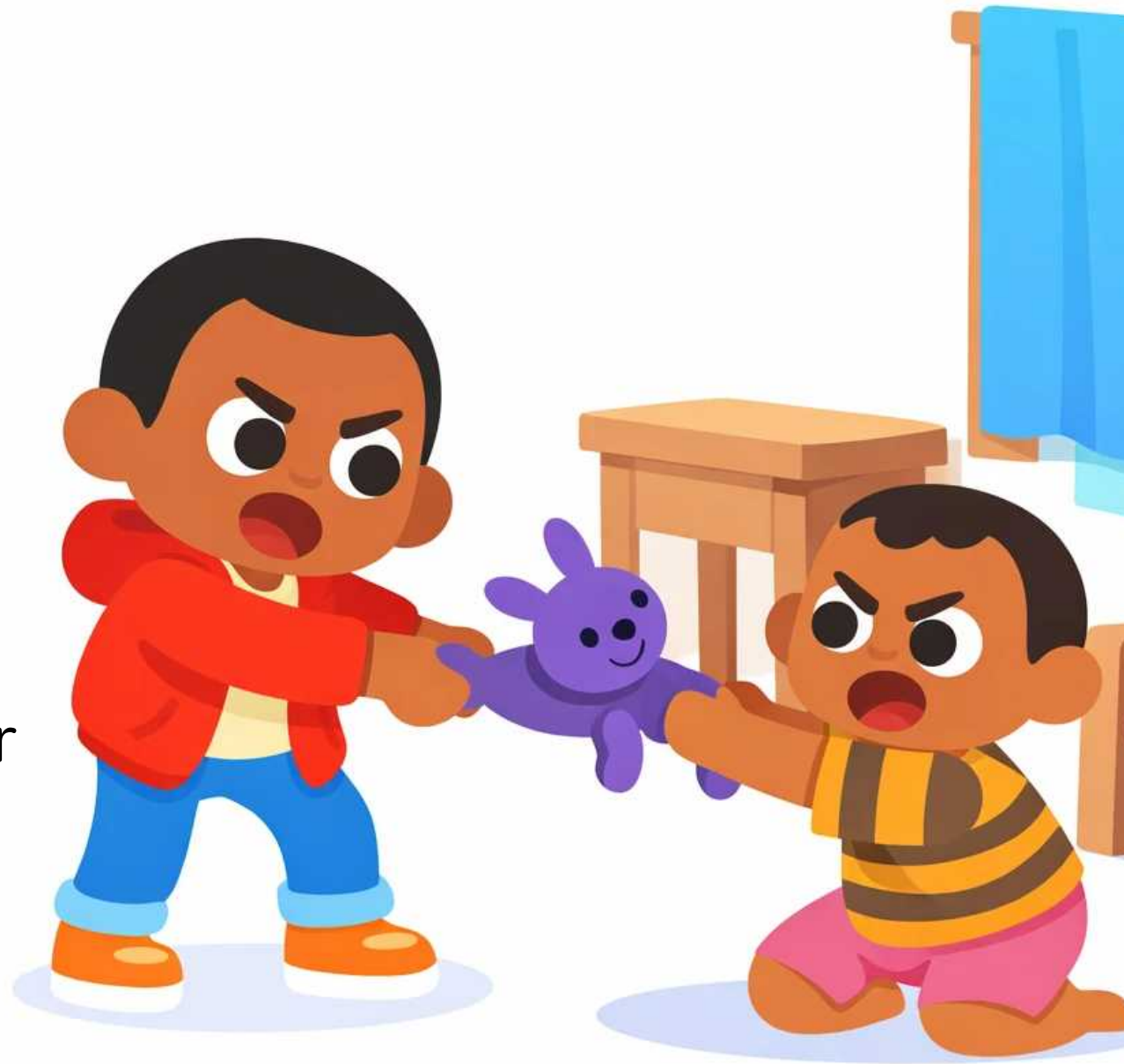


Both Boys Would Not Let Go



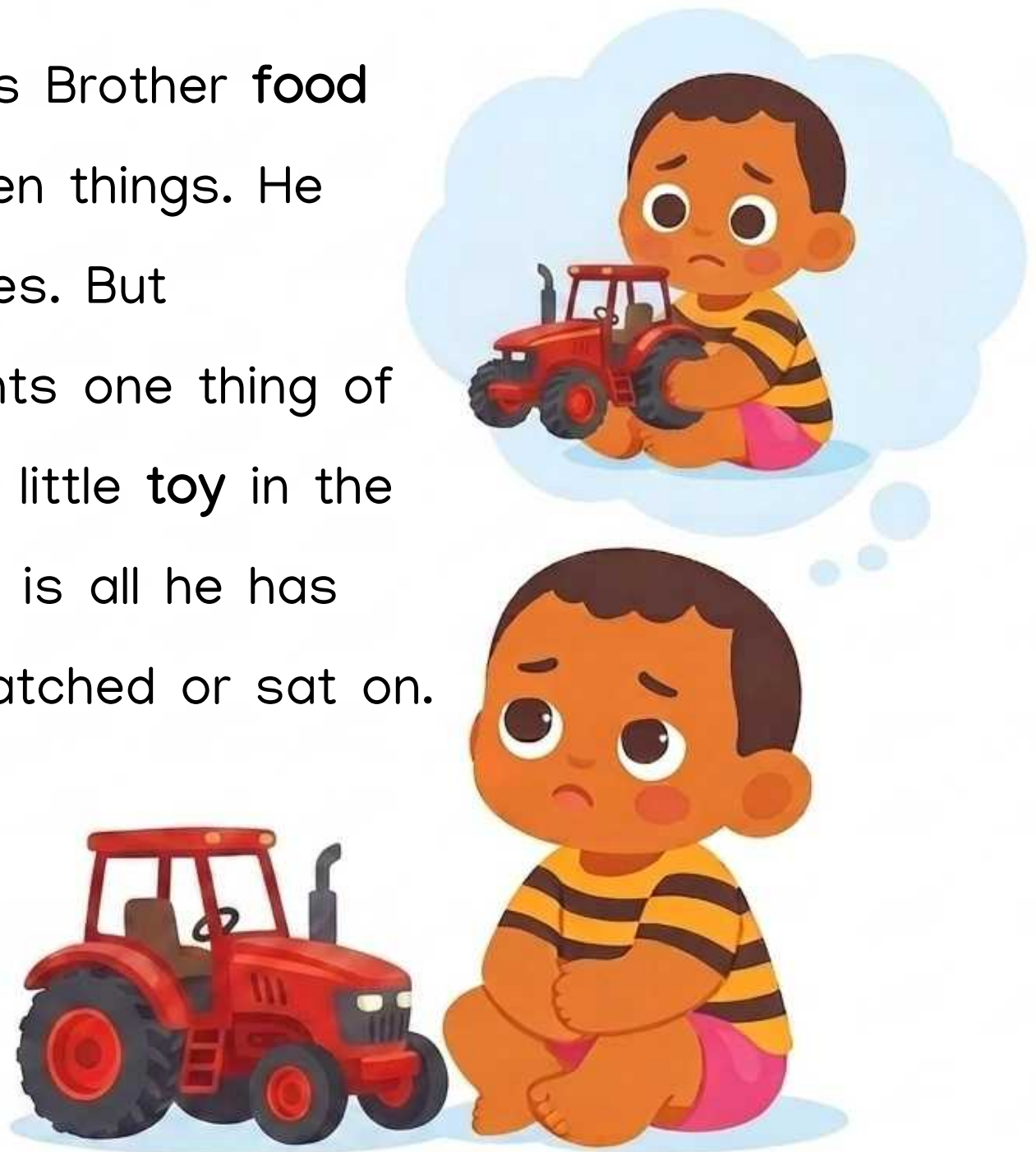
'Mine!' Boy yells, pulling the purple toy with both hands. Brother pulls harder. The toy stretches between them. 'I had it first,' Boy growls. But Brother just yanks harder. Both hold on tight.





Crash! The **toy** hits the **floor**. Mom marches in with her arms crossed. She **points** at both of them. 'Bed. Now.' 'But Brother started it!' **Boy** sobs. Brother hangs his **head**. It never matters who starts it.

Day after day, Boy gives Brother food and fixes Brother's broken things. He gives and gives and gives. But sometimes Boy just wants one thing of his own. He looks at his little toy in the dirt. One small toy. That is all he has that Brother has not snatched or sat on.





Then **Boy** sees something in the yard that makes him forget all **about** toys. A **beast!** A real, huge **gray** beast with a long trunk stands **right** there past the bushes. **Boy** sneaks past Mom, tiptoes across the grass, and gets up on its back. The **beast** lifts its trunk and off they go. 'Hold on!' **Boy** whispers to himself. And he does.

They ride across a
wide, open plain. Boy
feels the mild wind on
his face. No Brother.
No fighting. Boy is free.
Then he **sees** a small
shape crouching low
under a big **tree**. Boy's
grin fades. 'Brother?'





Then one more **beast** charges at Brother. It is mad! Its **feet pound** the **ground**. Brother runs hard and pumps his arms, but the mad **beast** is faster. It is right behind him. 'Run!' Boy yells.

Brother reaches the tree.

He pulls up, branch by branch, until he is high in the treetop. He sits still, both hands on the branch.

Safe. For now. Boy

watches from far away.

His heart pounds. He does not want to be alone now.

He just wants Brother to be safe.





'Go!' **Boy** kicks his heels.

'Faster!' The **beast**

stretches its legs and
charges. Trees fly past.

The wind howls loud all
around him. **Boy** leans

forward and **points** the

way. 'Hold on, Brother!'

he yells across the **plain**.

'I am on my **way**!'

Too late. The mad **beast** coils its trunk around a branch and pulls hard. The wood groans, bends, and cracks. Brother holds on tight, but the **tree** is shaking now. 'Stop!' Boy shouts. The mad **beast** just pulls harder. How long can that branch hold?





Boy leaps off and catches a low branch. He pulls up fast and stretches his arm up as far as it can go. 'Grab on!' Brother reaches down. Their fingers brush. So close. Boy stretches until his arm hurts. 'Almost... just a bit more...'

The mad beast's trunk
coils tight around Boy's
waist and pulls him out
of the tree. His legs
kick. His arms reach
for Brother, but Brother
is too far away. 'Hold
on, Brother!' Boy
screams. 'Hold on!'





'Wake up, **Boy!** Wake up!' Mom sits on the edge of his bed and puts her hand on his head. 'It **was** just a **dream.**' Boy blinks. His bed. His blanket. His **pillow.** Just a **dream.** Brother stands by the bed, watching him with soft **eyes.** Boy **reaches** for Brother's hand and holds it **tight.** 'We can **play** with my **toy tomorrow,**' he whispers. Brother smiles, and this time, both hold on.



Both Boys Would Not Let Go

A boy finally has one small toy that's all his own, until an enormous beast in the yard sweeps him away on a wild ride. He races across the plains, free and happy, until he spots his brother crouching under a tree. Then the mad beast turns, feet pounding the ground straight toward him. What will the boy do when it's his brother in danger now? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 97: Vowel Teams & Diphthongs Review), this book practices words like 'beast', 'reach', 'tight', 'howl', 'ground'.

Phonics Focus: Vowel Teams & Diphthongs Review

about, around, beast, between, boy, bush, coil, coils, crouch, day, doe, down, dream, eyes, feel, feet, fight, fighting, floor, food, free, gray, groan, groans, ground, growl, growls, head, heart, heel, high, how, howl, lean, look, loud, low, now, out, own, pillow, plain, play, point, points, pound, pull, put, reach, reaches, real, right, scream, see, sees, shout, sneak, tight, tiptoe, tomorrow, too, toy, tree, treetop, waist, want, was, watch, way, wood

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