



Teddy goes to School

An on-entry transition
and assessment tool for
reception teachers and
practitioners

Teddy will soon be five and it is time for him to go to 'big school'. He's excited but also has 'butterflies' in his tummy and he's not sure how he feels. The story follows Teddy through his first day at school, meeting his teacher, making some friends and joining in with some fun activities.

The book is intended to help children talk about their experiences of starting school and thus aid the settling in process.

Along with the book this pack also includes:

- a guide for effective transition into school
- notes on the role of the key person
- independent activity suggestions to help with initial observations of children
- an example of a baseline observation sheet
- baseline assessment guidance
- an assessment grid to assist with baseline assessments
- reception baseline activities



A guide for effective on-entry transition to reception

The key to effective transition is:

- identifying clear aims for the transition activities in terms of supporting children to settle quickly
- effective management in order to achieve these aims

Transition event	In all these transition events you should consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the aims for the event? ● Are these aims being achieved with the current arrangements?
Open days	Open days take many different forms in schools from one off events for the whole family to a series of events for a parent and child to explore the environment.
Stay and play sessions	Stay and play sessions provide opportunities for parents and children to visit the nursery, explore the resources and experience what it will be like. This may happen alongside the current cohort or not. Schools sometimes offer refreshments to parents which enables them to leave their child in the provision and meet with other parents whilst still being close at hand. This may provide a good opportunity to observe how the child copes with separation and their interests.
Home visits	Home visits are a very valuable opportunity to gather information on a child's development, experiences, opportunities and interests. This information will be invaluable in helping you to plan effectively for the child once they enter the provision, as well as providing evidence for an on-entry, baseline assessment.
Staggered entry	Staggered entry allows time for staff to settle small groups of children quickly and are valuable opportunities to make observations of children's development and interests.
Foundation Stage booklet	Any information that you can provide for children and parents will help support children to settle quickly. Booklets/leaflets with pictures of the provision, the staff and key information such as start and finish times, lunch arrangements etc are easily made and provide useful information for parents.
Website	Films of your provision and links from your school website to information about the early years and what children and parents can expect.
Other parents	Volunteers can be recruited from existing parents whose children are in the early years. They can be useful sources of information for the school about what it was like for them and their children to start in the provision but also for new parents to have a friendly face they can approach. This will help to ease parents anxieties about separating from their child.
SEND and links with other professionals	Links with other professionals are important in helping to form a picture of the child prior to starting within the nursery. This is particularly the case for children with SEND as they may well have received support prior to starting in the provision.

Attachment, well-being and involvement

The role of the key person

Children thrive when they have secure, loving relationships. This is naturally provided by a child's parents and in early years settings it is provided by a key person. It is a statutory requirement of the EYFS to assign each child a key person (this is also a safeguarding and welfare requirement). Once you have met with the families who are new to your setting you must inform them of the name of the key person and explain their role. The main aim of the key person is to build a relationship with the child and their family and to keep an oversight of their development and well-being. The key person responds sensitively to children's feelings and behaviours and meets their emotional needs by providing reassurance. Depending on the number of staff in your team the key person can also meet with their children for small group activities.

Here is a statement you may want to include in your information leaflet/booklet:

'The key person is the member of staff who will build the initial relationship when your child starts school and will be able to answer any of your questions. Every key person has a group of children in their care and keeps a special eye on their well-being and involvement day to day.'

Why attachment matters

Attachments are the emotional bonds that children develop initially with their parents and then with other carers such as a key person. Children with secure attachments find it easier to separate from their main carer, engage in more pretend play and can sustain their attention for longer periods of time. Having a strong emotional attachment enables children to feel secure and this in turn will result in a child being more independent and having confidence to try out new things.

Positive, strong attachments influence all aspects of a child's development, hence the importance of the key person.

Well-being and involvement

Developed by Ferre Leavers, the Leuven Scale is a five-point scale that allows early years practitioners to measure children's emotional well-being and involvement. According to Leavers, children in a high state of 'well-being' are like 'fish in water'. They are comfortable in their environment, confident and eager to experiment and explore. Children with low levels of well-being often appear frightened, anxious and dependent, making it hard for them to learn in a sustained way.

High levels of 'involvement' are characterised by curiosity, fascination, deep satisfaction and a genuine interest in what they are doing.

The Leuven Scale for levels of emotional well-being

1. Extremely low: the child shows clear signs of distress such as crying or screaming. They may seem withdrawn, frightened or aloof, and may behave aggressively, hurting themselves or others around them.
2. Low: they may seem uneasy and display a slumped posture. However, the discomfort is not evident all the time and is not as strongly expressed as in Level 1.
3. Moderate: the child has a neutral expression and demeanour. Their posture and expression neither show signs of sadness, pleasure, comfort or discomfort.
4. High: the child looks happy, cheerful and satisfied. But, these signals are not always present with the same intensity.
5. Extremely high: the child is lively, cheerful, confident and shows no signs of stress or tension. Their actions are spontaneous and expressive. They may talk to themselves, hum, sing and look entirely at ease with themselves.

The Leuven Scale for levels of involvement

1. Extremely low: the child may seem absent-minded and displays a lack of energy. They may stare aimlessly or look around to see what others are doing. Their actions may seem passive and repetitive.
2. Low: they are easily distracted. They might focus on a task while they are being observed, then lapse into phases of absent-mindedness - looking blankly at what is happening around them.
3. Moderate: the child may seem involved in an activity but at a routine level. They might look like they are making progress with what they are doing but rarely show much energy or concentration.
4. High: they are not easily distracted and seem entirely engrossed in what they do.
5. Extremely high: the child demonstrates continuous and intense activity indicating complete involvement. They are focused, creative, lively and persistent.



The characteristics of effective learning

There is a close link between the Leuven Scale and the characteristics of effective learning. When we see a child displaying these characteristics - we are seeing learning taking place. *“The learner has to do the work, you can’t teach someone something as if you’re just putting it into their brain - the learner has to take experience in, make sense of it and have the interest and the motivation in the first place.”* Nancy Stewart (February 2019)

Playing and exploring

Finding out and exploring

- Showing curiosity about objects, events and people
- Using senses to explore the world around them
- Engaging in open-ended activity
- Showing particular interests

Playing with what they know

- Pretending objects are things from their experience
- Representing their experiences in play
- Taking on a role in their play
- Acting out experiences with other people

Being willing to ‘have a go’

- Initiating activities
- Seeking challenge
- Showing a ‘can do’ attitude
- Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences, and learning by trial and error

Active learning

Being involved and concentrating

- Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time
- Showing high levels of energy, fascination
- Not easily distracted
- Paying attention to details

Keeping on trying

- Persisting with activity when challenges occur
- Showing a belief that more effort or a different approach will pay off
- Bouncing back after difficulties

Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

- Showing satisfaction in meeting their own goals
- Being proud of how they accomplished something – not just the end result
- Enjoying meeting challenges for their own sake rather than external rewards or praise

Creating and thinking critically

Having their own ideas

- Thinking of ideas
- Finding ways to solve problems
- Finding new ways to do things

Making links

- Making links and noticing patterns in their experience
- Making predictions
- Testing their ideas
- Developing ideas of grouping, sequences, cause and effect

Choosing ways to do things

- Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal
- Checking how well their activities are going
- Changing strategy as needed
- Reviewing how well the approach worked

Assessing how children learn

Using the characteristics of effective learning and the Leuven Scale.

Name: _____ DOB: _____

Assessment criteria

1	Not yet
2	Rarely
3	Sometimes
4	Often

Playing and Exploring - Engagement	Involvement	Well-being
Finding out and exploring: <i>Is the child interested in exploring their world using their senses?</i>		
Playing with what they know: <i>Are experiences from their life reflected in their learning/play?</i>		
Being willing to 'have a go': <i>Are they willing to have a go at new experiences and challenges?</i>		
Active learning – Motivation	Involvement	Well-being
Being involved and concentrating: <i>Do they show sustained focus in their learning/play?</i>		
Keeping on trying: <i>Do they persist when things become difficult?</i>		
Enjoying achieving what they set out to do: <i>Do they show pride and satisfaction?</i>		
Creativity and Thinking Critically - Thinking	Involvement	Well-being
Having their own ideas: <i>Are they innovative in their learning/play and have their own ideas?</i>		
Making links: <i>Do they make links in their learning/play?</i>		
Choosing ways to do things: <i>Do they plan, review and adapt their learning/play?</i>		

Assessment

On-entry assessment for reception teachers and practitioners

An on-entry assessment, or baseline, is necessary to help teachers and practitioners identify what children already know and can do, what their interests are and to help establish whether the child is 'on track' or not. This information will help to plan meaningful activities that will optimise children's learning.

The revised EYFS (2021) requires teachers to make an assessment decision about whether children are developmentally on track or not. In order to make this decision practitioners need to observe children carefully during the first few weeks in school and may collect evidence in the form of photographs, work samples and written observations to support them in making judgements.

Through meaningful interactions and playing with children, practitioners will form their own thoughts and ideas about a child's development and of the characteristics of effective learning that children demonstrate through their play. Through discussions of what they know and of the evidence collected, practitioners will be able to make an assessment judgement together about whether a child is on track or not.

The assessment grid in this pack lists some statements that will help practitioners to identify on track children. If children cannot do the things listed then they are likely to be below on track and if they can confidently do all and more then they are above on track but would be recorded as 'on track'. Assessments are based on the age ranges found in the 'Birth to Five Matters' document. For children who are not on track practitioners should list the areas of learning where children need more support.

N.B. 'On track' for children with additional needs may look different and practitioners should consider carefully what is appropriate for individual children.



Reception baseline observation sheet

On-entry assessment

On track (tick box)

Not on track (tick box)

Reason(s) if not on track

Pupil's Interests

PSED

Communication & Language

Literacy

Physical Development

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts

Pupil's Voice



Reception baseline assessment grid

This is not a tick list. The statements should be used as a guide to help you make a decision about whether a child is on-track or not.

On track

Range 6 (48-60 months)

Not on track

Working in age spans below Range 6

N.B. Ranges of development can be found at www.birthto5matters.org.uk

<p>PSED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Beginning to manage emotions by offering own explanation and reasoning ● Can share resources and starting to form friendships ● Negotiates, cooperates and can follow routines and expectations ● Independently follows own interests for sustained periods of time 	<p>L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Makes recognisable letter shapes ● Makes some initial letter sound correspondence ● Knows writing goes from left to right/top to bottom ● Can write own name ● Shows an interest in books and enjoys listening to stories
<p>PD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tripod grip with control; draws pictures that are recognisable to others ● Controlled movement, more agile and skilful ● Negotiates space successfully ● Can put on own coat and shoes 	<p>M</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Can count to ten and beyond ● Able to use 1-to-1 correspondence to count a group of objects up to 5 ● Recognises and names shapes ● Makes and copies patterns ● Can sort and compare objects
<p>CL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Uses more complex sentences with an expanding vocabulary ● Initiates conversation and shares experiences ● Follows simple two and three part instructions ● Using imaginative narrative in role play situations ● Listens to stories attentively and joins in with repeated refrains 	<p>UW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explores purposefully and asks questions seeking clarification and answers ● Shows an interest in the lives of people who are familiar to them and talks about significant events
		<p>EAD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Makes models , uses materials, tools & colours selected with a purpose in mind ● Paints and draws recognisable objects/things ● Joins in with singing and enjoys exploring musical instruments ● Participates in role play creating and following a storyline

When making your baseline assessments remember this is a snapshot judgement and the most accurate picture of the child's overall learning will come from an holistic view of all the descriptors.

Reception baseline activities

Teddy is about to turn 5 and is starting school. The book focuses on Teddy's first day at school and the day before he starts and how he feels. The activities focus on Teddy's impending birthday and the importance of being 5.

Communication and language

- Encourage children to talk about what their favourite things are at school.
- Can they talk through and understand the routine of the day?
- Follows instructions to make a birthday cake.
- Provide children with some basic resources so that they can role play birthday parties and use appropriate language.
- Encourage children to talk about the illustrations in the book and relate to their own experiences.

PSED

- Teddy had something that felt like 'butterflies in his tummy' - talk to the children about what they think that might have been. Have they ever had that feeling? What can you do to make it better? Use the book 'The Colour Monster' to extend children's emotional language.
- Teddy makes friends with Ruby. Talk to the children about how you make friends. Who do they like playing with and what is their favourite thing to do in school?
- Play party games such as pass the parcel: encourage children to join in, share and work together. Talk about waiting for 'your turn'.

Physical development

- Sort party food into healthy and unhealthy.
- Use scissors and tape to wrap presents.
- Play party games such as 'musical bumps' and 'musical statues'.

Literacy

- Independently write invitations to the party.
- Independently write Teddy's birthday card.
- Make lists for: friends to invite; games to play; food; music etc.
- Read stories together that include birthdays:

Kipper's Birthday – *Mick Inkpen*

The Night Before my Birthday – *Natasha Wing*

I want Two Birthdays – *Tony Ross*

Happy Birthday Sam – *Pat Hutchins*

Bear's Birthday – *Stella Blackstone*

My Presents – *Rod Campbell*

Maths

- Wrap presents (empty boxes); make own wrapping paper using different patterns.
- Sorting and comparing activities: bears, balloons, cake candles etc. What's the same? What's different? (bigger, smaller, colour etc).
- Make a cake: follow instructions, weighing, measuring and sharing.
- Make a birthday calendar that shows which months the children's birthdays are in.
- Teddy marks off the days until he goes to school: talk to the children about days, weeks and months.



Reception baseline activities cont...

Understanding the world

- A birthday is a celebration of the day you were born. What did you look like on the day you were born? Create a display of 'birth' day photos.
- Your age is how many years you have been alive: how many years have you been alive? Your mum and dad? Your teacher?
- What did your mum and dad look like on the day they were born?
- Who is the oldest person you know?
- What month were you born in? Do you know all the months of the year?
- Each month has a birthstone (Jan: Garnet; Feb: Amethyst; Mar: Aquamarine; Apr: Diamond; May: Emerald; Jun: Pearl; Jul: Ruby; Aug: Peridot; Sept: Sapphire; Oct: Opal; Nov: Topaz; Dec: Turquoise). Can you find out what colours all these gems are? Allow children to explore colour and relate to the 'Colour Monster' book.
- How do you celebrate your birthday?
- Children may have different things that they do to celebrate birthdays in their own cultures – ensure that these things are incorporated into the planning for Teddy's birthday.
- In Mexico a birthday is celebrated with a Pinata; in Vietnam everyone celebrates their birthday on New Year's Day not the day they were born, they call it 'tet'; in China when its your birthday you have to slurp long noodles without biting them.

Expressive art and design

- Design and make party invitations.
- Design and make a birthday card for Teddy.
- Design and print wrapping paper.
- Role play birthday parties.
- Explore colour and colour mixing. What are happy colours? What are sad colours? What colour is your name?
- Sing songs and dance.
- Design a birthday cake – what kind of cake would you like for your next birthday?





Teddy goes to School

Words: Sue Rogers

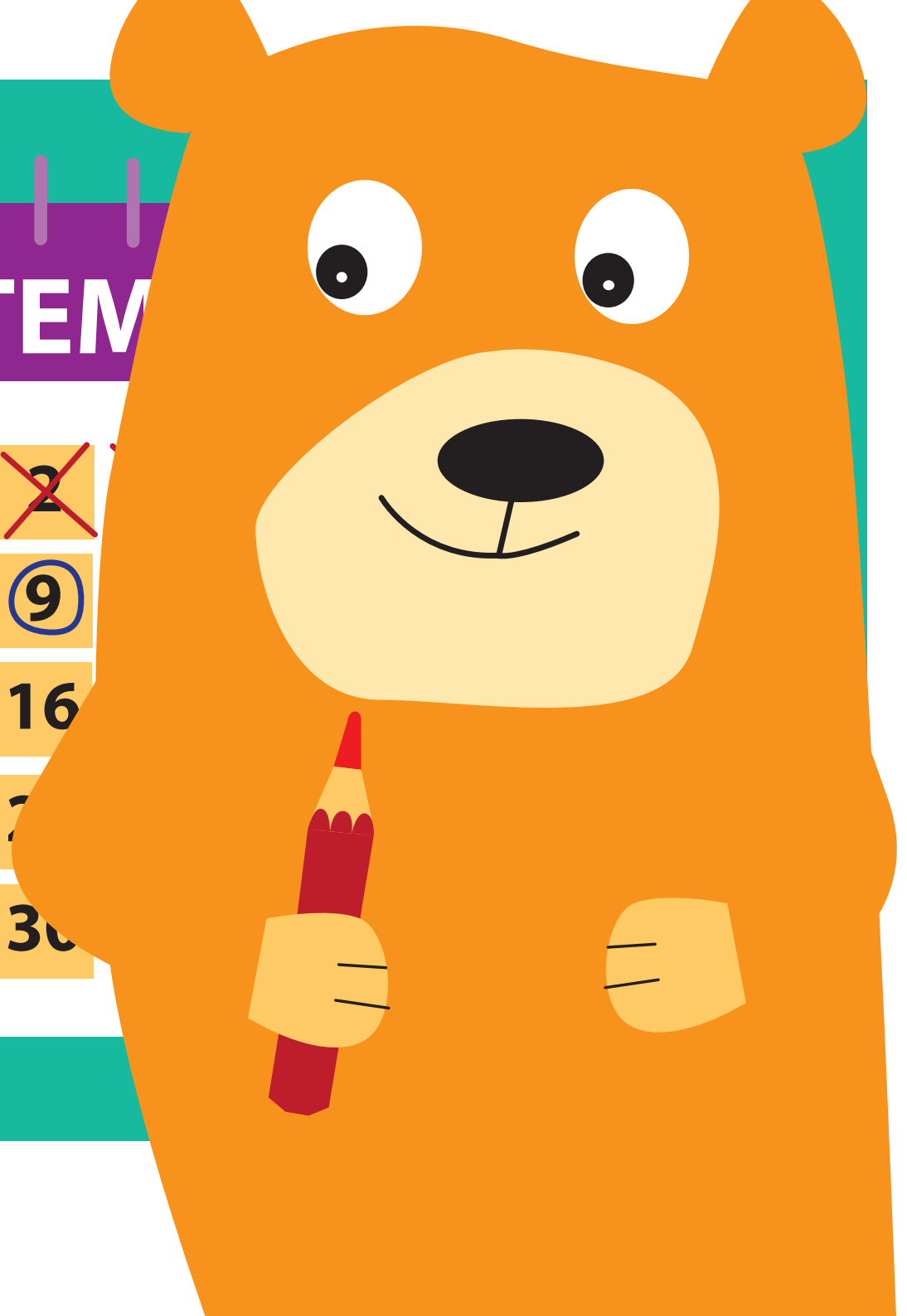
Pictures: Peter Rogers

This is Teddy.
Teddy is
nearly five.



Teddy is
really
excited.

Tomorrow
he is going
to big
school for
the first
time.



He has
everything
ready.
He has
his school
uniform,
and his
brand new
backpack.



Teddy is going to
bed early because
his Mum says
a good night's
sleep will help
him to enjoy
tomorrow
more.





The next morning
Teddy wakes up
early and looks at
his school uniform.
He is still excited
but it feels like there
are butterflies in his
tummy and he's not
sure what that is.

Mum calls him to come
for breakfast.

After breakfast he
cleans his teeth, washes
his face and puts on
his uniform.

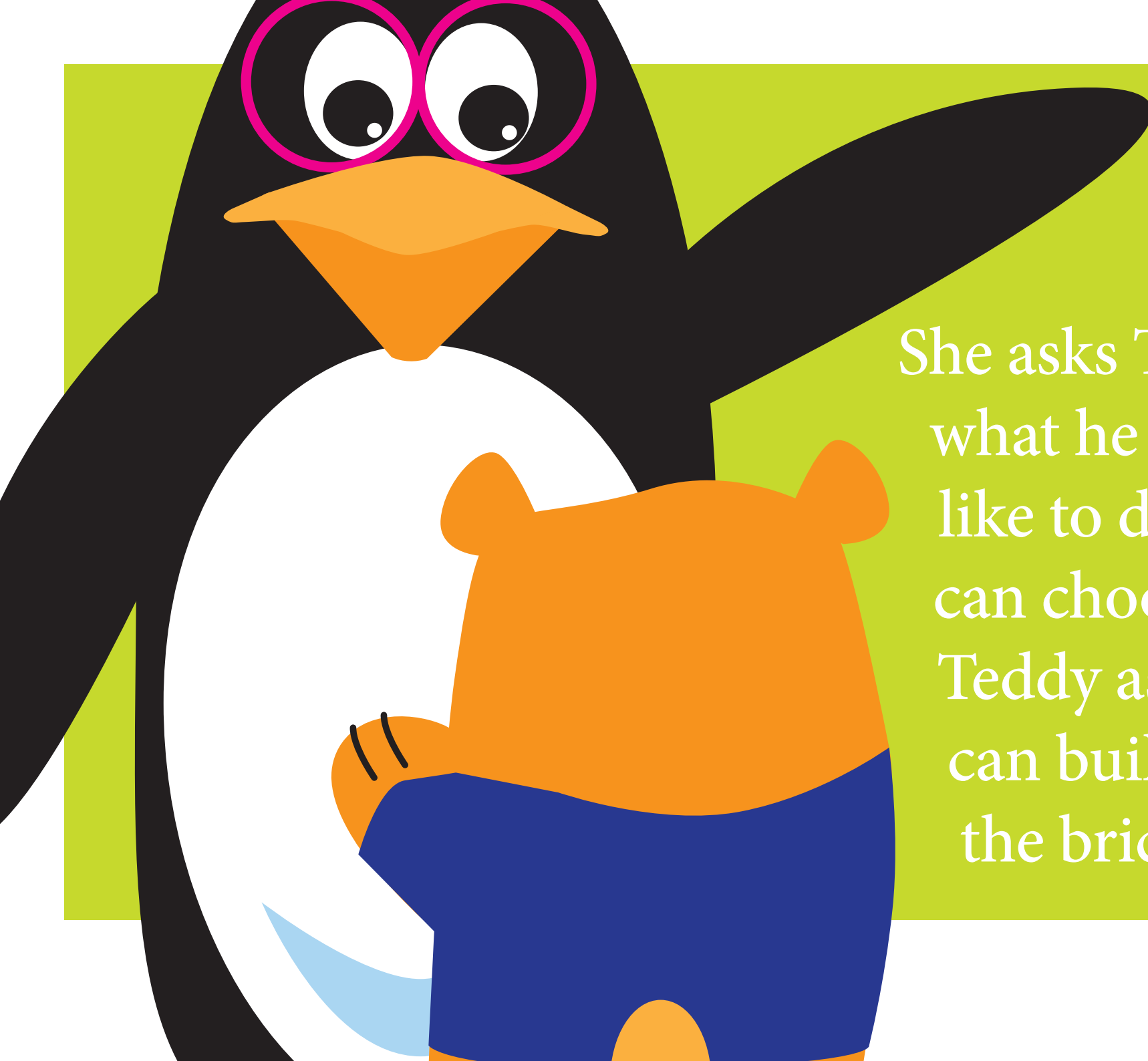




Teddy walks
to school with
his Mum and
his little sister.
She won't stop
talking about
how much *she*
wants to go to
school.

Mum takes Teddy to the classroom door and kisses him goodbye. Mrs Jolly is Teddy's teacher and she says 'Hello' and takes Teddy into the classroom.

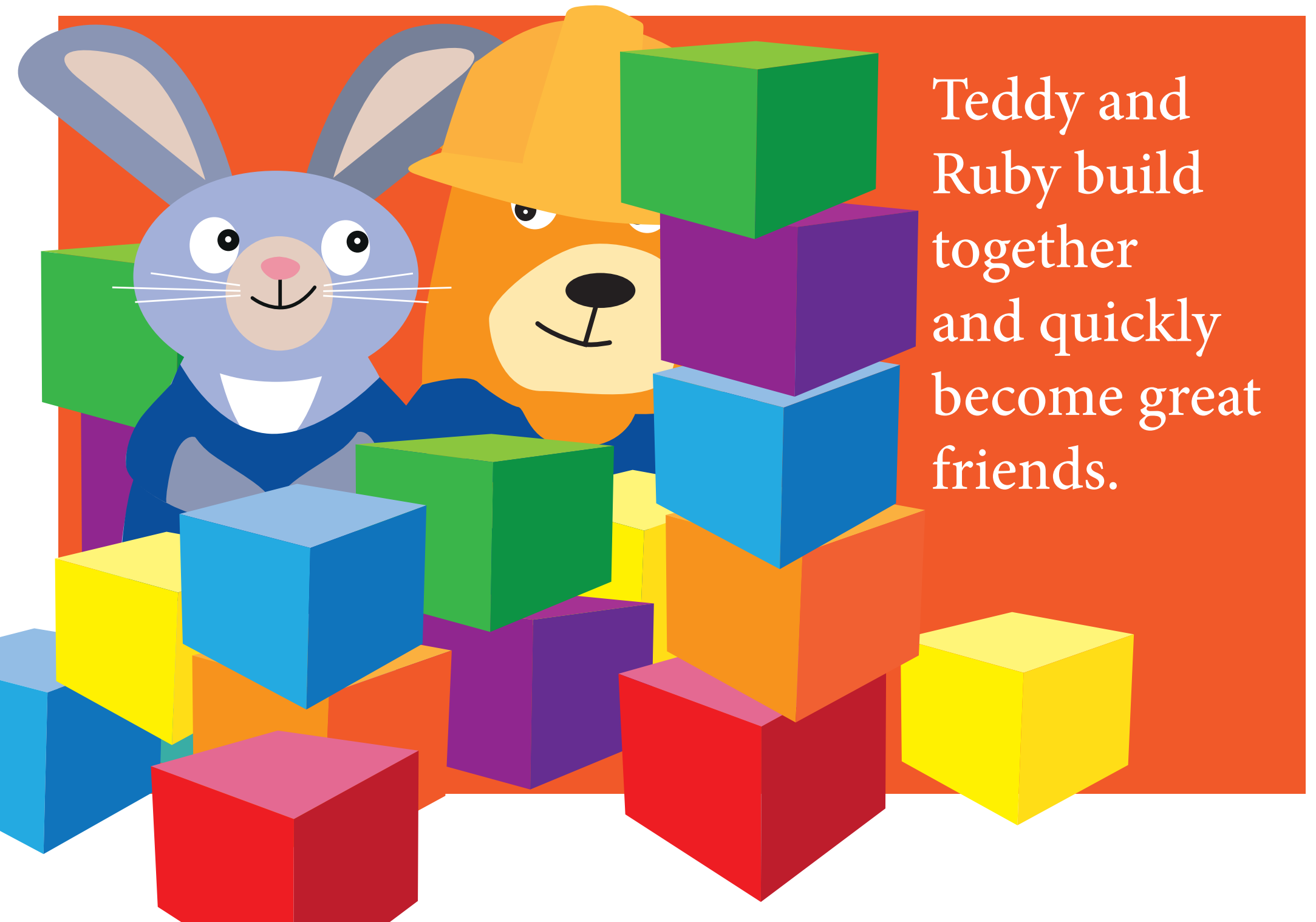




She asks Teddy
what he would
like to do. He
can choose!
Teddy asks if he
can build with
the bricks.

Mrs Jolly
takes him to
the building area
and introduces
him to Ruby who
is already
building.

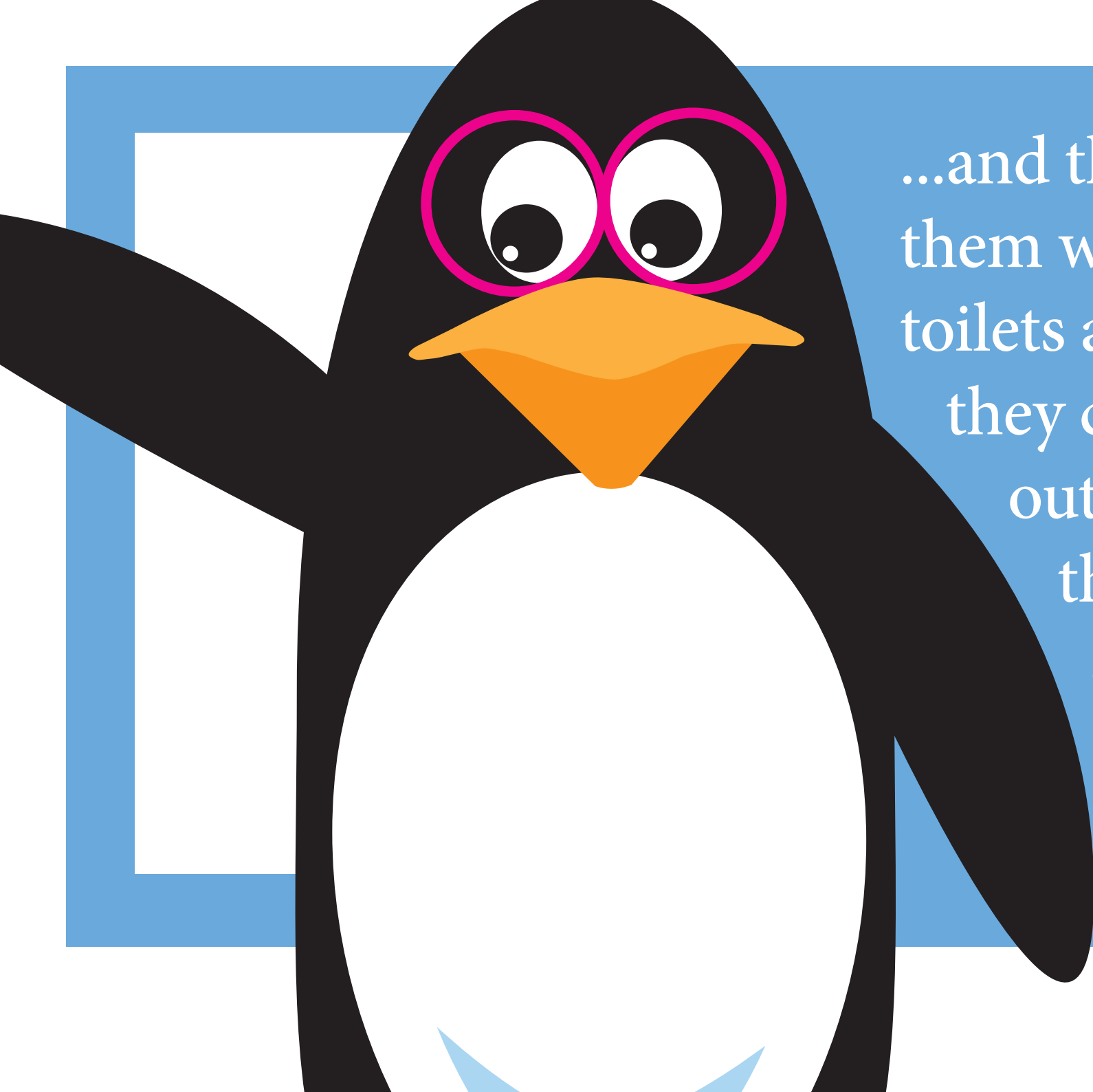




Teddy and
Ruby build
together
and quickly
become great
friends.



Later Mrs Jolly asks them to come to the carpet for a story. She reads a book all about starting school...



...and then she tells them where the toilets are and how they can play outside anytime they want to, so long as the door is open.

Teddy likes the milk and fruit and after that he decides to go outside and play there.



He likes the bikes
and the climbing,
and he makes
more friends.



The day goes so fast and soon
it is time for Mum to collect
him. He says goodbye to
Mrs Jolly and she says,
“See you tomorrow
Teddy!”



A cartoon illustration of three bears. A large brown bear is on the left, looking forward with a slight smile. In the foreground, an orange bear is holding a brown, round object (possibly a nut or a piece of wood) in its right hand. To the left of the orange bear is a smaller yellow bear with a pink bow on its head. The background is a solid light green color.

As they walk home
Mum asks if he has
had a good day.

“Brilliant!” says Teddy.

“What did
you do?”
says Mum.

“Nothing
much!”
says
Teddy.





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