



# Stories for early years: Doing more with less



Hosted by

**Ross Thorburn**

Teacher trainer, podcast host,  
& StudyCat Stories author

# Plan for today

How to make  
stories

Read stories  
together

Activities for  
using stories

# Plan for today

How to make  
stories

Read stories  
together

Activities for  
using stories

What is in a (good) story





plot

characters

language

plot



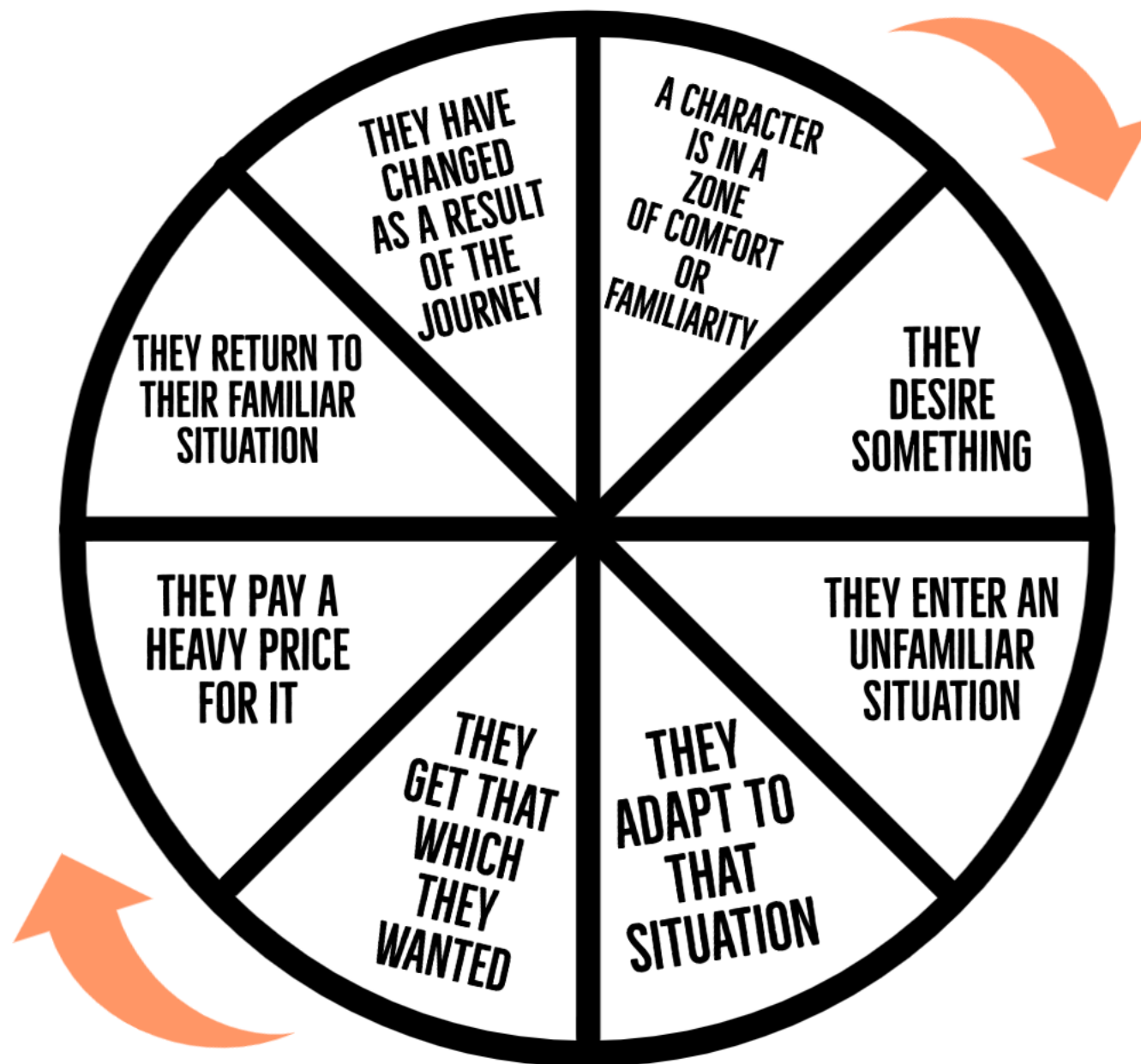
characters



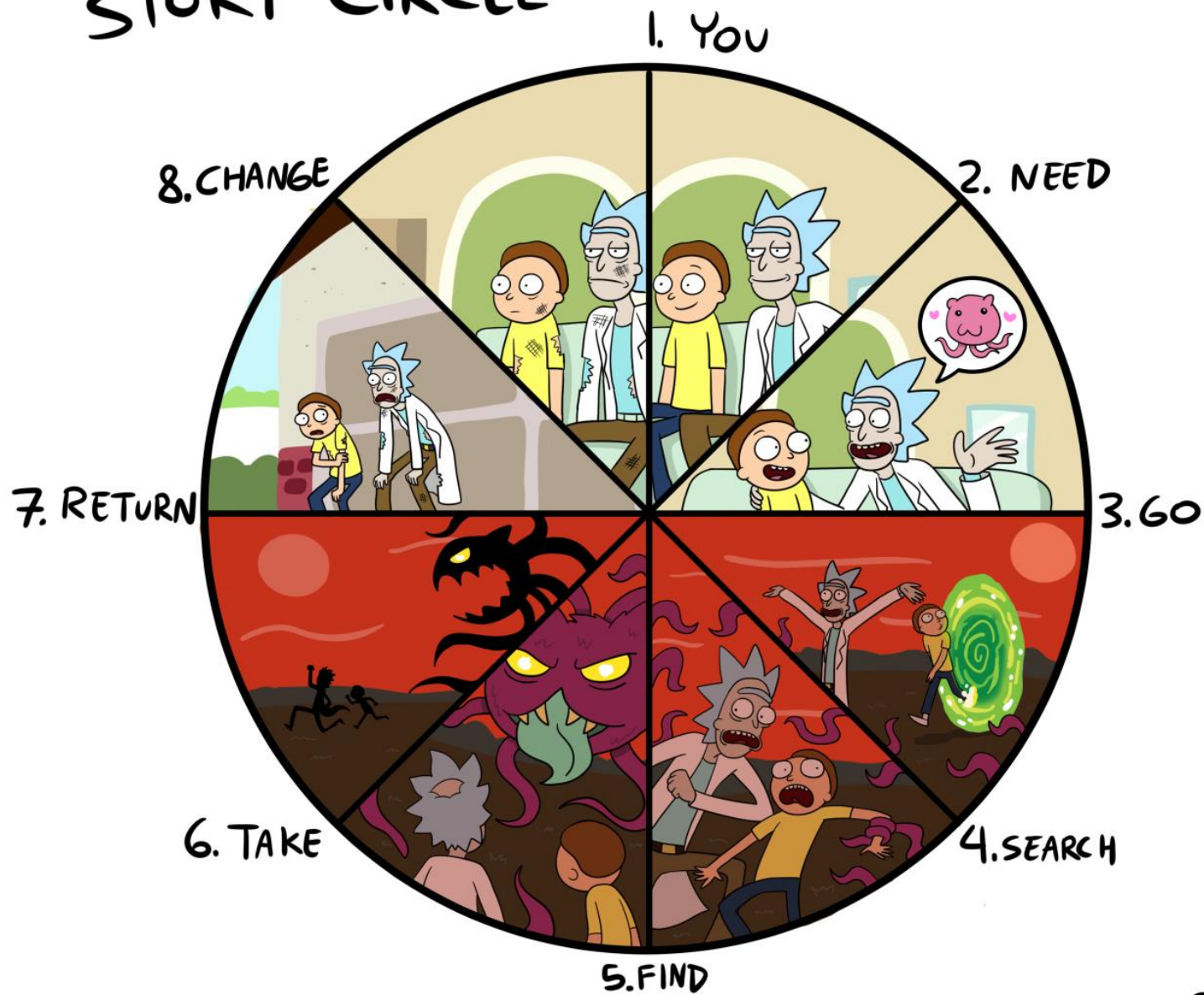
language

# DAN HARMON'S "STORY CIRCLE"

examples?



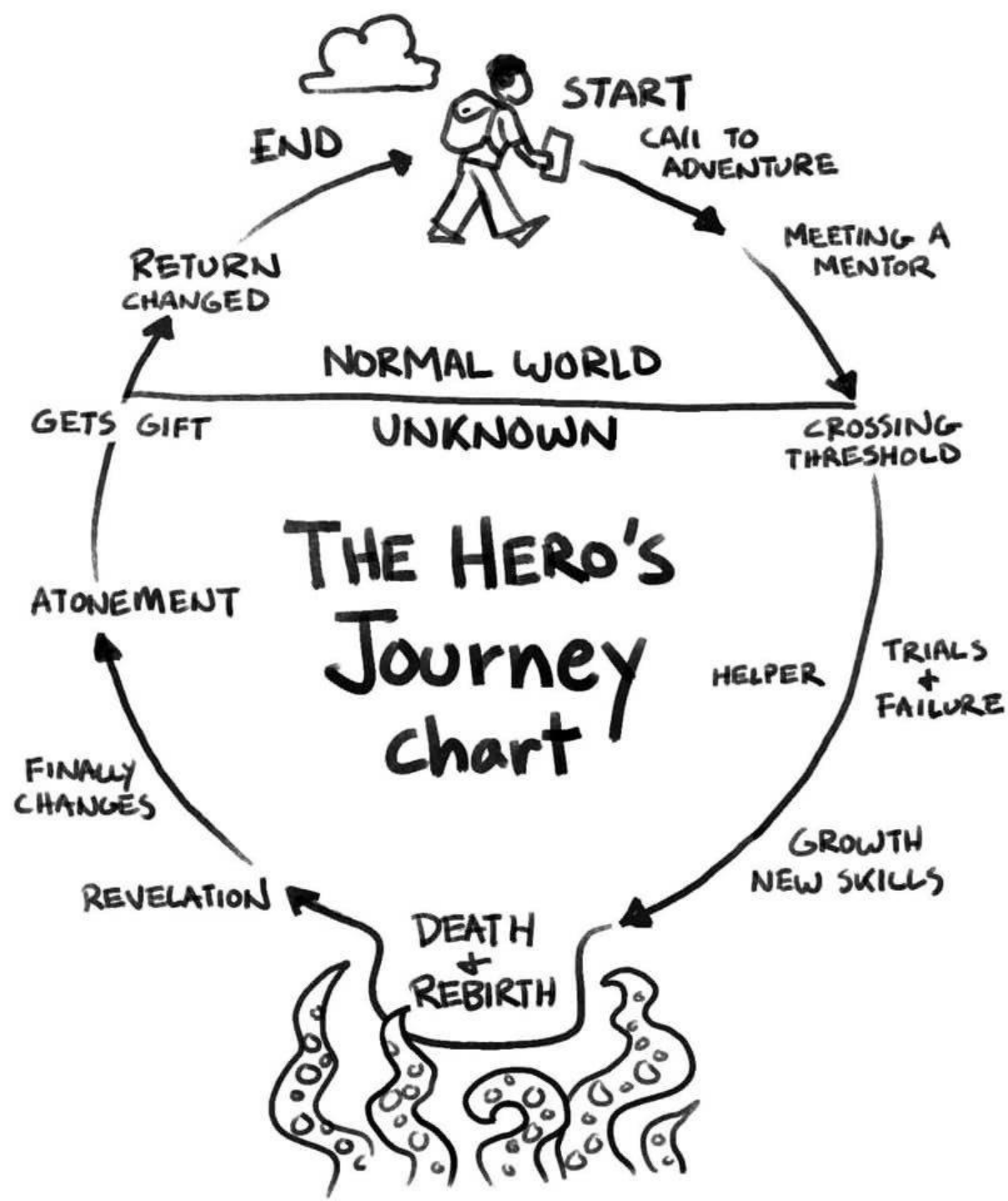
# DAN HARMON'S STORY CIRCLE



DH



examples?





2



1





2



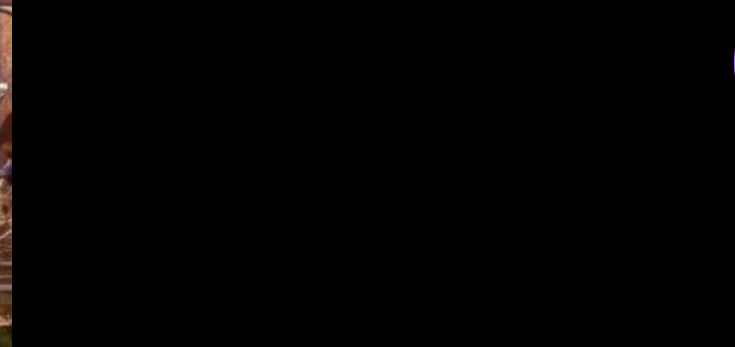
1



3











A diagram illustrating the combination of three elements: plot, characters, and language. It consists of three rounded rectangular boxes arranged horizontally. The first box on the left is grey and contains the word "plot". To its right is a grey plus sign. The middle box is red and contains the word "characters". To its right is another grey plus sign. The final box on the right is grey and contains the word "language".

plot

characters

language





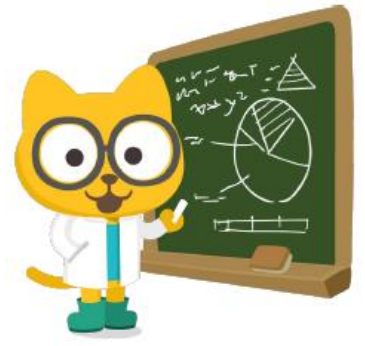
**Name:** Studycat

**Age:** 7

**Likes:** Making up games, jokes, singing and teaching languages!

**Personality:**

Studycat, our heroine, has found a really fun and playful way to learn languages and she wants to share that with her friends because she sees how language enables understanding and respect for other people.







**Name:** Bob

**Age:** 8

**Lives:** Catland

**Likes:** Food! Sports.

**Dislikes:** Being hungry

**Personality:** Perseverance.

Bob is a tough cat! He protects the other friends.

**Skill:** Teamwork/collaboration.

Nutrition!





**Name:** Ali

**Age:** 7

**Lives:** Catland

**Likes:** Helping people

**Dislikes:** Being alone.

**Personality:** Chatterbox. She is a thoughtful cat who loves helping friends. Ali knows that a good night's sleep helps her feel happy and full of energy.

**Skill:** Communication, empathy. Super Sleeper!



**Name:** Kitty

**Age:** 6

**Likes:** Playing music. Being clean & tidy & organised.

**Dislikes:** Bullies, loud noises.

**Personality:** Kitty loves playing piano. Shy, but with keen senses. Loves solving puzzles and riddles.

**Skill:** Awareness and problem solving. Super senses.







**Name:** Tom,

**Age:** 6

**Likes:** Helping his brother, acting, and dressing up!

**Dislikes:** Being bored

**Personality:** Playful and energetic, confident. Tom is a super fun cat. He is very creative and confident. He loves performing and showing off!

**Skill:** Creativity



plot



characters



language









red, blue, yellow, green,  
orange, purple, pink, brown,  
gray, white, black

friend, brother, sister, mom, dad,  
grandma, grandpa, mother, father,  
grandmother, grandfather, aunt,  
uncle, cousin

- a) When might children say these?
- b) What other language would children use these with?
- c) How could these be part of a story?

# Kitty's Balloons





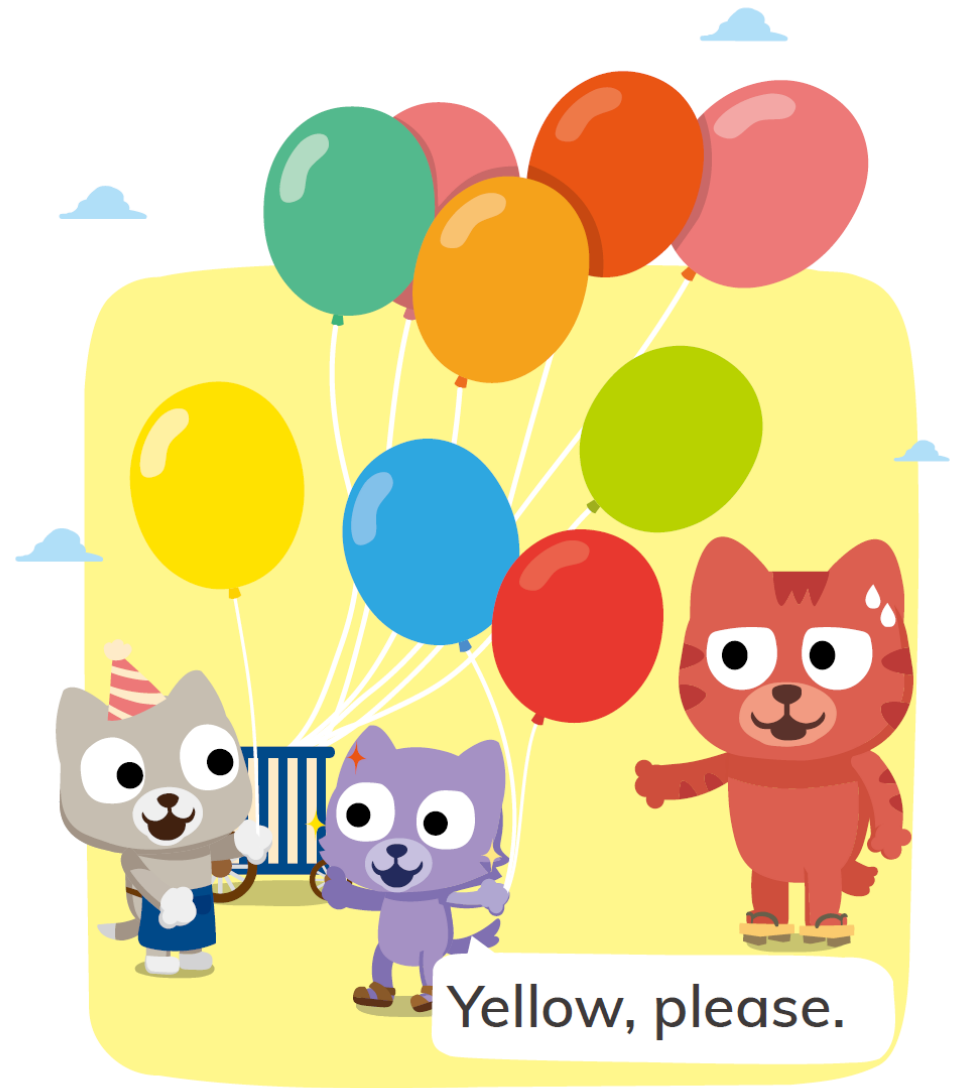
Kitty sees balloons.



Kitty wants a balloon.



Kitty wants another balloon.



Kitty wants another balloon.



Kitty is flying.



Bob helps Kitty.



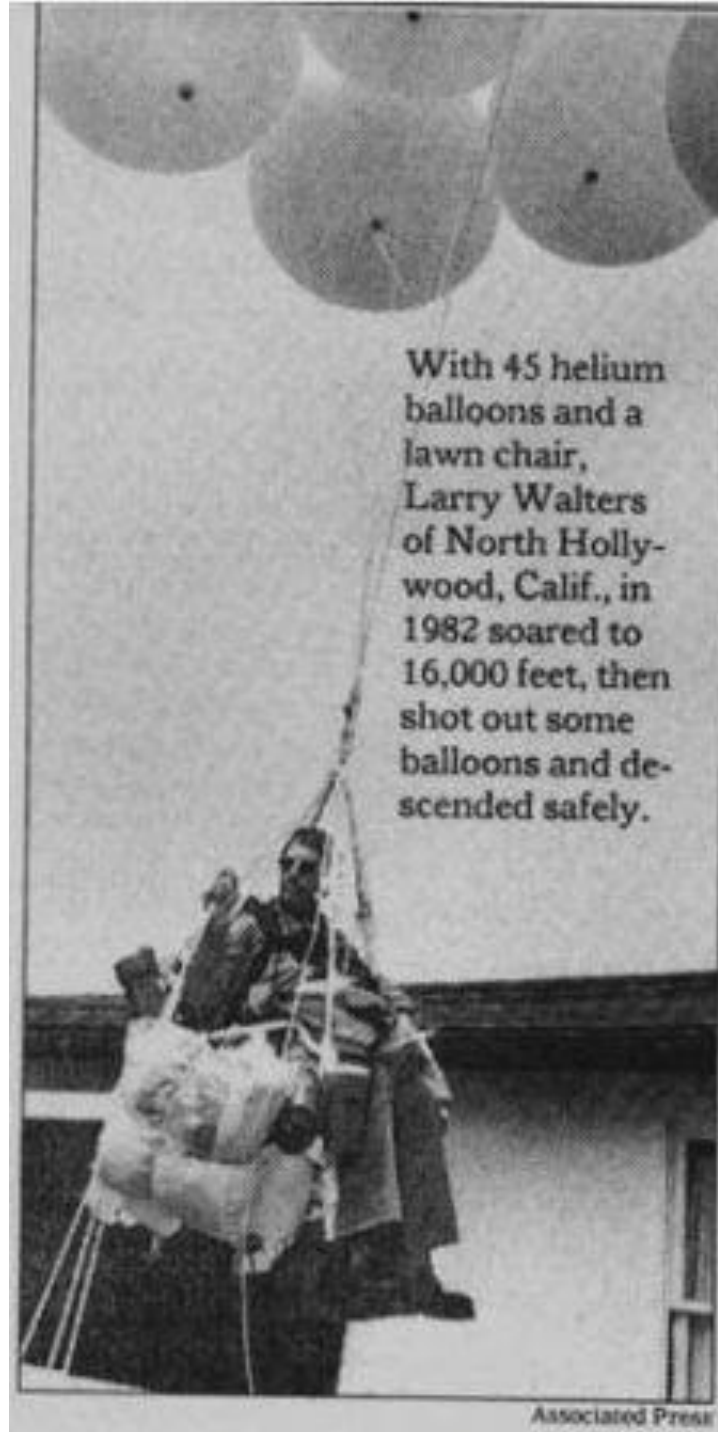
Kitty keeps one.



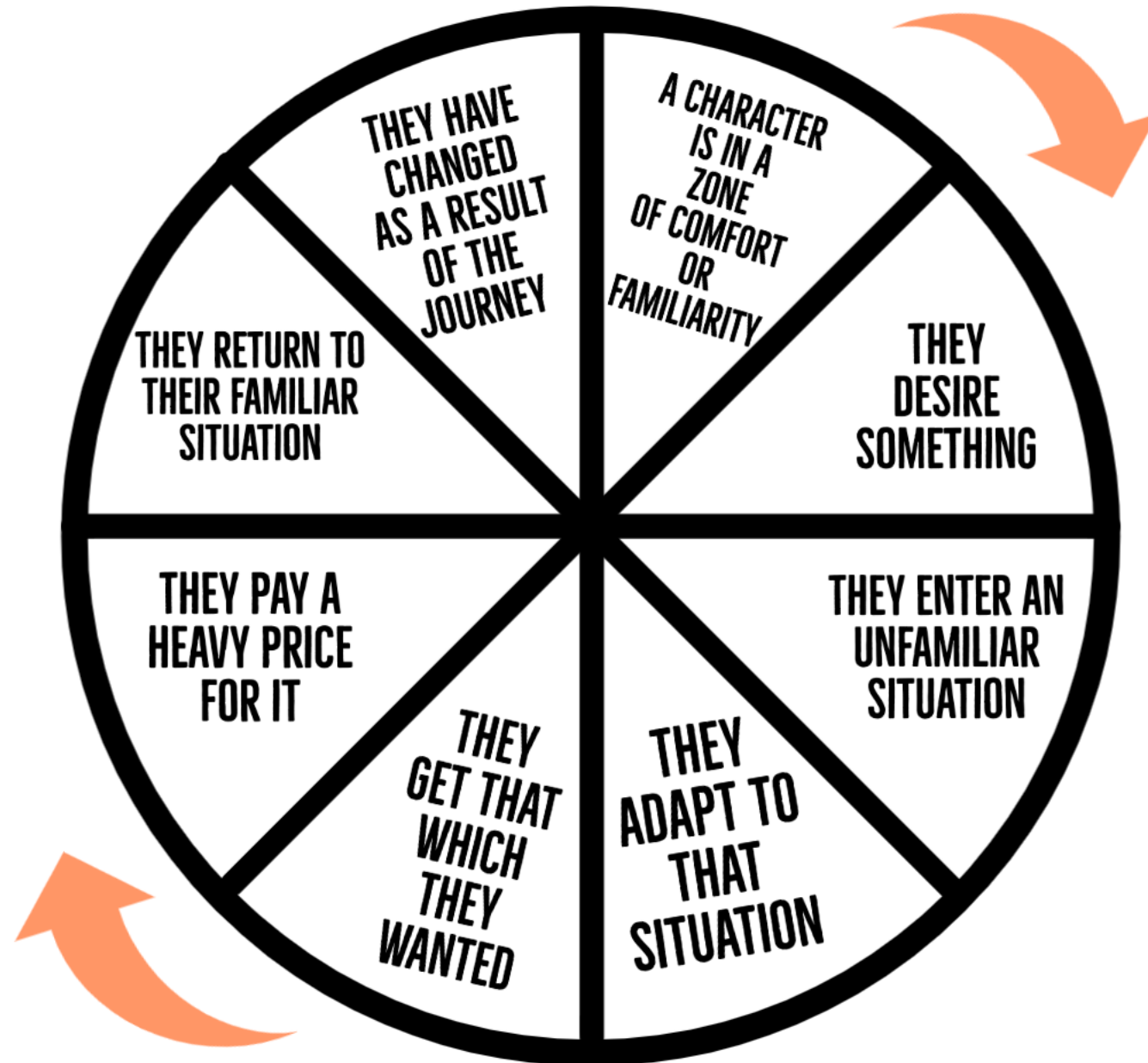


Kitty is happy.

*inspired by...*



# DAN HARMON'S "STORY CIRCLE"



Is “Red please” a sentence?  
Is it ‘good’ English?



How would you say  
“Red please” in  
another language you  
know?



Spanish



German



French



Chinese



# Plan for today

How to make  
stories

Read stories  
together

Activities for  
using stories



Tāng Mǔ de shēng rì  
汤姆的生日





What words will you  
see in the book?



What words will you see in the book?

What questions do you want to ask the book?

# Tom's birthday







It's Tom's birthday.

Tom wants to see his  
grandma and grandpa.



He can't find them.



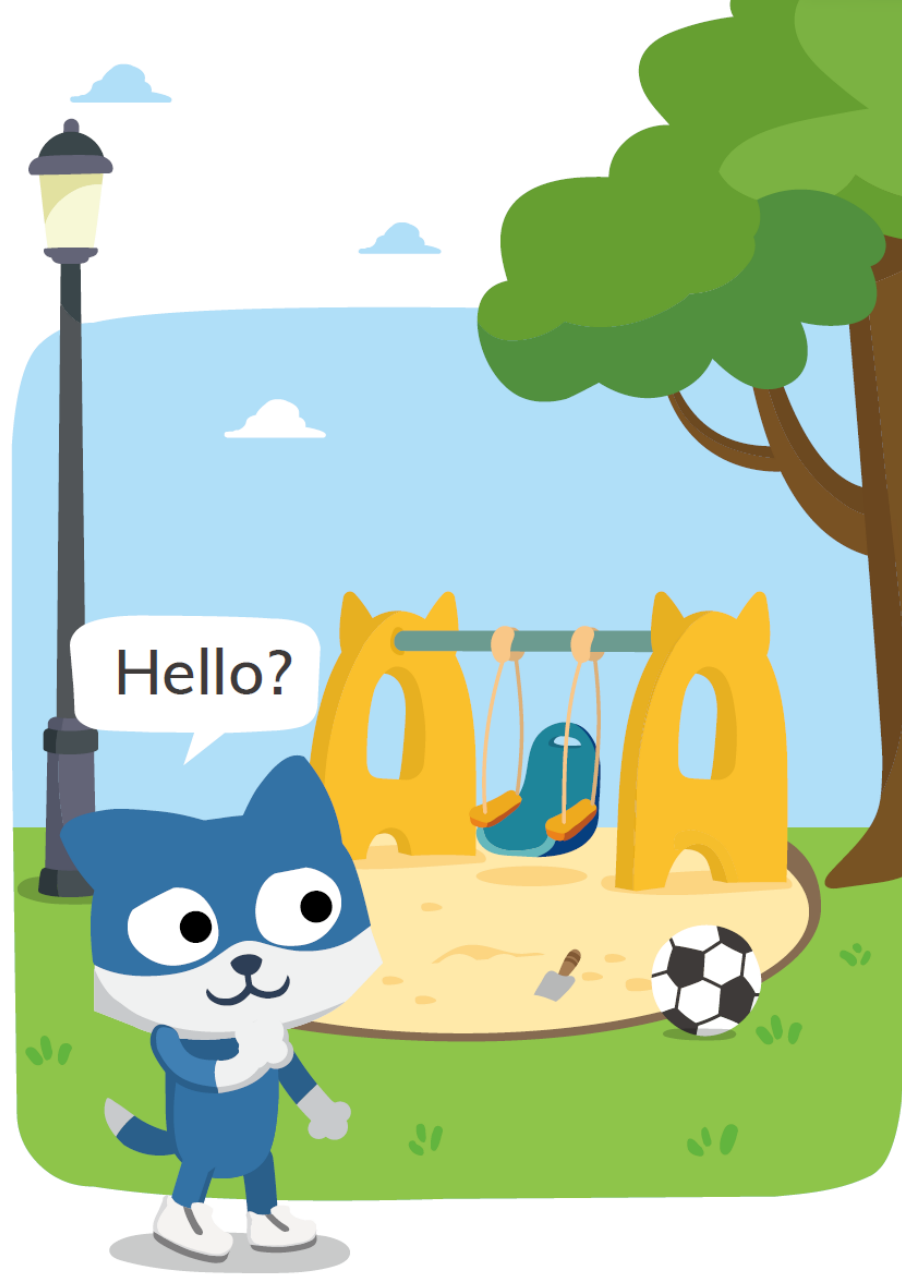
Tom wants to see his  
aunt and uncle.



He can't find them.



Tom wants to see his brother.



He can't find his brother.



Tom wants to see his friends.



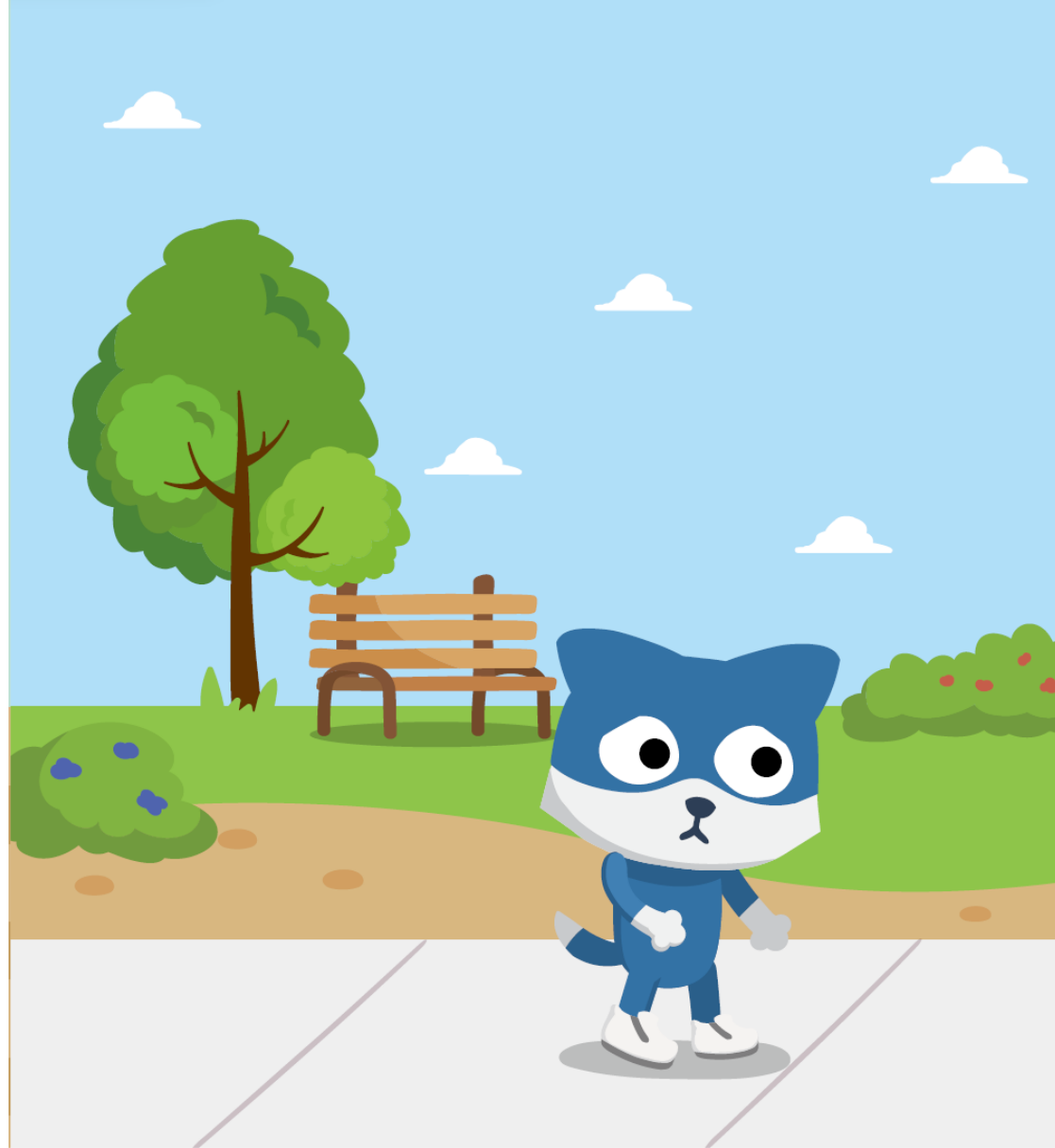
He can't find them.

Tom wants to see  
his teacher.





He can't find her.



Tom walks home.



He opens the door.

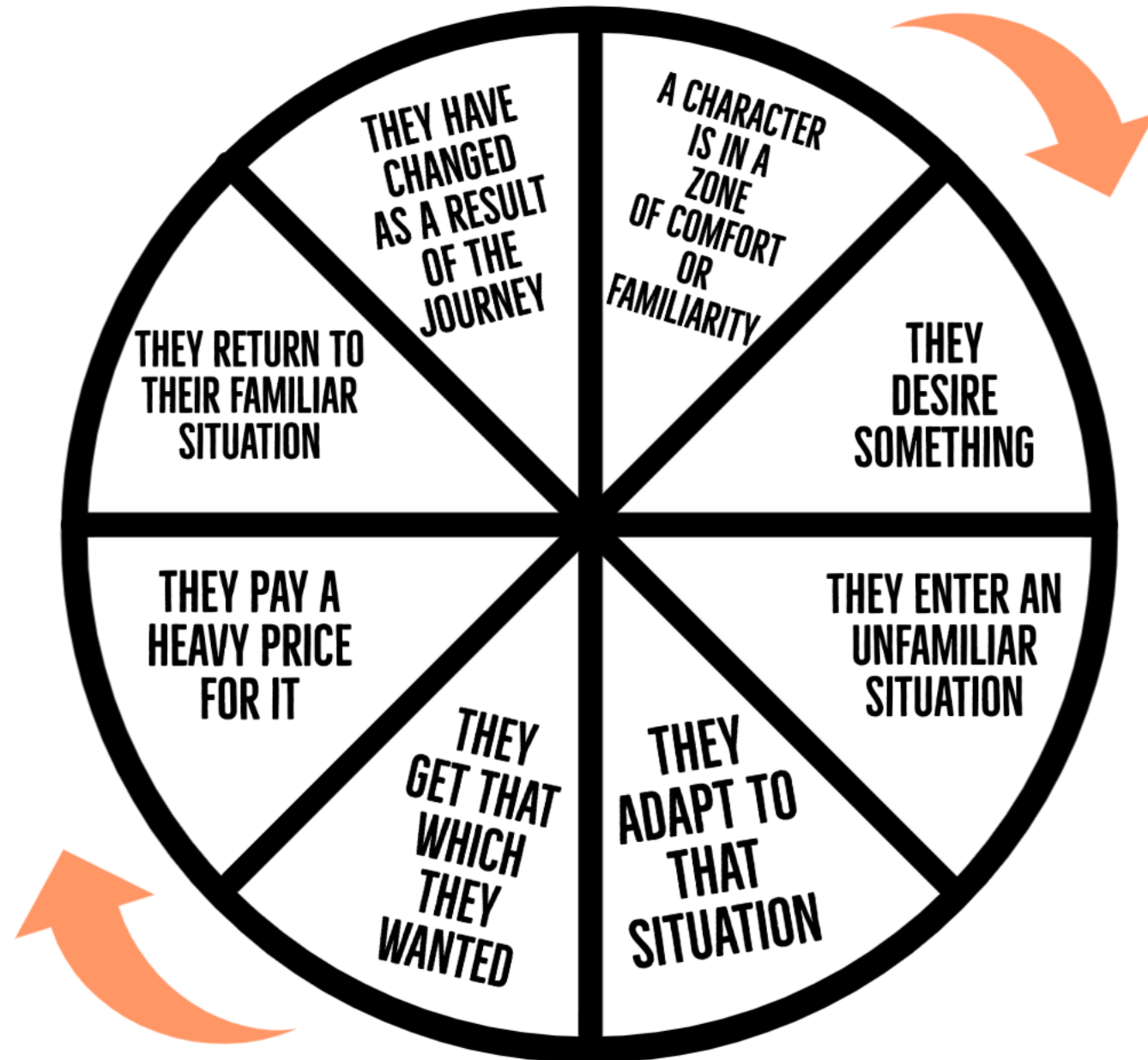
It's a surprise!



What words did you see in the book?

What questions can you answer?

# DAN HARMON'S "STORY CIRCLE"



Write the  
words to a  
book with no  
words



# Fishing

























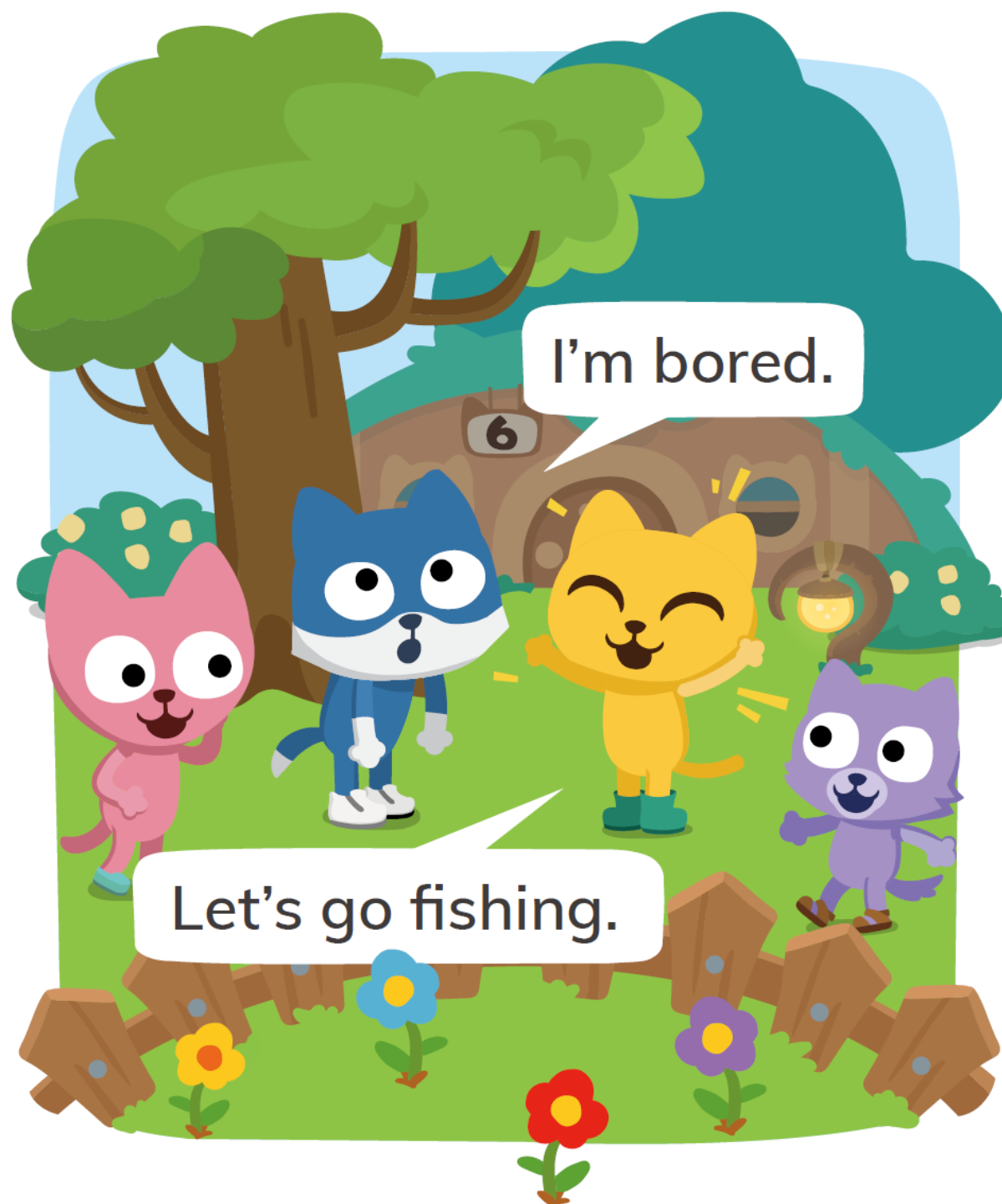




# Fishing









Studycat, Ali, Kitty and Tom go to the beach by train.

I've got a fish.

I've got a little fish.



Look! I've got  
a big fish!





Studycat thinks it's a shark.



Ali thinks it's whale.





Kitty thinks it's a big turtle.



Everyone helps Tom.



It's a tire.

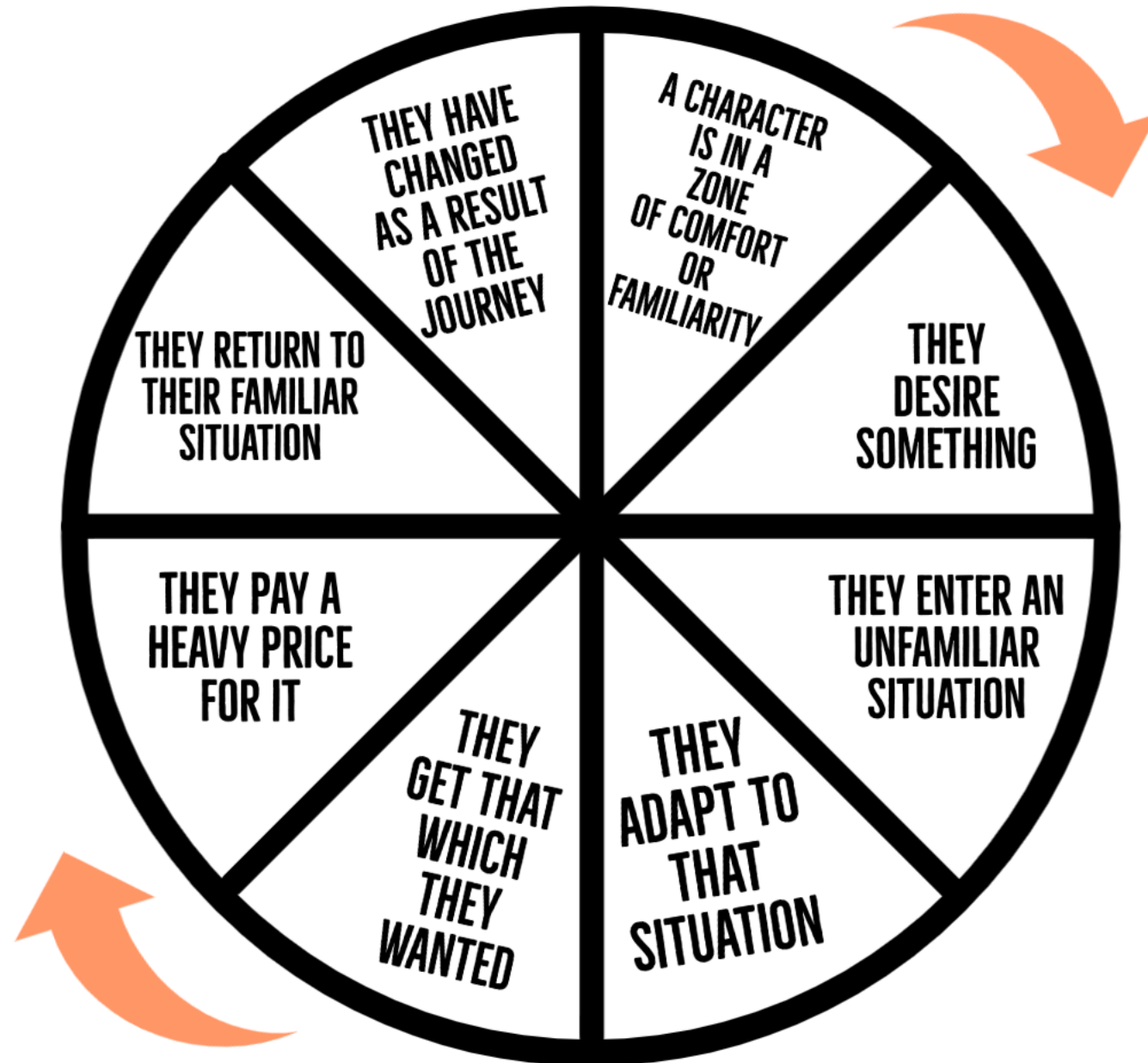


Tom is sad.



I love my swing!

# DAN HARMON'S "STORY CIRCLE"



Dear diary, today I...



interview  
questions



---

# CATS NEWS

---

November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022



# Plan for today

How to make  
stories

Read stories  
together

Activities for  
using stories

## Pre-reading

predict  
the words

ask  
questions

write your  
own  
words

## Post-reading

make a  
newspaper

write the  
diary

character  
interview

# Review of today

How to make  
stories

Read stories  
together

Activities for  
using stories