

Where Is Steve's Rod?



Alex lifts up her new rod. She **shows** a big grin. Three sticks. Two strings. One fine rod. 'Steve!' she bellows. 'Race me to the water! The **slow** one is a bad fish!'





Steve looks at Alex's rod.
Then he looks at his **own**
hands. No rod at all.

'Wait,' he says. 'I need a
rod too.'

'So make one, Steve!' says
Alex. 'Sticks and string are
all over.' She flicks her line
into the water. 'I will wait.
But not for long.'

Steve runs to the beach where they keep the kit. He will grab sticks and string, make a rod, and get back soon. But the pile is **low**. Some bits of **stone**. A block or two. Not one stick. '**Now** where did it all go?' Steve says.





Steve looks out over the water at a far land thick with trees. So many sticks over there. But that is a long, **slow** swim. There must be a stick not so far off. 'I will not swim to a far land for one stick,' Steve says.

Steve tries the grass
by the **town** next. This
spot has good stuff:
sticks and string. But
not **now**. No sticks. No
string. No more. Steve
frowns. One was here
first. One with a new
fishing rod.





Then Steve spots an old **stone** bin set **low** in the hill. He leans in for a look. And a fishing rod hangs inside! It is like it waits just for him. 'Yes!' Steve yells. He grabs it.

He lifts the rod up to the sunlight. The string is worn. The stick has a crack. One tug from a fish and snap!

Steve **frowns**. 'It is bad. But it is a rod.'

He tucks it under his arm and hunts on. There must be sticks and string out here.





He looks all over. He checks the high grass. He even tugs the **flowers**. Not one stick. Not one bit of string. The clouds **blow** in. Steve needs his lunch **now**. That old rod starts to look like his one **hope**.

Then Steve spots a rod tip poking up from a **hole** in the dirt. A rod! He jumps down to grab it. But this one is bad as well. It has a crack right down it. 'Come on!' Steve **moans**. Two rods, and not one can get a fish.



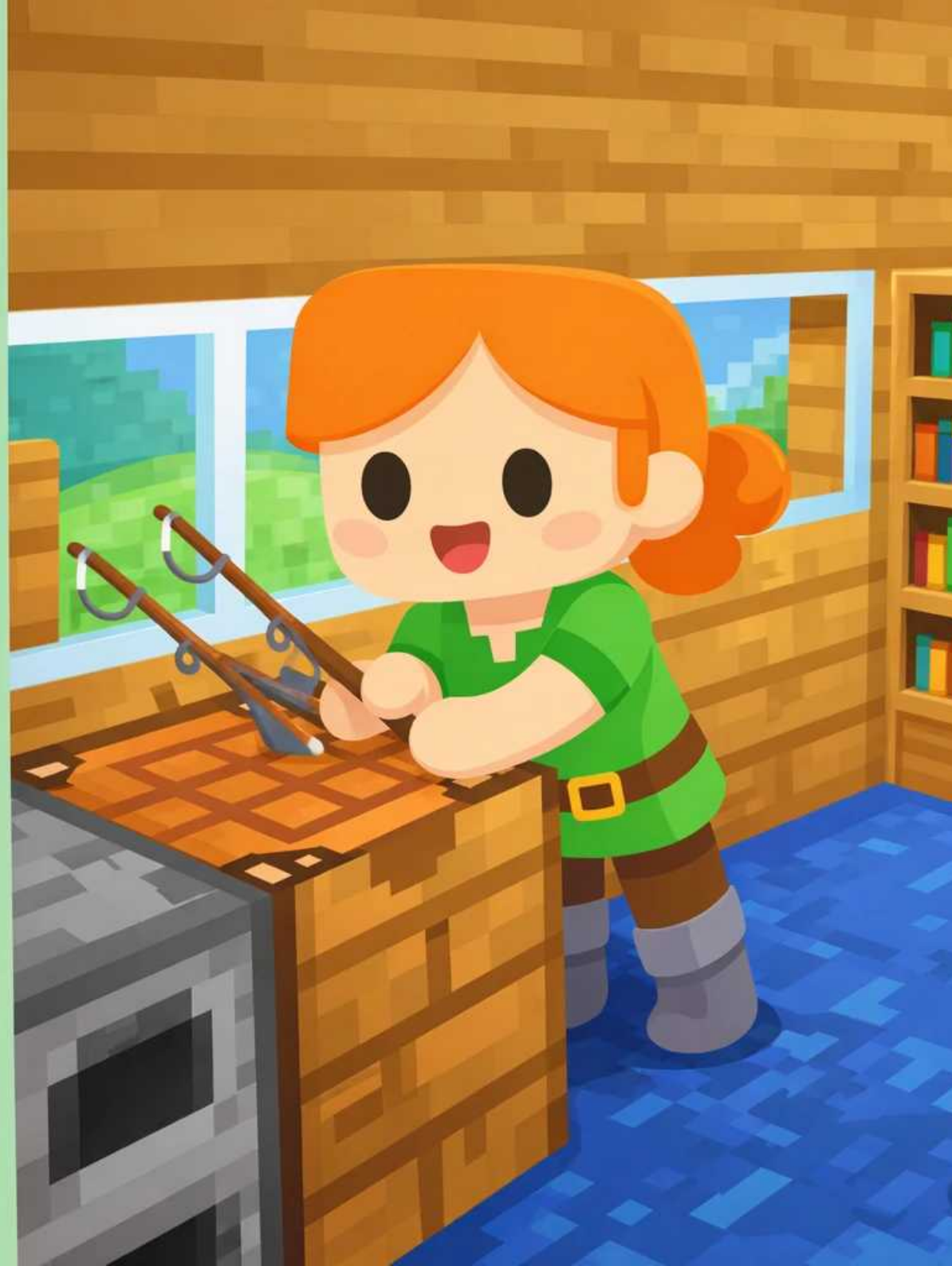


The sun sinks **low**.
Steve treks **home**
with a cracked rod
in each hand. Two
bad rods. No fish.
One very long day.
Alex is going to
mock him no end.

But Alex sees the rods and gasps. She does not mock him. Her eyes **glow**.

'Steve! Give them here!'
She grabs them and rushes to her craft bench.

'This bit is fine. And this bit! **Wow**, this will do it. This will more than do it!'





Alex spins round with a new rod. The best bits from both old ones. She **throws** it to Steve. 'There,' she says. '**Now** we are even.' Steve grins. 'Even? Alex, what a day I have had! I will win this,' he **boasts**. Alex grabs her **own** rod and runs outside. 'Biggest fish wins. Get set. Go!'



Where Is Steve's Rod?

Steve has no fishing rod, and every scrap of string and stick in the village is already gone. He searches the beach, the fields, even an old stone bin in the hillside, but every rod he finds is cracked or worn thin. Will he find anything good enough to beat Alex's brand-new one? Written for Jolly Phonics classrooms (Step 3, Unit 7: /oa/ mixed), this book practices words like 'low', 'own', 'frowns', 'glow', 'hope'.

Phonics Focus: <mixed>

bellow, blow, boasts, flowers, frowns, glow, hole, home, hope, low, moans, now, own, shows, slow, stone, throws, town, wow

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