

Cake in the Dirt





Zom steps out at
first light.

Then he stops with a
jerk. His mouth hangs
open wide.

What is that thing on
the farm?

Cake! Rows and rows! Cake sits in neat lines in the dirt. 'I did not plant cake,' Zom blurts. 'Do cakes grow?'





Zom brings Skel
and Jack out to
see. Skel groans.

'What a mess.

What a big job.'

Jack howls with
mirth. He shakes
and shakes.

They pack the cake
in crates and cart it
to town.

The day **turns** to
dusk. The sheep
rest in the pen.

'That was odd,'
says Zom.





But at sunup, coal!
Black lumps in the
dirt. Black lumps by
each post.

'First cake, and now
coal,' Zom says.

'This is very odd.'

They pack up the
coal. Skel lugs crate
after crate.

Jack **shirks** the work.
He is bent over with
mirth.

Zom looks at that
grin. 'Jack. It is Jack.'





At dusk, Zom stands
firm by the crop
patch.

'It was not me!' Jack
blurts. 'It is just a fun
joke!'

But that grin looks
like a **smirk**.

So Zom stands by
the hut all night. He
does not sleep.

Jack does not come
out. He does not
stir. Not one bit.

'Got him,' says Zom.





But at sunup, eggs!

Eggs by each rail. Eggs
on each path. This is
the **third** morning!

'It was not Jack,' Zom
says. 'He did not **stir**
all night.'

Skel asks, 'Then who?'

Jack bursts out
with a big egg box.
He sprints down
the stone path to
town. 'Eggs! This is
the best one yet!'
He grins all the
way there.



Skel has had it.

'Three days! Cake, coal, eggs! No one does the farm work.' He takes a **firm** grip on his bow. 'Tonight, I keep watch.'



Then a glowing
lantern comes over
the hill. Then a mob!
They **lurch** down
the **turf**, grinning
wide. Skel **jerks** up
his bow. 'Oh no,' he
says. 'They all look
like Jack!'





Cake in the Dirt

Zom wakes up to find his farm covered in cake, planted in neat rows like crops. No one will admit to it, but someone on the farm has a very odd sense of humor. As coal and then eggs appear overnight too, Zom is determined to catch the culprit red-handed. Could there be more than one trickster on the loose? Written for Jolly Phonics classrooms (Step 2, Unit 11: er, ir, ur as in her, bird, turn), this book practices words like 'blurts', 'dirt', 'firm', 'stir', 'jerk'.

Phonics Focus: <er> <ir> <ur>

blurts, bursts, dirt, firm, first, jerk, jerks, lurch, mirth, shirks, smirk, stir, third, turf, turns

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