



Too Big for the World

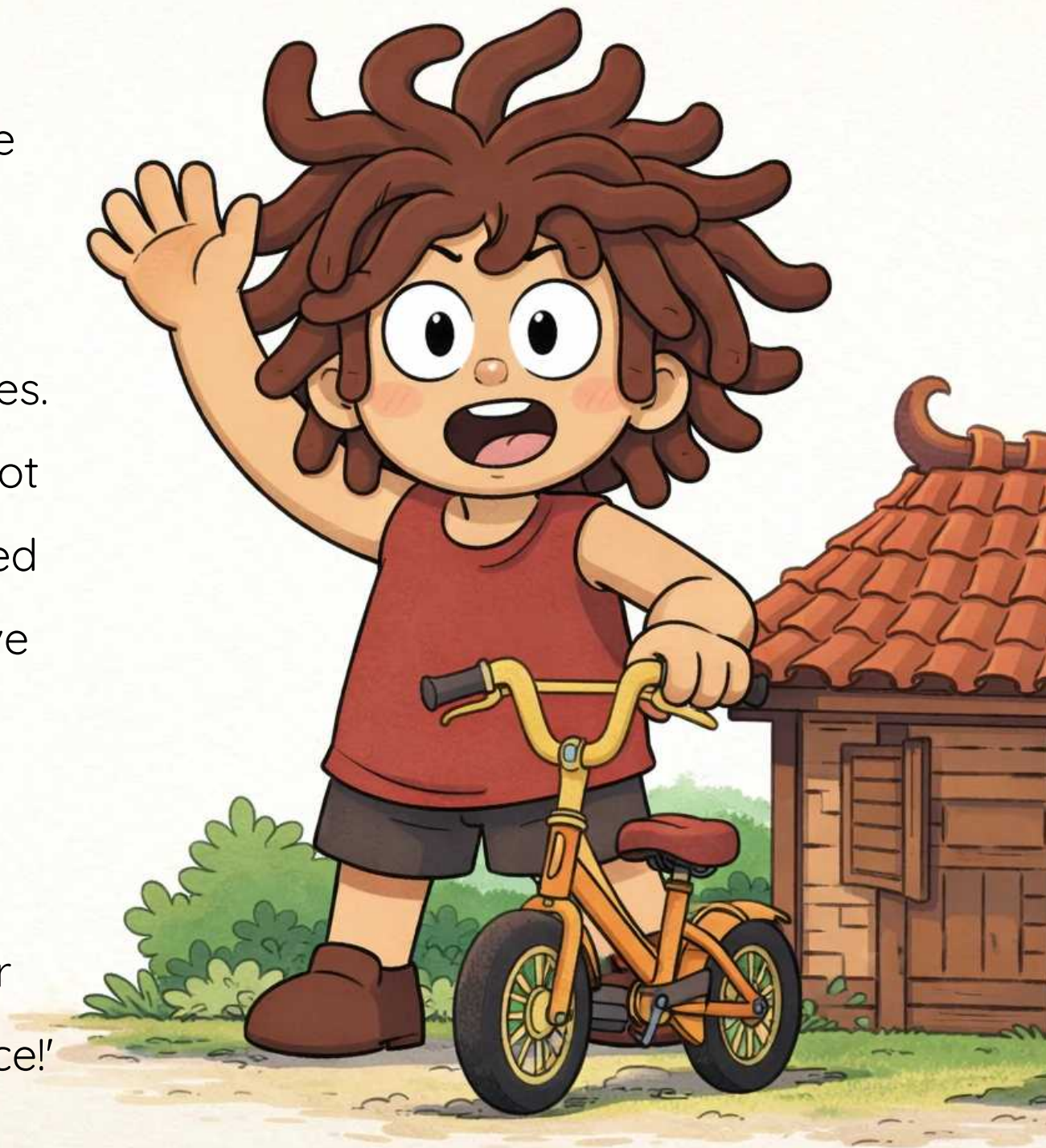
Max had always been underground, in his cave. His mother said, 'The people up there are not ready for you, dear.' But today was Max's birthday. He was up **early**, and he had just one **thought**: today, he would find a friend. He gripped the rock at the edge of the cave and stepped out into the sunlight at last. It was all so bright! So green! So... small. His big eyes opened wide. 'This,' said Max, '**ought** to be the best day ever.'





Not far off, three kids played tag near the woods. Ben spotted a shape, far off. A big shape. 'Look!' he whispered. They crouched by the bush and peeked through the leaves. The girl gasped. 'What. Is. That.' It moved toward them, and it grew bigger and bigger. Ben **thought** it was a man. A very big one.

Max walked into the town, grinning a huge grin. Then he spotted a bike sitting by a house. It had two wheels, a seat, and bright yellow handles. 'Wow!' Max gasped. He did not know what it was, but he liked it. He reached down and gave it a soft pat. Well, soft for a big boy. He waved at the empty street, **though** no one was there. 'Can any one hear me?' he called. 'I am very nice!'





By the bush, Ben's knees shook. 'Is it a monster?' he whispered. 'It is patting my bike!' said the girl. Max just wanted to ring the small bell. But his fingers were big and strong, and the wheel bent flat under them. **Although** Max did not mean to do it, Ben shouted, 'It broke the bike! Run!'

Ben grabbed the bike and ran. The girl and the other kid scrambled toward the house. Max's heart dropped. 'Wait!' he called. 'Don't go!' But Max's voice was huge. The shout rattled the windows and shook the roof. Birds bolted out of the trees. The kids just ran faster. Max stood in the empty yard. All he had **brought** was hope. Not one kid turned back. Not one.





Max looked at his huge hands, the hands that had bent the bike. 'I just wanted to play,' he said. His voice was tiny now, as soft as a whisper. He had **sought** a friend, and now all the kids had run from him. Then Max started to cry. Not small tears. Big tears, dropping down his face like rain.

Inside the house, the kids huddled in a heap. Drip! Drop! Drip! Big drops banged on the roof and ran down the windows. 'Is it raining?' asked the girl. Ben stepped to the door and peeked out. Fat drops were falling from the sky, but just on the town. The rest of the sky was bright blue. 'That is not rain,' Ben said, **though** he did not know what it was.





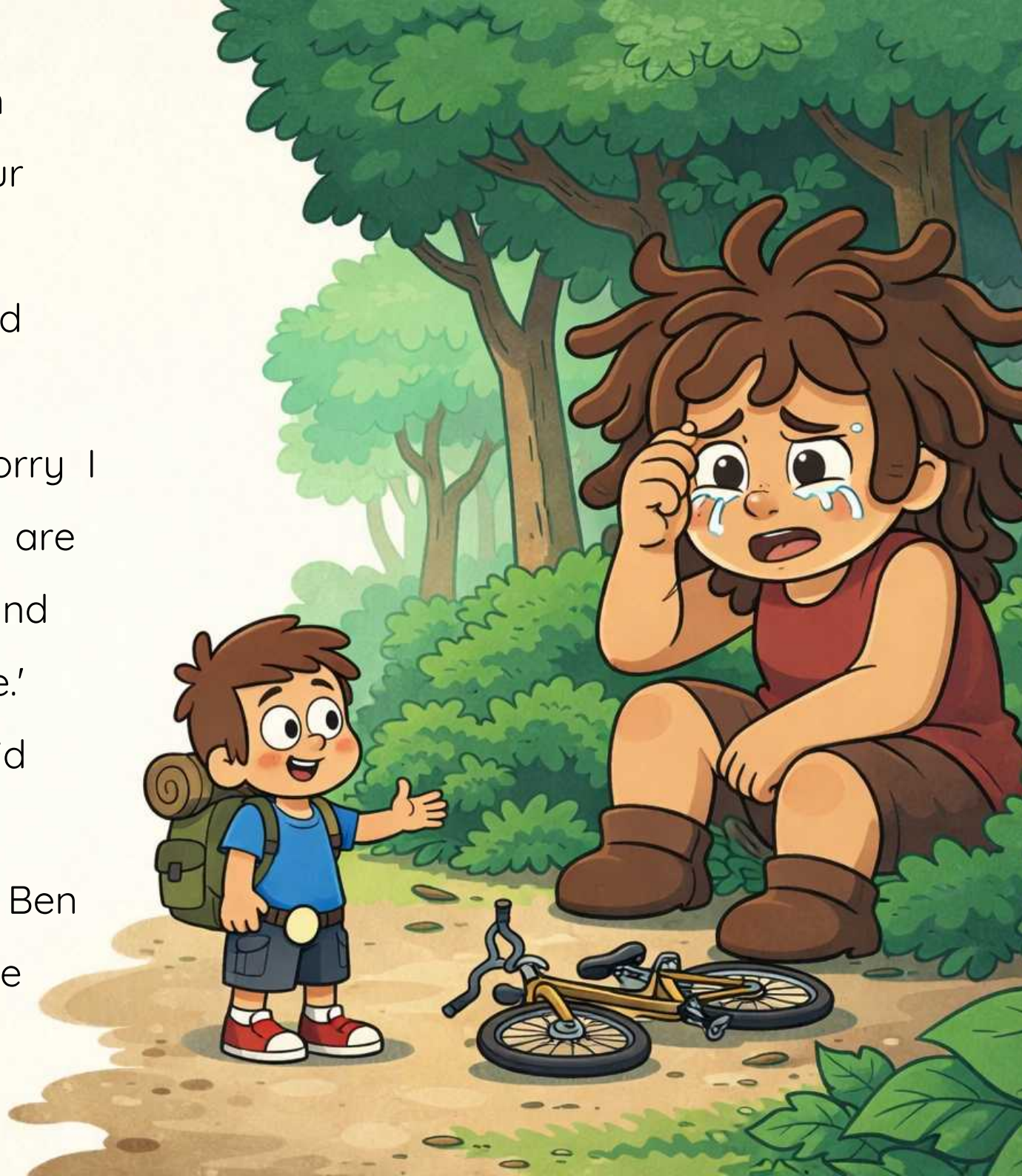
Ben stepped outside and sat by the edge of the house. He held the broken wheel. Out past the town, at the edge of the woods, he could see a huge shape in the grass. Ben **thought** hard. 'He is not a monster,' he said. 'He is just a boy. A very, very big boy. He just wanted to play. And we ran.' The wheel felt heavy in his hands. But not as heavy as his **thoughts** felt right now.

Ben walked out toward the woods. He could see Max now. Max sat and hid his face in his huge hands. His sobs shook the trees, and leaves danced down. 'He is very upset,' Ben said softly. His legs wanted to run the other way. 'No, legs,' said Ben. 'We **ought** to go talk to him.'



Ben stepped up close. 'I am Ben!' he called. 'What is your name?' Max lifted his huge head. His eyes were red and wet. His nose was running. 'M-Max,' he sniffled. 'I am sorry I broke your bike. My fingers are big and my voice is loud, and there is just so much of me.' 'Yes, you are pretty big,' said Ben, grinning up at him.

Although Max was a mess, Ben still smiled. 'But bikes can be fixed.'



'Would you like to play a game, Max?' asked Ben. 'My friends want to meet you.' Max opened his mouth. Then closed it. Then opened it again, like a big fish. This was just what he had **sought** when he crawled out of the cave. His smile grew so wide that his eyes shut tight. He wanted to jump and shout and dance. But he did not want to crush his new friend. 'I would like that,' he whispered, as softly as he could.





They played all afternoon. When the sun was low, Max **brought** his new friends to his cave to eat. His mother had set out heaps of food on the rock ledges, more than the kids had ever seen. 'So much food!' said Ben, from way up high. The girl stood on a rock and threw her hands up. 'This is the best!' 'Have as much as you like,' Max said. Then he grinned. 'But look out when I drink my juice! Once, I spilled it, and the cave was wet for a month!' They all laughed. Now, at last, Max did not feel so big. He felt just right.



Too Big for the World

Max has always lived underground in his cave, but on his birthday he finally crawls out to find a friend. When he wanders into town and spots a shiny bike, he is delighted, but his huge hands are far too strong for something so small. Will the villagers see past his size before he loses hope of ever finding a friend? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 116: ough /aw/, /ō/), this book practices words like 'thought', 'although', 'brought', 'sought', and 'ought'.

Phonics Focus: ough /aw/, /ō/

although, brought, early, ought, sought, though, thought, thoughts

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