



# acadience® reading k–6

## Student Materials

### Grade 4 | Benchmark 3

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## For use with Acadience Learning Online

## A Wild Ride for Bella

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▶ Bella fastened her life jacket and stepped into her aunt and uncle’s big yellow raft. Her older brother, Martin, had claimed that river rafting would be the most exciting thing Bella would ever do, but she was skeptical.

“How could floating on the water be that exciting?” Bella thought to herself. She thought maybe her brother was just trying to show off because he’d been rafting so many times. This trip would be her first time down the river.

Bella’s aunt and uncle sat in the back of the raft where they could steer the boat best. Bella and Martin sat in the front and used their paddles to help the raft move downstream. As they drifted down the calm river, Bella said, “This is fun, but it seems pretty simple to me. It doesn’t seem like the most exciting thing I’ve ever done.”

Just then, they heard a roaring sound up ahead and Bella felt her heart pounding loudly. As they came around the bend, Bella saw white water rushing and whirling between huge rocks.

“Draw left!” called her aunt. Bella and Martin immediately paddled to the left as hard as they could. They managed to avoid colliding with a big rock hidden under the churning water. They spun around in a whirlpool and then slipped into a fast current. They raced along, dipping and bouncing over the water. Sprays of water soaked their clothes. Suddenly they reached the end of the rapids and floated into calm water again.

Bella’s eyes were bright and she was breathing heavily after the wild ride. “Martin, I think you were right. That was definitely the most exciting ride I have ever had.” She grinned and said, “Now I want to go back and ride those rapids again!”

Everyone laughed. They had all been thinking the exact same thing.

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# Rainbows

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▶ Since long ago, people around the world have been amazed by the rainbow. This natural light show has inspired everything from movies to songs. A close look at the science behind the rainbow shows that there is more to the rainbow than what meets the eye.

The first thing most people notice about a rainbow is the bright colors. These colors are created by the sun's light passing through raindrops. Different colors reflect back at slightly different angles, splitting the light into the rainbow. What may surprise you is that the colors you see are not the only colors in a rainbow. Rainbows are actually made up of every color in the light spectrum, from red to violet. However, the human eye can only see a small number of these colors.

Another interesting part of a rainbow is its arch. A rainbow is really a circle. Since the ground gets in the way, it looks like an arch. Actually, the arch that you see is formed by raindrops that are in just the right place to reflect the colors back to your eyes. A person standing next to you will see a rainbow formed by slightly different drops. We can only see a rainbow when the sun is low enough in the sky. This is why we do not see a rainbow every time it is sunny and raining.

Rainbows can also be seen in other combinations of light and water. This includes waterfalls, dew-covered spider webs, and even light from the moon. There are also double rainbows, when a second arch is formed by light that bounces twice inside the raindrops. Much more rare is the fire rainbow. A fire rainbow is caused by a rainbow's interaction with cirrus clouds that creates a rainbow in the shape of fire. As you now know, rainbows are much more complex than what we see!

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## A New Kind of Family

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► Baby elephants need help to survive. Like all babies, they need protection. They also need a sense of love and belonging. A woman in Kenya is trying to provide that kind of love and care for baby elephants who have lost their families. She is giving orphaned elephants a new kind of family.

The woman, Daphne Sheldrick, has created an elephant nursery. It is a place to give a baby what it needs so it can return to the wild. The keepers who work there become the elephant's new family. They stay with the baby at all times just as its elephant family would have. The keepers make milk available to the orphan twenty-four hours a day. They show it love and affection and never let it feel alone. Baby elephants are so sensitive that missing someone can make them very ill. To prevent that, the keepers make sure the baby doesn't become attached to just one person. Each night, a different worker sleeps with it. That way, the baby feels secure no matter which workers are on duty.

Elephant orphans must learn to communicate by being with other elephants. When the babies are a year old, they move to a nearby park. It is a protected place where herds of older orphans live. They are slowly getting ready to live in the wild. There, the baby orphans learn elephant language and how to get along with a herd. It is easy for them to fit in because older elephants naturally love all baby elephants.

At the park, baby orphans are free to wander with the herd. But they still have plenty of contact with their human family. As the young elephants become more confident, they go into the wild more and more often. Most eventually find a place with a wild herd.

Orphans who live in the wild often come back to visit. Many years later, they still recognize and love the humans who raised them. The keepers know that the old saying is true—an elephant truly never forgets!

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