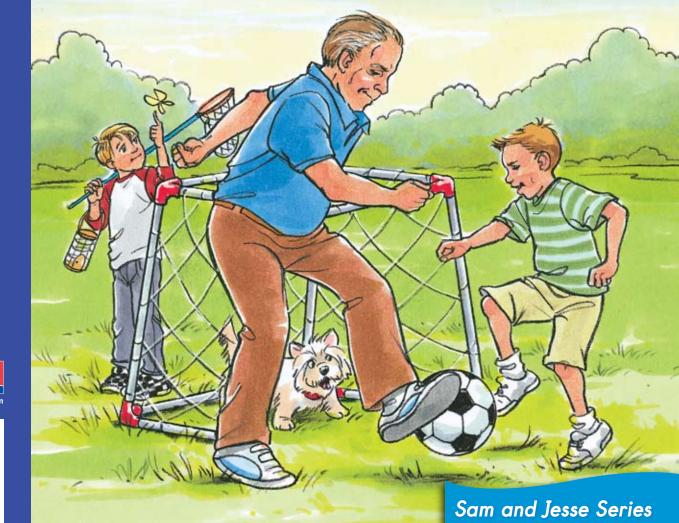




by Maggie Bridger illustrated by Meredith Johnson





Fiction







278 Total Running Words

The Soccer Game

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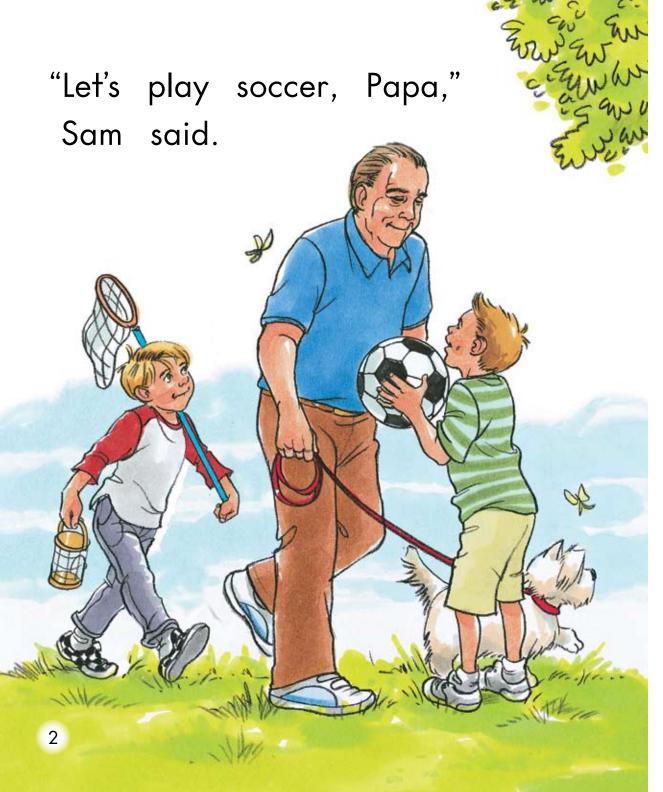
The Soccer Game

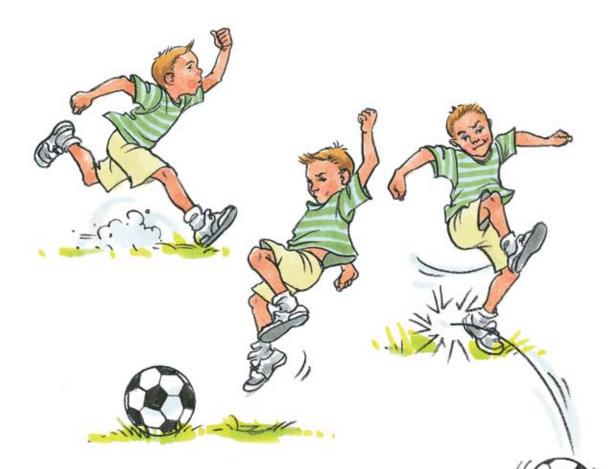
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Sam







Sam was good at soccer. He liked to run fast. He could jump, and he could kick the ball into the net.



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"I want to play, too," Jesse said.

"You do?" said Sam. Jesse liked soccer, but he liked bugs more.

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"Let's play, boys," Papa said. "See if you can kick the ball past me."



Sam kicked the ball, but Papa stopped it. The ball didn't go in the net.

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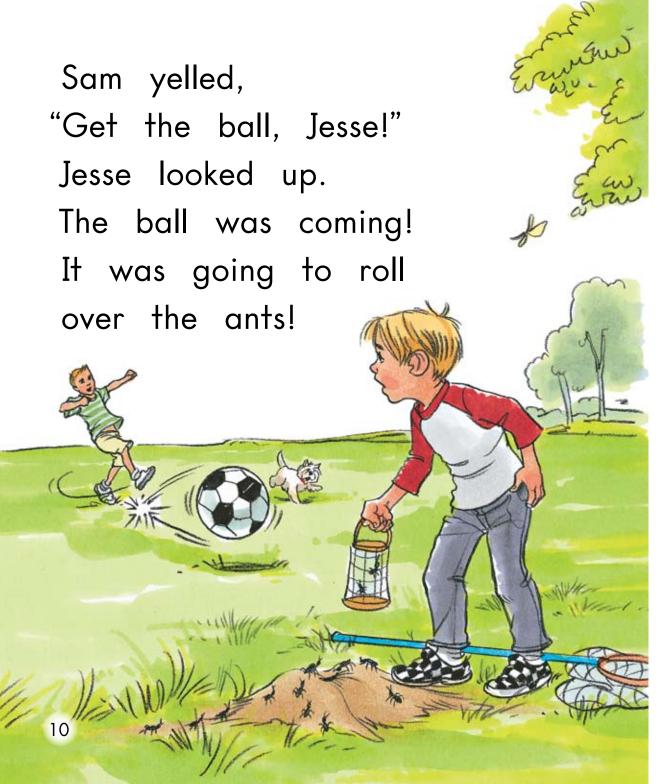
Then Jesse kicked the ball, and Papa stopped it. "You have to help each other, boys," Papa said. Papa kicked the ball back. Sam had to run to get it.

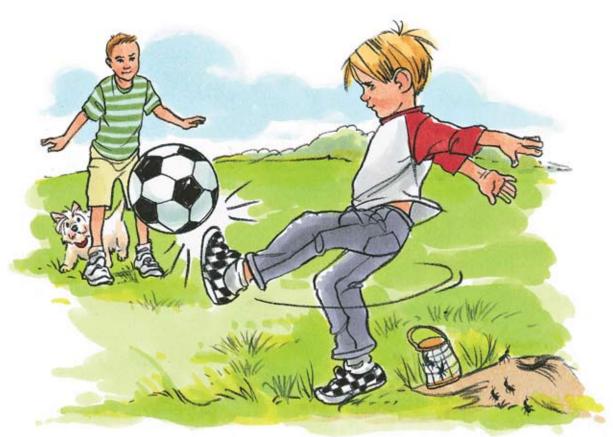
"Come on, Jesse. Come and help me," Sam said.

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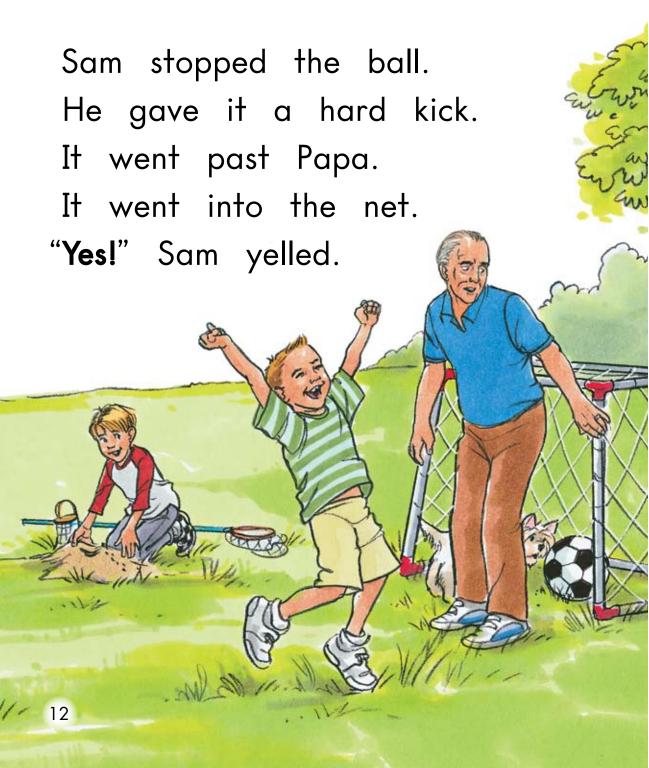
But Jesse was looking at an ant hill. The ants were red and black. They had six legs.

S





Jesse put his foot out. He stopped the ball to save the ants. Then he kicked the ball back to Sam.





"We did it!" Jesse said.

"We did it?" Sam said. "No, I kicked the ball into the net. You were looking at ants." "I kicked the ball to you," Jesse said.

"You just wanted to save your ants," Sam said.

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Papa smiled. "It **was** a good kick," he said. Sam looked at Jesse.

"You did help me get the ball past Papa," Sam said.

"We make a good team," Sam said.

"Yes, we do," Jesse said. "You, me, and the ants!"

