

Where Did Bones Go?



Skel teaches Bones all he can. How to track a smell. How to creep in the long grass and not make a sound. How to sit so still when a bird is close. Bones is the best dog in the land, and he feels it. He trots beside Skel with his red scarf in the wind. He has so much **energy**.





Bones is brave. A snake?
Fine. One time, a cross
goat chases them up a
tree, and Bones grins for
days. But storms? Storms
are not fine. One night, a
huge storm **rages**. Rain
lashes the mud path, and
the land quakes with each
boom. Bones stands stiff
by a big log and shakes
from snout to tail.

'Stay by me, Bones,'
Skel says. 'It is just
sound.' Then a big crack
splits the sky, and the
storm **rages** on. Bones
runs. He is off like a
flash. Skel yells his
name three times, but
Bones is gone, just a
dark shape in the rain.





Skel hunts for Bones all night. He slips on wet rocks and trips in a ditch, yelling till his voice is worn. 'Bones! Bones!' The wind howls back. That is all. The hills are **huge** and dark. Deep in the night, Skel turns for home. He will rest and hunt at first light. But each step away feels bad.

Back at home, Zom brings
Skel hot stew in a bowl.
Skel just taps his spoon
and peeks at the door. But
no feet tap, and no bark
comes. 'Bones is strong,'
says Zom. 'He will be safe
in some den.' 'No,' says
Skel. 'He is upset out there,
a lone, sad pup. The house
feels **strange** with no Bones
in it.'





Zom looks at his sad pal. Then he grabs his coat. 'Rest, Skel,' says Zom. 'I will go and look for Bones.'

'Zom, it is dark and wet out there.'

'Yes. But I must go.' Zom sets off into the chilly night. Skel sits in the amber lamp glow. He feels the **urge** to go too, but he is spent. With Zom out there hunting, Skel can sleep at last.

Bones is lost, deep in a **strange** dark wood. The storm is gone, but which way is home? He is so hungry. He creeps in the leaves, snout down, seeking a snack. Then he sees them. Three wolves stand between the trees, still as stones. Bones stands stiff. The **large** one turns and trots deep into the wood. The rest go too. And Bones goes with them.





Days pass. Bones hunts with the pack in the red and amber leaves. He creeps as they creep, quick and still. The rules: eat fast, sleep light, trust just the pack. No one pats him. No one says 'good boy.' But they let him run with them, and that is fine. Or is it? Day by day, Bones **changes.**

One morn, Bones **charges** in the trees so fast that leaves kick up like a red and gold storm. A branch tugs his red scarf off, and it drops in the dirt. Bones glances back. He slows. But wolves do not have red scarfs. Wolves do not have things at all. So Bones runs on and leaves the scarf there.





Zom finds Bones in a gap in the trees. 'Bones!' Zom bends down and holds out his hand, just as Skel does. 'Come, boy. Time to go home.' Bones drops low. A growl rolls up from deep in his chest, and his teeth flash white. Zom pulls his hand back. This is not the pal from home. This is a **strange** beast now, and it will not come home.

Zom rushes back and tells Skel
just where to go. Skel goes alone.
He does not call. He does not yell.
He just waits in the wood.

Bones hides. He peeks out from a
big tree, set to run. Then he sees
Skel, and Skel sees him. Like
magic, a thing cracks open inside
Bones. He thinks back to a hand
that rubs his chin, a voice that
says 'good boy,' a dirt path where
the best pals trot side by side.

He misses Skel. He misses him so
much it hurts.





They go home side by side, warm amber light on the trees. Bones stays so close to Skel's leg that Skel trips on him. 'Bones, Bones,' Skel says with a grin. 'I am so glad my pal is back.' Zom rushes down the path with a **huge** treat. Bones sniffs his hand, then licks his face, all his face. 'I think that lick says he is sad he ran off,' says Skel. 'I think that lick says more treats!' yells Zom, and he rubs his wet cheek. Bones wags his tail so hard that all his body wags too. Home is the best place to be.



SOFT G

Where Did Bones Go?

Bones is the best hunting dog in the valley, brave through snakes, rivers, even an angry goat. But when a huge storm rages through the night, he bolts in terror and vanishes into the dark. Will Skel ever find his best friend again? Written for Jolly Phonics classrooms (Step 3, Unit 3: soft g as in giant), this book practices words like 'huge', 'rages', 'large', 'charges', 'urge'.

Phonics Focus: <soft> <g>

changes, charges, energy, huge, large, magic, rages, strange, urge, wage

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