

Vic Has a Phenomenal Thing!



Coach Vic stands on the porch with hands on hips and a grin as wide as can be. 'I have a **phenomenal** thing to show the gang!' he calls down. 'Come inside!' We race up the path. Dog flops flat in the grass. A **phenomenal** thing? Dog will think so when he sees it.



Vic bends down by a big old trunk. Behind him, the shelf is packed with **trophies** and prizes. 'Are all the **trophies** his?' a kid asks. Vic just smiles and dips a hand deep into the trunk. Dog presses in to peek.



Vic pulls out a big ball and hoists it up high. 'This,' he says, 'is a ball for a new game. It was my sport when I was a lad. Now I am going to teach the gang to play!' We all gaze up. Hands go up. We all ask to tap that **phenomenal** ball.





Vic sets out a little model.
It has a little net, little
players, and a little ball,
just a dot.

'Two teams,' says Vic. 'Hit
the ball back over the net.
Win, and you are the
champ!'

He says 'champ' like it is
the best **phrase** there is.
We all bend in to look.

Vic holds up **photographs**. In one, a player leaps up high with the ball. In one, a player crouches low to scoop it up. In one, a player smashes it over the net.

'Aim well and you win the point,' says Vic. 'But here is the trick. No feet!'

'No feet?' we all ask. 'No feet.'

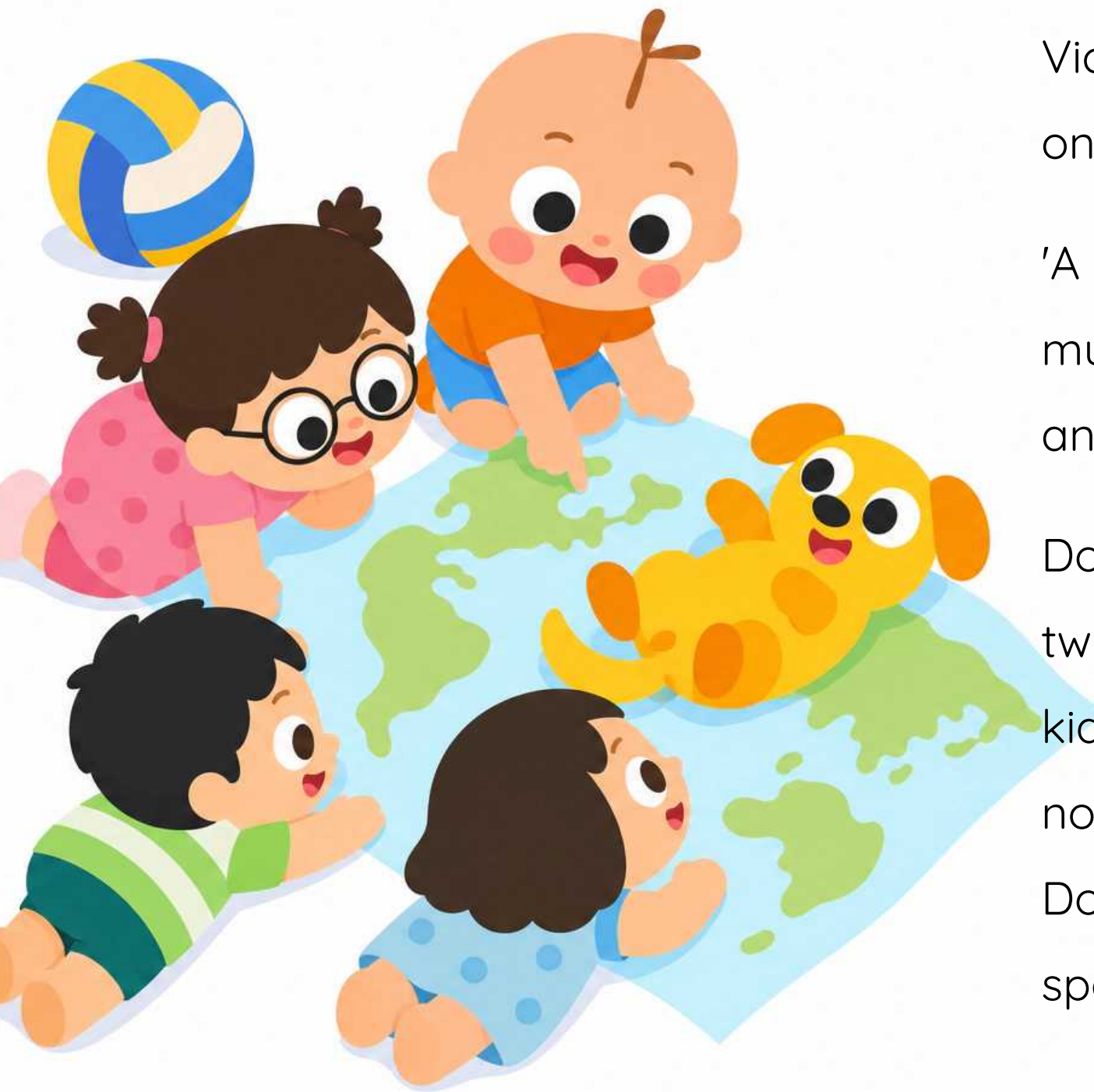




Vic holds up a map. An arrow on it arcs to a gap where no player stands. 'See that gap?' Vic taps it with **emphasis**. 'Aim there. Hit it where they are not. That is how a champ wins!' He tucks the map away. The game feels hard. But Vic makes it feel like the best fun there is.

Dog spots the **photographs**
and flips them over one by
one. The top one shows a
player diving on a sandy
spot to get a ball. Dog's
tail thumps fast. A sandy
spot! A ball up high!
Players diving and chasing!
What an **epiphany!** This is
not just a sport for kids.
This is a dog sport too.
Dog can tell.





Vic lays out a big map
on the ground.

'A grand spot is not a
must,' he says. 'Just a net
and a flat, grassy spot!'

Dog flops onto the map,
twisting, tail thumping. A
kid grins at him. Dog is
no **cartographer**. But
Dog has a flat, grassy
spot now!

Tim looks up at Vic with a shy smile.
'What if I am no good?' asks Tim.
Vic bends down and pats him kindly.
'No kid has to be the best. Just get
out there and try. That is what all
champs do.' **'Phew!'** says Tim with a
grin. Dog presses into Tim's side, tail
thumping, nose tapping his hand. 'Dog
is keen to try too!' says Tim. 'But
Dog,' says Vic, 'has no hands at all.'



Coach Vic marches out to the yard, and we trot behind him in a long line. Dog trots at the back.

Vic shows us how to hit. How to pass.
How to send it over the net.

Then he tosses the ball up and smashes it with **oomph!** It sails past us all. 'Now,' says Vic, 'we train!'



We line up by the net. One kid tosses the ball up. One kid leaps and sends it over.

'Yes! Just like that!' yells Vic, hands on his hips.

Dog crouches low in the grass, still as a **phantom**, gazing at that ball. No kid sees him. But Vic does. 'Dog,' he says. 'Stop. Do not do it.'





But Dog is quick. Dog grabs the ball from the air and hugs it tight with both paws, nose pressing into it like it is a grand **trophy**. The ball is as big as Dog. He will not give it back.

'Paws off the ball!' we all yell. Dog just thumps his tail.

No feet? Fine. Dog has paws, and paws are not feet.



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Coach Vic has something phenomenal to show the gang, and he pulls a strange new ball from an old trunk covered in trophies. He needs players for a brand-new game, no feet allowed, and even Dog wants a turn chasing that ball across the grass. Will Vic's tricks and Tim's shy try be enough to win? Written for Jolly Phonics classrooms (Step 3, Unit 1: ph as in phone), this book practices words like 'phenomenal', 'trophies', 'emphasis', 'phew', 'oomph'.

Phonics Focus: <ph>

cartographer, emphasis, epiphany, oomph, phantom, phenomenal, phew, photographs, phrase, trophies, trophy

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