



Lamb All Alone





The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is the UK's largest animal charity. They rescue, look after and rehome hundreds of thousands of animals each year in England and Wales. They also offer advice on caring for all animals and campaign to change laws that will protect them. Their work relies on your support, and buying this book helps them save animals' lives.

www.rspca.org.uk



Lamb All Alone



By Kate Davies
Illustrated by Jon Davis

 SCHOLASTIC

First published in the UK in 2013 by Scholastic Children's Books
An imprint of Scholastic Ltd
Euston House, 24 Eversholt Street
London, NW1 1DB, UK
Registered office: Westfield Road, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 0RA
SCHOLASTIC and associated logos are trademarks
and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc.

Text copyright © RSPCA, 2013
Illustration copyright © RSPCA, 2013

ISBN 978 1407 13323 2

RSPCA name and logo are trademarks of RSPCA used by
Scholastic Ltd under license from RSPCA Trading Ltd.
Scholastic will donate a minimum of 15p to the RSPCA from
every book sold. Such amount shall be paid to RSPCA Trading Limited
which pays all its taxable profits to the RSPCA. Registered in
England and Wales Charity No. 219099
www.rspca.org.uk

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library.

All rights reserved.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall
not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, hired out or otherwise
circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it
is published. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored
in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means
(electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without
the prior written permission of Scholastic Limited.

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY
Papers used by Scholastic Children's Books are made
from wood grown in sustainable forests.

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places,
incidents and dialogues are products of the author's imagination
or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual people,
living or dead, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

www.scholastic.co.uk/zone

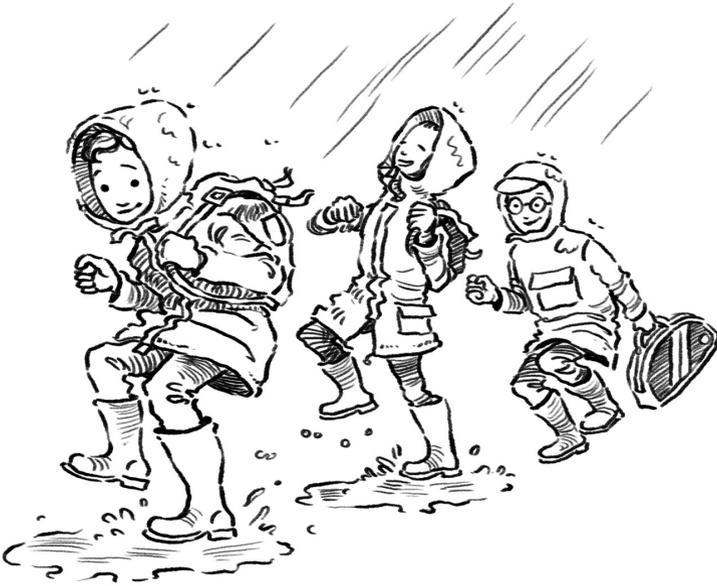


1

“Turn to page five in your maths books, everyone. . .”

Ben tried to concentrate on what Mrs Jackson was saying, but the gentle drumming of the rain against the window made him feel sleepy. It had been pouring non-stop for an entire week. *Surely the sky should have run out of water by now,* thought Ben.

It had been fun last Monday, when the rain started. He and his best friends, Tom and Sam, had walked to school in their wellington boots, splashing through



the puddles as they passed fields full of sheep and newborn lambs. On Tuesday it wasn't quite so fun – Tom had jumped in a puddle, splashing water over the top of Ben's wellies, and Ben had to sit through a whole day of school in his stinky wet socks. By Wednesday the sheep had started looking very sorry for themselves, their woolly coats heavy with water, and Ben's mum decided she'd drive him to school until the rain stopped. Ben didn't

like being in the car much – it smelled of sickly-sweet air freshener, and Mum always had the radio tuned into the news or classical music.

Now it was Monday again, and the rain *still* hadn't stopped. Ben had been cooped up inside all weekend. He'd missed football practice, the last one before the Easter holidays, and he'd played every computer game he had at least twice. Mum hadn't even let him walk his sheepdog, Jess, or go swimming with his eighteen-year-old sister, Kate, who had a weekend job as a lifeguard at the local pool. "I don't want you coming down with a cold," she'd said. Ben didn't think getting a cold would be so bad – at least then he could stay off school and not worry about long multiplication.

Ben started counting the raindrops chasing each other down the classroom windows, giving himself double points when they joined together into one big drop. He'd reached forty-four when he felt a sharp jab in his ribs.

"Ben!" Tom hissed, jerking his head towards Mrs Jackson. Ben looked round. The whole of 6J was staring at him – and so was his teacher.

"Did you hear what I just said, Ben?" asked Mrs Jackson, raising her eyebrows.

Ben looked at her blankly. "Er . . . yes?" he said – but he hadn't.

"Great!" she said. "Come up and write the answer on the board, then." She waggled the whiteboard pen at Ben.

He stood up as slowly as he could, desperately trying to remember what Mrs Jackson had been talking about. He looked

at Tom and Sam but they just shrugged their shoulders. They obviously hadn't been listening, either. Ben walked to the front of the classroom, and took the whiteboard pen from Mrs Jackson. The sum on the board made no sense to him – the numbers just swam around in front of his eyes. He wrote the number “55” in big red letters. It was as good a guess as any.

“No, Ben. The answer's one hundred and seventy-six,” said Mrs Jackson, rubbing out the sum. “But I don't think you were listening when I explained the question, were you?”

Ben shook his head, and Mrs Jackson smiled at him.

“I know it's miserable outside, but please try to pay attention instead of staring out of the window.”

Ben nodded.

“Have a go at another one,” said Mrs Jackson, turning back to the whiteboard. Her bracelets jangled as she wrote the new problem on the board.

“OK, Ben. What’s seven times forty-eight?”

Just at that moment, there was a sharp *rat-tat-tat* at the classroom door. Mrs Jackson went to open it, and Ben dashed back to his seat.

“How lucky are you?” whispered Tom.

“I know! Let’s hope she forgets about me,” said Ben.

“Shh!” said Sam, pointing at the door. “It’s Mr Hughes!”

Mr Hughes was their head teacher. Ben really liked him – he made brilliant jokes in assembly, and always joined in for the races on Sports Day – but today he wasn’t smiling at all.

“Good morning, children,” he said as he walked into the classroom. “I just need to have a quick word with Mrs Jackson. . .”

Mrs Jackson and Mr Hughes stood at the front of the room, talking in hushed voices, while the whole class whispered among themselves, trying to guess what was going on.

“Maybe they’re going to give us all Easter eggs to make up for not being able to play outside!” said Ben hopefully. “Or a class pet! We’ve been asking for one for ages!”

“No way . . . it must be something bad,” said Sam, straining to hear what the teachers were saying. “The last time Mr Hughes looked that serious was when the whole of year two came down with chickenpox.”

“Maybe all the teachers have caught measles!”

“Maybe a killer bug has come from outer space!”

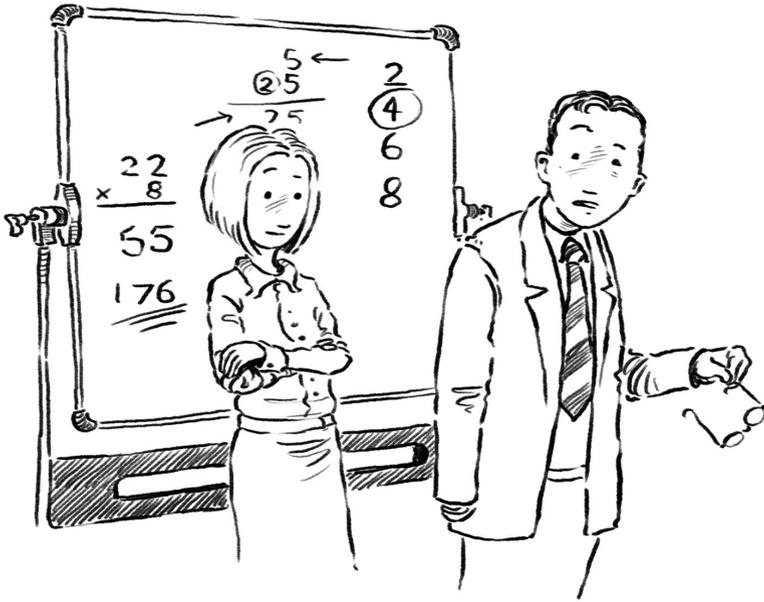
“Maybe an alien spaceship has landed in the playground!”

“Yeah, and maybe they’re looking for ten-year-old boys to take back to their planet!” said Tom.

“They’ll probably clone us, and then—” started Sam.

“Don’t worry, boys – I just walked through the playground, and I didn’t see any aliens,” said Mr Hughes. Sam blushed, and Tom became very interested in a tiny mark on his desk.

“But I do have something to tell you all,” Mr Hughes continued. “You’ll probably have noticed that it’s still raining. Well, the Environment Agency has issued a



flood warning for the area. They think the river is going to overflow – and if that happens, the school might be flooded.”

Everyone started whispering to each other excitedly. Ben nudged Tom and grinned. Imagine . . . it would be even better than a snow day. They wouldn’t have to do maths homework for weeks!

“Settle down, everyone,” said Mr Hughes, holding up his hands to silence

the class. “I haven’t finished. Because of the risk of flooding, I’m afraid I’ve had to call your parents. They’re all on their way to collect you – the school is closed until further notice.”

“HOORAY!” A huge cheer went up around the classroom.

“Yesssss!” said Ben, punching the air. “No more long multiplication. I’m going home to play with Jess!”

“I’m going to watch TV for the rest of the day and eat fish fingers for tea,” said Tom, packing up his pencil case.

Sam was the only one not smiling. “I really hope my bedroom isn’t flooded,” he said.

“Your bedroom’s on the first floor!” said Ben, shaking his head. “The water will never get up there.”

But that made Ben think – his bedroom

was on the ground floor, looking out on to the garden. He'd better hurry home and make sure all his things were safe.