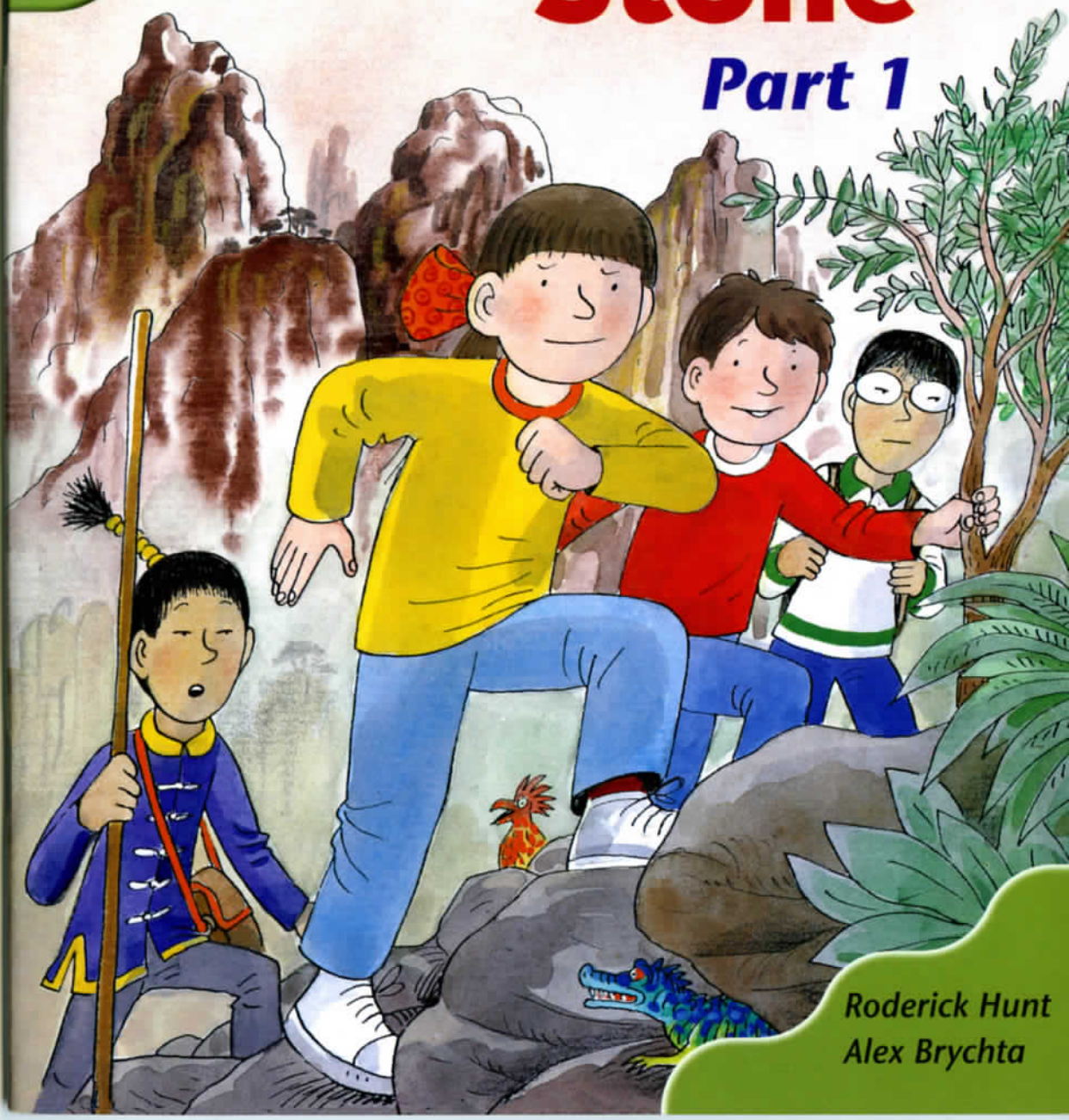




Oxford
Reading
Tree

The Riddle Stone

Part 1



Roderick Hunt
Alex Brychta

What's this story about?

Dad finds an old stone with Chinese writing on it. Hong's grandfather knows what it says and the magic key takes the children to a world of riddles. They meet Ty who wants to be a Riddle Maker.

Talk together

Explain what riddles are. Find and read the first riddle on page 8 and the answer on page 9. Look at some of the pictures and talk about the strange creatures.

Read the story

W = Word recognition **G** = Language comprehension

- W** Page 1, notice that 'strange' begins with the sounds 'str'. Think of other words beginning with 'str', e.g. 'strong', 'strap', 'street'.
- G** Page 13, when you know the answer to the riddle, go back to the rhyme on page 12. Ask, "Why does a shadow stick to your feet?"
- G** Page 21, ask the children to explain what 'beyond' means.
- W** Page 26, use the letter sounds to work out 'serpent'. Use the picture to work out what a serpent is.
- G** Page 32, ask, "What do you think might happen next?"



Dad had pulled up some floorboards.

“Hello!” he said. “What’s this?”

Under the floor was a stone. It had some strange writing on it.



Dad was going to throw the stone away, but Chip wanted to keep it.

"Look at this," he said to Biff. "Do you think the writing is Chinese?"

"I don't know," said Biff.



Chip took the stone to school. He showed it to a boy called Hong.

“It is written in Chinese,” said Hong. “I can’t read it, but my grandfather can.”



Hong's grandfather always came after school to take Hong home.

Chip showed him the stone.

"Yes, it is Chinese," said Hong's grandfather. "It says, 'Do You Mind?'"



“What a strange question,” said Biff.

“It may be a riddle,” said Hong’s grandfather. “See! The stone is broken. Maybe the answer is on the other half.”



Chip gave Hong the stone to keep. He put it in his bag.

“May Hong come round to play with us?” asked Biff.

“All right,” said Hong’s grandfather.



They went to play in Biff's room.

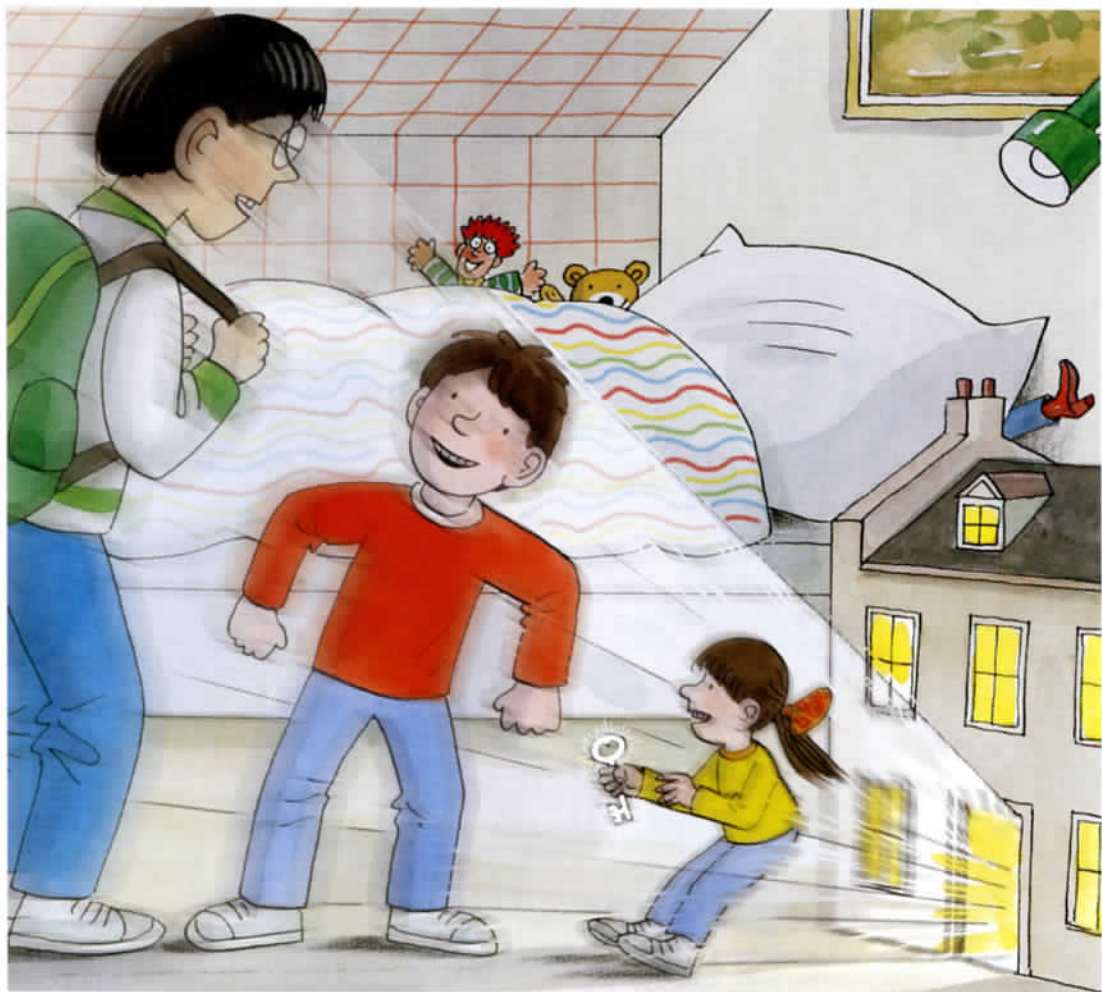
"What is a riddle?" asked Chip.

"It's a puzzle in words," said Hong.



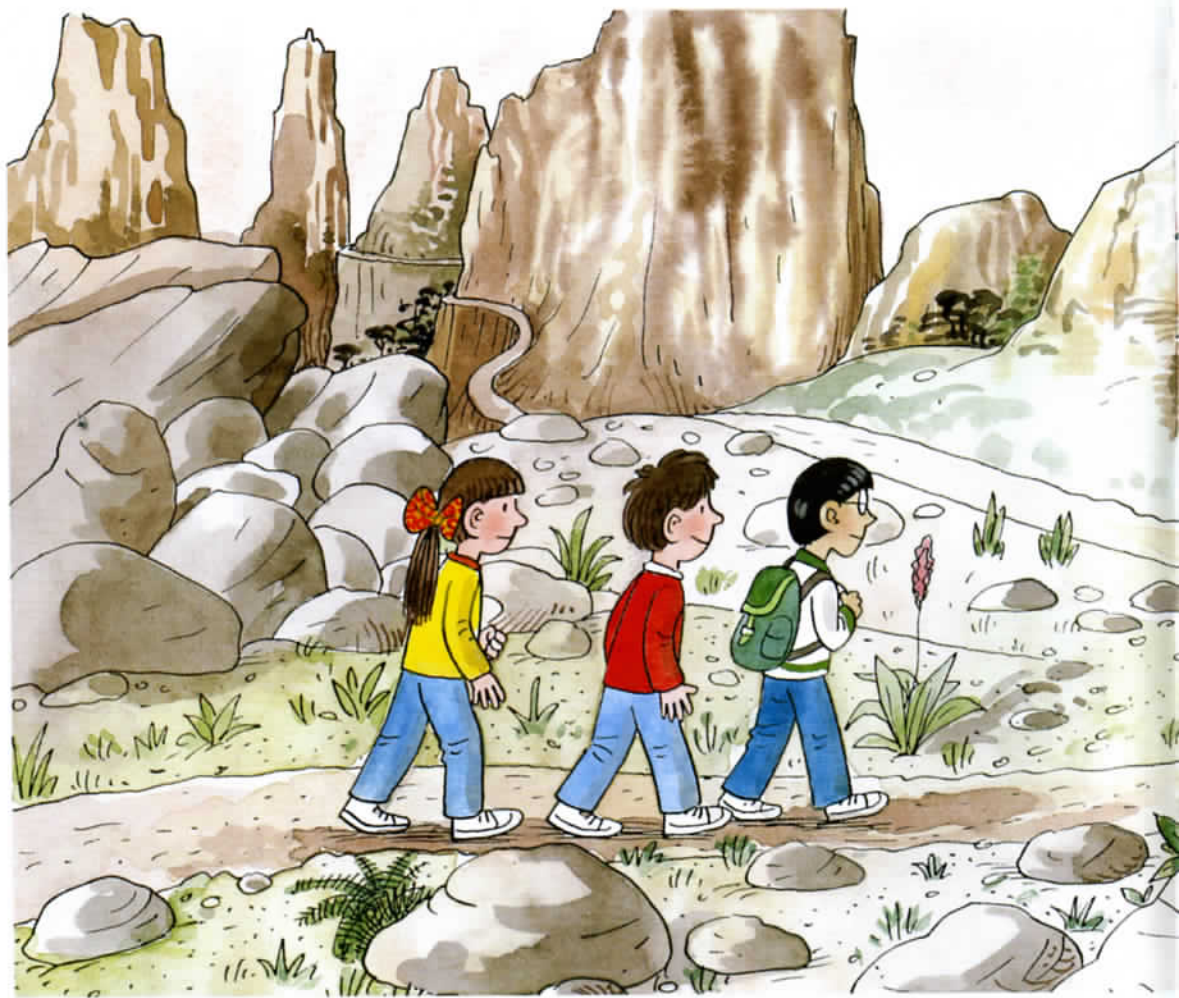
“Here is a good riddle,” said Hong. “How do you spell ‘hungry horse’ using only four letters?”

“We don’t know,” said Biff.



“It’s easy,” laughed Hong. “M T G G.
Here’s another riddle. What is this? The more
it dries the more it gets wet.”

Suddenly, the magic key began to glow.

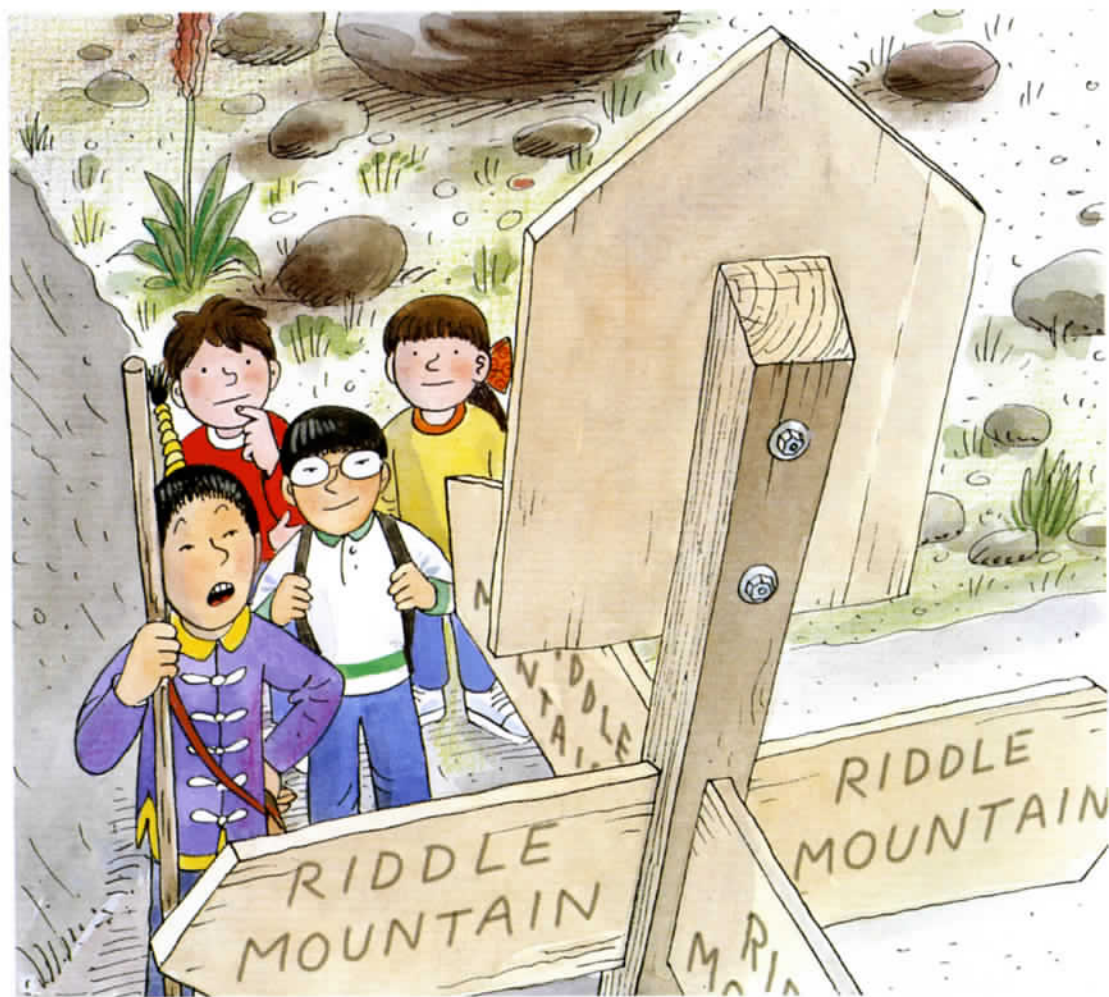


The magic took them to a rocky valley.
Four paths met. There was a signpost
pointing four ways. Each way pointed to
Riddle Mountain.



A boy was sitting on a rock.

“My name is Ty,” he said. “I want to go to Riddle Mountain, but I don’t know which path to take. I can’t think of the answer to this riddle.”



The riddle was on a tall post. It said,
“It’s only one colour, but it can grow.
Sticks to your feet, wherever you go.
There in the sun, not in the rain.
Never does harm, never feels pain.”



“The answer is a shadow,” said Hong.
“Look at the shadow of the post. It points
up that path. That must be the way.”

“Are you sure?” asked Biff.

“Yes, it’s a riddle,” said Ty. “Let’s go!”



“It is hard to get to Riddle Mountain,” said Ty. “It will be dangerous. I may never get there.”

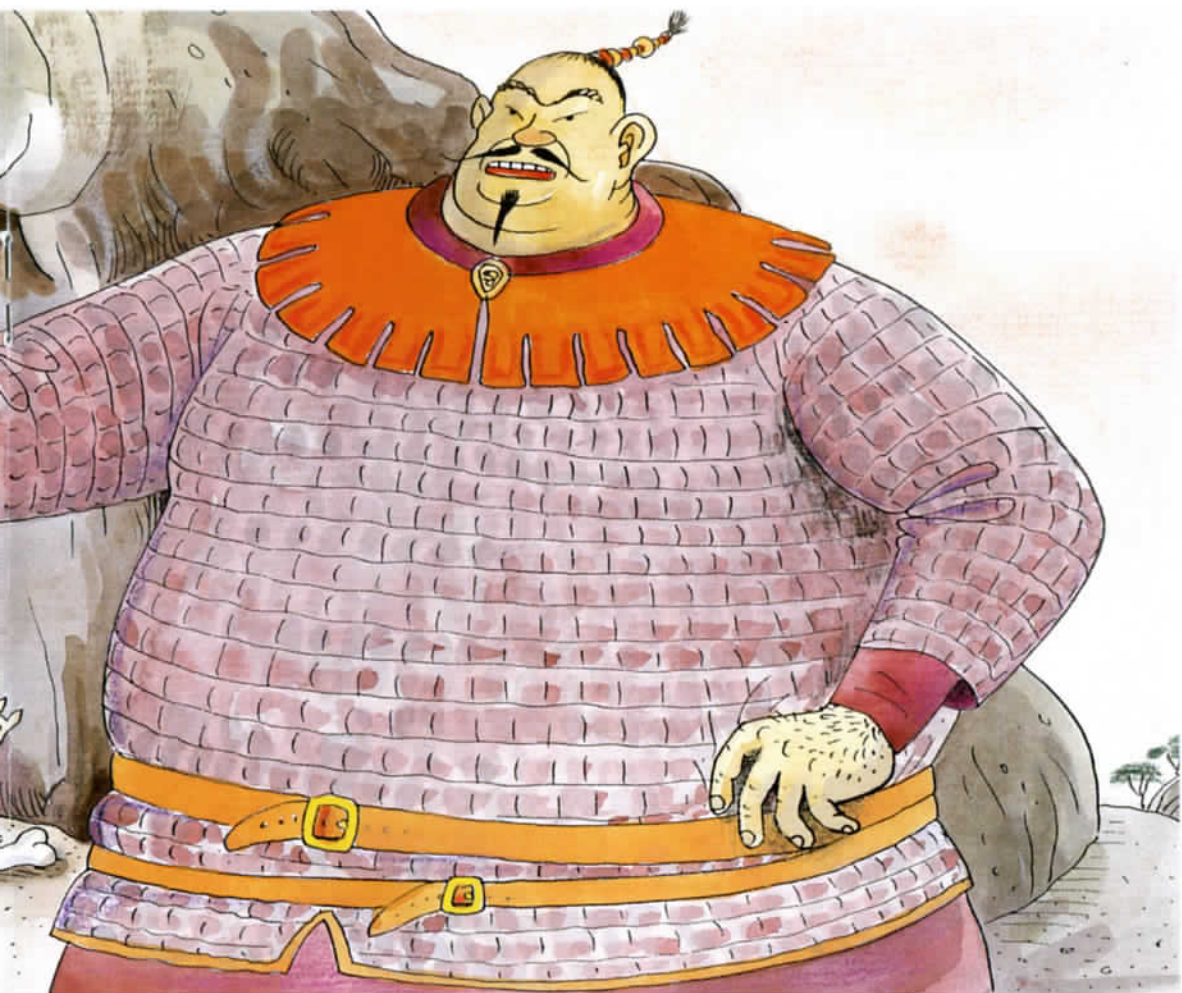
“Then why do you have to go?” asked Biff.



“I want to be the Riddle Maker,” said Ty. “I have to get to Riddle Mountain. I have to answer *all* the riddles on the way. The last riddle is the hardest. No one has ever found the answer.”



Suddenly, a huge giant stood in the way.
“I hope he’s friendly,” said Chip.
“Answer this riddle and you can
pass by,” roared the giant.



“Write down how much I weigh,” he said.

“But he must weigh tonnes!” said Biff.

“No, it’s a riddle,” said Hong. “I can do it.” He wrote down the answer.



“Good luck in the Land of Riddles,” said the giant.

“What did you write down?” asked Chip.

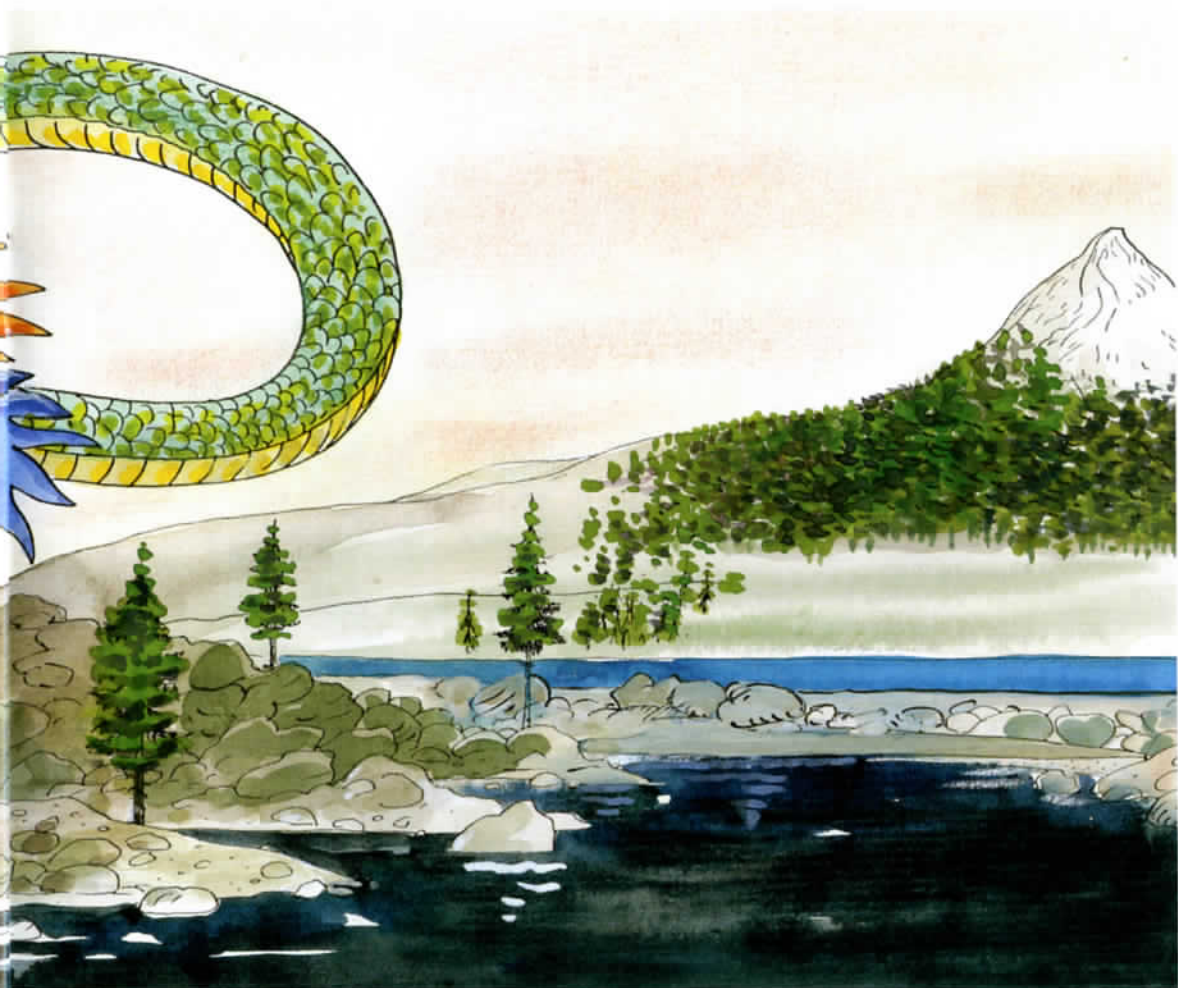
“I wrote the words ‘how much I weigh’,” said Hong.



It was not far to the top of the hill.
Suddenly, a dragon stood in the way.
“I hope he’s friendly,” said Hong.
“Look!” said Biff. “There are bubbles
coming out of his mouth!”



The dragon spoke.
“Over there is Riddle Mountain,” it said.
“You have a long way to go.”
“Help!” said Ty. “The journey looks dangerous.”



Below was a black lake. Across the lake, the land was dry and rocky. Beyond, there was a deep river and dark forest. Far away was a tall, grey mountain.



Huge bubbles came out of the dragon's jaws.

"Answer this riddle," it said. "How many sides does a bubble have?"

"That's easy," said Hong. "It has two."



“The inside and the outside,” he said.

“Good,” said the dragon. “Now step inside this bubble.”

Hong stepped into the bubble. It began to float away.

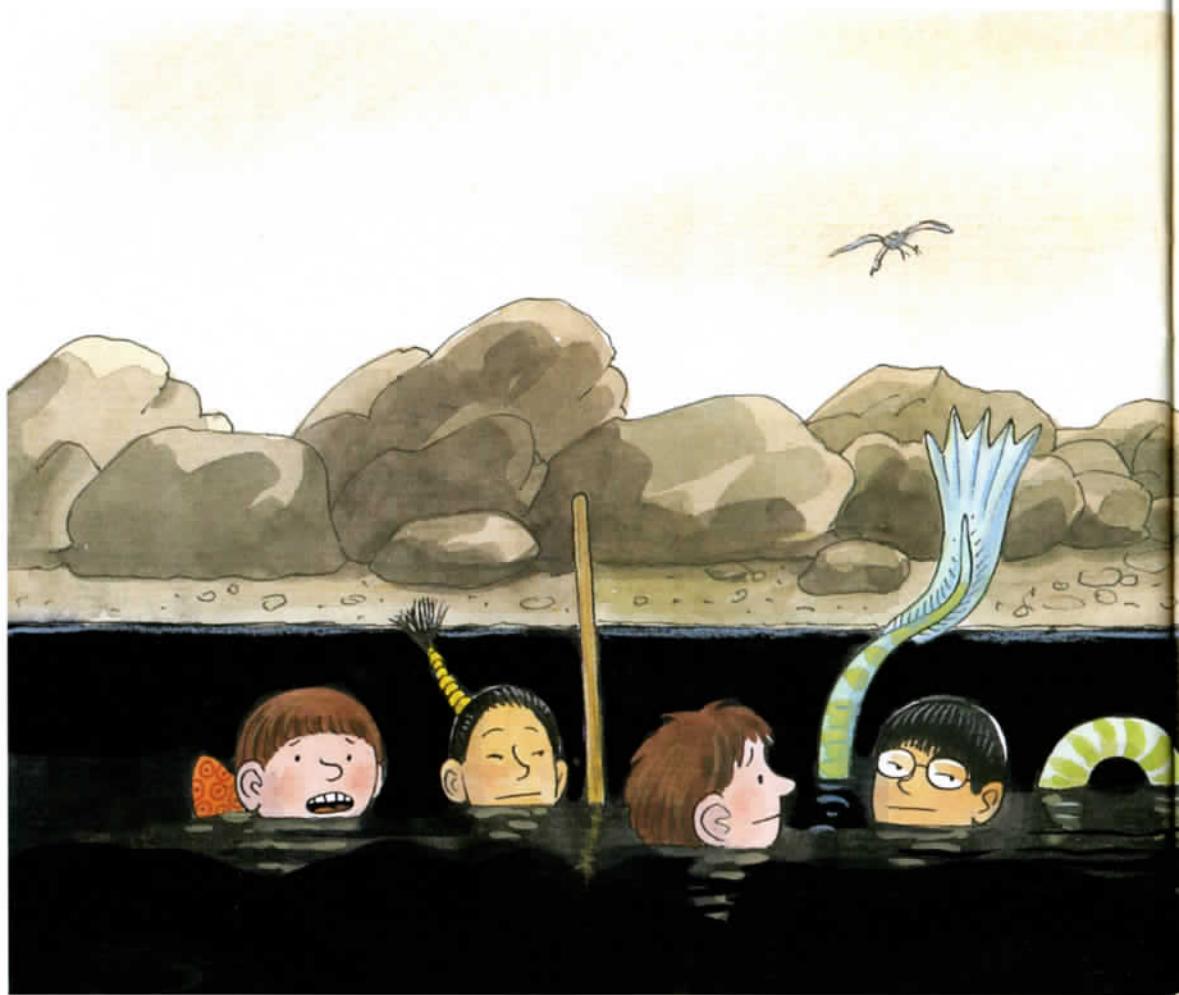


“Step into a bubble,” yelled Hong.
They all stepped inside the bubbles and
floated up and up.
“This is scary,” said Biff. “What if
the bubbles pop?”



They floated on and on. At last, they began to float down to the black lake.

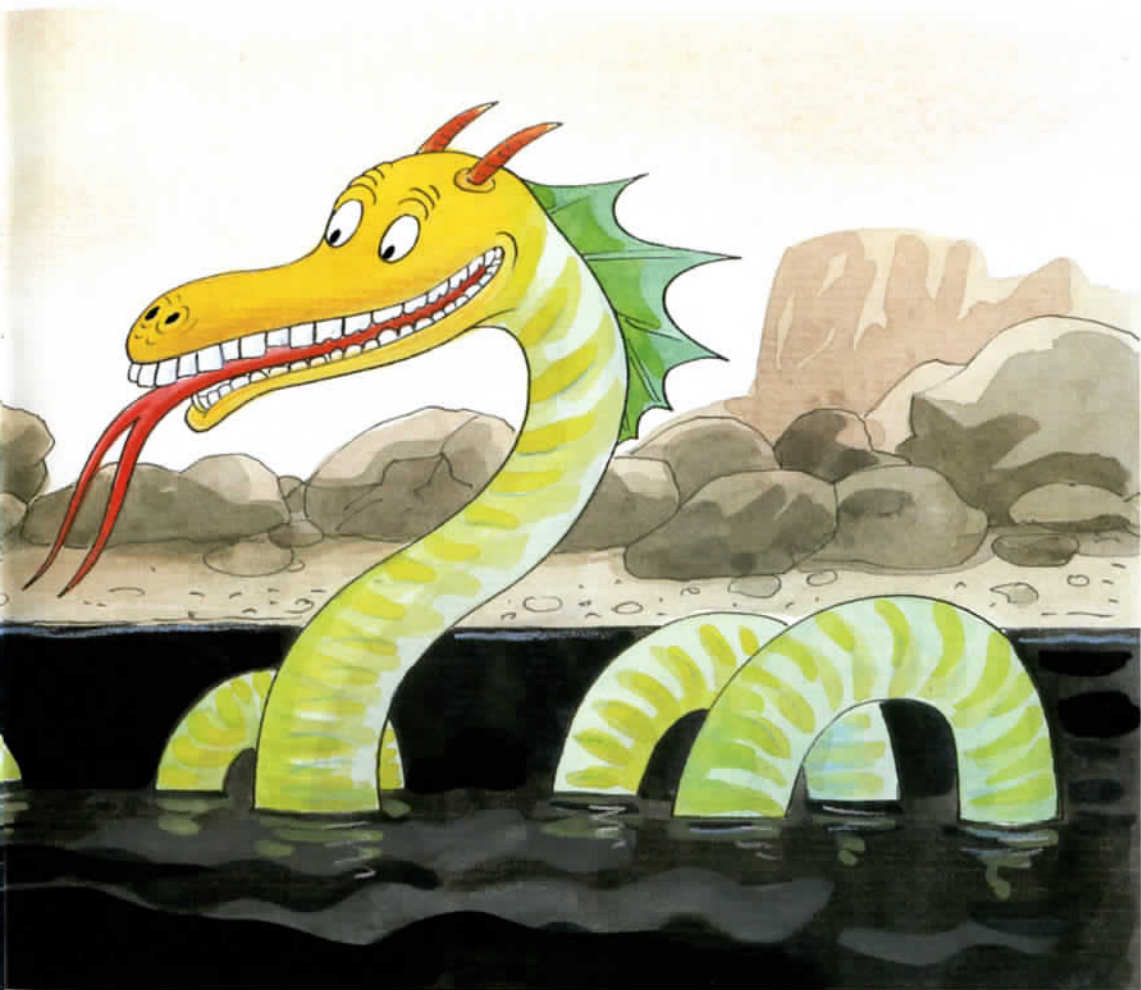
“I hope the bubbles don’t pop here,” yelled Chip.



Then the bubbles popped and the children fell into the lake.

Suddenly, a huge serpent rose out of the water.

"I don't like this adventure," said Biff.



“What is this?” said the serpent, “the more it dries, the more it gets wet?”

“It’s easy,” said Hong. “It’s a towel.”

“Good,” said the serpent. “Now climb on my back.”



The serpent swam across the lake.

“How do you know the answer to all these riddles, Hong?” asked Ty.

“I don’t know,” said Hong. “They just come to me.”



Goblins were waiting for the children.
They pulled and pinched them.

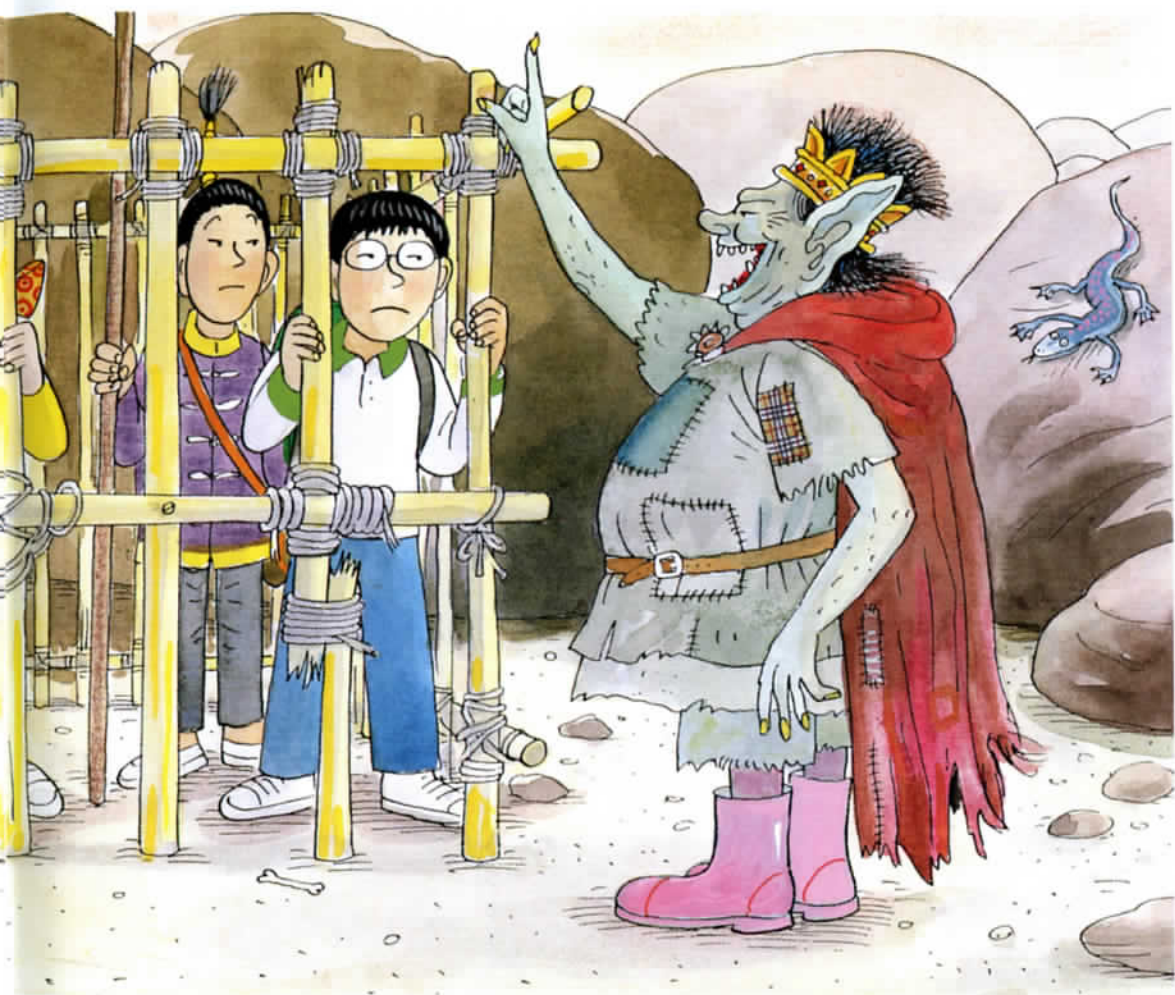
“Ouch! That hurts,” said Chip.

“Ha! You won’t answer the next
riddle,” said one of the goblins.



The goblins put the children in a cage. One of the goblins stole the magic key.

“Oh no!” said Biff. “Now we can’t get back from this adventure.”



The Goblin King spoke to them.
“Answer this,” he said. “How do you
want to die?”
“We don’t want to die,” said Chip.



Hong began to laugh.

"It's not funny," said Biff. "We don't want to die."

"It's a riddle," said Hong. "Don't worry. I know the answer."

Play a game

Quiz

To help remember events.

- Open the book at any page and ask a question that has the answer on that page, e.g. "What was the giant carrying?" (page 16).
- Let them ask you a similar question.
- Have two or three turns each.

Other ideas

You can use these ideas straight away, or on another day.

- Invite children to explain their favourite computer game or board game to you.
- Read some joke books together.

The Riddle Stone

Part 1

Getting to Riddle Mountain
is hard when the
only way is to
solve riddles.



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