

What a Whiff, Ted!





Ted grabbed his white cane and marched out the door. Today was the day of the birthday party. There would be cake. There would be games. And Ted knew exactly how to get there. No map. No **sign**. Behind the fence, Cat watched him go with wide eyes. Ted did not need to see Cat to know Cat was there. He always knew.

'Wait! Wait wait wait!' Kim came running up behind him, arms out wide. Kim **often** did this. 'Ted, do you want help? Are you sure you are okay?' Ted kept walking. He smiled his kindest smile. 'Kim. I walk to **school** every single day. I walk to the park. I walk to the shop and back. Finding the party is not going to be hard.' 'But what if you get lost?' Kim whispered. 'I will not,' said Ted. 'I know the way.'





At the corner of Marsh Street, Ted stopped. He lifted his chin and took one long, deep breath through his nose. Then he grinned. 'This way.' He turned right. Kim's mouth fell open. 'How did you do that? There's no **sign!** Not a thing! How did you know to turn right?'

'Can't you smell that?' Ted said. Kim sniffed the air. Her eyes went wide. 'Fish!' 'The fish shop,' Ted said proudly. 'It's three streets before **school**. When I catch that whiff, I turn right. Works every time.' Kim took a big sniff and smiled. 'It really does smell like fish!'





Down the next street, Ted stopped at a tall stone wall. He ran his fingers slowly across the **gnarled**, bumpy stone. Cat sat on top, peering down at him. 'What are you doing now?' Kim asked. 'Saying hello to an old friend,' Ted said with a smile. 'I have felt this wall since I was three. Every bump. Every crack. There's no other wall like it in town. And it tells me to turn left.'

'Watch out, Ted!' Kim lunged forward, pointing at the big puddle that **glistened** across the path. 'You will get soaked! You will get wet! You will...'

Ted calmly walked around it. Not one drop landed on his bare feet. Kim blinked. They were perfectly dry.

'You were saying?' Ted said, still smiling.



'But... how?' Kim sputtered.

Ted tapped his cane on the ground. Tap. Tap tap. **'Listen.'**

When my cane taps water, the sound changes. The feeling changes. So I knew exactly where the puddle started, and exactly where it ended.'

Kim stared at the cane, then at the puddle, then back at Ted. 'That is the coolest thing I have ever seen in my life.' Ted shrugged like it was nothing. But his grin said otherwise.





Woof! Woof woof woof! A big brown dog shoved its head through a gate, barking so loud that Cat jumped up on a fence post. 'Look out, Ted!' Kim shouted, grabbing his arm. But Ted just laughed. 'I know that dog. He **often** barks at people. He has been barking at me since Monday.' Ted turned left down the next street. 'And that is how I know to turn.'

Kim's eyes lit up. 'Let me guess! You can hear the dog barking, and you know where it lives. That is how you knew to turn!' 'Now you are getting it,' Ted said. 'I **listen**. I smell. I feel. And my cane taps. Four guides, and they never take a day off.' 'Smell, feel, sound...' Kim counted on her fingers. 'Ted, you do not just know the way. You know everything about the way.'





Then Ted stopped. He took a long, slow sniff. 'Yes,' he whispered. 'Cake. We're close.' Kim gasped. She sniffed too. Her face lit up. 'I can smell it! Ted, I can smell the cake from this spot!' Kim was **aching** to run to the door. But she made herself walk. She wanted to walk the last bit with Ted.

'We made it!' Kim shouted, jumping up and down. Balloons bobbed in the breeze, and the doorway was **bustling** with music, cheers, and party guests spilling outside.

Ted stepped forward, holding a perfectly wrapped gift. 'Told you I knew the way.'

Cat trotted up beside them, sat down, and licked one paw before turning to face the door.





Inside, the table was piled high with cake and fruit and more food than all of them could eat. Ted and Kim sat with their friends, party hats on, **stomachs** full. 'Ted,' Kim said, 'I'm really glad you knew the way.' Ted grinned. 'And I'm glad you came with me, Kim. It's more fun with a friend.' Kim smiled. Then she paused. 'Ted... how do we get home?' Ted leaned back in his chair. 'Easy. I just follow the smell of fish.'



What a Whiff, Ted!

Ted walks to Ava's birthday party using only his cane, his nose, and his memory of every wall and puddle along the way. Kim tags along, amazed as Ted turns corner after corner without ever looking. When a big stone wall, a splashing puddle, and a loud barking dog all show up on the route, will Kim ever guess how Ted always seems to know exactly where to go? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 118: ch /sh/, /k/; gn /n/; gh /g/; silent t), this book practices words like 'listen', 'often', 'school', 'gnarled', 'glistened'.

Phonics Focus: ch /sh/, /k/; gn /n/; gh /g/; silent t

aching, bustling, glistened, gnarled, listen, often, school, sign, stomachs

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