

Conkers



Reading Made Simple



au

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This book is to be read after the Level 3 sound

au

has been learnt.

You can sound these words out. Practice them before you start to read the book.

replied ree plied

enjoyed en joy ed

different diff er ent

happened hap en ed

explained

escape

inspect in spect

It was autumn and Pam and Sam wanted to go and look for conkers.

“We will have to go out and find a tree with some growing on it.” said Mum.

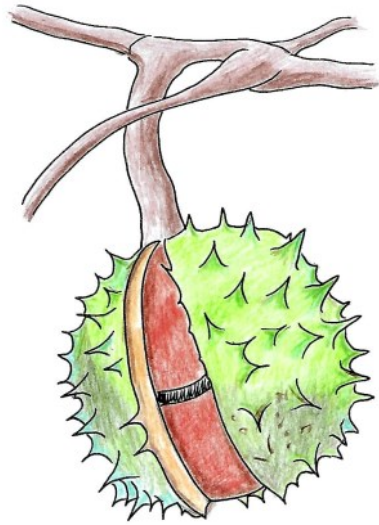
They went to the park.

“Look on the ground. You may find some

conkers under the tree. This will help us to find the right tree, “ said Mum.

“I have found conkers,” called Pam. Sam ran to look. “Conkers!” he shouted. “This must be a Conker tree.”

“Well,” said Mum, “we don’t call it a conker tree. Its proper name is a Horse



Chestnut tree.”

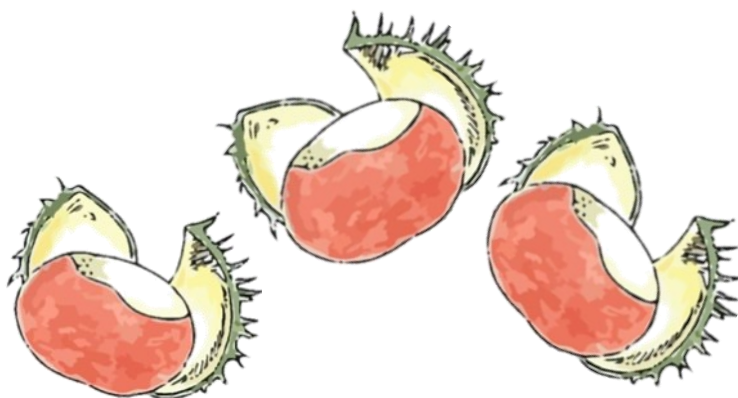
The children gathered lots of conkers and put them in their bags.

“Why does the Horse Chestnut tree make conkers?” asked Sam.

“Conkers are seeds, replied Mum.

“Each conker could grow into a new Horse Chestnut tree, if it found good soil to grow in.”

The children enjoyed finding conkers that day.



In the winter they went to the park again. The conker tree looked different.

“What’s happened to the Horse Chestnut tree?” asked Pam.



“In the winter, the Horse Chestnut tree rests,” explained Mum. “It has lost all of its leaves. It has big, dark, sticky buds at the end of its twigs. Inside the sticky buds are new leaves. The sticky stuff keeps the buds safe and dry.”

The children looked at the big, fat, sticky buds.

“Now look for the horse-shoes on the twigs,” said Mum. “These tell you that this tree is a Horse Chestnut tree.” said Mum.

“Oh, I can see the horse-shoe shape,” said Sam.

“You can also know a tree by its shape,” said Mum.

“Can you see how it has a domed shape?”

“We will come again in spring,” said Mum, “and visit our tree again.”





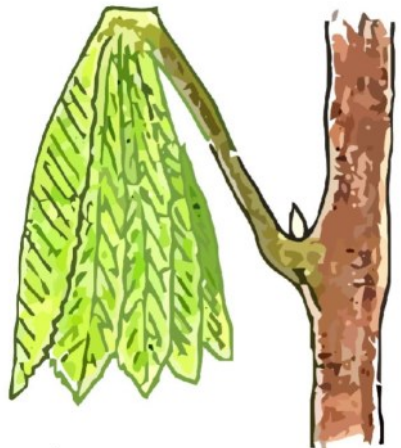
When the spring came, Pam, Sam and Mum went to the park to see their tree again.

“Oh look, Mummy!” said Sam. “Look at the

sticky buds. They are bursting open!” They all looked.

“Yes, said Pam, and this one has baby leaves. Don’t they look funny! They are hanging down.”

“That’s what they look like at first,” explained Mum.



It was May before they were able to visit the tree again. This time they were in for a surprise.

The Horse Chestnut tree was covered in pink flowers.

“Aren’t they lovely!” cried Pam. They look like lots of candles on the tree.”

“Yes,” said Sam, “and the leaves are so much bigger now.”



“Look at the leaves children,” said Mum.

“They are funny leaves,” said Sam. “They look like lots of little leaves joined together.”



“You are right,” said Mum. “The little leaves are called leaflets, but they all make one big leaf.”

“There are seven leaflets on this leaf,” said Pam.

“Most have seven,” said Mum.

“We will come back in the summer and see what happens next,” said Mum.

It was the summer holidays before they could visit the tree again. The flowers had all gone and the tree was covered with big, green leaves. They stood in the shade under the tree to escape from the heat of the hot sun.

“There is nothing to see now,” said Pam. “No conkers, no flowers, just leaves.”

“Have a closer look,” said Mum.

“I can see some prickly round things, here,” said Sam.

“And there are some here too,” said Pam, inspecting a twig.

“Ah! You have found them,” said Mum.

“What are they?” said the children.

“Conkers!” said Mum, “baby conkers.”



“After the flowers fade, the conkers start to grow. At first they are small,”

explained Mum.

“They have a

green, prickly case to keep them safe. By the autumn, the conkers will be ripe and they will begin to fall from the tree.”

“And then we can come conker hunting again!” exclaimed Sam.

“Yes, we can” said Mum.

“Now you know the story of the Horse Chestnut tree!”

