

PIEDMONT PARK  
CITY OF ATLANTA

PETS MUST BE ON LEASH

# Amari's Shining Moment

By The Rollins Center for Language & Literacy at the Atlanta Speech School

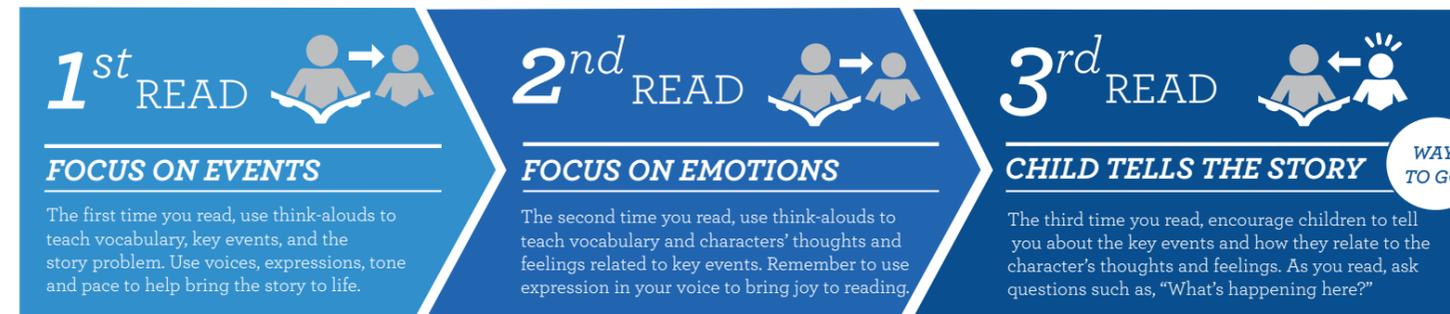
Illustrated by John Floyd Jr.

## How you read with children makes a difference, for a lifetime.

A book can transform a child's life forever. By reading this book at least three times, you help children build language and vocabulary, engage in meaningful conversation, nurture critical thinking, and create powerful, determined learners and problem solvers.



How to transform story time into the ultimate learning experience for each and every child



### Tips for reading:

 <p><b>Point to words</b> Point to illustrations to help children understand key vocabulary</p>	 <p><b>Use think-alouds</b> Use think-alouds to help children understand important parts of the story. You can say things like, "I wonder why..." or "She must feel... because..."</p>	 <p><b>Respond</b> Respond to children using well-formed sentences and key vocabulary from the story</p>
 <p><b>Act out words</b> Help children understand important vocabulary by acting out these words</p>	 <p><b>Ask open-ended questions</b> At the end of the story, ask a "how" or "why" question to encourage children to discuss key events and characters' thoughts and feelings related to those events</p>	 <p><b>Tie the book to other parts of the day</b> Plan centers and small group activities connected to the story that encourage children to use vocabulary from the book</p>
 <p><b>Tell child-friendly definitions</b> Define key vocabulary using words the children understand</p>		 <p>For more information, visit the Cox Campus <a href="http://www.readrightfromthestart.org">www.readrightfromthestart.org</a></p>

Rollins Center for Language & Literacy | A Program of the Atlanta Speech School

PAT the Vocabulary (adapted from Lea McGee)

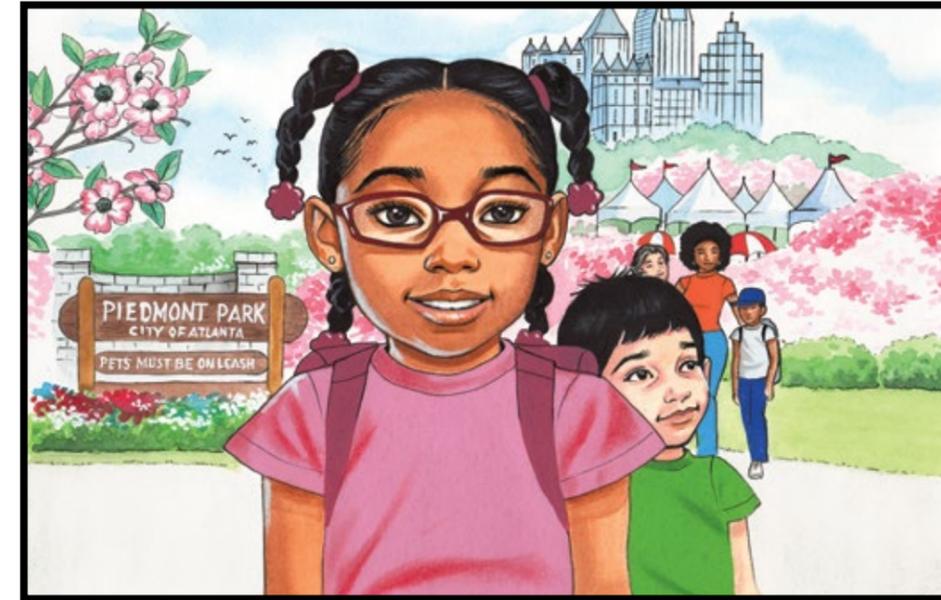
See it in action! Want to learn other ways to read to your child to build vocabulary?

[atlantaspeechschool.org/read](http://atlantaspeechschool.org/read)



This book is intended to be read to children ages 3-6. Please feel free to help your older children attempt to read the story to you. Enjoy!

# Amari's Shining Moment



By The Rollins Center for Language & Literacy at the Atlanta Speech School

Illustrated by John Floyd Jr.

## *Before you Read this Book, Say...*

**1<sup>st</sup> Read:** Look, Amari has a new friend. I bet they enjoy spending time together. I wonder what kind of adventures they will have.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Read:** I remember that Andres felt very nervous about performing in front of a crowd. I wonder how Amari encouraged him to be brave. Let's read and find out.

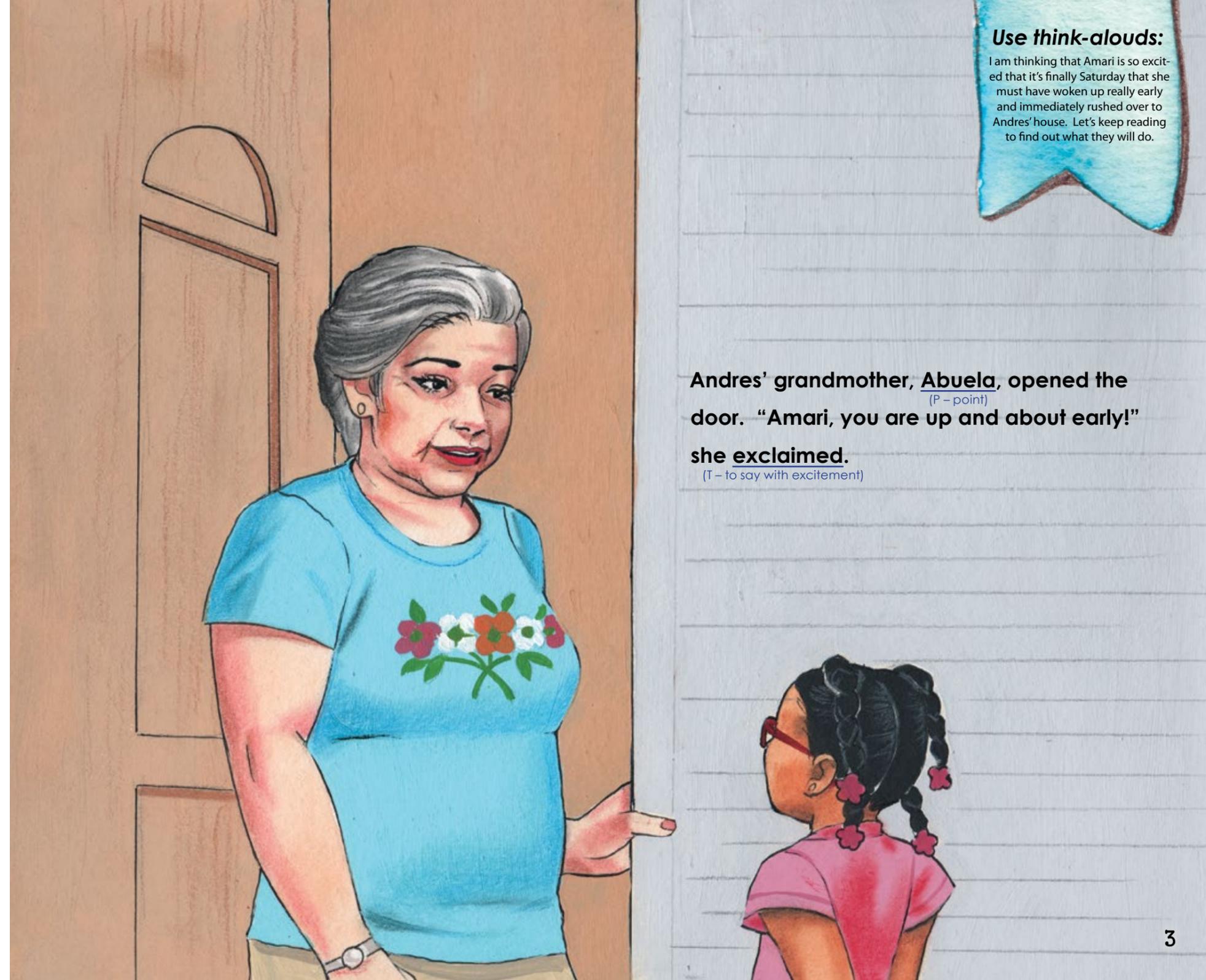
**3<sup>rd</sup> Read:** Amari was confident that Andres would overcome his fear. I wonder how she was so sure.



“Amari, where are you off to?” asked Mama.

“I’m going next door to Andres’ house to figure out what we’re doing today. You know we do something together every Saturday!” Amari said as she rushed out the door.

(T – moving fast/quickly/in a hurry)



**Use think-alouds:**

I am thinking that Amari is so excited that it's finally Saturday that she must have woken up really early and immediately rushed over to Andres' house. Let's keep reading to find out what they will do.

Andres' grandmother, Abuela, opened the door. “Amari, you are up and about early!”

(P – point)

she exclaimed.

(T – to say with excitement)

Andres ran to greet Amari. "What do you want to do today?"  
(P - point) (T - say hello)  
asked Amari. "Are we going to the library like we usually do?"

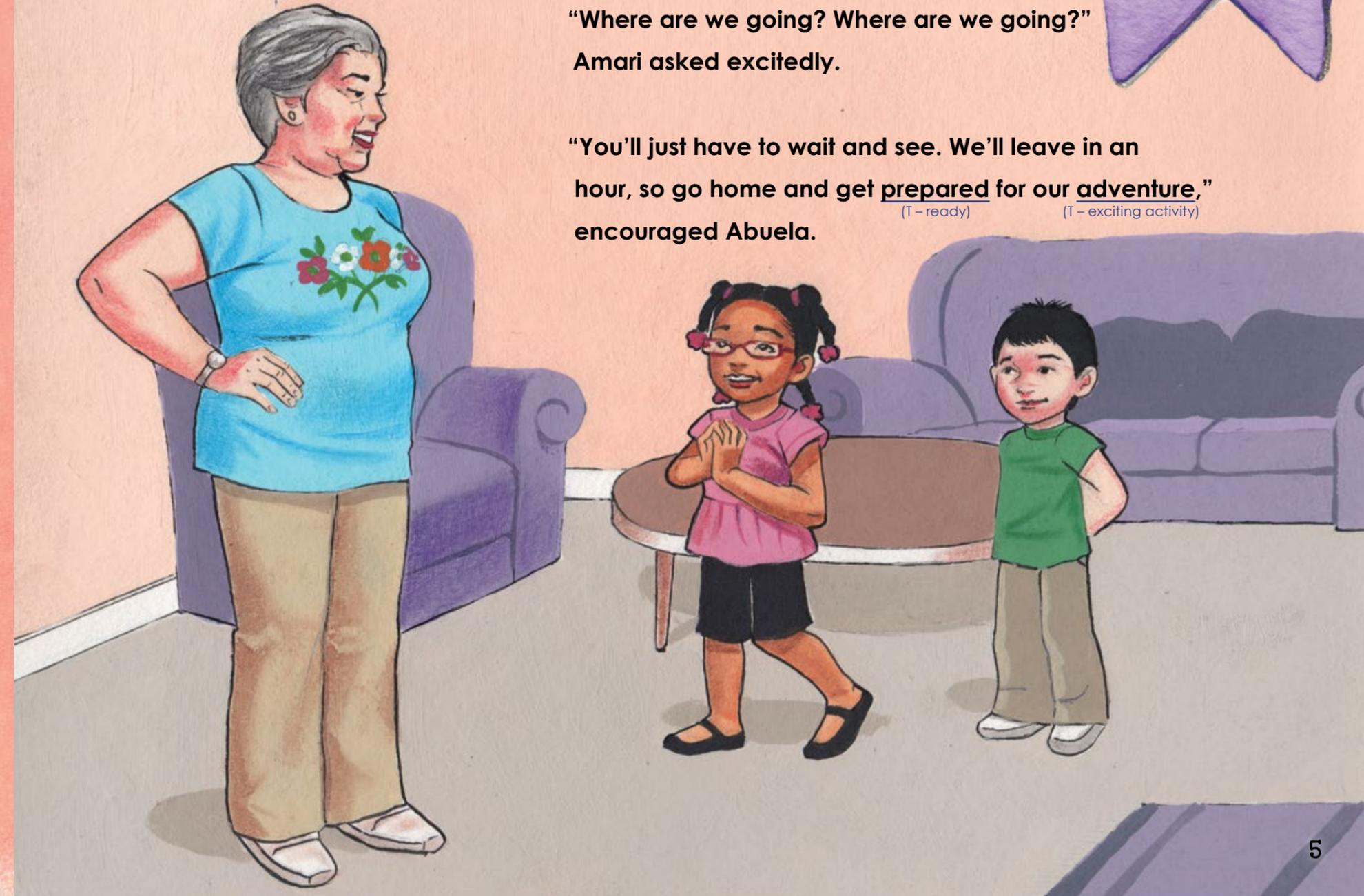
"Well, Abuela wants to take us somewhere special," replied Andres.



Abuela smiled, "I will call your mom  
and invite your family."  
(T - ask to come)

"Where are we going? Where are we going?"  
Amari asked excitedly.

"You'll just have to wait and see. We'll leave in an  
hour, so go home and get prepared for our adventure,"  
(T - ready) (T - exciting activity)  
encouraged Abuela.



**Use think-alouds:**

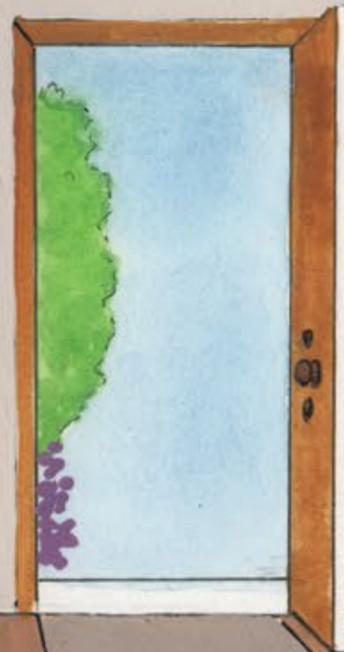
I am thinking that Abuela sees how excited Amari and Andres are and wants to continue to build their excitement and anticipation, so she's keeping their destination, or where they are going, a secret.

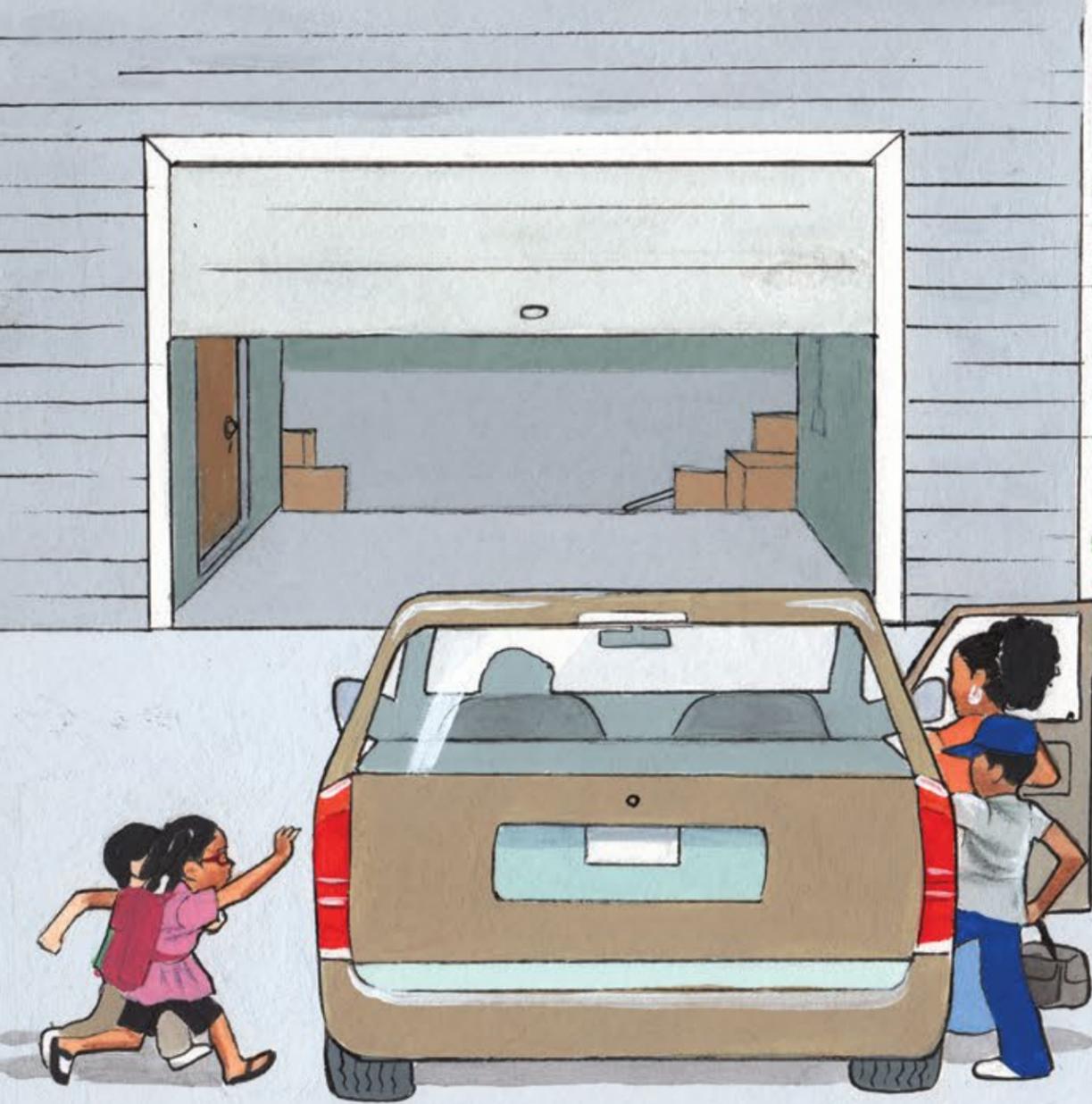
Amari raced through her front door, excited to  
(A – act out excited)  
share the news with Mama and Will.

“Mama! Will! Abuela is taking us somewhere  
special!” gasped Amari.  
(A – act out gasped)

“We already know,” chuckled Mama.  
(A – act out chuckled)

“Go grab your backpack, and I will  
throw your sunscreen and hat in.”  
(P – point)





Abuela backed out of the garage, and Amari and Andres ran hurriedly to the van.  
(P – point)



Amari and Andres were anxious to know where they were going.

(T – antsy, worried, or eager)

When Abuela pulled the van into a parking space, Andres and Amari

recognized where they were.

(T – had seen before)

**Use think-alouds:**

So the special destination that Abuela was keeping a secret is Piedmont Park. And it sounds like there is a festival, or a special event, happening.

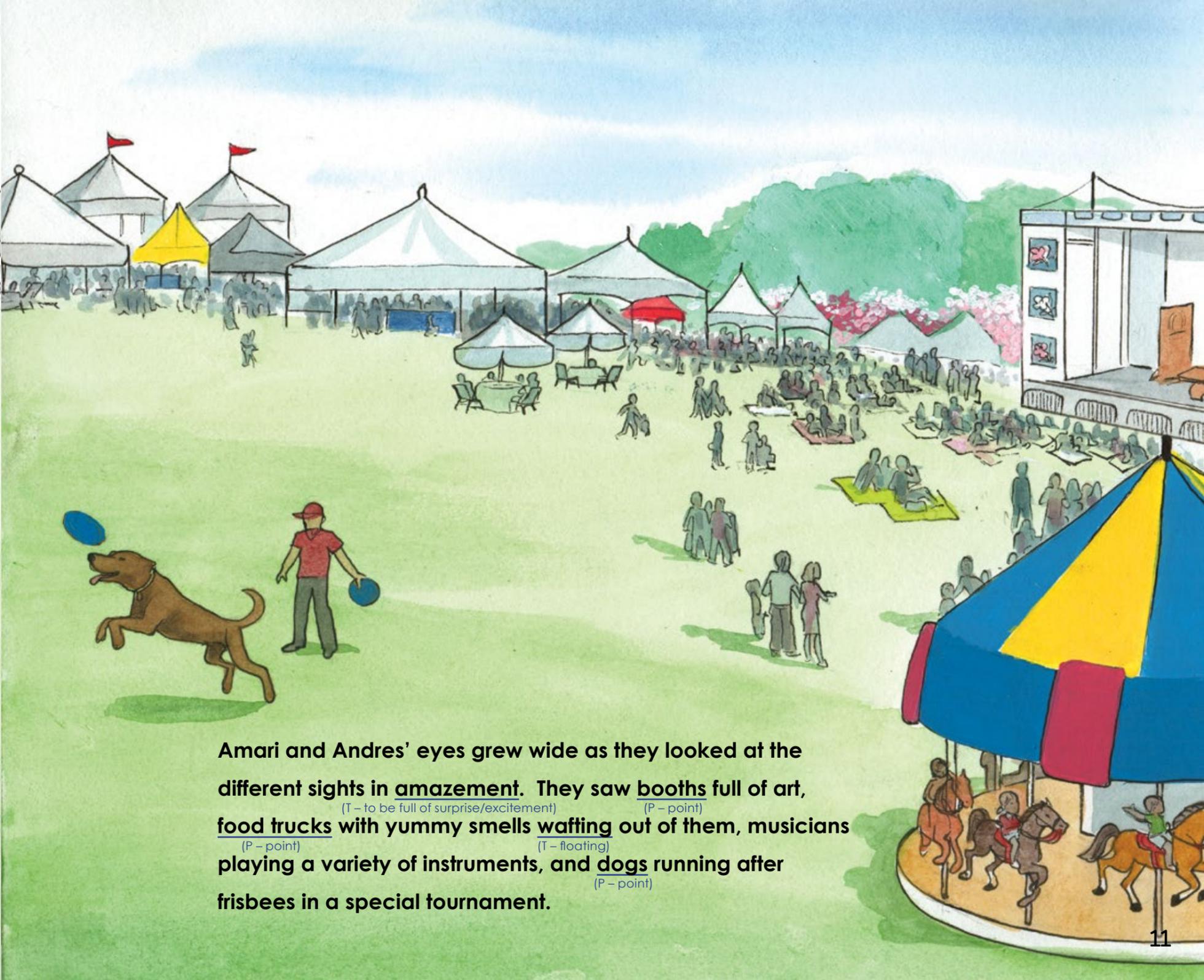


“Piedmont Park!” Andres shouted.

(P – point)

“There are so many people! What’s going on here?” asked Amari.

“It’s an event called the Dogwood Festival that takes place every spring,” explained Abuela.



Amari and Andres' eyes grew wide as they looked at the different sights in amazement. They saw booths full of art, food trucks with yummy smells waffing out of them, musicians playing a variety of instruments, and dogs running after frisbees in a special tournament.

(T - to be full of surprise/excitement)

(P - point)

(P - point)

(T - floating)

(P - point)

“There are just so many things to see!” Amari said to Andres.

Amari pulled on Will’s arm as he read the festival program and map.

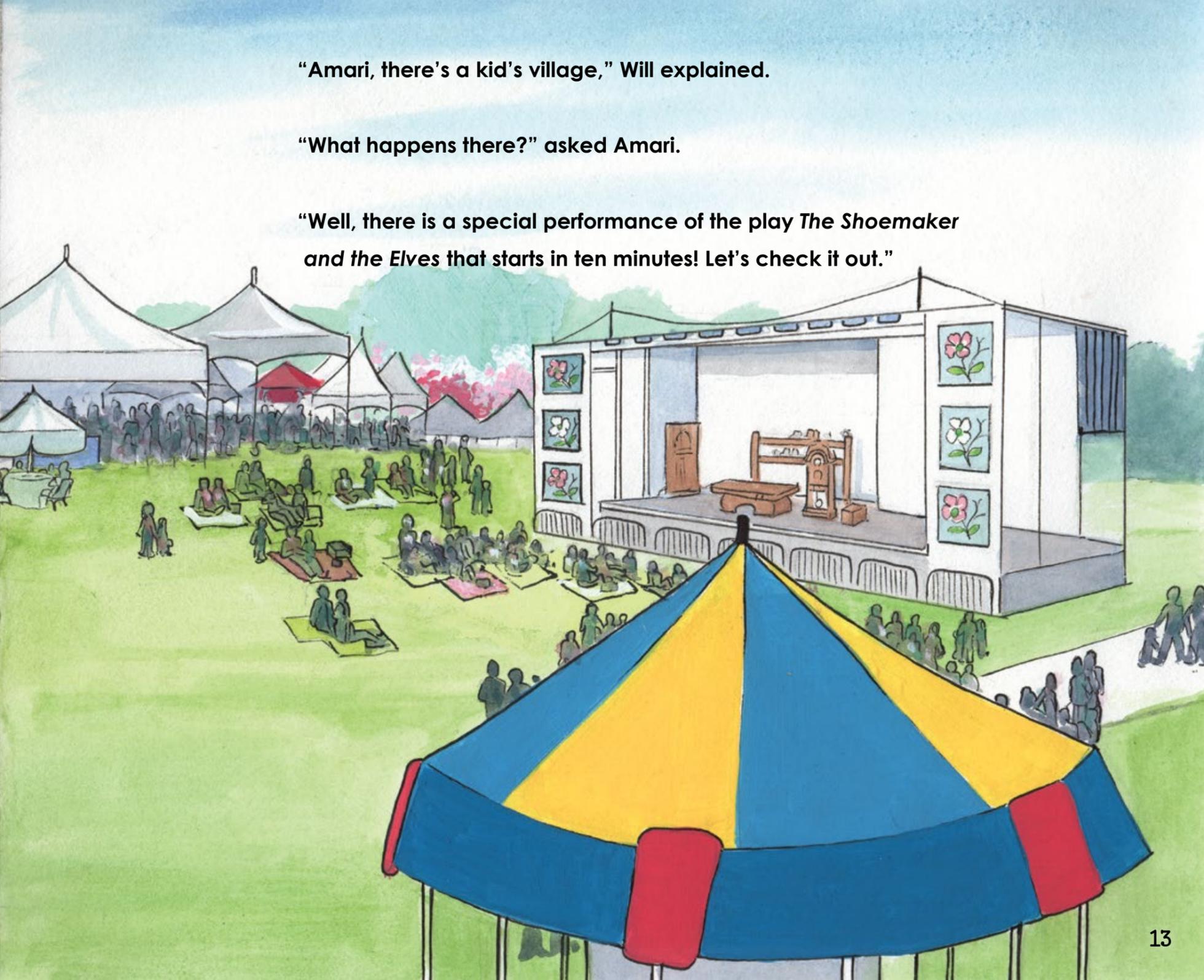
(P – point)

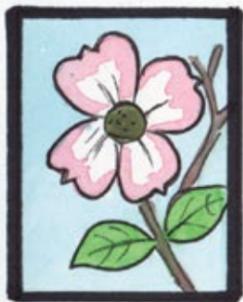
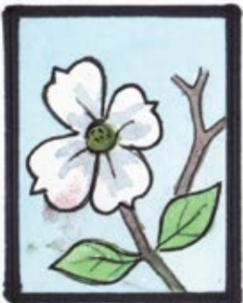
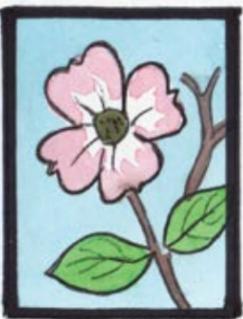


“Amari, there’s a kid’s village,” Will explained.

“What happens there?” asked Amari.

“Well, there is a special performance of the play *The Shoemaker and the Elves* that starts in ten minutes! Let’s check it out.”





**Use think-alouds:**

I see that Andres is thinking about how it would feel to perform on a stage. He thinks that it would be pretty frightening to be in front of so many people.

They found seats in the crowded grass in front of the outdoor stage.

<sup>(P – point)</sup>  
“Mama, what’s a play?” asked Amari.

“A play is when people act out a story for others to enjoy,” she answered.

Andres <sup>(A – act out glanced)</sup>glanced around. There were so many people filling the park.

“It sure takes a lot of courage to perform <sup>(T – feeling brave/overcoming fear)</sup>in front of this many people. I would be so nervous on that stage,” he thought.



**Use think-alouds:**

I see that Amari is remembering all the things about the play that they saw. She must have loved that part of her day.



After the play, Amari was full of questions.

“Mama, have you ever been in a play? How did they make those costumes?”

“How could they talk loud enough for everyone to hear?”

“How could they remember what to say?”

Mama laughed, “Hold on, Amari. I can only answer one question at a time.”

As her dad tucked her into bed that night, Amari lay thinking about how

(P – point) (A – act out tucked)

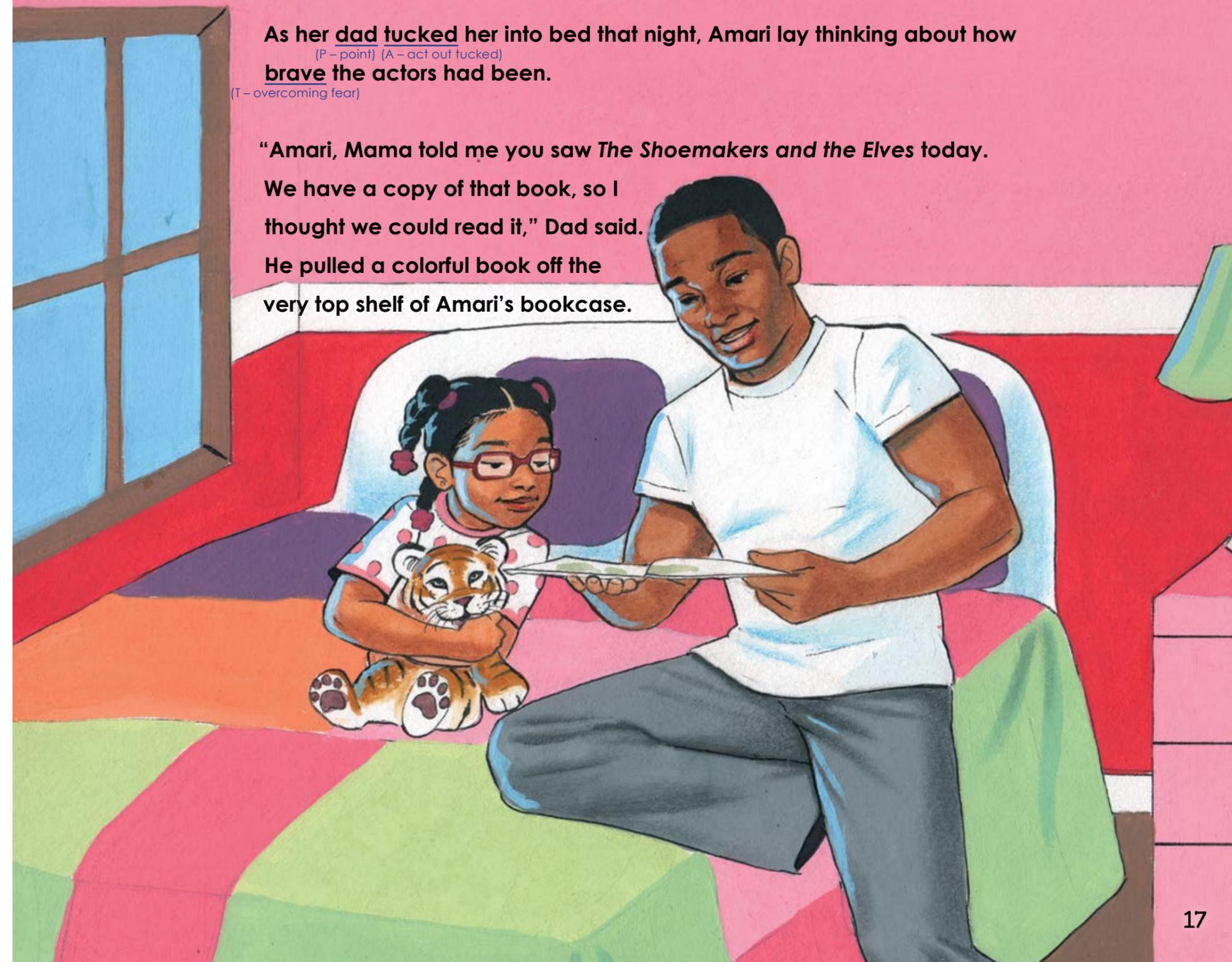
**brave the actors had been.**

(T – overcoming fear)

“Amari, Mama told me you saw *The Shoemakers and the Elves* today.

We have a copy of that book, so I thought we could read it,” Dad said.

He pulled a colorful book off the very top shelf of Amari’s bookcase.





**Use think-alouds:**

I remember when Andres was watching the play at Piedmont park and how he imagined that he would be pretty nervous if he were performing in front of a crowd. Now, Amari wants to put on a play, and I doubt that Andres wants to do that! Let's read and find out what happens.

The next morning, Amari skipped next door to show Andres the book her dad had found.  
(A – act out skipped)

“Look, it’s The Shoemaker and the Elves! Just like we saw at Piedmont Park!”  
(P – point)

Andres flipped through the pages, admiring the illustrations and recognizing familiar scenes. Amari had an idea.  
(T – to really like something)  
(T – something you’ve seen before)

“What if we put on a play?” exclaimed Amari. “We could use the book to help us remember what happened!”

“I could never perform in front of people. I would be so nervous, Amari,” Andres admitted.  
(T – act)

As Amari kept explaining the idea, it did sound fun. Andres agreed to help put on the play.  
(T – said yes)



Amari ran home to tell her family about the idea. “Will, can you help us construct a stage like the one we saw at the Dogwood Festival?”

“Sure, meet me in the backyard,” he said.

Will arrived in the backyard with an armful of old wood, a hammer, and nails.

“Look! I found these strings of lights in the garage! We could hang them up above our stage!” said Amari.

“I was thinking we could use this box to make our backdrop!” added Andres.

“Once we make the stage then you can paint it!” Amari’s Dad added.

**Use think-alouds:**

I wonder if Andres is thinking about performing in front of his neighbors. I bet he is feeling anxious.

Andres bit his lip and sighed as he hung the lights on the stage.

(A – act out sighed)

“Are you okay, Andres?” asked Amari

Andres shrugged his shoulders and continued to string lights

(A – act out shrugged)

on the stage.



All week, Amari and Andres continued to prepare for the big day. On Friday afternoon, they finished the stage and picked out old shoes and tools to be the props. Mama helped them design costumes. Everything was ready!



That night, Amari had dinner at Abuela and Andres' house. Amari noticed Andres was unusually quiet. "Aren't you excited about tomorrow, Andres?"



**Use think-alouds:**

Andres has been feeling anxious about performing in front of people. Even though he probably thinks it will be pretty fun, he is still nervous about everyone watching him.

Andres' lip trembled. "I am excited, but I am scared to be in front of a crowd," Andres explained. (A - act out trembled) Abuela came around the table and gave Andres a big hug.

"It's okay, Andres. Even the best performers get a little nervous before a big performance. It's called stage fright. I would always get nervous before I sang in front of people."

Amari looked up at Abuela. "You sang in front of people?" she asked.

"Absolutely! I love to sing, and I was part of many singing groups!"

Abuela explained. "I always say that what makes you feel more

confident is practice, practice, practice!

(T - feeling like you can do it)

So, let's practice!"

Andres arranged a pretend audience on the living room floor.

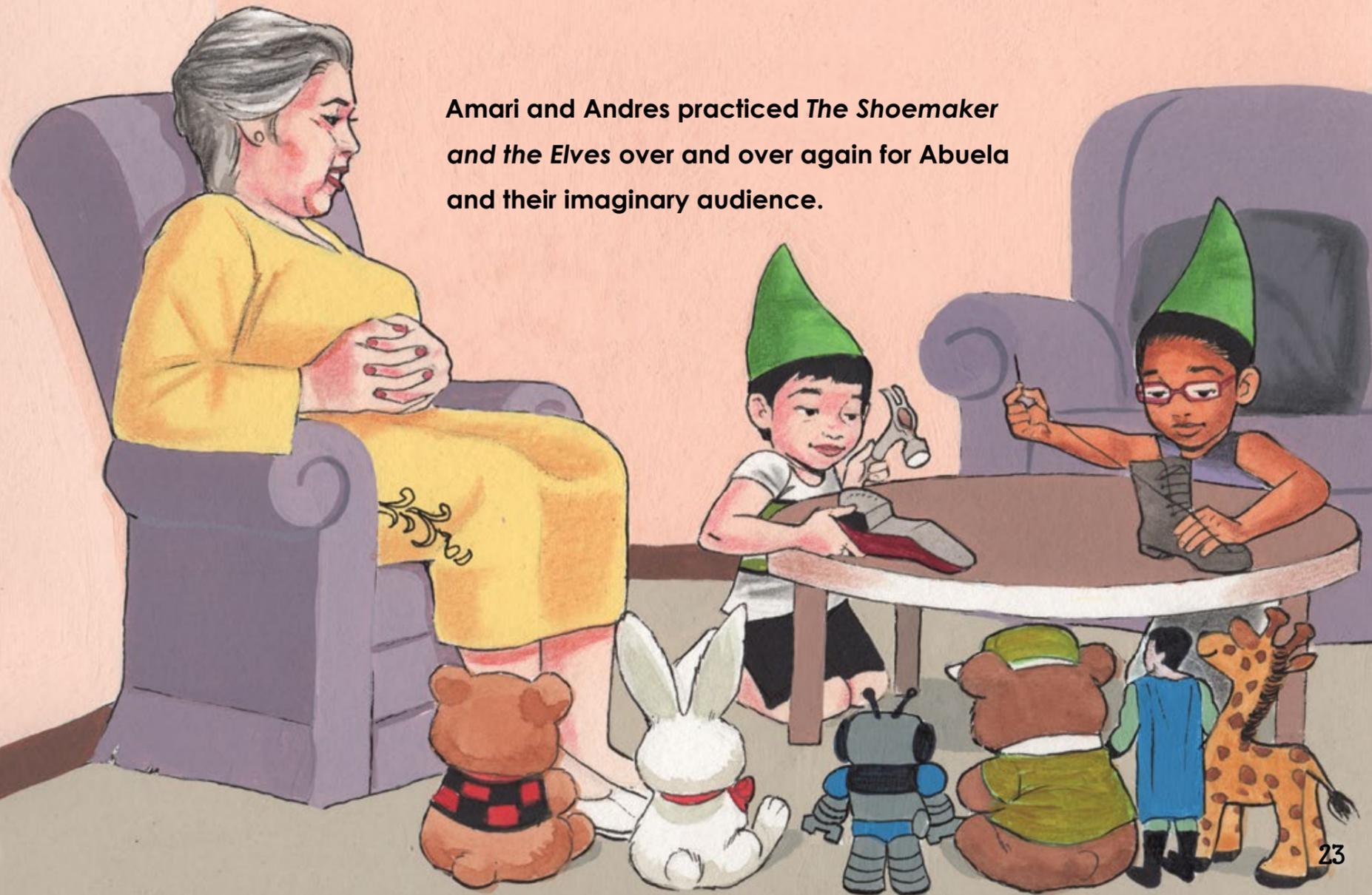
(T – to set up)

Amari giggled. “That’s not a real crowd, Andres.”

(A – act out giggled)

“Well, we will have to use our imaginations.”

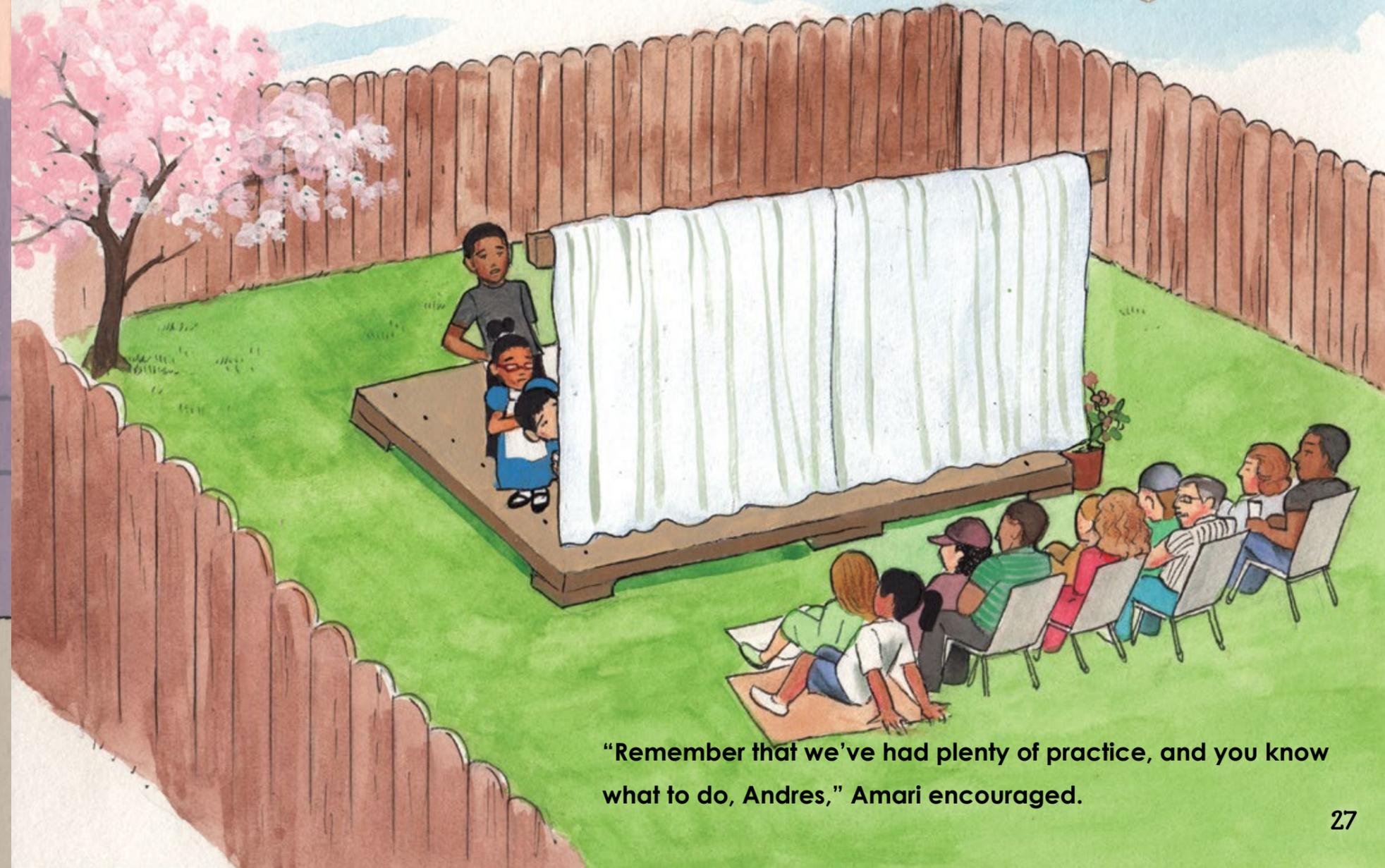
Amari and Andres practiced *The Shoemaker and the Elves* over and over again for Abuela and their imaginary audience.



The next morning, they set up chairs and blankets just before the large crowd gathered. Will stood behind the curtain with Amari and Andres and helped them into their costumes. Andres peeked from behind the curtain and shuddered.

**Use think-alouds:**

I see that Andres peered, or looked, from behind the curtain to see the crowd. I bet seeing the crowd makes him anxious or nervous.



“Remember that we’ve had plenty of practice, and you know what to do, Andres,” Amari encouraged.

Will hugged Andres and said, "Do you want to know what I do when I get nervous?"



Andres nodded his head.

"I do star jumps to remind me that I am a star, and I can do anything I put my mind to." As he jumped into the air, he shouted "I am a star!" At the same time, he reached his arms out wide above his head and kicked out his legs.

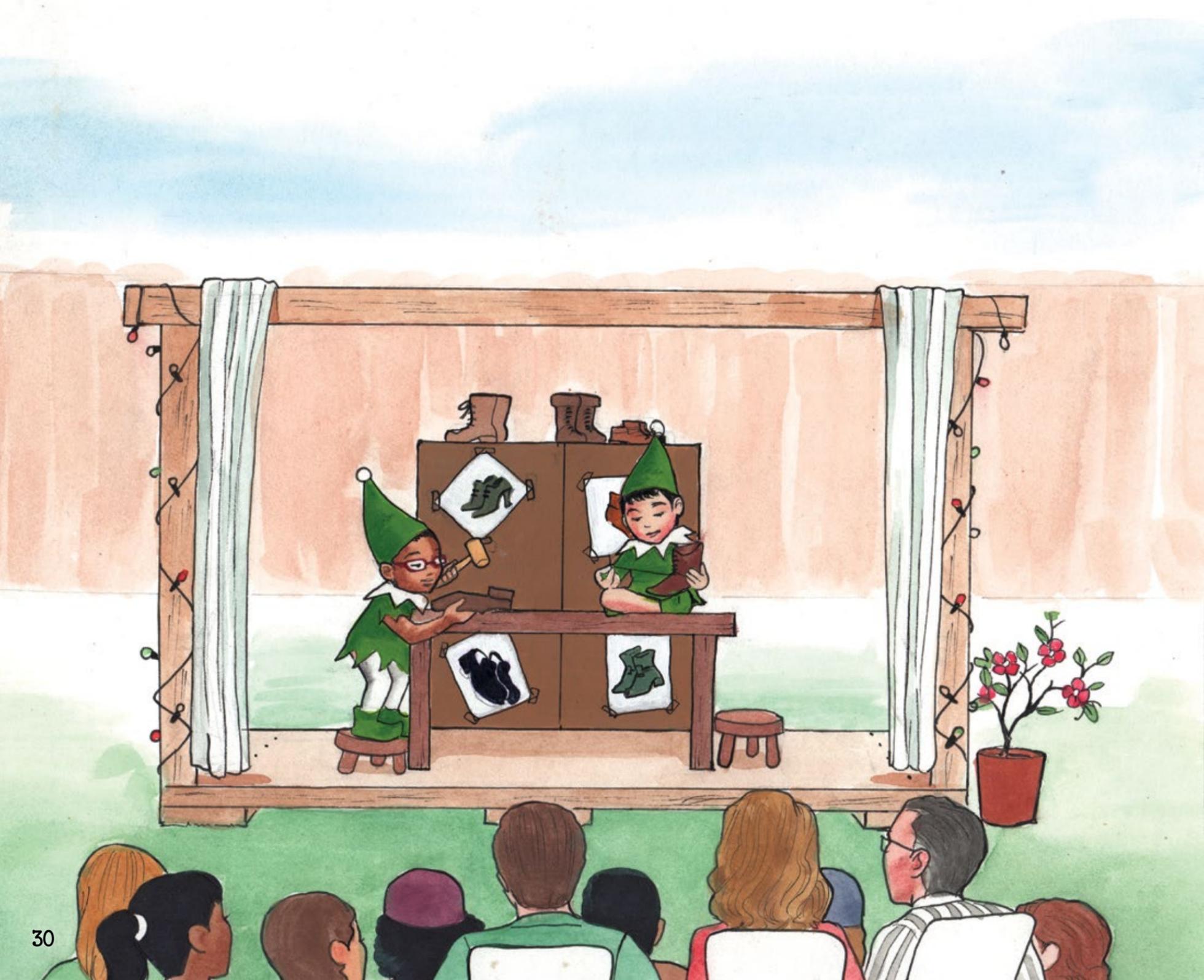
Andres and Amari laughed. Will looked so silly.

"Now you try," encouraged Will.

Andres began to jump into the air over and over again, shouting "I'm a star! I'm a star! I'm a star!"

All the laughing made him feel better.

"Ready?" asked Amari.

**Use think-alouds:**

I bet that Amari and Andres feel proud of themselves for completing their production. I know that Andres is especially proud of himself for being able to overcome his fear of performing in front of people. And Amari should feel proud of herself because she helped her friend overcome his fear.

“Ready!” said Andres. They took a deep breath as Will pulled back their curtain. The play began! At last, they were performing like the actors in Piedmont Park!

When the play was complete, the crowd went wild. Andres and Amari beamed. They had performed courageously even though it was scary being in front of a big crowd. Maybe one day they would even perform at the Dogwood Festival.

### Use think-alouds:

I'm thinking that Andres and Amari had so much fun acting out *The Shoemaker and the Elves* that they want to put on lots more plays of stories they read in books! What a fun way for these friends to spend time together!



The next Saturday morning, Andres and Amari returned to the library. When they left, their arms were so full of books they could barely carry them. When they got home, they spread the books out on Abuela's living room floor.

Amari looked at her friend. "What book should we act out next?"

### After Reading, Ask Open-Ended Questions:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Read:** Why did Amari and Andres want to put on a play?  
*Possible answers:* They liked watching the play at Piedmont Park. They enjoyed seeing the actors perform at Piedmont Park and wanted to do the same.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Read:** How did Andres feel when he completed the play?  
*Possible answers:* He felt proud because he overcame his fear.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Read:** How did Amari help Andres overcome his fear?  
*Possible answers:* She helped him practice. Amari and Andres practiced together to help him feel more confident about performing in front of people.

### Do more with the book

- **Read** other books about being brave and having courage with your child. You can find many of these at your local library. Here are some examples: *Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell, *Alexander and the Wind Up Mouse* by Leo Lionni, *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman, and *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn.
- **Encourage** your child to talk about a time when he or she felt nervous or afraid. Discuss ways to overcome fears. Now have them share these ways to overcome fears with a sibling or friend.
- **Visit** your local park and discuss similarities between the local park scenery and the scenery discussed in the story.
- **Encourage** your child to talk about a time when they felt like they experienced a "shining moment."
- **Practice** doing star jumps with your child throughout the day.
- **Research** plays for children in your area, and take a family trip to view the performance.

### Put on a play like Amari and Andres

- **Choose** a book from home, school, or your local library to act out.
- **Write** and **decorate** invitations to friends and family to view your play. Or, invite special stuffed animals, dolls, or figurines to watch the performance!
- **Create** scenery and costumes for your play from materials around your house.
- **Decorate** paper plates to make masks for your performance. Help your child use a hole puncher or scissors to cut a hole on each side. Then, put string through each hole and tie together to hold the mask onto his or her head. These masks are a perfect costume for animal characters.
- **Transform** a cardboard box into a castle, cave, or skyscraper to use in your play by painting, coloring, or gluing different materials onto the outside. Cardboard box creations make great scenery for plays!

### Summary: *The Shoemaker and the Elves*



*The Shoemaker and the Elves* is a story about a shoemaker who couldn't make enough money to take care of his family, no matter how hard he worked. One day he had only enough leather to make one more pair of shoes. Before going to bed that night, he left the leather out with plans to make one more pair of shoes the next day. When he woke up, he saw a beautiful pair of shoes already made. Someone came into the shop and was so impressed with the well-made shoes that he paid more than expected. Now, the shoemaker had enough money to make two more pairs of shoes. Every morning new shoes were waiting for him. Customers continued to come in and pay more than expected for the shoes. Because he was able to sell these shoes for good money, he gave away some shoes and money to help other people in their town. One night, the shoemaker and his wife decided to stay up to see who could be making these shoes. At midnight, they saw two elves in tattered clothes. They watched as the elves worked to make the shoes. As soon as the sun came up, the elves ran away. The next day, the shoemaker and his wife talked about how grateful they were, made them new clothes, and left them on the workbench. The elves were excited about the new clothes but never returned again.

# Mayor's Summer Reading Club 2015

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**The Annie E. Casey Foundation**

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**Atlanta Braves**

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**Atlanta Dream**

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**Atlanta Police Department**

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**Atlanta Public Schools**

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**Atlanta Area School for the Deaf**

[www.aasdweb.com](http://www.aasdweb.com)

**Atlanta Speech School**

[www.atlantaspeechschool.org](http://www.atlantaspeechschool.org)

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[www.afpls.org](http://www.afpls.org)

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**The Children's Museum of Atlanta**

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**City of Atlanta Mayor's Office**

[www.atlantaga.gov](http://www.atlantaga.gov)

**City of Atlanta Parks and Recreation:**

**Centers of Hope**

[www.atlantaga.gov](http://www.atlantaga.gov)

**Clarkston Early Learning Network**

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**DeKalb County Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs**

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**Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy**

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**Friends of Adair Park**

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**Friends of Reverend James Orange Park at Oakland City****GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students**

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[www.mse.education.gsu.edu](http://www.mse.education.gsu.edu)

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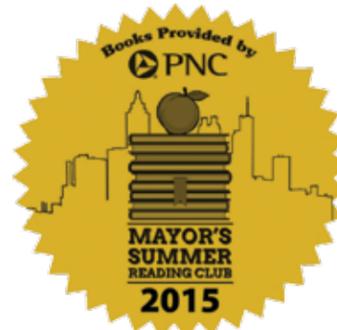
[www.unitedwayatlanta.org](http://www.unitedwayatlanta.org)

**U.S. Attorney's Office (NDGA)**

[www.justice.gov/usao/gan/community](http://www.justice.gov/usao/gan/community)

**The Wren's Nest**

[www.wrensnest.org](http://www.wrensnest.org)



*\*As of April 2015*

## More Information



[www.atlantaspeechschool.org](http://www.atlantaspeechschool.org)



[www.geears.org](http://www.geears.org)

Amari is back with a new adventure! After seeing a play at Atlanta's Dogwood Festival, Amari and her friend and neighbor, Andres, are inspired to put on their own play. What challenges will these friends have to overcome as they get ready for their big performance?



Amari shares her strength and encourages her friend to overcome his stage fright as they work together to bring books to life on the stage. *Amari's Shining Moment* also includes ideas for adults to use while reading. These ideas will build children's language and vocabulary skills and prepare them to be on a path to "read to learn" by 3rd grade.

US \$7.99

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