

# Amari's Blue Ribbon

By The Rollins Center for Language & Literacy at the Atlanta Speech School  
Illustrated by John Floyd Jr.





**As you read, your goal is to bring the story to life so that the story can become part of your child's life.**

Here are a few ways to bring the story to life:

1. Create conversation around the book by sharing the "Before you read this book" statement with your child at the beginning and asking the open-ended question in the "After reading" section at the end. By stating the purpose and saving your questions until the end of the story, you give your child a focus as you read together.
2. On some pages, you will notice "think-alouds" in the corner. Say these "think-alouds" after you read each page. This models critical thinking for your child and prepares him/her to successfully answer the question at the end.
3. Look for the words in blue that help you use the PAT strategy to **Point** to the illustrations, **Act** out words, or **Tell** a child-friendly definition to help your child understand and gain new vocabulary introduced in the story. Changing your voice tone as you read can also help to keep your child engaged.

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

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



**Use think-alouds:**

I'm wondering what Amari is making for Grandpa. I'm thinking she wants to hide it because she doesn't want Grandpa to see it yet.

ack, Mom **whispered** to Amari and  
(Tell) (Act) **whispered**—said something quietly  
Remember our **surprise**? We're  
(Tell) (Act) **surprise**—something you didn't know about

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

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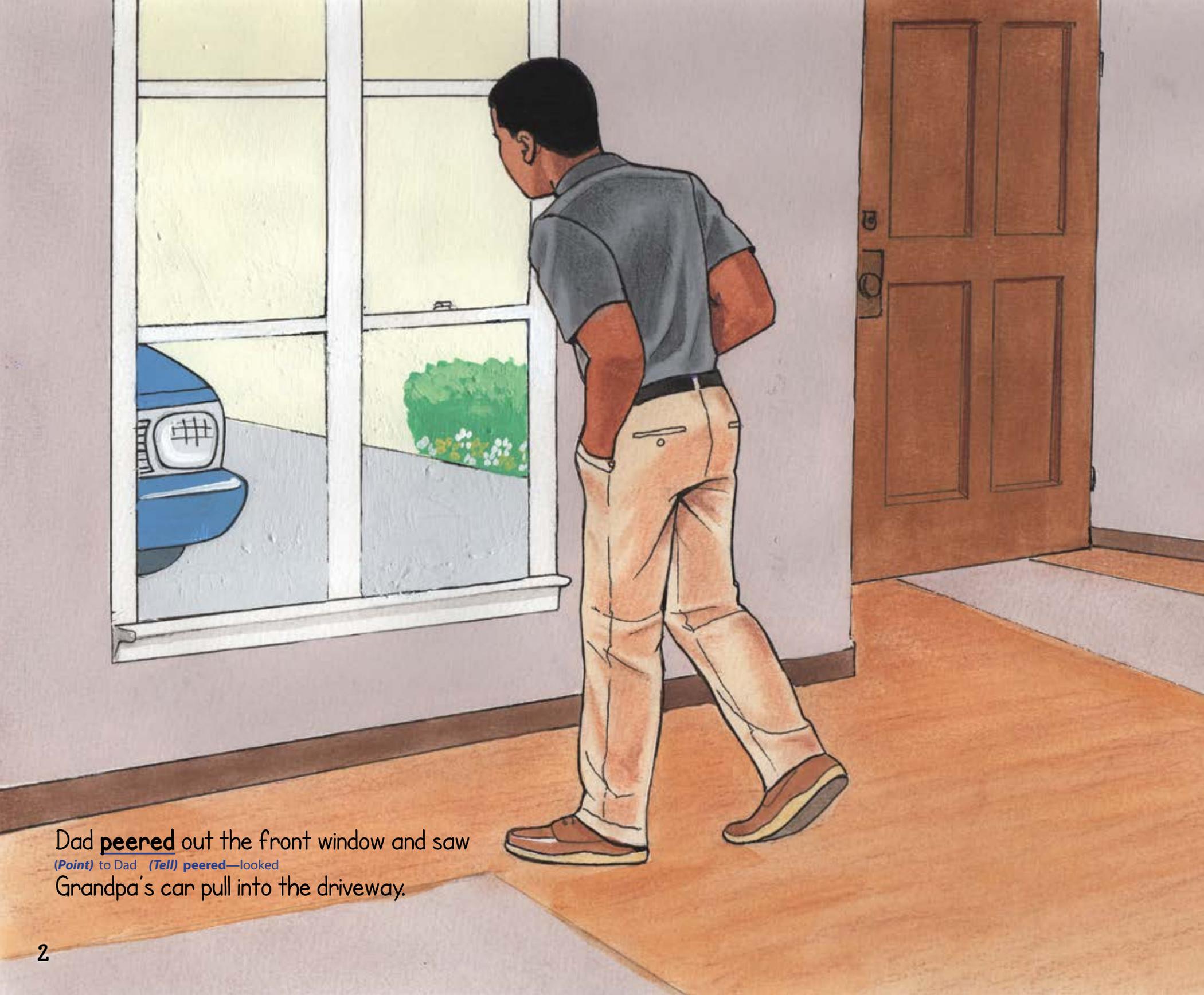
# Amari's Blue Ribbon



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*Before you read this book, say...*

**I notice that Amari, Will, and their Grandpa look like they really care about each other. I wonder how they will show they care about each other in this story. Let's read and find out.**



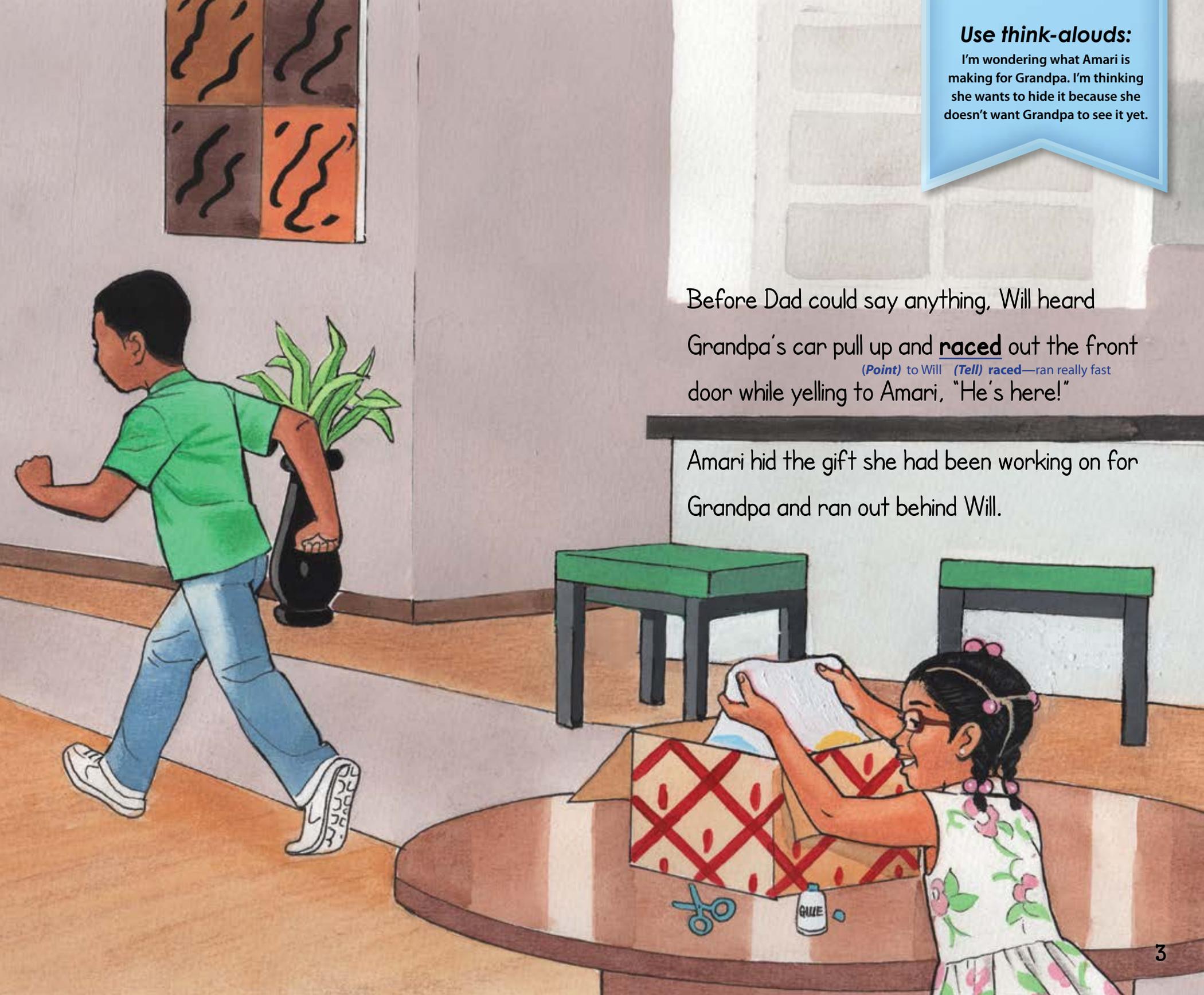
Dad **peered** out the front window and saw  
*(Point)* to Dad *(Tell)* **peered**—looked  
Grandpa's car pull into the driveway.

**Use think-alouds:**

I'm wondering what Amari is making for Grandpa. I'm thinking she wants to hide it because she doesn't want Grandpa to see it yet.

Before Dad could say anything, Will heard Grandpa's car pull up and **raced** out the front door while yelling to Amari, "He's here!"  
(Point) to Will (Tell) **raced**—ran really fast

Amari hid the gift she had been working on for Grandpa and ran out behind Will.

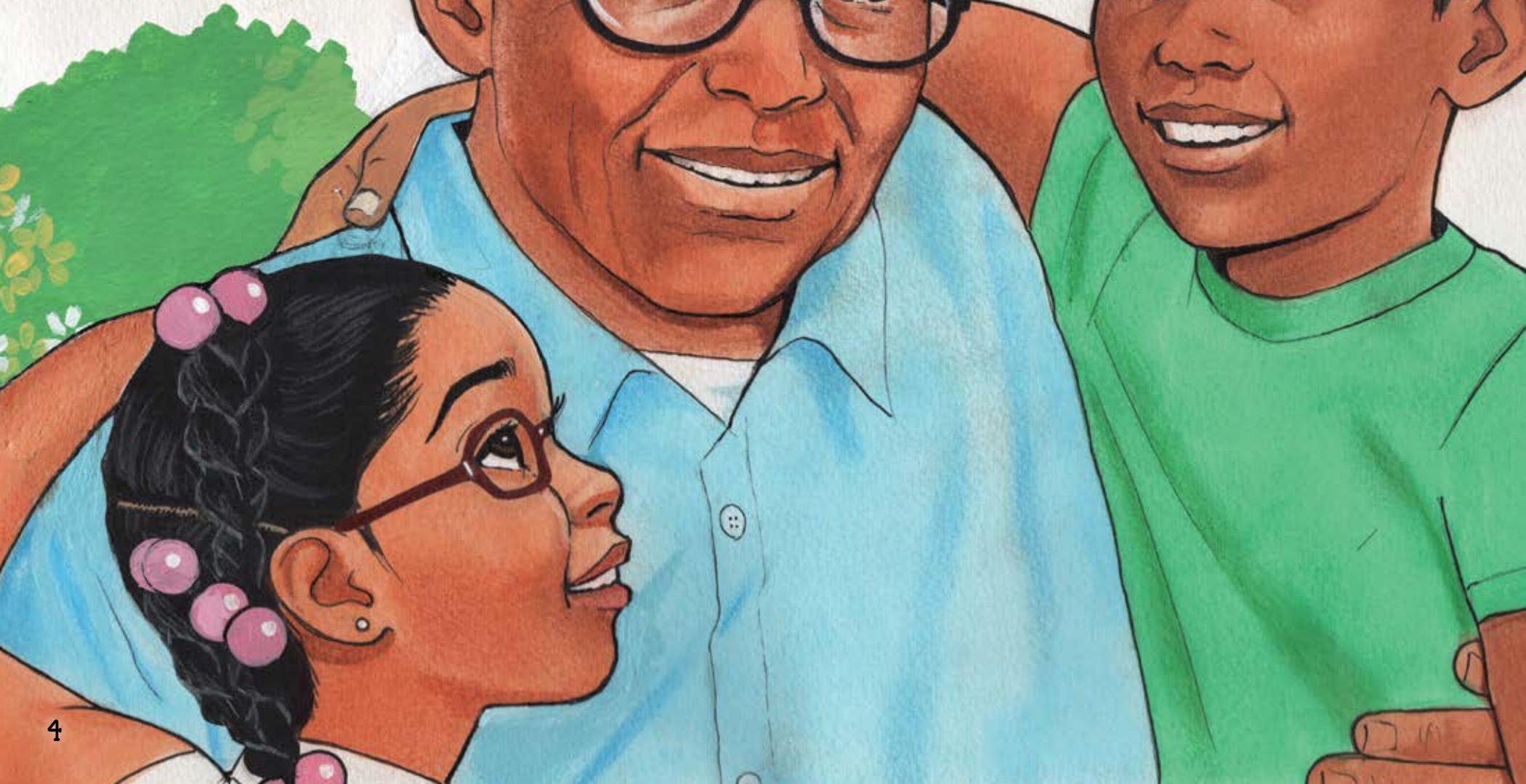


"We've been waiting for you,  
Grandpa!" Amari and Will  
said **excitedly**.

*(Tell)* **excitedly**—very happy

"These are my **favorite**  
hugs from my favorite  
people," Grandpa replied.

*(Tell)* **favorite**—what you like most

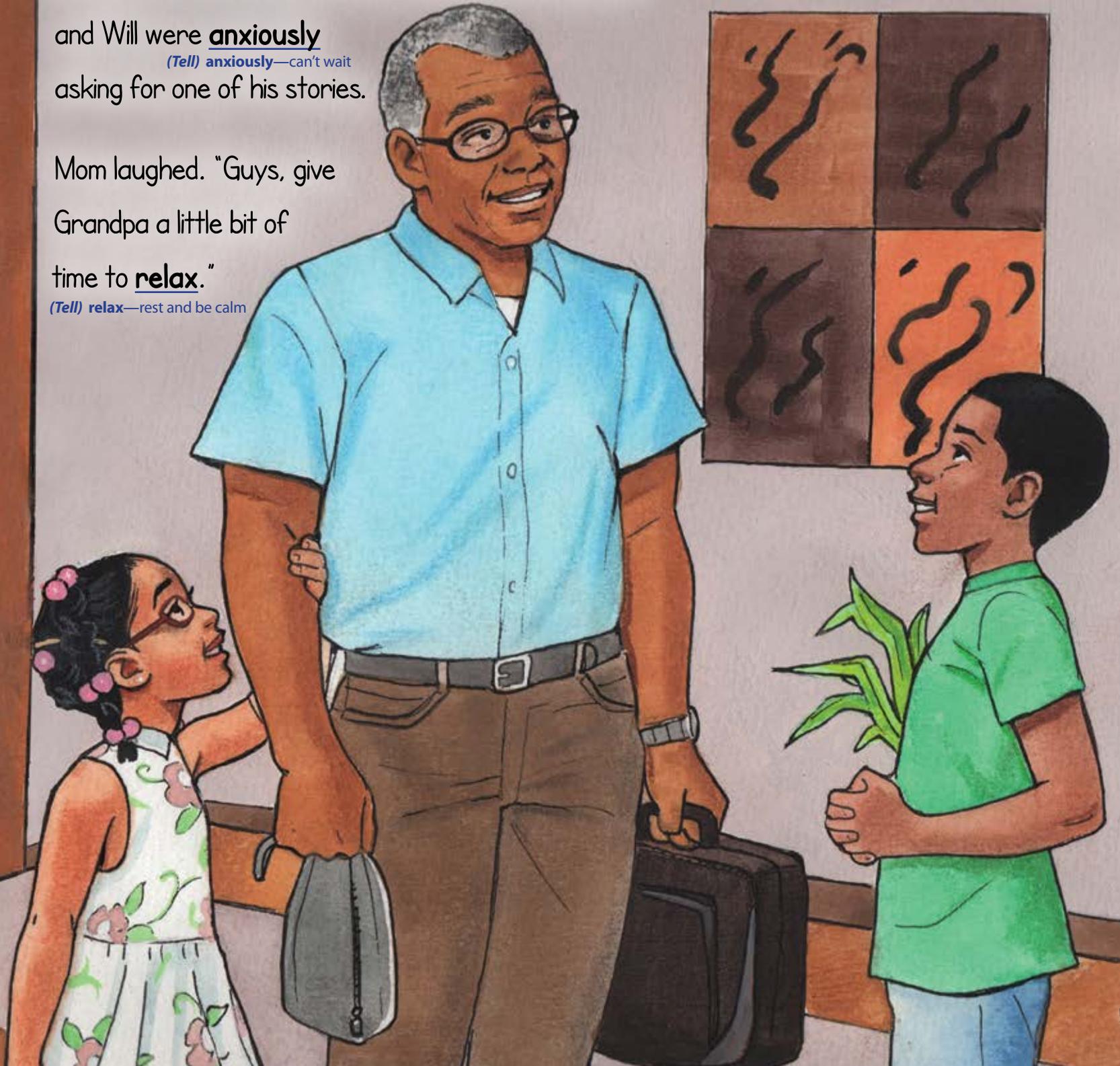


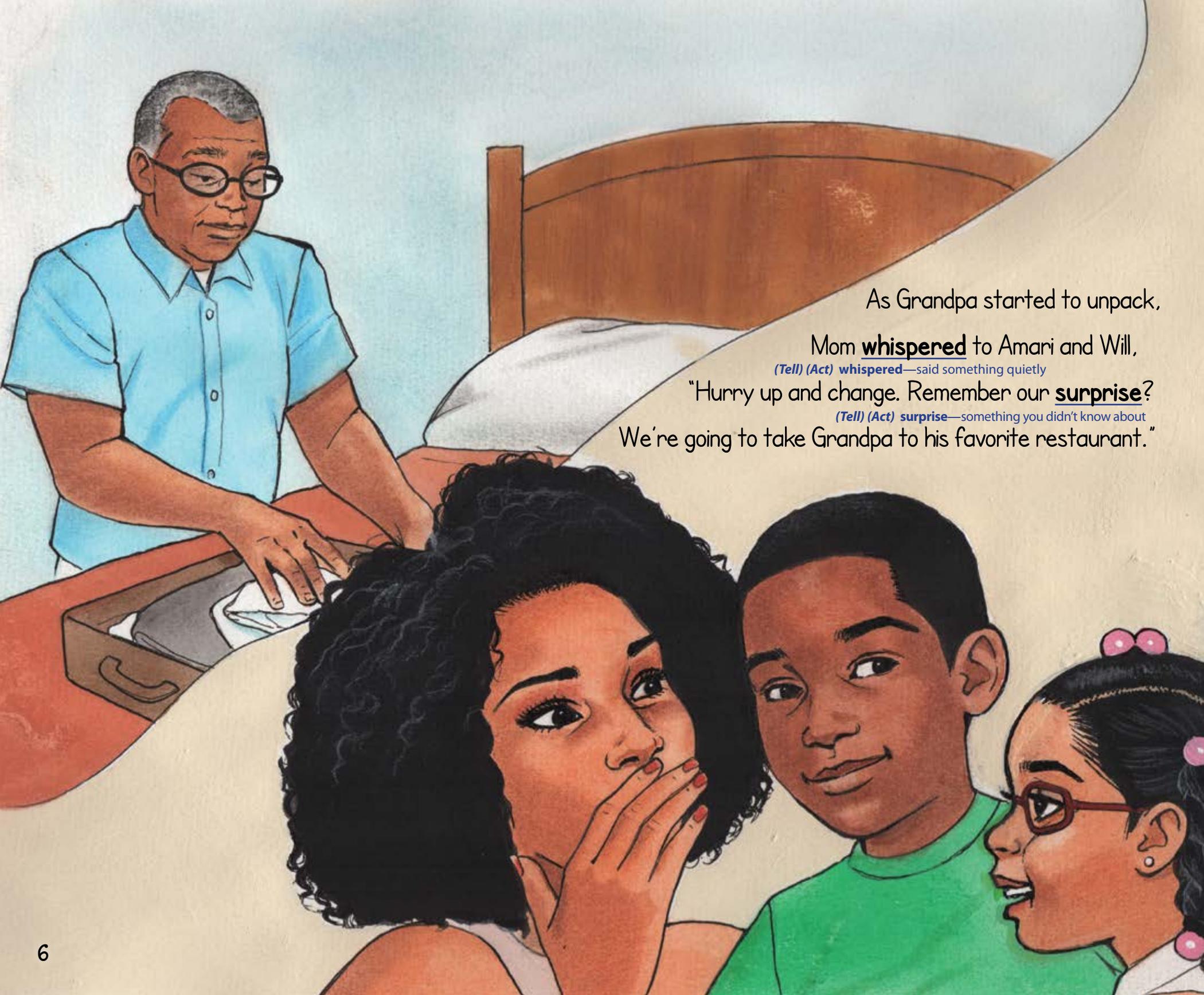
Even before Grandpa could put his bags down, Amari and Will were **anxiously** asking for one of his stories.

*(Tell)* **anxiously**—can't wait

Mom laughed. "Guys, give Grandpa a little bit of time to **relax.**"

*(Tell)* **relax**—rest and be calm





As Grandpa started to unpack,

Mom **whispered** to Amari and Will,

*(Tell) (Act) whispered*—said something quietly

“Hurry up and change. Remember our **surprise?**”

*(Tell) (Act) surprise*—something you didn’t know about

We’re going to take Grandpa to his favorite restaurant.”

**Use think-alouds:**

Amari is bringing the gift box with her. I bet she is planning to surprise Grandpa at the restaurant.



Amari grabbed Grandpa's gift on her way out.  
She had her own surprise in mind.



PASCH  
RESTAURANT

HAL'S  
RESTAURANT

**Use think-alouds:**

I think that Amari and Will are very excited about surprising Grandpa. Grandpa says that the restaurant has lots of memories. I bet he's going to have some stories to share.



As they pulled up to Paschal's Restaurant, Amari and Will giggled in the back seat, and a grin **swept across** Grandpa's face.

*(Act) (Tell) swept across—spread*

"What a treat. This place has delicious food and so many memories!"





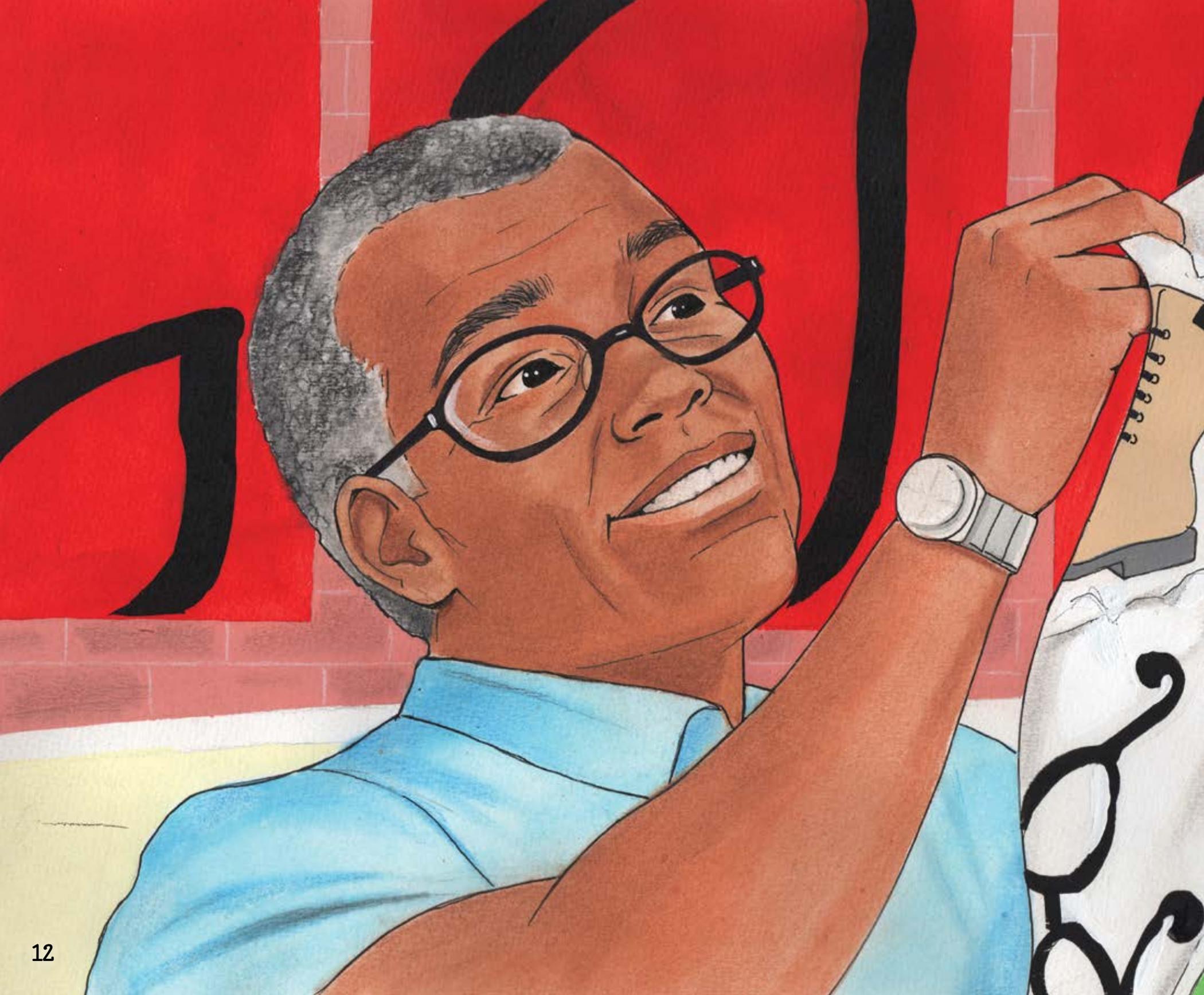
As they sat down, Amari placed the gift box in front of Grandpa.

“What’s this?” asked Grandpa.

“I wanted to make you something special,” Amari said.

“Thank you, Amari. That was so **thoughtful**.”

*(Tell)* thoughtful—nice, kind





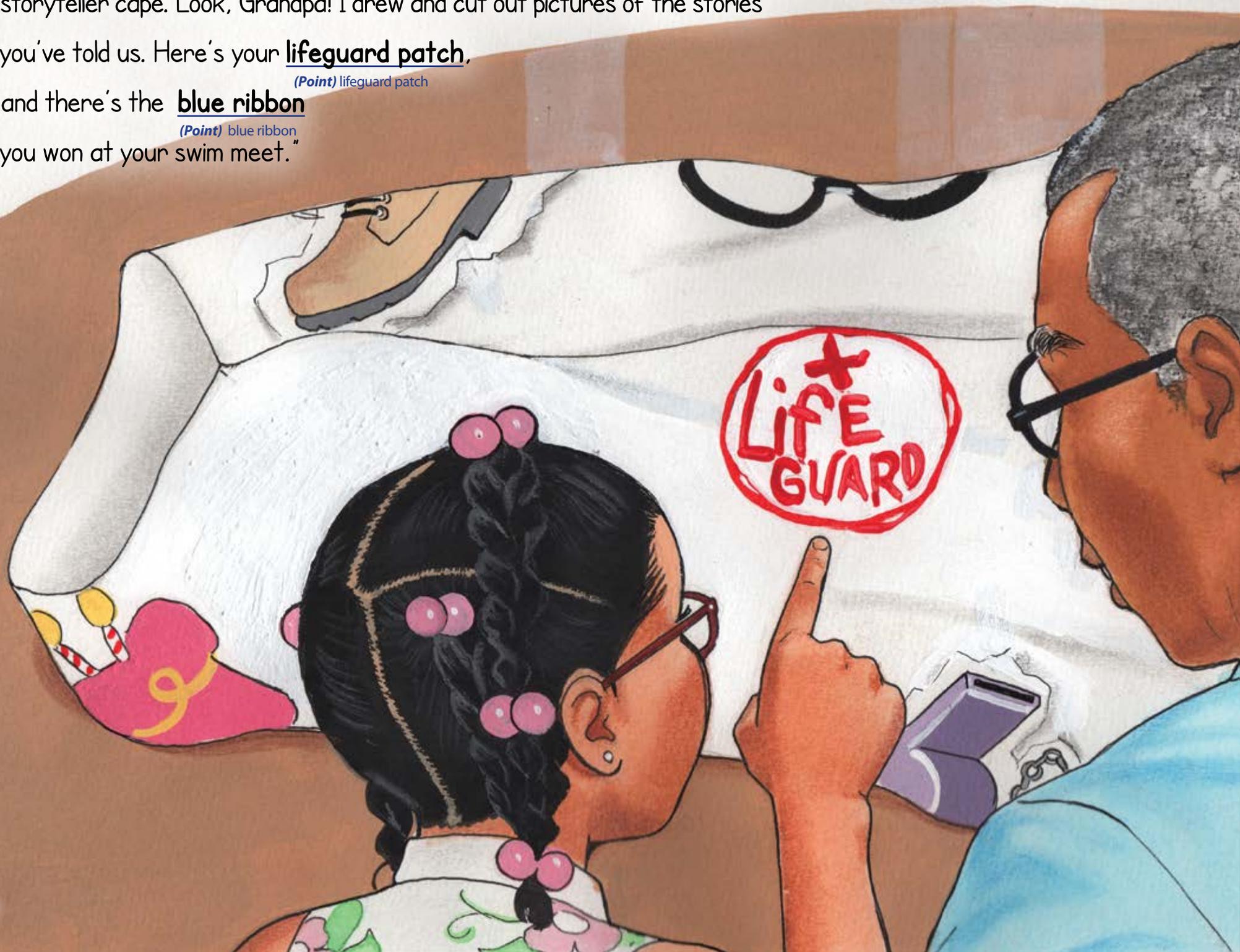
Grandpa opened the box and pulled out a cape

**adorned** with colorful pictures.

*(Tell)* adorned—covered

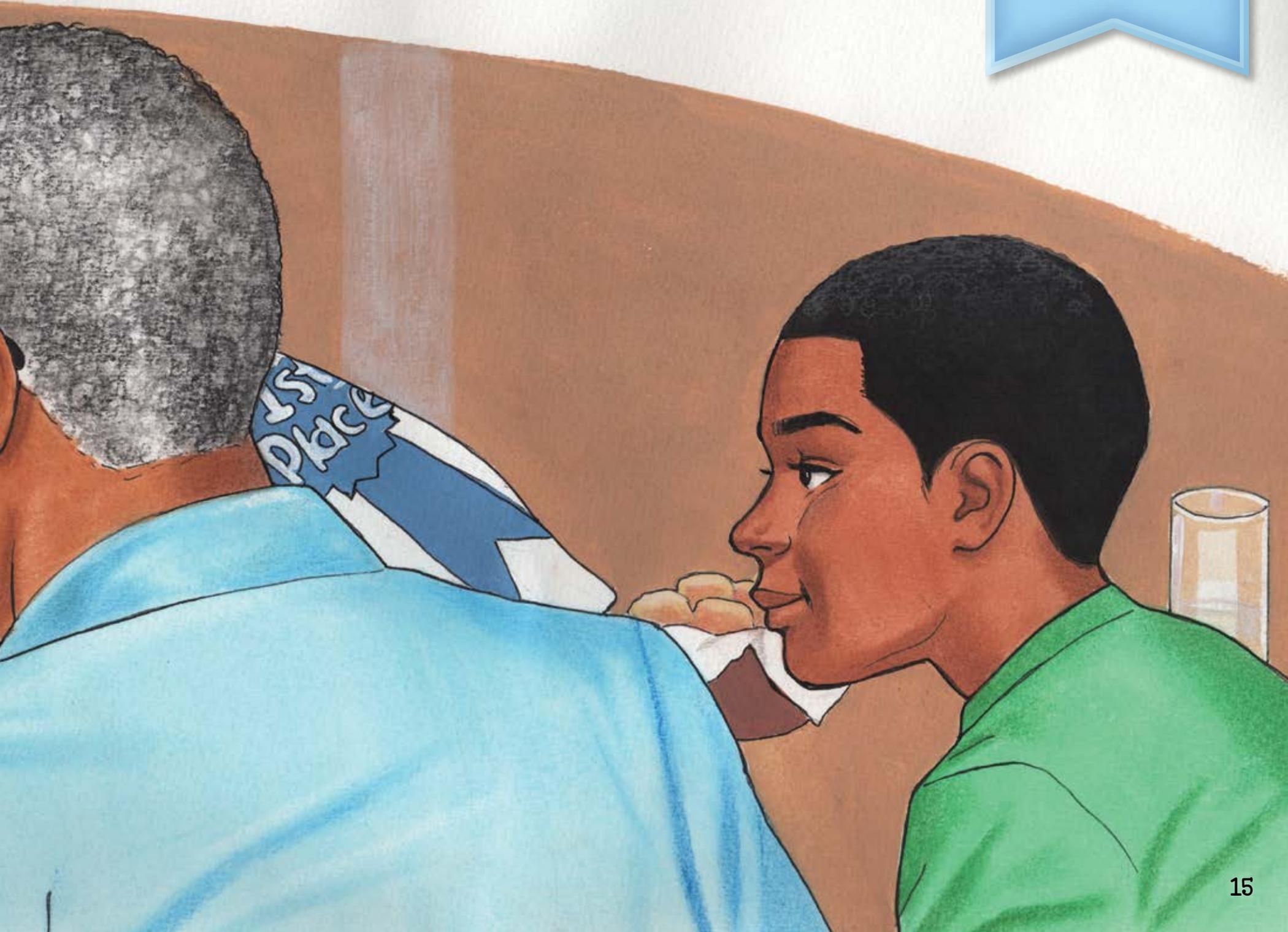
“Oh, Amari! What are these wonderful pictures?”

"You're the best storyteller in the whole wide world, so I made you a storyteller cape. Look, Grandpa! I drew and cut out pictures of the stories you've told us. Here's your lifeguard patch,  
(Point) lifeguard patch  
and there's the blue ribbon  
(Point) blue ribbon  
you won at your swim meet."

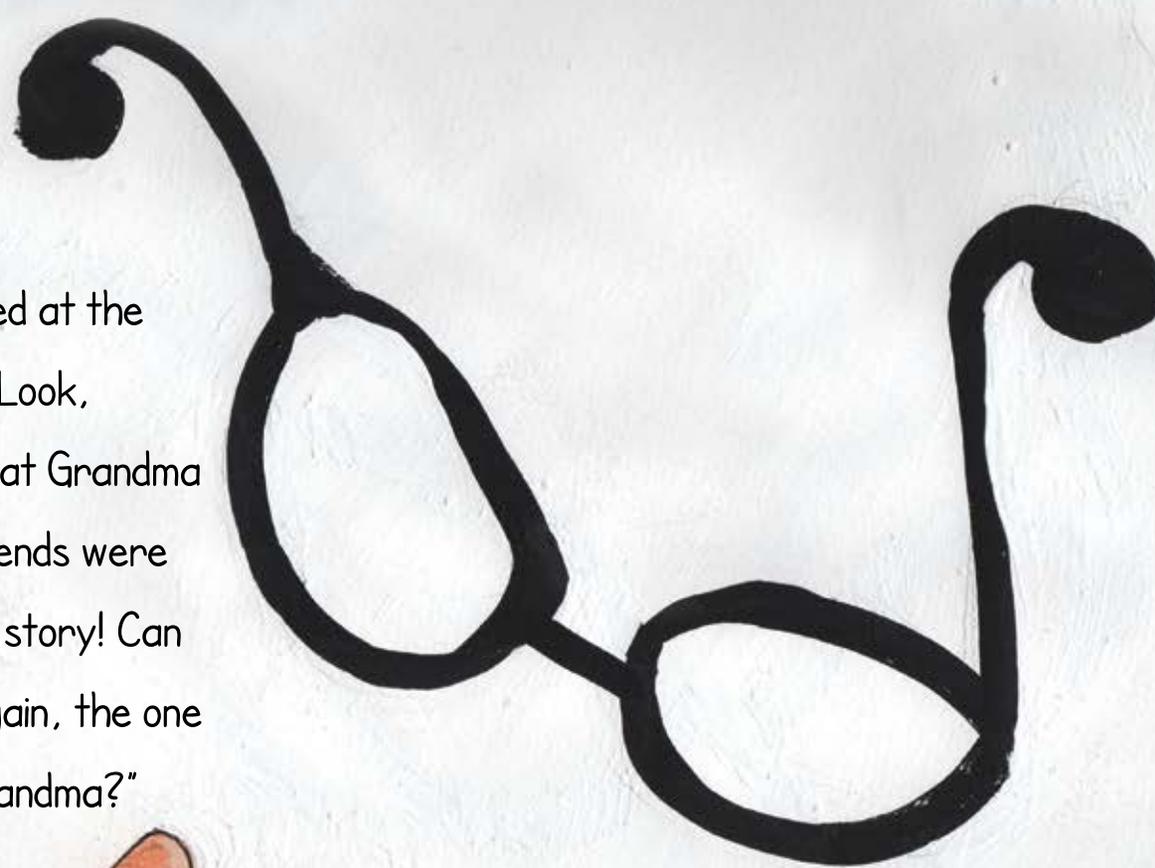


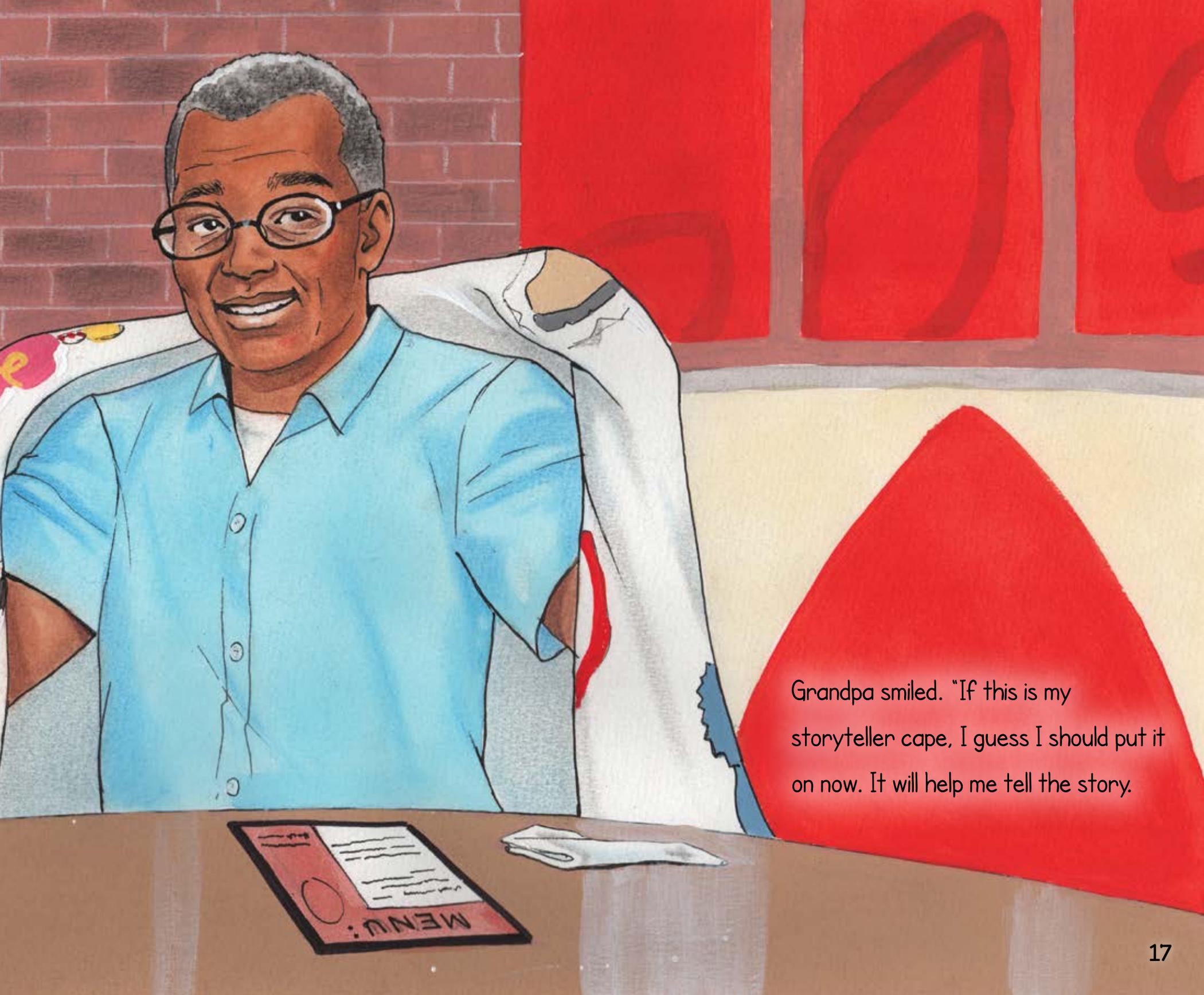
**Use think-alouds:**

I notice that Grandpa smiled as Amari pointed out some of the pictures on the cape. He must really like sharing stories.



"Oh, yeah." Amari pointed at the picture of eyeglasses. "Look, Grandpa. These are what Grandma put on that time her friends were **teasing** you. I love that story! Can (Tell) **teasing**—to make fun of you tell us that story again, the one about when you met Grandma?"





Grandpa smiled. "If this is my storyteller cape, I guess I should put it on now. It will help me tell the story.

A long time ago, I went to Paschal's old location to order my dinner:

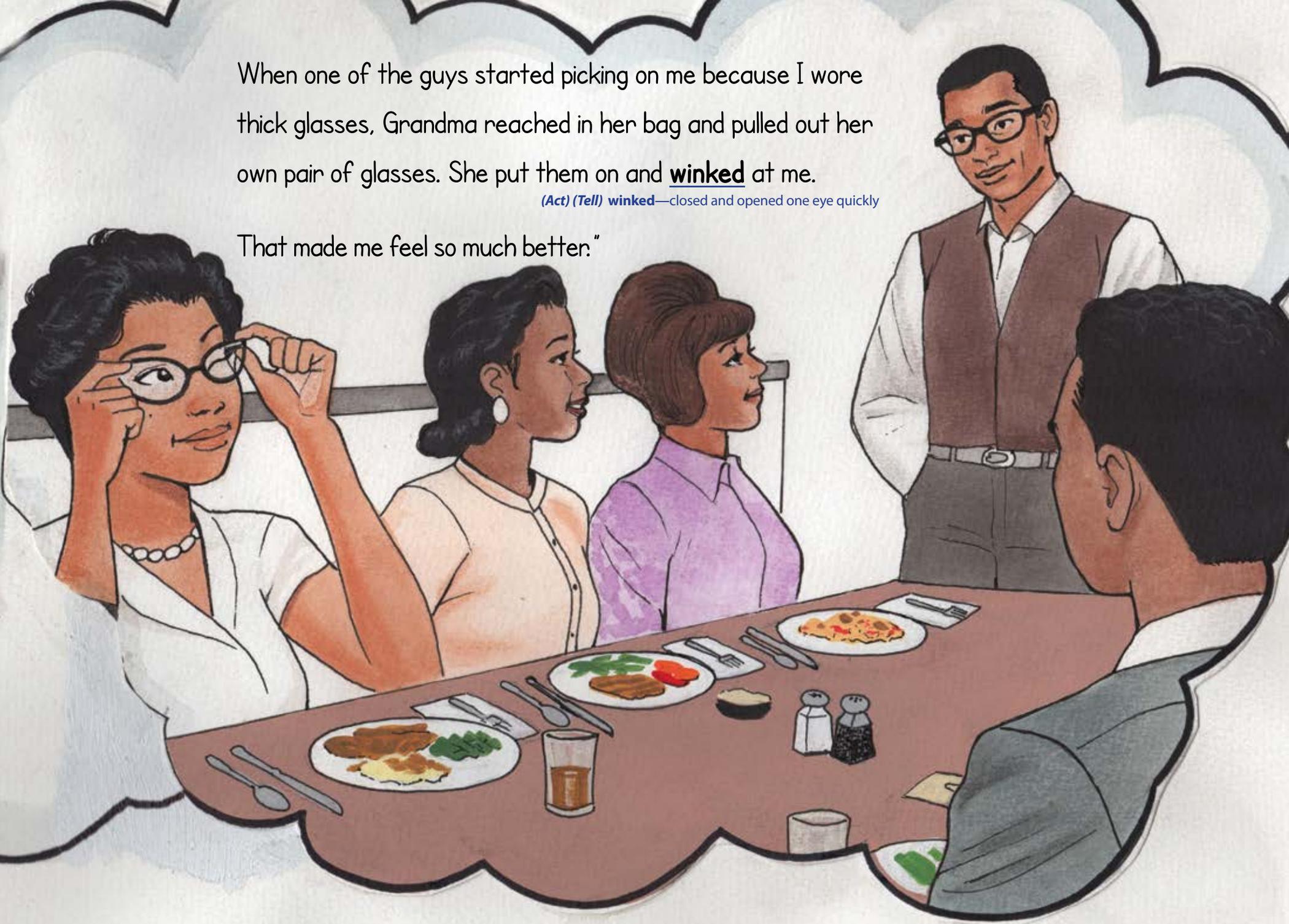
I **recognized** some of  
*(Tell) recognized*—had seen before  
Grandma's friends and went  
over to say hello. They  
**introduced** me to her.  
*(Tell) introduced*—helped me meet her



When one of the guys started picking on me because I wore thick glasses, Grandma reached in her bag and pulled out her own pair of glasses. She put them on and **winked** at me.

*(Act) (Tell)* **winked**—closed and opened one eye quickly

That made me feel so much better.”



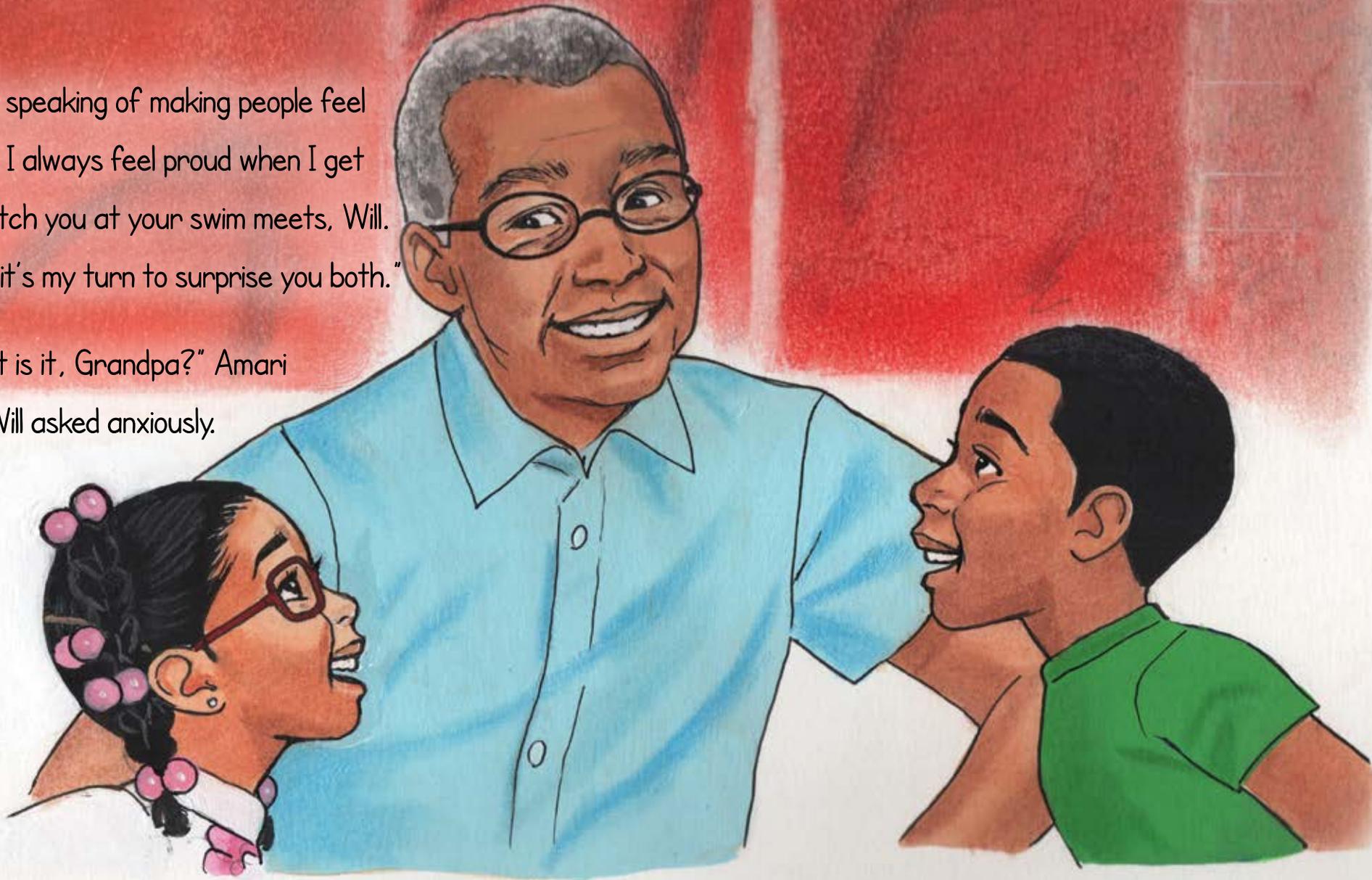
“I can see Grandma doing that,” said Will.

“She always knew the right thing to do or say to make people feel **comfortable**, no matter what.”

*(Tell)* **comfortable**—feel good

“Well, speaking of making people feel good, I always feel proud when I get to watch you at your swim meets, Will. Now, it’s my turn to surprise you both.”

“What is it, Grandpa?” Amari and Will asked anxiously.



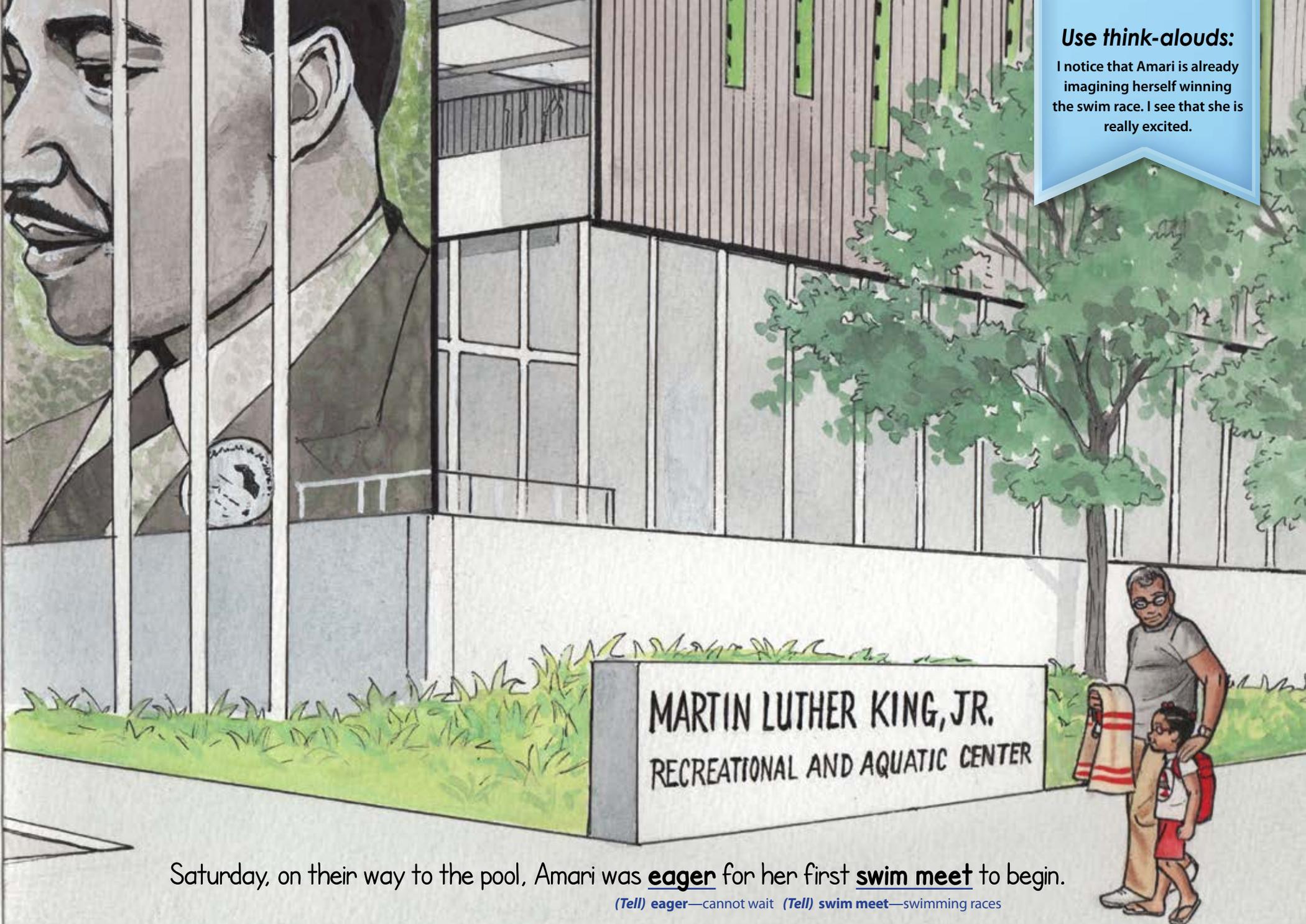
“I’m staying until Saturday so that I can take you to your swim meet while your mom and dad are at work. Now, I get to see you swim too, Amari.”

Amari and Will **beamed** with excitement.

*(Act) (Tell)* **beamed**—smile really big

**Use think-alouds:**

I notice that Amari is already imagining herself winning the swim race. I see that she is really excited.



Saturday, on their way to the pool, Amari was **eager** for her first **swim meet** to begin.

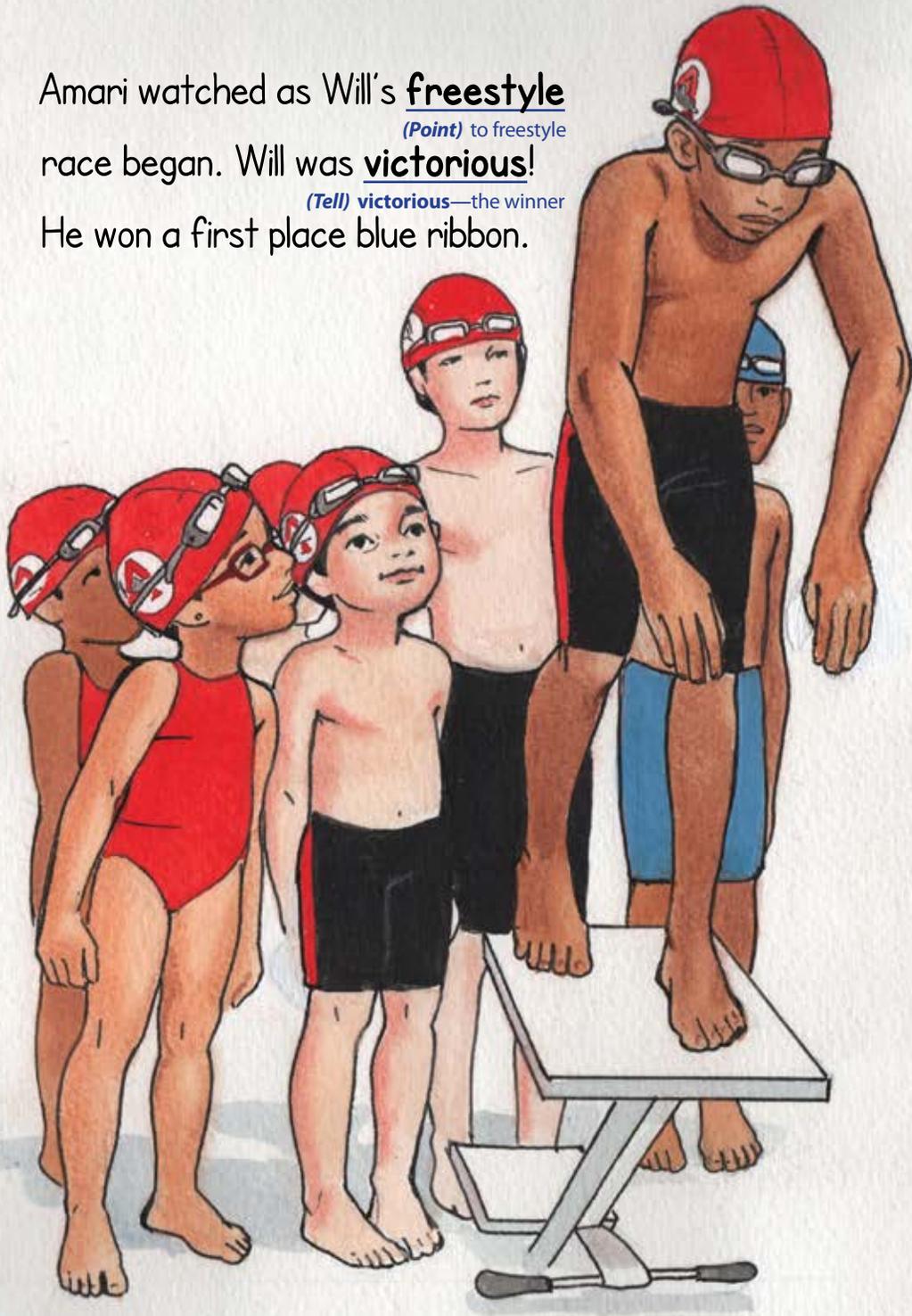
*(Tell) eager—cannot wait (Tell) swim meet—swimming races*

“I’m going to jump in and swim so fast. I’m going to kick hard, and I just know I am going to win a ribbon. It will look just like yours, Grandpa, and I’m going to hang it up in my room!”

Amari watched as Will's **freestyle** race began. Will was **victorious!** He won a first place blue ribbon.

(Point) to freestyle

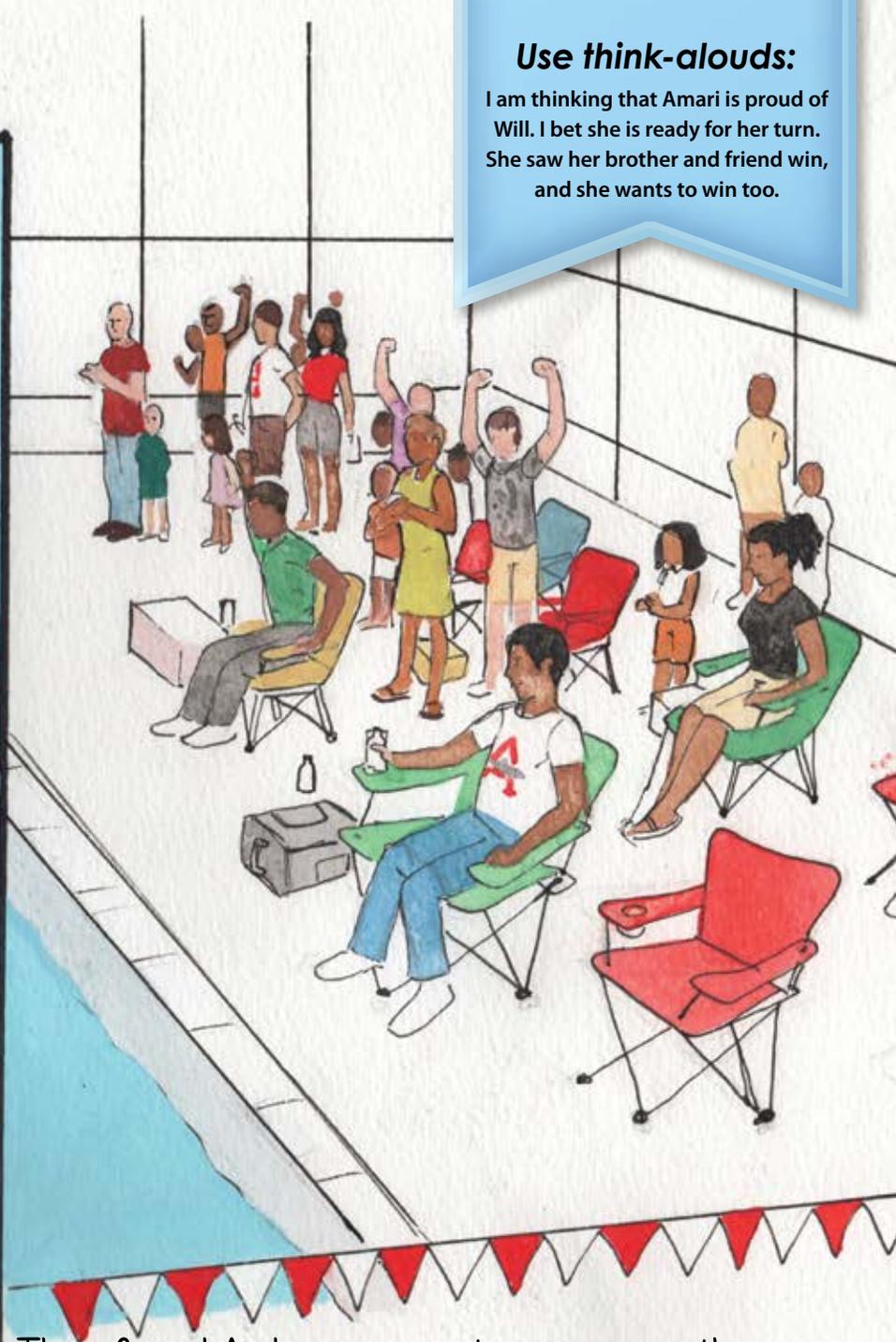
(Tell) victorious—the winner



Everyone cheered. Amari shouted for her big brother. She could hardly wait for her chance to win.

**Use think-alouds:**

I am thinking that Amari is proud of Will. I bet she is ready for her turn. She saw her brother and friend win, and she wants to win too.



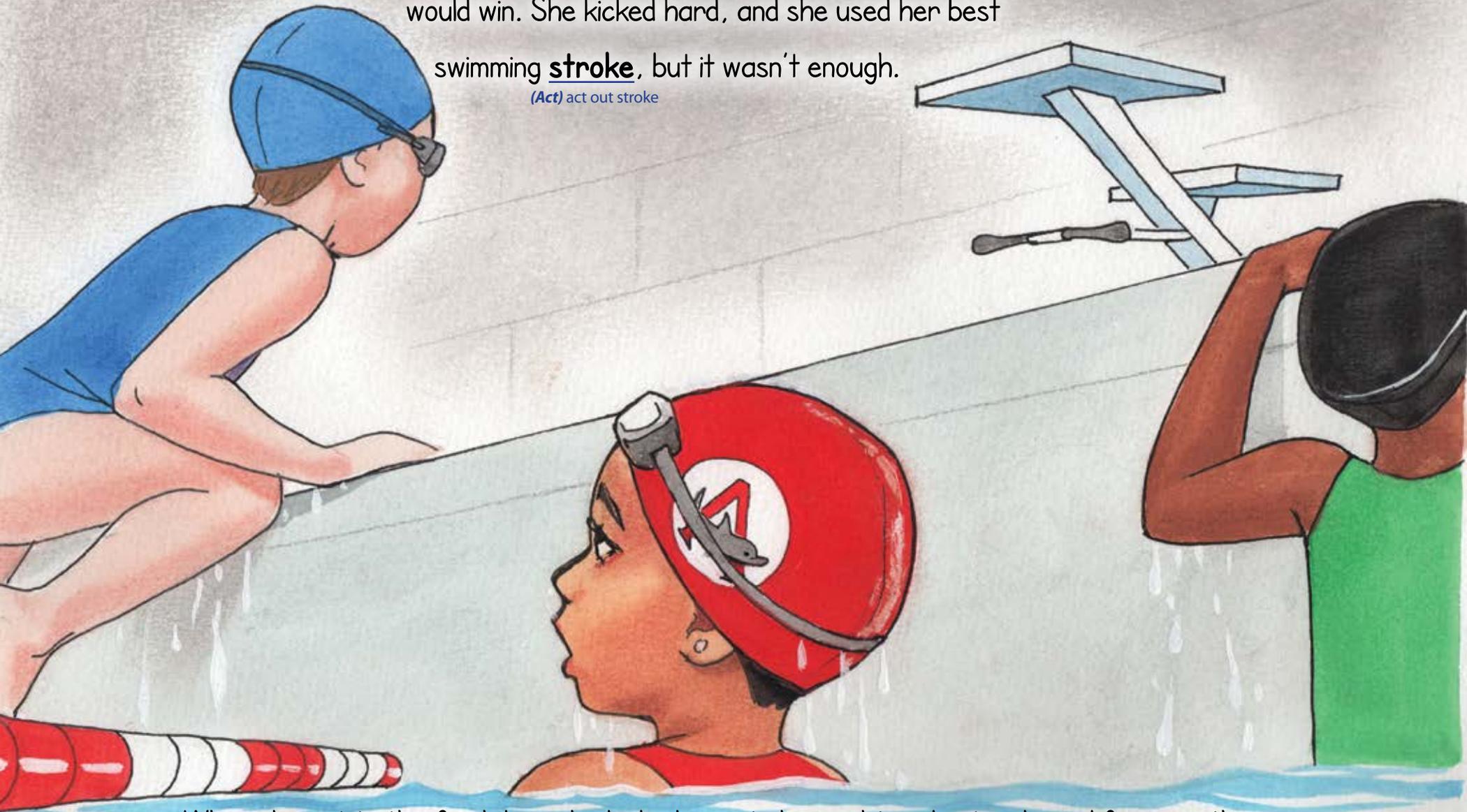
Their friend Andres was next, swimming in the **backstroke** event. He also won a first place ribbon.

*(Point) to backstroke*

Finally, it was Amari's turn.

All she could think about was winning a blue ribbon. At the sound of the starting whistle, she dove in. She just knew she would win. She kicked hard, and she used her best swimming **stroke**, but it wasn't enough.

(Act) act out stroke

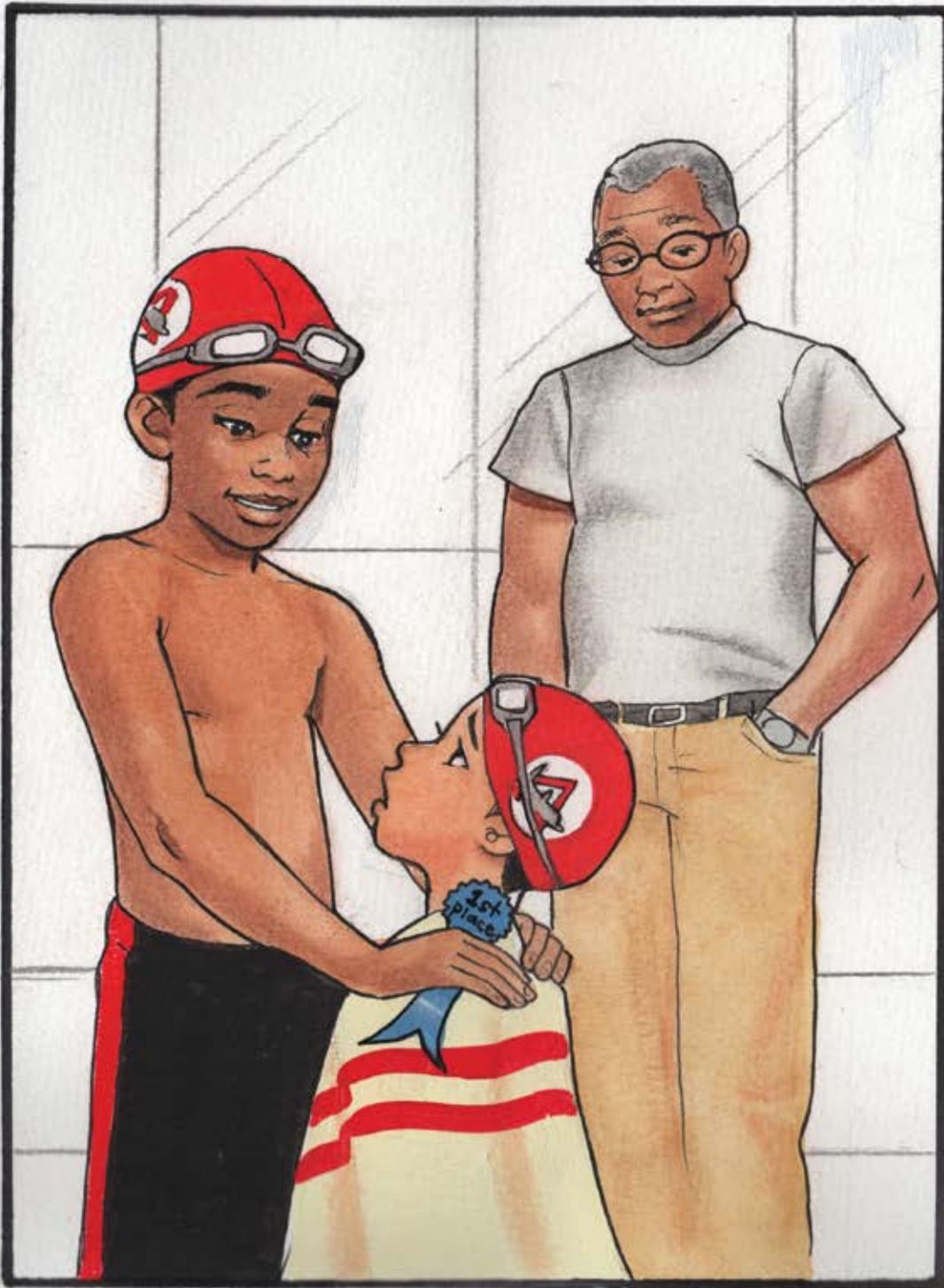


When she got to the finish line, she looked over to her right and noticed a girl from another team was already there. She looked to her left. That swimmer had already finished, too. Instead of coming in first, she had come in last. **Heartbroken**, she fought back her tears.

(Tell) Heartbroken — very upset

**Use think-alouds:**

I am thinking that Amari is really disappointed that she didn't win. She was determined to come in first place.



Will hated to see his sister so sad.

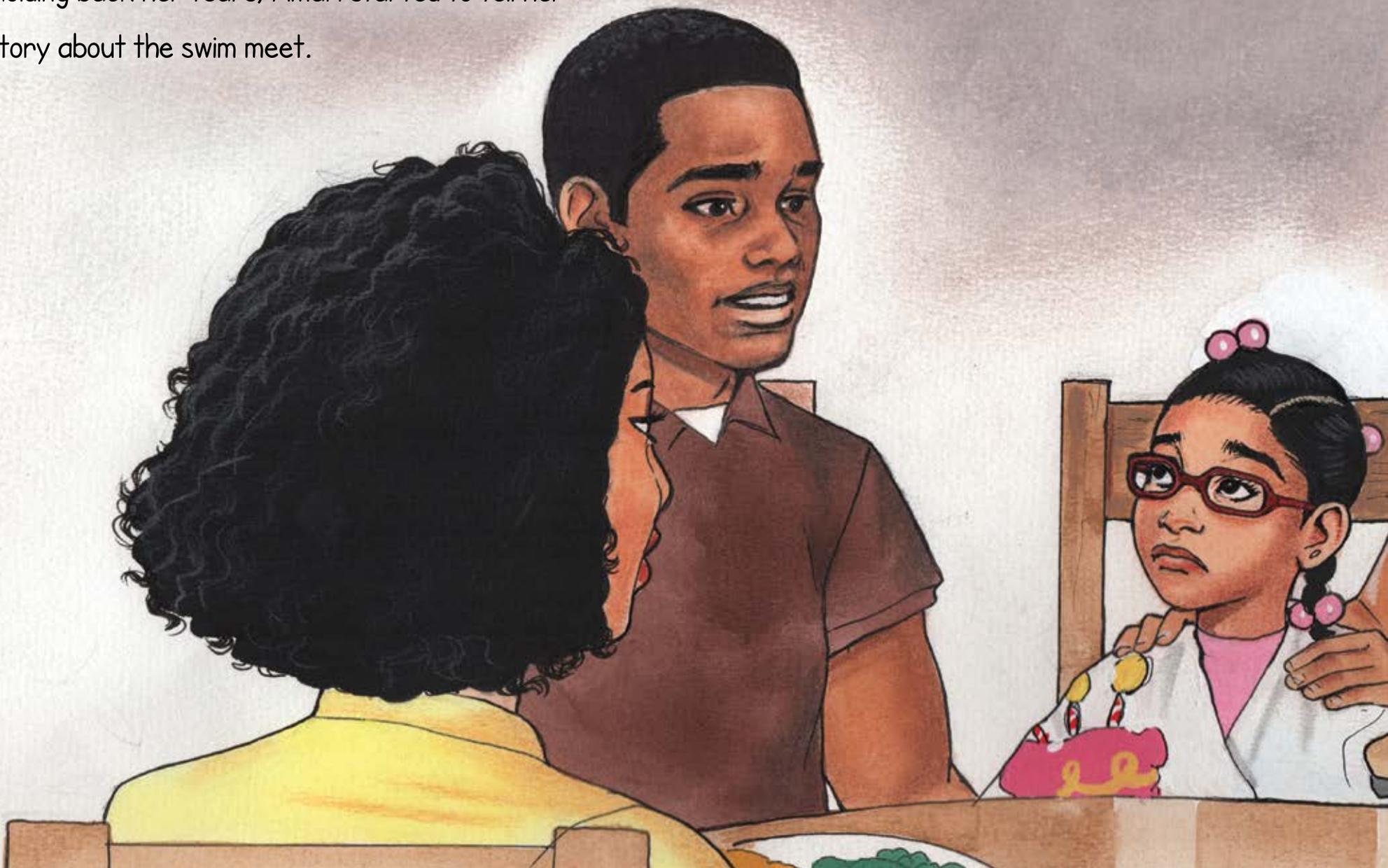
Grandpa watched as Will walked over to his little sister to **comfort** her:

*(Tell)* **comfort**—make someone feel better

"You did your best. You were kicking hard, and you did not stop until you got to the wall."

That evening, as the family sat down for dinner, Amari's dad glanced over at her and said, "Amari, why do you look so sad?"

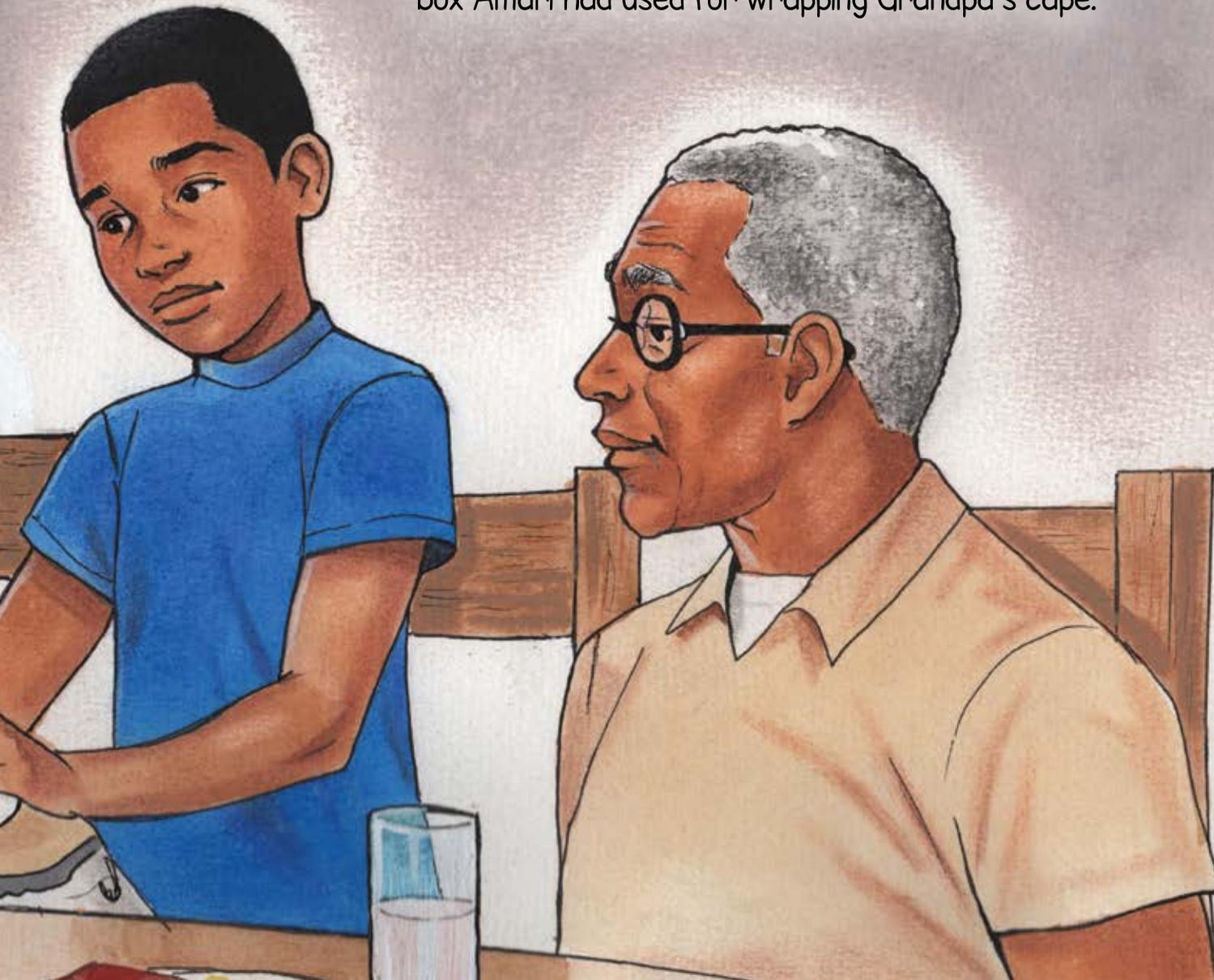
Holding back her tears, Amari started to tell her story about the swim meet.



**Use think-alouds:**

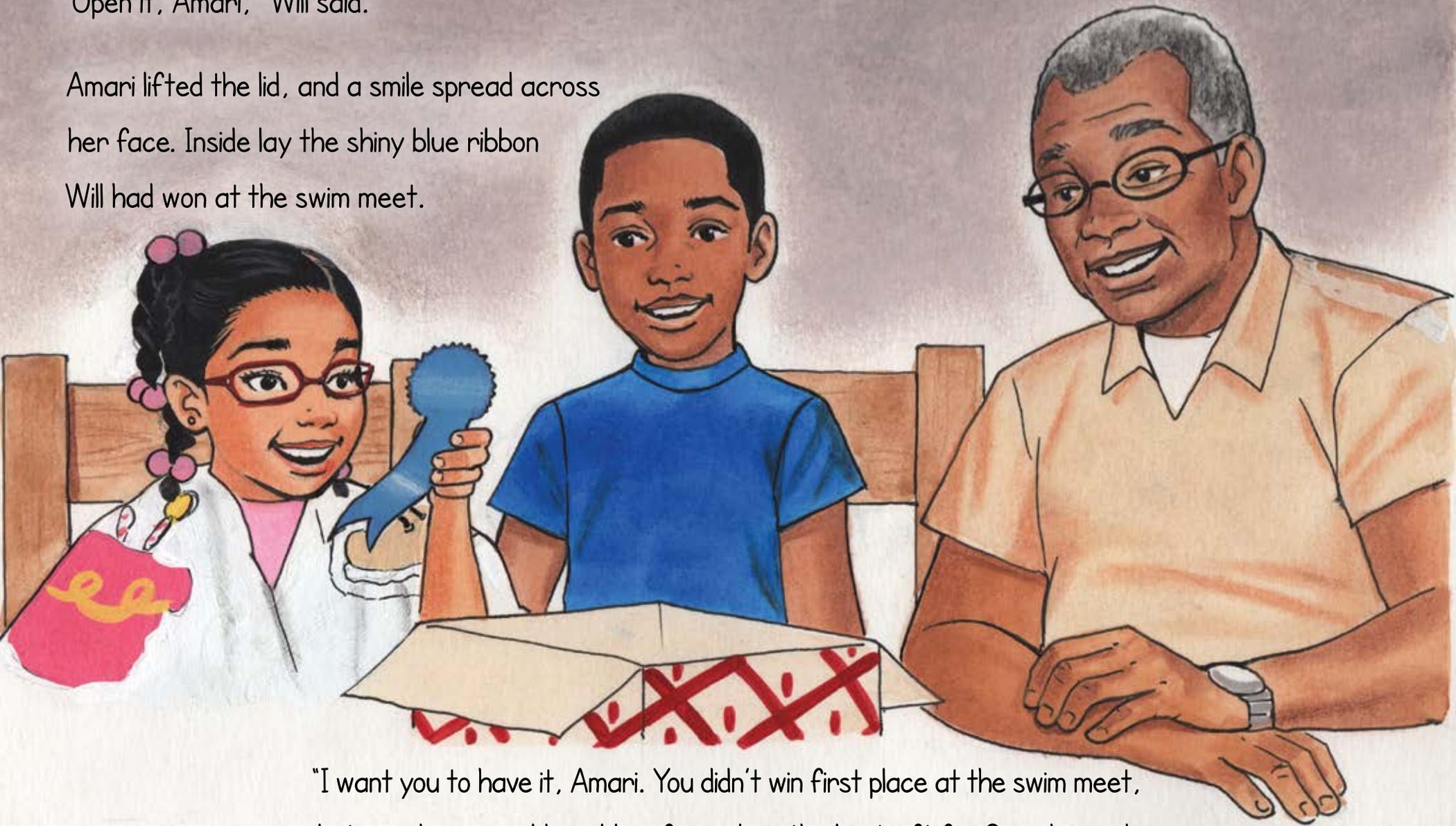
I am thinking that Will remembered how Grandma made Grandpa feel good, and he wanted to do the same thing for Amari.

Will grabbed Grandpa's storyteller cape and **draped** it around her shoulders. When Amari got to the end of the story, Will said, "Wait, that's not the end." He handed her the same gift box Amari had used for wrapping Grandpa's cape.



“Open it, Amari,” Will said.

Amari lifted the lid, and a smile spread across her face. Inside lay the shiny blue ribbon Will had won at the swim meet.



“I want you to have it, Amari. You didn’t win first place at the swim meet, but you deserve a blue ribbon for making the best gift for Grandpa and having the **courage** to share your story with all of us tonight.”

*(Tell)* **courage**—not scared

Grandpa’s eyes twinkled through his glasses. He laughed gently and said, “Grandma would think so too!”

*After reading, ask this open-ended question:*

**Why did Will give Amari his blue ribbon?**

**Possible response: He wanted to encourage her just like Grandma helped Grandpa when her friends were picking on him for wearing thick glasses.**



**Now that you've read this story with your child, GO and make the book come alive by trying some of these activities.**

1. Read this book at least three times with your child. By the third read, your child should be able to take the role of storyteller.
2. Share family stories during routine family activities like bedtime, mealtime, or as you drive places in the car. Consider asking extended family members to share stories—grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.
3. Encourage your child to create his/her own storyteller cape by drawing pictures of family stories and memories onto an old t-shirt or pillowcase.
4. Read other books that explore storytelling, courage, and family like *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman (courage and stories), *The Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant (family), and *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* by Carol McCloud (kindness), or books in Mercer Mayer's *Little Critter* series like *Just Grandpa and Me* and *Just Grandma and Me*.
5. Go to a local swim meet and cheer the athletes on. Learn more about what takes place at swim meets.
6. Make a story jar/box. Write storytelling ideas on slips of paper and place them in the container. Let children pull out a prompt and everyone can share their response. For example:
  - Tell about a time you were brave.
  - Tell about a time you learned something new.
  - Tell about something that made you laugh.
7. Spend some time with your child looking through family pictures. Share the stories behind the pictures.
8. If you have more than one child, work together to make a list of ways they might encourage each other like Will encouraged Amari in this story. For example:
  - Share a toy with your sibling.
  - Give your sibling a hug or high five.
  - Let your sibling pick the game you play together.

### Note about the MLK Natatorium:

The existing MLK Natatorium is currently closed and will reopen in a new location in late 2017. We encourage families to visit other local swimming facilities such as Rosel Fann Natatorium, John F. Kennedy Natatorium, Pittman Park Pool, Adamsville Natatorium and Washington Park Natatorium.

### Note about Paschal's Restaurant:

In Amari's first three adventures, she visits the Atlanta Zoo, the Atlanta Beltline, and Piedmont Park. In this story, Amari and her family share a special dinner together at Paschal's Restaurant which is known for its great Southern cuisine and so much more.

**Historical Context**—Paschal's Restaurant is an iconic American restaurant in Atlanta that specializes in Southern cuisine.

It originated in 1947 with brothers Robert and James Paschal opening Paschal's Restaurant at 837 West Hunter Street. West Hunter Street was later renamed Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. Many of the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement gathered in Paschal's Restaurant to discuss their strategy and issues in the 1960s. They included Martin Luther King, Jr., Andrew Young, Hosea Williams, John Lewis, Ralph David Abernathy, Joseph Lowery, Jesse Jackson, and others, leading it to be called the "unofficial headquarters" of the Movement. The restaurant was one of the first in the South to seat black and white patrons together, in an era when segregated seating was the norm.

There are currently two Paschal's Restaurant locations— one at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and another freestanding one in the Castleberry Hill area along Northside Drive.

To learn more about the history of Paschal's Restaurant, please visit their website at [www.paschalsatlanta.com](http://www.paschalsatlanta.com)

### More Information



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



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

## Mayor's Summer Reading Club 2016

**Alliance Theatre**  
[www.alliancetheatre.org](http://www.alliancetheatre.org)

**The Annie E. Casey Foundation**  
[www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)

**Atlanta Braves**  
[www.braves.com](http://www.braves.com)

**Atlanta Police Department**  
[www.atlantapd.org](http://www.atlantapd.org)

**Atlanta Public Schools**  
[www.atlanta.k12.ga.us](http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us)

**Atlanta Area School for the Deaf**  
[www.aasdweb.com](http://www.aasdweb.com)

**Atlanta Speech School**  
[www.atlantaspeechschool.org](http://www.atlantaspeechschool.org)

**Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System**  
[www.afpls.org](http://www.afpls.org)

**Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta**  
[www.bgcma.org](http://www.bgcma.org)

**Carl E. Sanders Family YMCA at Buckhead**  
[www.sby.ymcaatlanta.org](http://www.sby.ymcaatlanta.org)

**CDF Action**  
[www.cdfaction.org](http://www.cdfaction.org)

**The Children's Museum of Atlanta**  
[www.childrensmuseumatlanta.org](http://www.childrensmuseumatlanta.org)

**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**  
[www.cdfaction.org](http://www.cdfaction.org)

**The Conservancy at Historic Washington Park**  
[www.facebook.com/conservancyathwp](http://www.facebook.com/conservancyathwp)

**DeKalb County Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs**  
[www.dekalbcountyga.gov/parks](http://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/parks)

**DeKalb County School District, Office of Family Engagement Regions 1 and 5**  
[dekalb.k12.ga.us/parent-resource-centers](http://dekalb.k12.ga.us/parent-resource-centers)

**DeKalb County Public Library**  
[www.dekalblibrary.org](http://www.dekalblibrary.org)

**DREAM It Forward Foundation**  
[www.dreamitff.org](http://www.dreamitff.org)

**Emmaus House**  
[www.emmaushouseatlanta.org](http://www.emmaushouseatlanta.org)

**Endurance Project Management**  
[www.endurancepm.com](http://www.endurancepm.com)

**Fernbank Museum of Natural History**  
[www.fernbankmuseum.org](http://www.fernbankmuseum.org)

**Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy**  
[www.ferstfoundation.org](http://www.ferstfoundation.org)

**Friends of Adair Park**  
[www.adairpark.com](http://www.adairpark.com)

**Friends of Collier Heights Park**  
[www.collierpark.us](http://www.collierpark.us)

**Friends of Lillian Cooper Shepherd Park**

**Friends of Reverend James Orange Park at Oakland City**

**GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students**  
[www.geears.org](http://www.geears.org)

**Georgia State University Athletics**  
[www.georgiastatesports.com](http://www.georgiastatesports.com)

**Georgia State University, Department of Middle and Secondary Education**  
[www.mse.education.gsu.edu](http://www.mse.education.gsu.edu)

**High Museum of Art**  
[www.high.org](http://www.high.org)

**Horizons Atlanta**  
[www.horizonsatlanta.org](http://www.horizonsatlanta.org)

**The Junior League of Atlanta**  
[www.jlatlanta.org](http://www.jlatlanta.org)

**The Junior League of DeKalb County**  
[www.jldekalb.org](http://www.jldekalb.org)

**Latin American Association**  
[www.thelaa.org](http://www.thelaa.org)

**Page Turners Make Great Learners, Inc.**  
[www.pageturnersgreatlearners.org](http://www.pageturnersgreatlearners.org)

**Park Pride**  
[www.parkpride.org](http://www.parkpride.org)

**Partners in Action for Healthy Living, Inc.**  
[www.pahlga.org](http://www.pahlga.org)

**PNC BANK**  
[www.pnc.com](http://www.pnc.com)

**Office of the Director, DeKalb County Board of Health**  
[www.dekalbhealth.net](http://www.dekalbhealth.net)

**Radio One**  
[www.radiooneatlanta.com](http://www.radiooneatlanta.com)

**Reach Out and Read Georgia**  
[www.reachoutandread.org/georgia](http://www.reachoutandread.org/georgia)

**Sheltering Arms**  
[www.shelteringarmsforkids.com](http://www.shelteringarmsforkids.com)

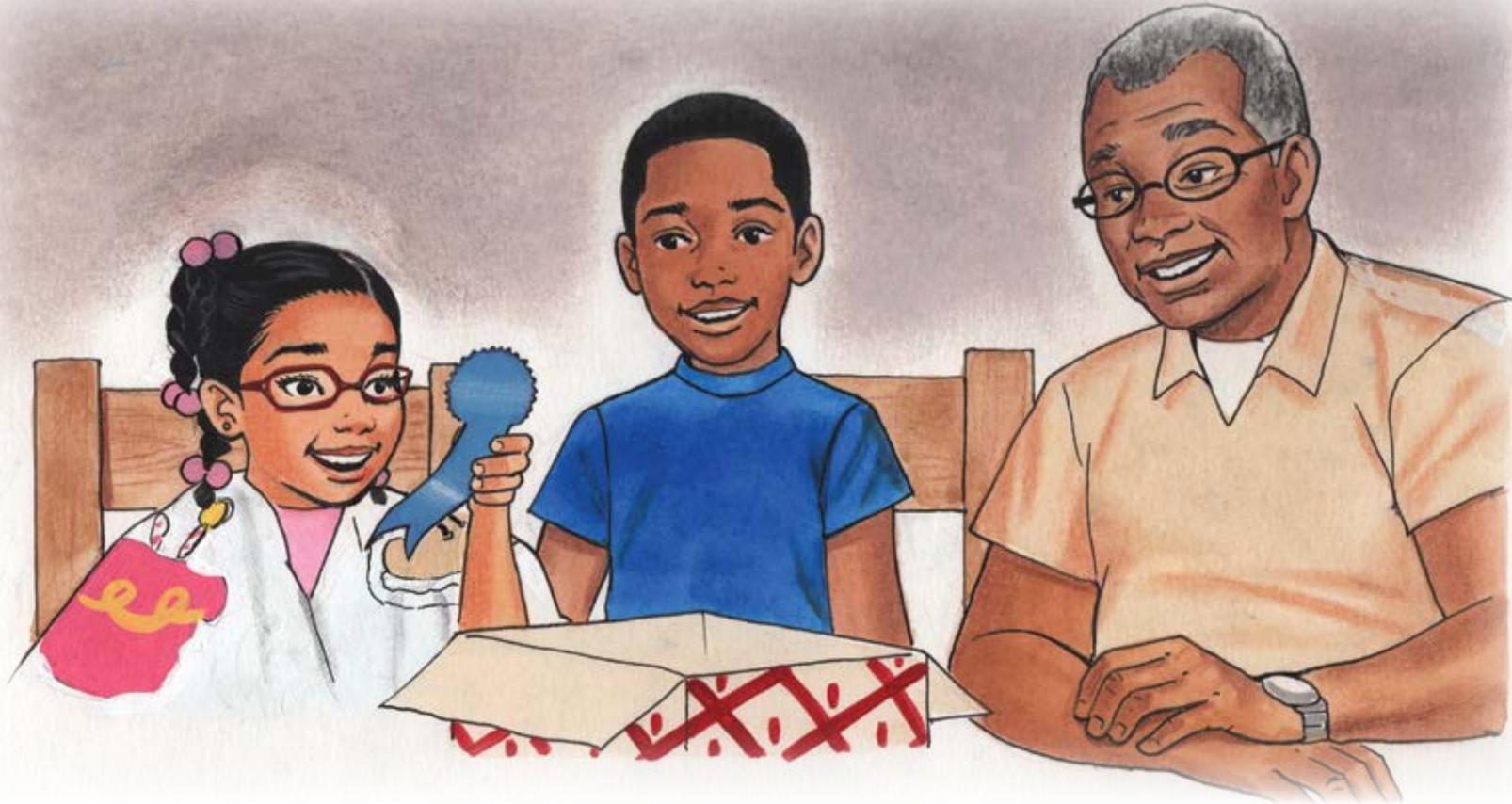
**United Way of Greater Atlanta**  
[www.unitedwayatlanta.org](http://www.unitedwayatlanta.org)

**U.S. Attorney's Office (NDGA)**  
[www.justice.gov/usao/gan/community](http://www.justice.gov/usao/gan/community)

**West Atlanta Watershed Alliance (WAWA)**  
[facebook.com/groups/153801427979743/](https://facebook.com/groups/153801427979743/)



Get ready to enjoy Amari's latest adventure! Amari has her heart set on winning a blue ribbon. Grandpa has come to visit, and he's full of stories to share. I wonder if Amari will have a story of her own to share.



*Amari's Blue Ribbon* 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 \$2.99



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