

I Choose That Home!





Joy had one job: drop off mangoes at the house at the end of the road. Simple. Easy. But then Joy looked up. Way, way up. A house on stilts, taller than a tree, with a ladder going right up into the **air**. 'I want that house!' Joy whispered. No dogs. No mud. **Barely** a **care** in the **air** up there. Up there, Joy would be queen of the world.

But the mangoes were not going to carry themselves. Joy kept walking. That was when the smell hit. Hot, sizzling, crispy food. Right there on a table outside a shop that was a home, too. A woman grinned from behind the counter. 'Hungry?' A man leaned so close his nose was right at the food. Kids sat close by, eyeing plates piled high. An old man rested beside a pile of greens. 'Wait. You live at the shop and eat at the shop?' Joy **stared**. The stilt house was already forgotten. 'I want that house!'



Joy turned the corner and stopped. Five kids. Maybe six. Racing and laughing under a big raised house like it was the best day of their lives. One adult sat on a bench, watching with **care**. Another stood with arms crossed, watching even closer. Even a little pet was curled up sleeping right in all that noise. 'That's the most kids I've ever seen!' Joy breathed. 'I want that house!' A house full of kids meant games. And games meant never, ever being bored.



The basket was getting heavy. Joy **barely cared**, because there in the sunshine sat the finest sight in the world.

Fruit. Mountains of fruit. Bananas, watermelons, pineapples, all stacked up bright and golden in the sun. A woman stood behind her stand, proud as a queen. A man reached for a bunch of bananas. A boy on a bike waved as he rode past.

'You have all the fruit?' Joy stood there **staring**, clutching the little basket tighter. 'All of it? I want that house!'





The road led into the city, where houses were stacked on top of each other. Joy tilted her head. In one window, high **upstairs**, a woman sat at a stitching tool while a child stood beside her, watching every stitch. Clothes hung on a rack. A poster brightened the wall. Every single corner of that small room had a job to do. 'You can make clothes? Like, whatever you want?' Joy pressed her face against the building. 'I want that house!' A house where Joy could stitch her own cape? Truly the best one yet.

Then came the rumble. A deep, growly rumble from an open shop right under a house. Now that was **rare**. Inside, a man crouched beside a big motor, **repairing** it with **care**. Tools hung in neat rows on the walls. Outside, a kid rolled a tire while a small dog sat watching, tail wagging. 'A **repair** shop, right under a house!' Joy set the basket down. This was big. 'I want that house more than all the other houses.'





That was the end of it. Final answer. Until the road ran out of land and turned into water. Floating right there on the still water was a house. A real house, with a roof and a porch, just sitting there without a **care**. Three kids had the deck all to themselves. One dangled a fishing net over the railing. One sat with feet swinging over the edge. One stood among big pots of plants. A small rowboat bumped alongside. 'That's not **fair!**' Joy yelled. 'I want that house! You can fish from your bedroom!'

Joy dropped off the mangoes at last. Then she raced to class and slid into her seat. 'And that,' said the teacher, tapping the wall, 'is why every home is the right one for those who **share** it.' Joy **stared** at the photos pinned to the wall. Stilt house. Floating house. Big raised family house. All of them in a row. Hands shot up into the **air**. 'Which home would you choose?' the teacher asked. Every single hand pointed at a different photo.





'Well?' the teacher smiled, looking right at Joy. 'You saw them all. Which one is best?' Joy looked at each photo on the wall. The stilt house, high and **daring**. The big noisy family house. The houseboat on the waves. The little cabin with its porch. The shop with the bright fruit stand. 'Easy,' said Joy. 'I want that one. And that one. And that one. And that one and that one.' The class grinned. But honestly? They all felt the same way.



I Choose That Home!

Joy just has one job: deliver mangoes down the road. But when she spots a house on stilts, taller than any tree, with a ladder stretching into the air, she forgets all about it. No dogs, no mud, barely a care in the world up there. What could be better than that? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 112: air, are, ear /air/), this book practices words like 'care', 'stared', 'daring', 'repair', and 'upstairs'.

Phonics Focus: air, are, ear /air/

air, barely, care, cared, daring, fair, rare, repair, repairing, share, stared, staring, upstairs

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