

Steve needs a hot meal



Steve marches up from the **sea**, dripping wet and grinning. In his hand is a big fat cod.

'Lunch!' he yells. 'Fresh from the **sea**! I am the best at this.'

He lifts the cod and sniffs it. His grin slips. The fish is cold, slick, and very, very raw.



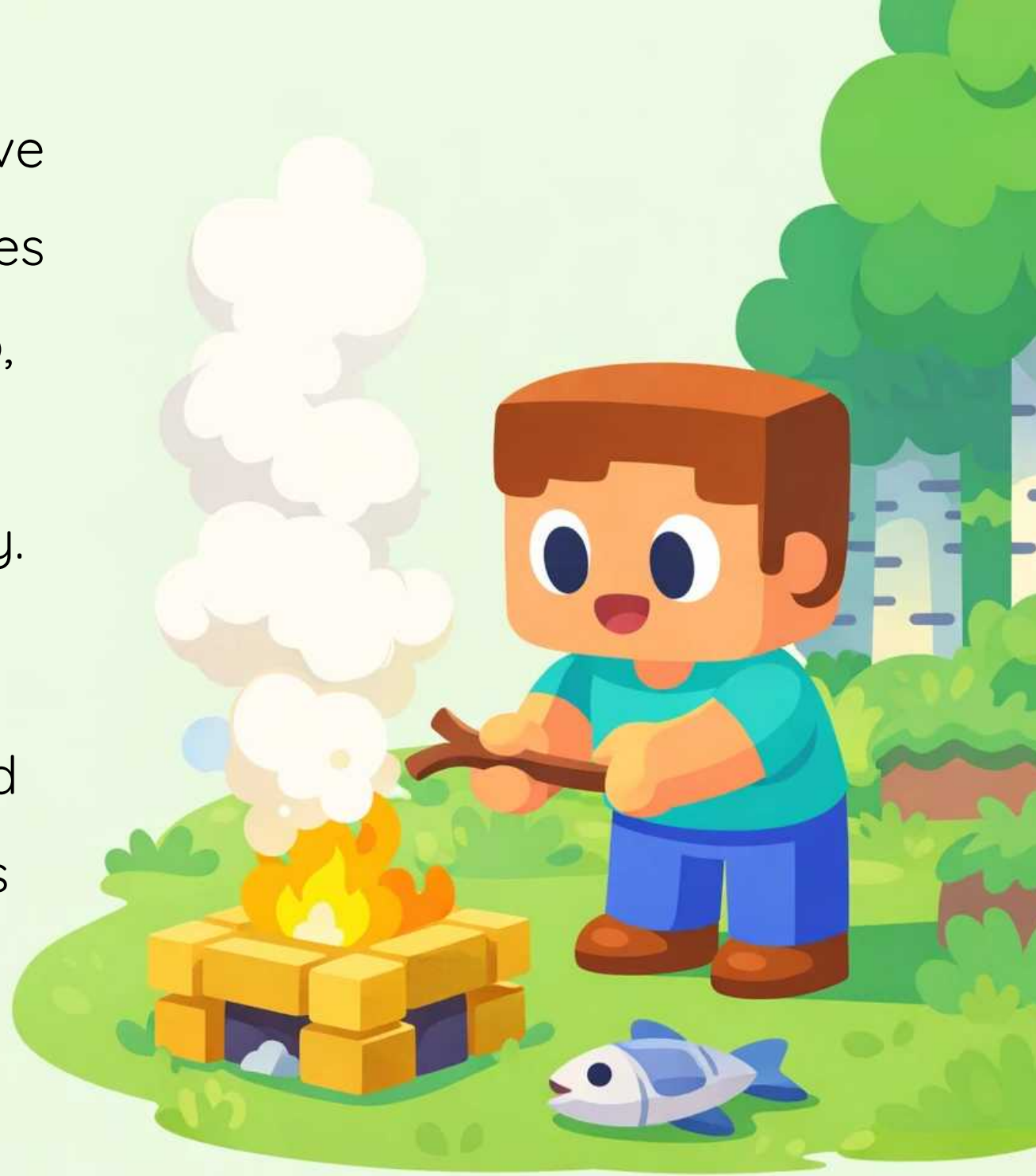


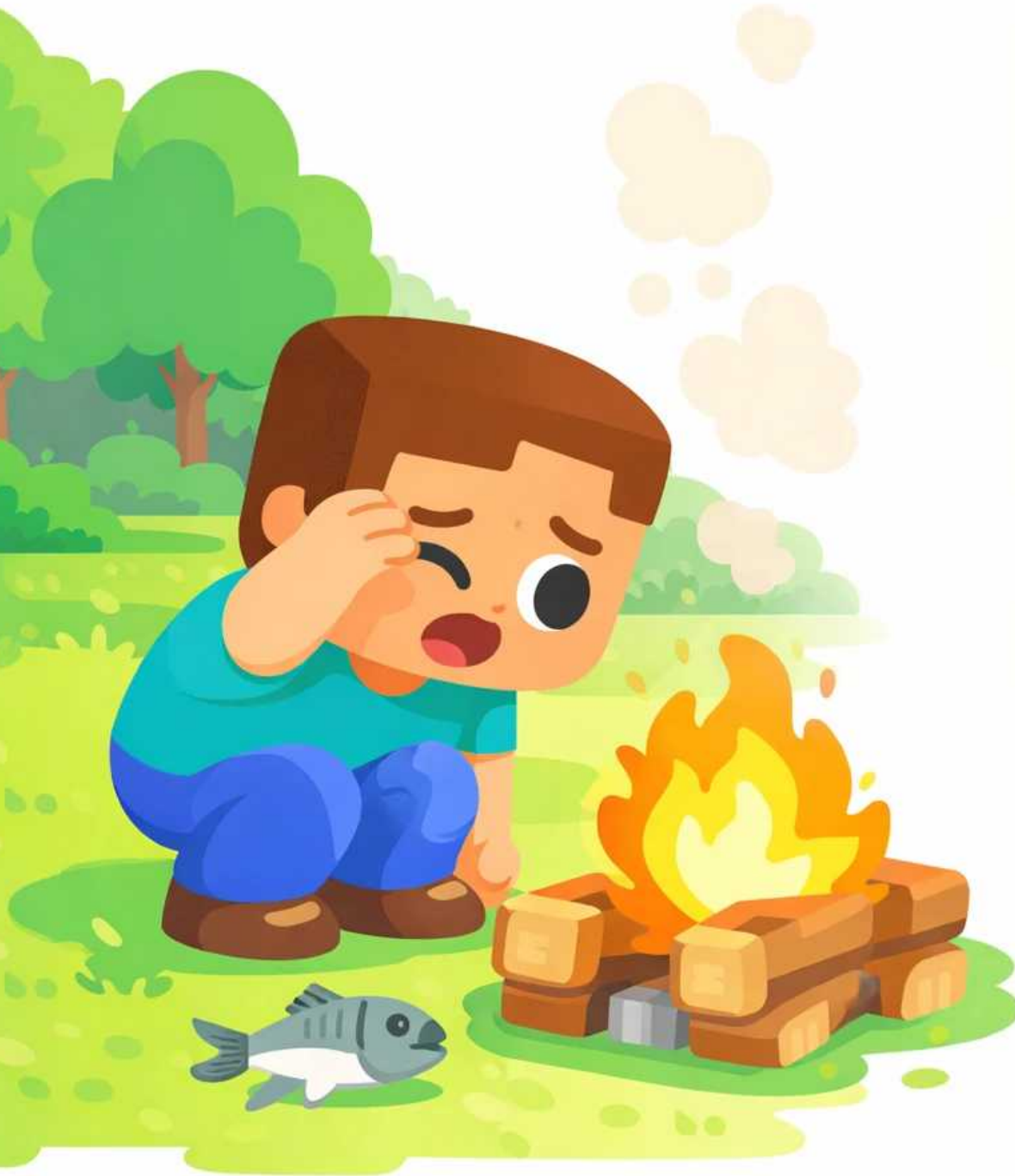
Steve sets the cod down on the grass and looks at it. The cod **seems** to **peek** back at him.

'I will not **eat** a fish like this,' says Steve. 'A fish **needs heat**. Hot and crisp. So I **need** fire. That can not be hard.'

It is not hard at all. Steve stacks up logs and strikes a spark. Flames **leap** up, crackling, and thick smoke drifts into the sky.

'**See** that?' says Steve with **glee**. 'I can fish and I can make fire.' He sets the cod beside the flames. 'Now we wait.'





Steve crouches down to check his fish. The campfire snaps and pops. **Heat beats** at his face.

'Eek!' Steve throws up his arm. 'That is very, very hot.'

He steps back, but just a **wee** bit. Steve will not **flee** from his own campfire.

Steve **leans** in and slides the cod **deep** into the flames. '**Each** side **needs** to **feel** the **heat**,' he says, like a wise old cook. 'That way it cooks the same on **each** side.' He wipes his hands on the grass. 'Steve can cook. Yes, Steve can.'





The cod hisses and turns a crisp brown. It smells so **sweet**. 'It is done!' Steve grabs the fish from the fire with both hands.

His mouth falls open.

'Hot! Hot hot hot hot!' Steve flips the fish from hand to hand, hopping round and round. Up on the hill, a **sheep** stops munching to **peer** at him.

The next morning, Steve finds a bit of raw chicken. His gut is empty. His fingers are still pink from the hot fish.

'This time I will **keep** still and cook it slow,' he says. 'And I will not grab it with my hands. **Indeed** I will not.'



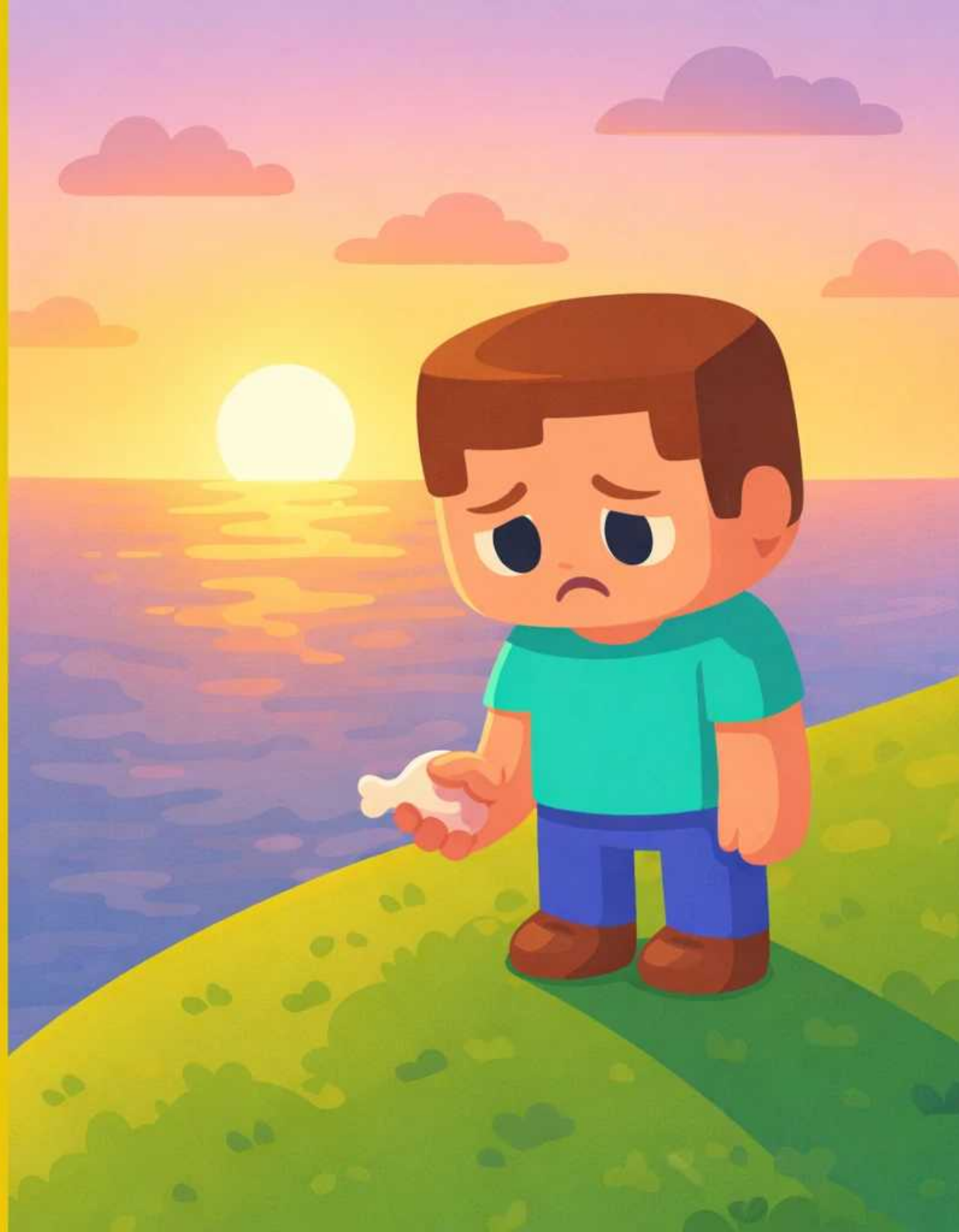


Steve looks all around.
Then he looks all
around again. No logs.
No twigs. Not one bit of
wood. Just grass, huge
trees, and a boat sitting
there. 'I can not burn a
boat!' Steve yelps.
'Where is all the wood?'

Steve treks up a **steep** hill and slumps down. The sun sinks low. His gut howls, and **three** birds **flee** from a **tree**.

He grips the sad raw chicken.

'I just want a hot **meal,**' he whispers. 'Is that so much to ask?'





Then Steve looks
down. There at his
feet is a **deep** pool
that glows with **heat**.
It hisses and **gleams**.
Steve gasps. 'Hot!' he
yells. 'That is very hot!
That is as hot as it
gets! I do not **need**
wood at all!'

Steve finds a long branch and jabs the chicken onto the end. He keeps it over the **heat**, nice and still. 'See that? Slow. **Neat**. I can wait,' he says, and he **beams**. 'Steve can cook. Yes, Steve can.'





Then Steve throws the chicken **deep** into the hot pool. A **wee** hiss, a puff of smoke, and then no chicken at all. The hot pool **eats** it up. Not one drumstick is left. The branch is in flames, so Steve drops it and stares at his hands. 'Hmm,' Steve says. 'It **seems** Steve can not cook after all.'



Steve needs a hot meal

Steve marches up from the sea with a big fat cod, sure he's the best fisherman around. But the fish is cold, slick, and very raw, so he needs fire, and how hard can that be? Will Steve finally get a hot meal without burning his fingers off? Written for Jolly Phonics classrooms (Step 3, Unit 5: /ee/ mixed), this book practices words like 'heat', 'need', 'deep', 'see' and 'sweet'.

Phonics Focus: <mixed>

beam, beams, beats, deep, each, eat, eats, feel, feet, flee, gleams, glee, heat, indeed, keep, leans, leap, meal, neat, need, needs, peek, peer, sea, see, seem, seems, sheep, steep, sweet, three, tree, trees, wee

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