eating for dinner in the text (carrot peels).

pp. 14–15: Ask the children to say all the things Ravi collects for Geeta’s bath (bucket, soap, towel). Ask the children to find the names of these items in the text and look for them in the picture. Look at the picture and ask the children what is going in the bucket (water). Where relevant, talk about the pump and how in many places in the world, people don’t have running tap water; they collect their water from pumps that bring water from under the ground.

pp. 16–17: “What is happening in this picture? Yes Geeta is having a bath. Can you see the bucket near Geeta?”

pp. 18–19. Discuss what is happening in the illustrations. Have the children read the text with you on page 19. Ask, “How long will Geeta’s nap be?” (short)

pp. 20–21: Discuss the illustrations. Discuss the use of exclamation marks. Have the children read the last sentence a few times with expression.

pp. 22–23: Who do you think just had a bath? (Ravi) Why? Who is eating hot dinner?”

p. 24: “What do you think Ravi thinks of his dinner?”

QUICK REVIEW OF WORDS

It is best if the children have completed all the activities in the book up to this point. Quickly review the word families on page 2. Review adding *s* to *thorn* to make *thorns*. Discuss how adding an *s* changes the word *thorn* from one to many. Review the meaning of *manure* and *cow dung*.

READING THE BOOK

Choose one of the following three methods to read the book:

Synthetic Phonics

First read each page and then have the children repeat, using the sounds of the letters or letter groups being taught, reading as follows: “/s-i-t/ Sit for a /sh-or-t/ short.” The children should then repeat the same way. Only sound-say the phonetic words whose sounds have been taught, not other high frequency words, such as *said*. Phonetically learned words with which a particular child is completely familiar (which should be many of them at this point) do not need to be sound-said. After reading a page with sound-say, read it normally, and have the child repeat. Children who are struggling can point to each word. Ask the child at various places in the story to predict what he or she thinks might happen next. Then you can ask if their prediction was correct or what actually happened. Some children may need more help than others.

Inductive Whole-word Phonics

First read each page and then have the children repeat, using the letter names (not the sounds of the letters) being taught, reading as follows: “s-i-t Sit for a s-h-o-r-t short.” The children should then repeat the same way. Only spell-say the phonetic words whose sounds have been taught, not other high frequency words, such as *said*. Phonetically learned words with which a particular child is completely familiar (which should be many of them at this point) do not need to be spell-said. After reading a page with spell-say, read it normally, and have the child repeat. Children who are struggling can point to each word. Ask the child at various places in the story to predict what he or she thinks might happen next. Then you can ask if their prediction was correct or, if not, what actually happened. Some children may need more help than others.

Guided Reading

The children read every one or two pages at a time to themselves. If the child reads correctly, give specific praise, such as, “You figured out *dinner*. How did you know what that word was?” Check that the children read without pointing. Ask the child at various points in the story to predict what he or she thinks might happen next. If a child stumbles over a word or reads it incorrectly, give help through referring to the word’s letter names, phonemes (letter sounds), the pictures, or to what has already happened in the story or on the page. You can refer to the list of word families in this book to help the child figure out a word, also.

AFTER READING THE BOOK, RETURNING TO THE TEXT

Word review exercise

Give the children a list of words to find in the text (*sharp, short, thorns, her, good, things, hard, run, hot, or*). The children could also record how often each word appears and on what page.

How does the character feel exercise

Show page 10 and think aloud about how you decide how the characters feel. Say, “How does Ravi feel?” And then answer the question out loud by referring to the words and/or the pictures, or to how the story is progressing. For example, you

could say, “I think Ravi feels a bit embarrassed because of the look on his face and that his mother needs to ask him to do something that he probably does everyday. On page 9 he looked like he was really absorbed in watching his mother cook, so he might have forgotten about his job.”

Have each child pick a page and describe (to the adult or to a partner) what one of the characters is feeling and how that decision was reached (using specific examples from the words, pictures, or story flow). Encourage the children to use words other than happy and sad.

Keystone words exercise

Remind the children that in different books, or on different pages in a book, certain words are very important. Ask the children to say what word is most important on page 10 (dinner, cow or needs) and to discuss why.

Thought pictures exercise

Show the children the text on page 20. You can also write the text on the board or a piece of paper. Explain to the children how you make pictures in your mind when you read, like having a video in your mind. Ask the children to pretend there is no picture in the book, make a thought picture from that sentence and share it with a partner.

Finding answers exercise

Model for the children how to find an answer by looking in the text. Take the question, “Why does Ravi look after his cow so carefully?” and then both show and explain how you use the book to get the answer from both the picture and text. For example, you could say, “Ravi and his family use the cow manure on walls, for cleaning and for cooking, so her manure is important and that’s why they look after her so well.”

Have the children find answers to the following questions, and explain the reasons for their answers. This can be done with a partner or as group work. Every child should answer at least one factual question and one inferential question. It is best if all children answer all questions. For the inferential questions, there is no “right” answer, and what is most important is for children to explain their process and reasoning based on the book.

Fact questions

- ♦ What did Ravi’s mum peel for dinner?. (carrots)
- ♦ What did Ravi’s family use the manure for? (cooking, cleaning pots, and sticking on walls)
- ♦ What were Geeta’s bath things? (bucket, towel, soap)
- ♦ Why was Ravi’s dinner not hot? (because he had to take a bath).

Inferential questions

- ♦ Why did Ravi fall in the manure?
- ♦ Why does Geeta need to be kept in the shed at night in winter?
- ♦ What other food would Geeta eat?
- ♦ Why does Ravi and his family stick cow manure on the walls?

Each child should now read the book out loud with fluency and expression. If needed, model this first.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

Give the children a large piece of paper. Ask them to draw a picture of a cow in the centre. Ask them to write and/or draw all the ways that cows can help us in our daily lives. This activity can be completed individually, or in small groups.

Ask the children to imagine if they had a pet cow at school. As a class write a simple book describing their cow, how they would take care of the cow and how their cow could help them. The children can illustrate the book.



Ravi picks up sharp rocks
and thorns from the yard.

☐ Yes ☐ No



We put the manure on
the walls.

☐ Yes ☐ No



I run with the buckets,
and put them in the shed.

☐ Yes ☐ No



My dinner is not hot.
It is bad!

☐ Yes ☐ No

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: The children should mark the box next to the word that completes the sentence which describes the picture. Correct answers are ones that match the story book. Ideally, the children should complete this without referring back to the book, and then they can look in the book to check their answers, or the answers of a partner.

Unscramble the sentences



a bath Geeta has



am I mess a



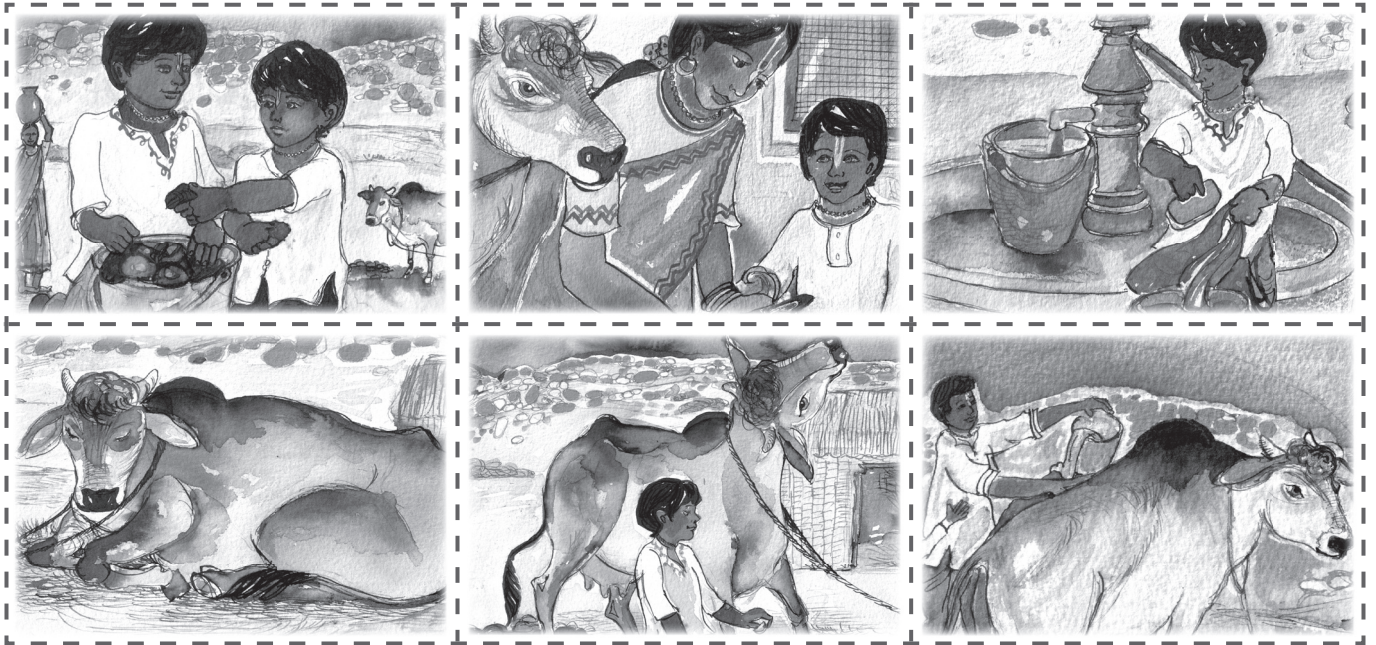
for a she can sit short nap



is cow pure manure

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Model unscrambling sentences and adding capitalization and period (full stop). Choose sentences from previous books or activity books to write on the board scrambled and then work with the children to fix. The children then unscramble these sentences on this page to make sense, adding capitalization and period (full stop). Children who struggle with this after repeated modeling can refer back to the reading book.

Put the story in order



Vikram and I put Geeta's manure in a bucket.

This is my cow, Geeta.

"Go get the cow her bath things!" said my dad.

My cow got her dinner and her bath.

Mum peels carrots for dinner.

Now she can sit for a short nap.

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Photocopy and cut out the sentences as well as the corresponding pictures. First have the children match the sentences with pictures, and then have them put both the sentences and pictures in the same order in which they appear in the story, *This is My Cow*. First have the children try to do this without referring to the book, and then have them look at the book to check and, if necessary, correct their answers.

Circle or write the correct word based on the story book



I pick up rocks and _____ from the yard.
buckets thorns carrots



The cow needs _____ dinner.
her cook sharp



I put her _____ down near her.
porch bucket orchard



She can sit for a _____ nap.
north shut short

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: The children should read each sentence, using sound-say or spell-say as needed. Then they should read the three words and decide which goes in the blank according to the story book. They should then write the word in the blank. It is good if they orally spell and say the word they have written. If a child is unable to write the word, he or she can circle the word that goes in the blank.

Write the missing words using the picture clues

The _____ is near
the shop.

The _____ burns
at night.

A fish is food for a

_____.

The men _____ in
the rain.

Dad is picking in the

_____.



NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Have the children read the sentences, using spell-say or sound-say as needed. Ask them which picture would go in the blank. Then ask them to orally spell the missing word, thinking of the sounds. If needed, they can look back at the word families on page 2. They should then write the missing word in the blank space.

thorn torch shorter church porch sharp

It's dark tonight. We can see with a

_____.

It will be hard to pick the _____
from her foot.

If it rains I will run to the _____.
I will not get wet.

I can hear the bell in the _____
ringing. Ding-dong!

I can see _____ thorns in the yard.

Vikram is _____ than his Dad.

NOTES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS: Ask the children to read the words in the top box, using sound-say or spell-say if needed. You can also refer to the word families on page 2. Then have the children read through the sentences, one at a time. After each sentence, ask them to suggest what word goes in the blank. They may have to try a few to see which ones make sense. Once a child has identified the correct word, he or she should write that word in the blank.