

OTTO DISCOVERS FM



by Linda Hutsell-Manning

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PEOPLE FIRST

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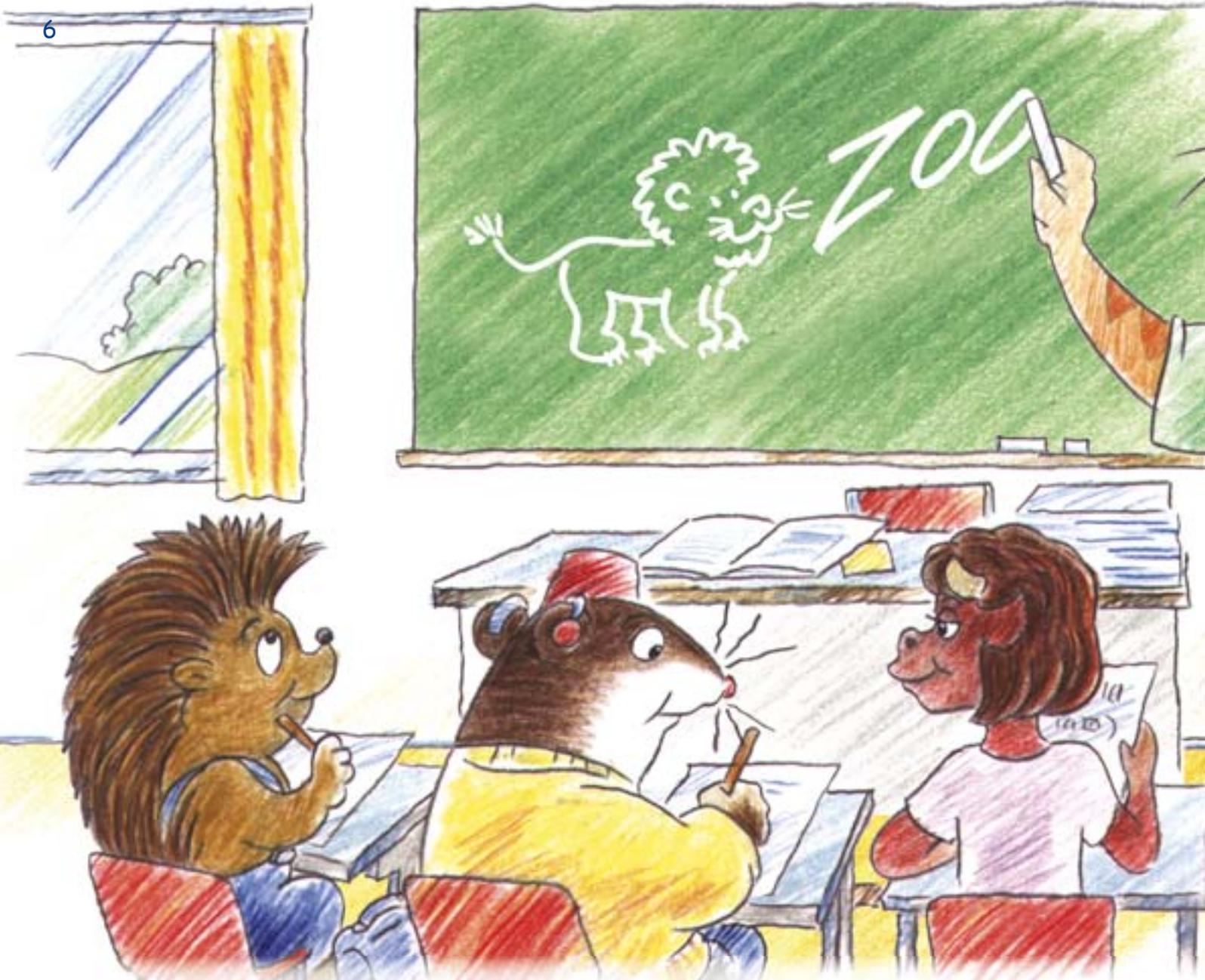
"Today is a special day for you," Otto's dad said, handing Otto his book bag. Otto frowned. "I can't hear you dad. The car engine is too loud." Otto's mom turned to him. "We're meeting with the school audiologist today," she added. Otto frowned again. "It's hard to hear you, mom." Otto's dad turned off the car engine "I just remembered," Otto said, opening the car door. "Today's a special day for me. I'm getting my FM system!"



"What did you do on the weekend?" Emily asked. Otto's friends all answered at the same time. "I...car.... movie," Bruno said quickly. "We...all day.... park," Kate said, excitedly. "Dad ...uncle.... grandma," Eric told them quietly. Otto wished they would take turns so he could hear more clearly.



"What did you do, Otto?" Bruno asked. "Not much," Otto replied. He didn't feel like talking when he couldn't hear what his friends were saying. There was too much other noise in the classroom. His dad had told him the FM system would make a big difference. But when would he get it?



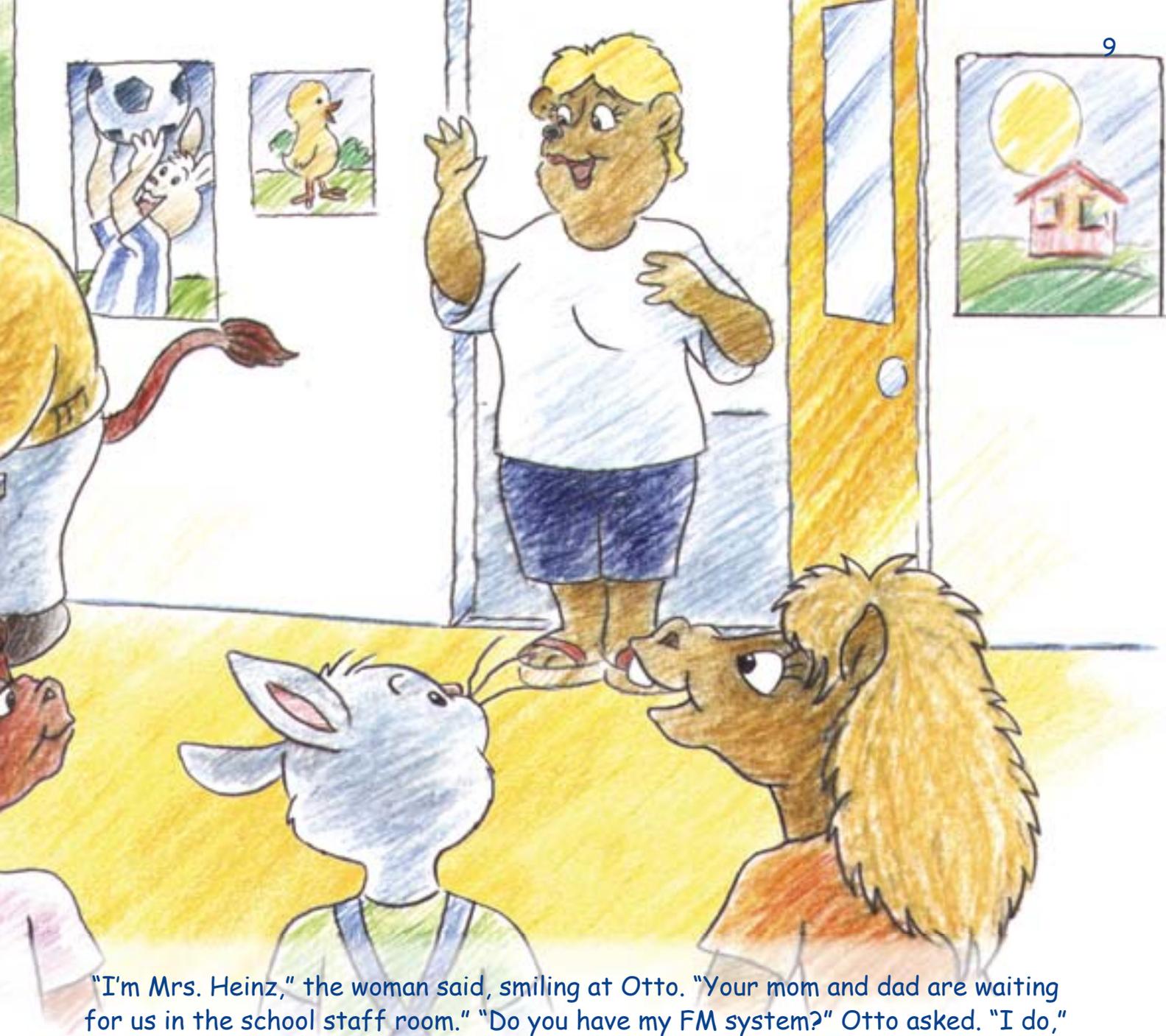
"Good morning children," Miss Mercier said. "Today we will work in groups." She printed 'A Visit to the Zoo on the blackboard'. The teacher's helper, Mr. Campa, placed a sheet of paper on each table. The paper at Otto's table said 'Big Cats'. "Work quietly together," Miss Mercier said. "Print the animal's name or draw its picture on your paper."



Everyone talked and words jumbled together. Otto loved the Zoo and knew the names of all the big cats. His friends printed words and drew pictures. Otto watched and said nothing.



Miss Mercier bent down and tapped Otto on the shoulder. "Time to get your FM system," she said, smiling. When Otto heard FM, he jumped out of his seat. Miss Mercier pointed to the open door where a woman was waiting. "Thanks," Otto said, grinning.



"I'm Mrs. Heinz," the woman said, smiling at Otto. "Your mom and dad are waiting for us in the school staff room." "Do you have my FM system?" Otto asked. "I do," Mrs. Heinz replied. "It's called Amigo." "Cool," Otto said "Just like a friend." "This way" Mrs. Heinz said, walking down the hall.



"Otto will hear more clearly with this FM system," Mrs. Heinz began, holding it up. She turned to Otto. "Can you hear me talking, Otto?" Otto nodded. "It's quiet in here," Otto replied, "I can hear every word." "Good," Mrs. Heinz said. "Otto only has problems when there's other noise around him or if we talk to him from far away," Otto's mom said.



"The first thing I will do is check that your hearing aids and the FM system work well together," Mrs. Heinz said, "to make sure they are just loud enough." Otto nodded and handed Mrs. Heinz both his hearing aids.



Mrs. Heinz quickly fastened an FM receiver to each of Otto's hearing aids. "Let's test the FM system out here in the hallway first," Mrs. Heinz said, handing the transmitter to Otto's dad. "Walk part way down the hall and then turn it on." Otto heard his parents' footsteps clunk clunking down the hall. And voices from other classrooms. And someone running down the stairs.



"I think you will hear your parents' voices clearly," Mrs. Heinz said. "How's that new FM system working?" his dad asked. "Can you hear us over here?" his mom added. Otto looked amazed. "I can hear both of you," he said, excitedly. "Just as if you're right beside me."



"Is it always this noisy at recess?" Otto's mom asked, grinning. Otto nodded. "Otto, may I use one of your hearing aids for a moment?" Mrs. Heinz asked. Otto handed her one. He watched her connect a stetoclip to it. "This stetoclip will let you hear what Otto hears through his hearing aids." Mrs. Heinz handed it to Otto's dad. "You'll see what a difference the FM system makes."



"Can you hear me, dad?" Otto asked. "I can," Otto's dad replied, listening through the stetoclip, "in spite of all the noise." "Can we use the FM system at home?" Otto's mom asked, putting the stetoclip to her ear. Mrs. Heinz nodded. "If you put the transmitter in the middle of the supper table" she explained, "Otto will hear everyone better. If you plug it into the TV, Otto will hear without turning up the sound."



Miss Mercier stepped quietly into the hall. "Do you have your FM system, Otto?" she asked. "Yes, Miss Mercier," Otto replied, "and it's amazing. It's called Amigo and it lets me hear voices so well." Miss Mercier nodded and smiled. "An extra friend! You'll hear more clearly in the classroom, now," she said.



Mrs. Heinz handed the FM transmitter to Miss Mercier. "This is the on/off switch," she explained. "You can clip the microphone to your belt or place the cord around your neck." Miss Mercier placed the cord around her neck and turned on the transmitter. "Can you hear me?" she asked Otto. "It sounds like you are right beside me," Otto said, grinning. "I can hear you so clearly."



"What are your students learning about this morning, Miss Mercier?" Mrs. Heinz asked. "We are studying zoo animals," Miss Mercier replied. "My table is talking about Big Cats," Otto added. "I know all their names."



"Does Otto answer questions in class?" Mrs. Heinz asked. "Not often," Miss Mercier replied. "He seems to be a shy student." "I'm not shy," Otto said, loudly. "I just couldn't hear the questions." "May we tell your class about the FM system, Otto?" Mrs. Heinz asked. "Oh, yes," Otto replied, grinning. "I'd like you to tell them all about it."

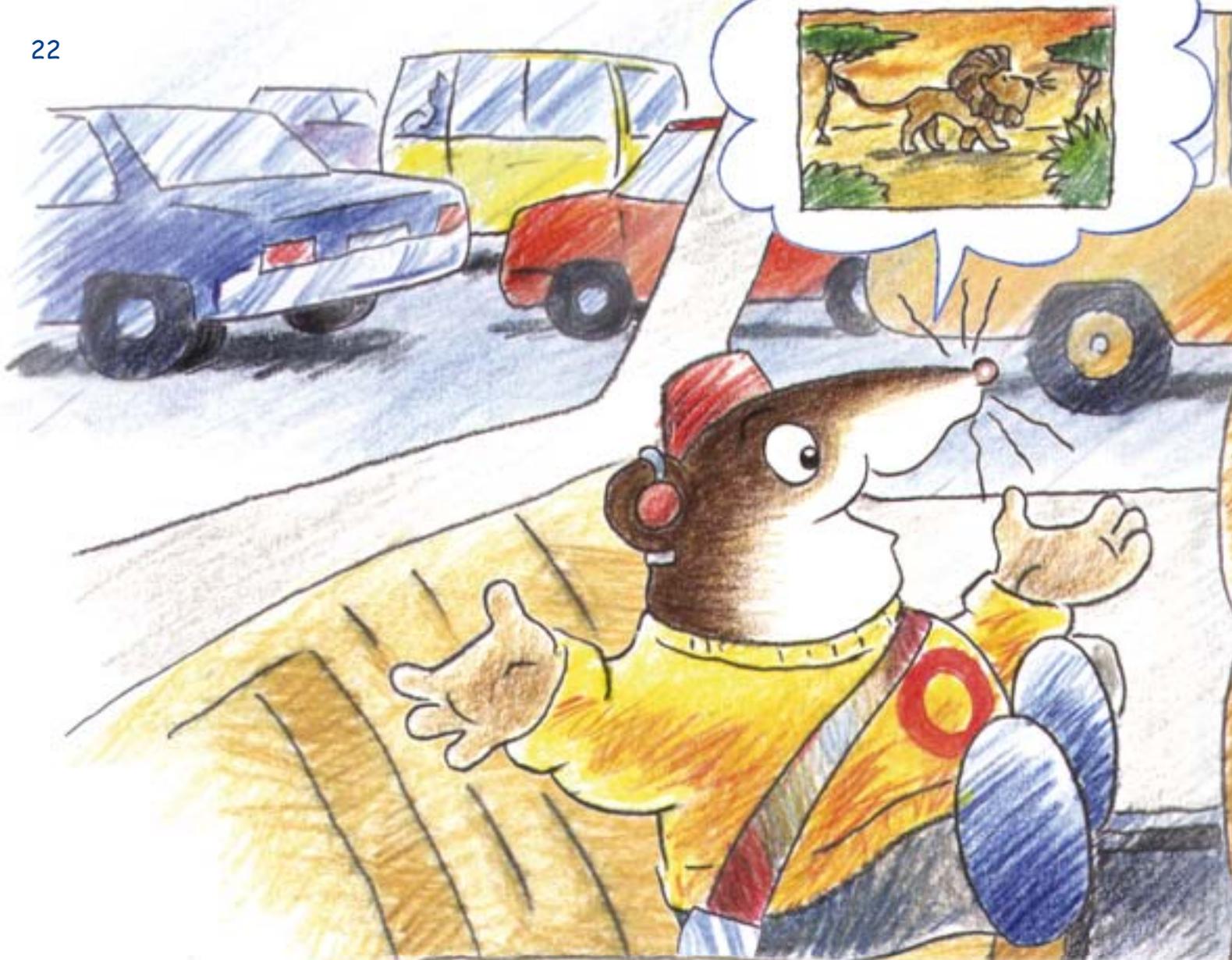


"Otto has an FM system to help him hear more clearly," Mrs. Heinz said, holding up the FM transmitter to show the class. Otto stood beside her. He was excited and a little nervous. What if the FM system didn't work as well here?

"Otto has a tiny FM receiver fastened to each of his hearing aids," Mrs. Heinz began, pointing to them. Otto felt a little self-conscious.



"I'll put the FM transmitter, here, on Otto's table." Just then, the recess bell rang. Kids' voices and footsteps echoed in the hallway. "Cool," Eric said, looking at the FM system. "It's like an astronaut's two way radio." "I think it's like a super hero's cell phone," Emily added. Otto grinned. "I hear both of you," he said, happily. "It works, Mrs. Heinz. My Amigo FM system works here, too."



Otto watched cars and trucks whizzing by in the oncoming lane. "Do I have the FM system in the right place?" his dad asked. "It must be, Otto said, grinning. "I can hear you clearly over the road noise."

"What did you learn in school today?" his dad continued. "We talked about zoo animals," Otto said. "Then we watched a movie about where big cats live. I could hear the movie and, best of all, I could hear what Miss Mercier was saying."



Outside, cars passed and, in the distance, a siren wailed. "Your cousins, Mike and Maria will be with us for supper," Otto's dad said. "Great," Otto replied. "I'll show them how super my FM system is." "I'd better help you with your homework before they arrive," his dad added, "so you can watch TV afterward."



"Testing, testing," Otto's dad said with a grin. "I hear you loud and clear," Otto replied, handing his dad a piece of paper. Otto's dad looked at the paper. "A...," he said, smiling, "like apple." Otto listened. "Like air and alligator and ankle," he replied, confidently.

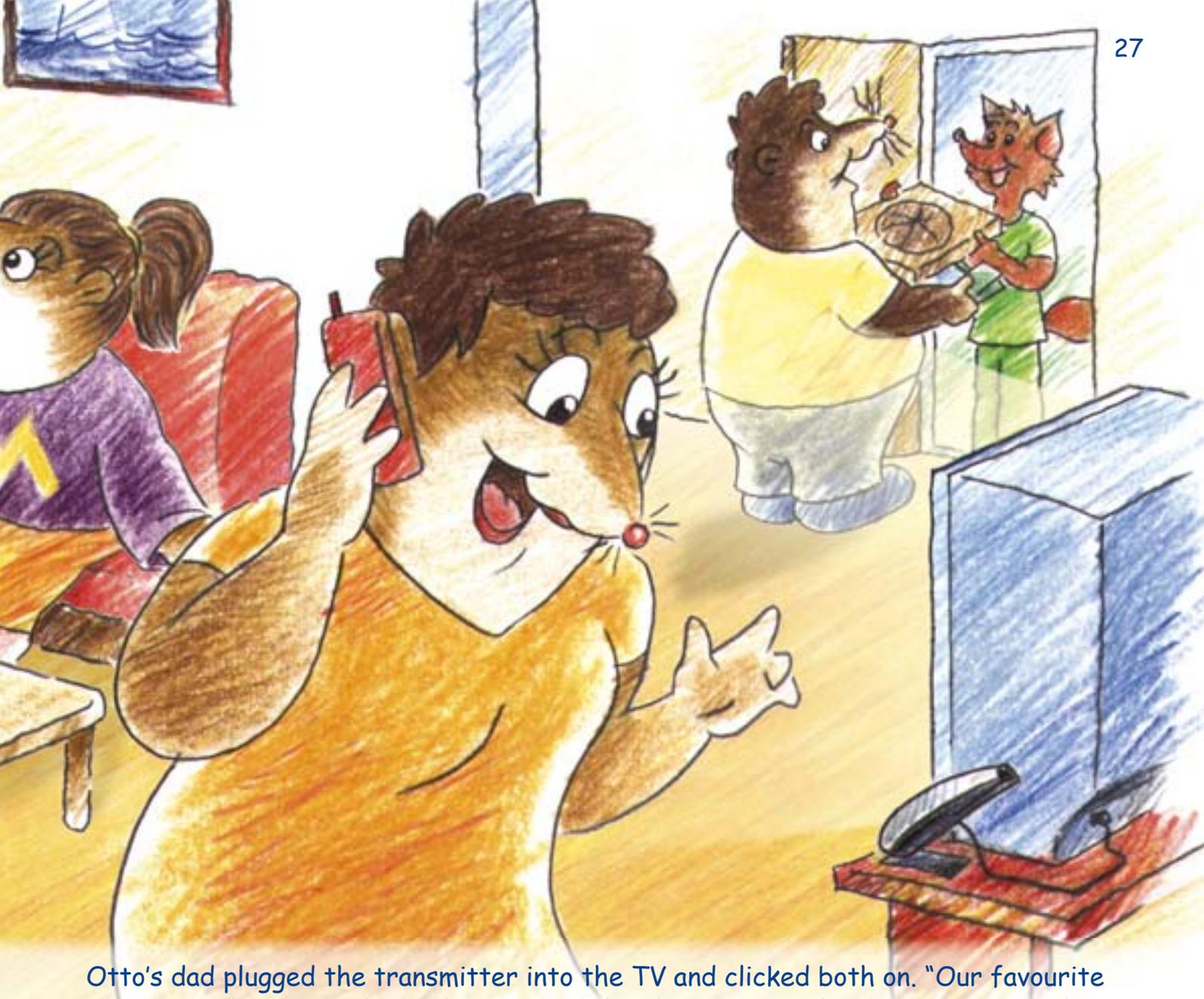
Just then the phone rang and Otto's mom started talking to his cousins' mom. Talking and talking.



"B..." his dad continued, "Like bus." This was amazing. Otto could hear his dad, every word. "Like bark and bag and bug," he said. Even though his mom was laughing and talking on the phone. "C..." his dad continued, "like cat. "Like catch and caterpillar and car," Otto replied, bouncing on the chair seat. "And camels and clocks and caramel candy." "Your cousins will be here in fifteen minutes," his mom called from the kitchen. "And I've ordered pizza for supper."



"That's my new Amigo FM system," Otto said, pointing to the transmitter on the coffee table. "What does it do?" his cousin Maria asked. "It helps me hear what I want to hear more clearly," Otto replied. "It looks cool," Mike added. "I thought it was an MP3 player."



Otto's dad plugged the transmitter into the TV and clicked both on. "Our favourite show is just starting," he said. Just then the phone rang and Otto's mom jumped up to answer. Otto was so interested in the program, he barely heard her talking. A little later, the doorbell rang. Otto's dad jumped up. Otto smelled pizza Yum, he thought, grinning and hugging his knees.



"Would you like another piece of pizza, Otto?" his mom said. "Yes, please," Otto replied. Glasses and cutlery clattered against the tabletop but, now, Otto could hear his mom clearly. Maria giggled and looked up at him. "You're eating lots of pizza tonight," she said. "I think hearing makes Otto hungrier," Otto's dad said, winking at him.



Otto's mom poured more milk into their glasses. Otto heard the milk jug clink against each glass. "Are you still playing soccer, Mike?" she asked. "We're in the finals," Mike said. "Our team is the best this year." This is MY best day, Otto thought. I can hear what I want to hear.



Otto's dad put the FM transmitter on Otto's dresser and, with a special cord, plugged it into an outlet. "Every night we must plug in your FM transmitter with this cord," his dad said. "Another thing to remember," his mom added, smiling. "I don't mind," Otto said, jumping into his bed and pulling up the covers.



"At night, I'll pretend my FM system is my cell phone charging." "It is like a phone," his dad said, sitting on the bed. "It lets you hear voices clearly." "Without all the annoying background noise," his mom added, bending down to give him a kiss. "See you in the morning," Otto said, sleepily, handing her his hearing aids. "Good night mom and dad. Goodnight FM system."



"Mrs. Heinz gave us our own stetoclip," Otto's mom said, "so we can listen to your FM system and hearing aids. "Cool," Otto replied, watching her check both. "And I bought extra batteries for your transmitter," his dad added.



"Are you ready for school?" Otto's mom asked, handing him his jacket. "I did my homework," Otto said, closing his school bag. "I have my Amigo FM system and extra batteries." "Let's go," his dad said. "You don't want to be late."



"I'm ready!"

Otto wears hearing aids. In this book you will learn how he discovers FM - a system that can help him hear even better with his hearing aids in school and at home. Otto and his parents will learn how to use FM, and he will show the cool new system to his cousins Mike and Maria when they visit for pizza!



www.otikids.com



For ages 5 years and up