

Her First Twirl



Miss Fern has a cane.

Click-clack, click-clack. It hits
the floor right on the beat.

All morning she looks at
her three **girls** as they leap
and spin. 'Leap high, **girls!**'
she calls. 'Be light, like little
birds!'

The **girls** grin. They love
Miss Fern. But no **girl** has
a clue who Miss Fern was.





The **girls** have no clue at all. Peek back in time, and there is little Fern! At night she **twirls** all **over** the city streets. She swings round a lamp. She leaps by the clock **tower**, with just the stars to see **her**. Fern **never** just goes from place to place. She floats!

Fern finds a **partner** who can keep up with **her**. Not many can. 'So swift, Fern!' the lad says, the **first** time they **perform**. 'Not so bad, **sir,**' Fern says with a **smirk**. When the two take the stage, they **turn** into one. The crowd does not make a sound.





Soon all the city chats
about Fern. Invites come
from far, far off.

So Fern packs **her** case,
puts a **sticker** on it, and
leaps **over** the globe. City
after city, a new stage.
Stage **after** stage, the
crowd roars.

All **over** the globe, they
cheer for Fern.

But here is the bit no
one tells. To be the best
hurts.

Fern trains when **her** feet
burn. She trains past
midnight, past the moon,
past the point when each
leg yells stop.

'Not yet,' Fern **whispers.**

'Not yet, not yet, not yet.'





Then the big night comes,
the best night of all. Fern
takes the stage one last
time.

The crowd claps so hard the
room shakes. **Her partner**
grips **her** hand as they float
in the soft glow.

'Wow!' the crowd roars. 'Ooh!'
The crowd cheers and cheers,
and Fern grins and grins.

The spotlight **covers** Fern
like a soft, bright cloak. Red
blooms rain down at **her**
feet. Fern shuts **her** eyes.
She soaks it all in. Then a
voice booms across the
room, 'Fern is the prima!
The **first** of the **first!**' That
is the best name a **girl** can
win. And no **girl** toils
harder for it than Fern.





Back in the room, one **girl** stops mid-twirl. 'Miss Fern,' she asks, 'did you once **twirl** on a stage?' Fern looks at **her** cane. She looks at the oak floor. She looks at the three little faces, full of the same glow she once had. 'Well,' Fern says with a wink, 'what do you think?' And she taps **her** cane. One, two. Right on the beat.



Her First Twirl

Miss Fern taps a cane across the studio floor as her three young dancers leap and spin, never guessing their teacher was once something else entirely. Long ago, Fern twirled through empty city streets at night, floating past lamp posts and the old clock tower before finding a partner who could finally keep up with her. Now, when a girl stops mid-twirl and asks if she ever danced on a real stage, what will Miss Fern say? Written for Jolly Phonics classrooms (Step 3, Unit 11: /er/ mixed), this book practices words like 'girl', 'first', 'turn', 'twirl', 'hurts'.

Phonics Focus: <mixed>

after, birds, burn, cheer, covers, first, girl, girls, harder, her, hurts, never, over, partner, perform, sir, smirk, sticker, tower, turn, twirl, twirls, whispers

Bookbot is not endorsed by or affiliated with UFLI (the University of Florida Literacy Institute) or Jolly Learning Ltd. UFLI Foundations and Jolly Phonics are trademarks of their respective owners.

Learn to read with confidence

The Bookbot app and its carefully designed decodable books help children practise the sounds and words they are learning, building strong phonics and reading skills one step at a time. In the app, children can listen to stories read aloud, follow highlighted words as they are spoken, and read independently when they are ready. Together, the decodable books and oral reading support help develop accuracy, fluency, confidence and a love of reading. Learn more at www.bookbotkids.com.



www.bookbotkids.com