

Digiduck's BIG Decision



Written by **Lindsay Buck**, *Childnet International*
Illustrated by **Ciara Flood**

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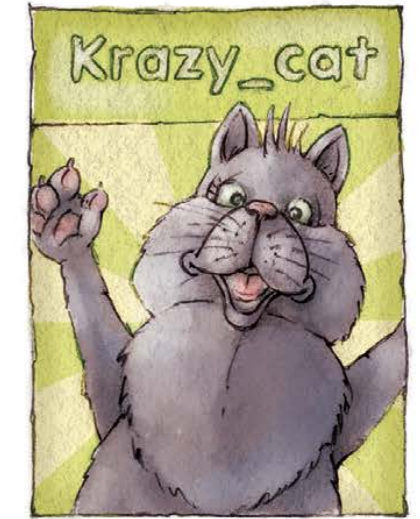
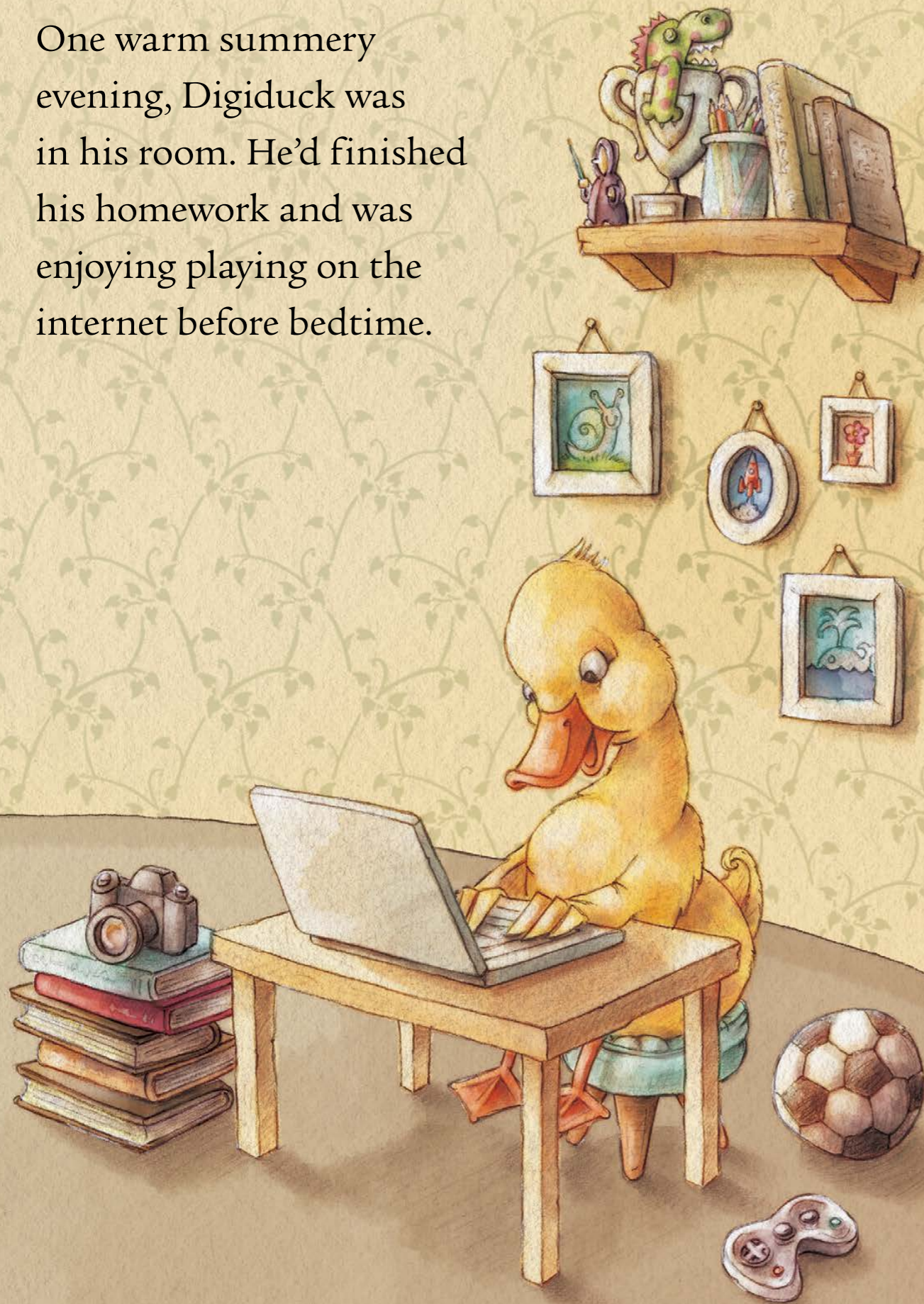
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One warm summery evening, Digiduck was in his room. He'd finished his homework and was enjoying playing on the internet before bedtime.

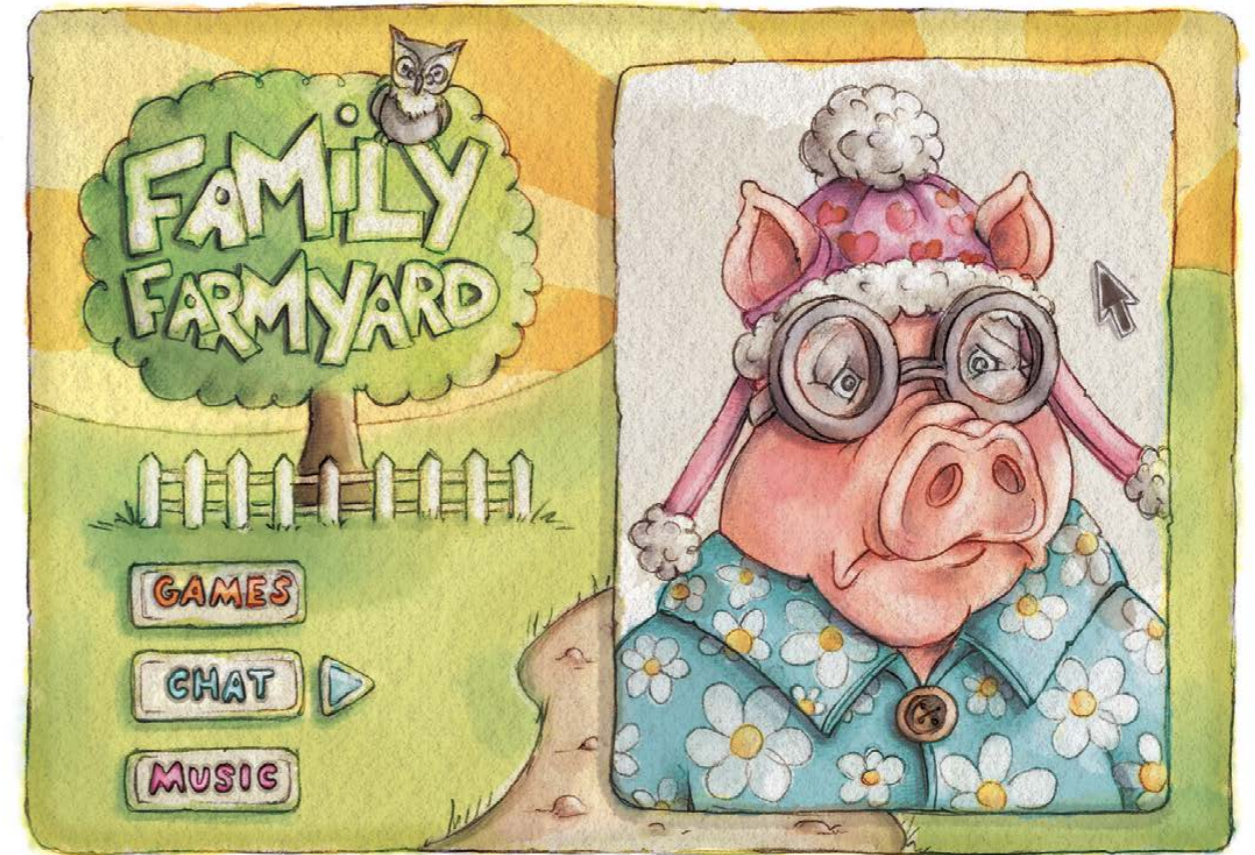


Family Farmyard was his favourite website. He could play games and chat to his friends. Great fun! Many animals liked to play at the Farmyard, including Digiduck's best friends from school.

Digiduck's screen went ping and he saw a new message from a friend. "How exciting!" he thought. He opened it and giggled.



Someone had made a picture of Proud.pig looking very silly indeed. "That is so funny!" chuckled Digiduck. "I must show my friends."



Before he could send the photo to everyone, Mummy Duck called up the stairs, "Bedtime darling duck! Wash your feathers, hop into bed and I'll be up as quick as a flap to tuck you in."

Digiduck felt sleepy so didn't argue, he didn't want to be tired for Proud.pig's party tomorrow. "I'll send the photo in the morning," he decided. Soon enough he was sound asleep.

The sky grew dark and the stars were shining brightly. All that could be heard were the soothing snores of Mr and Mrs Duck.



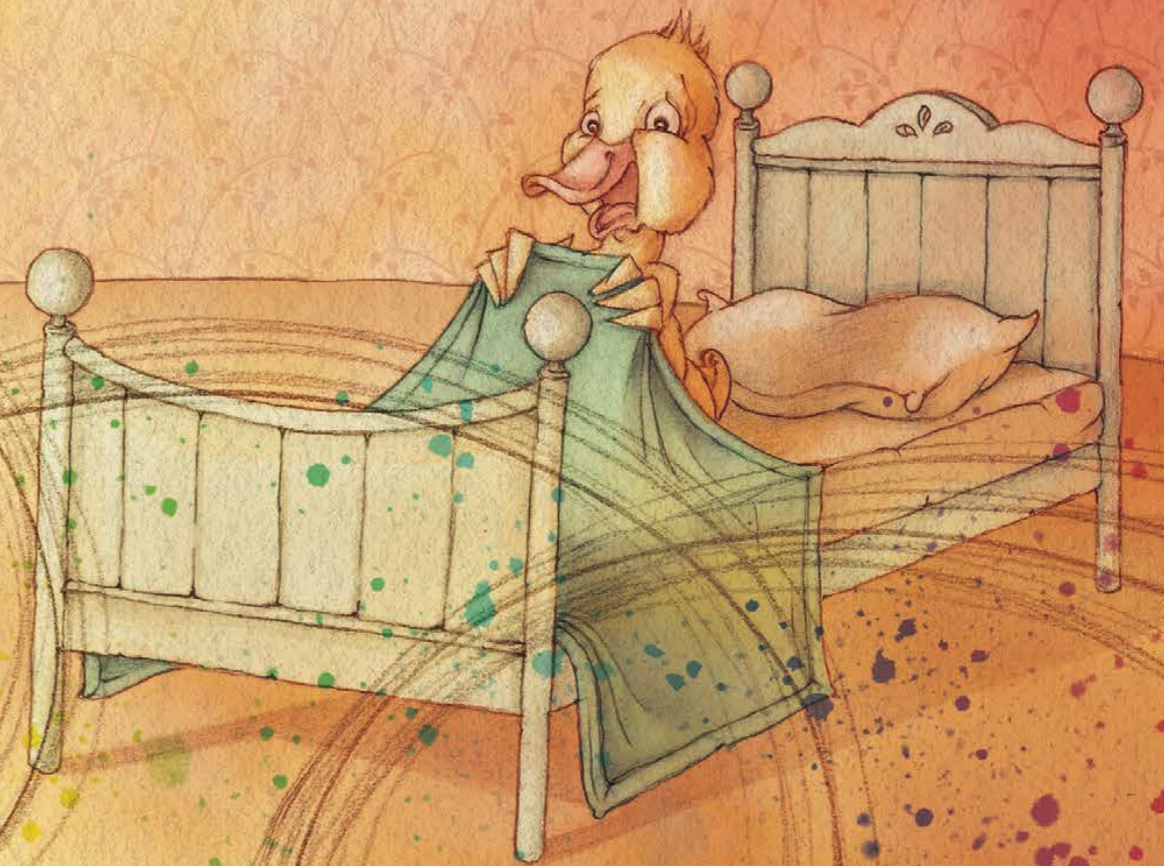
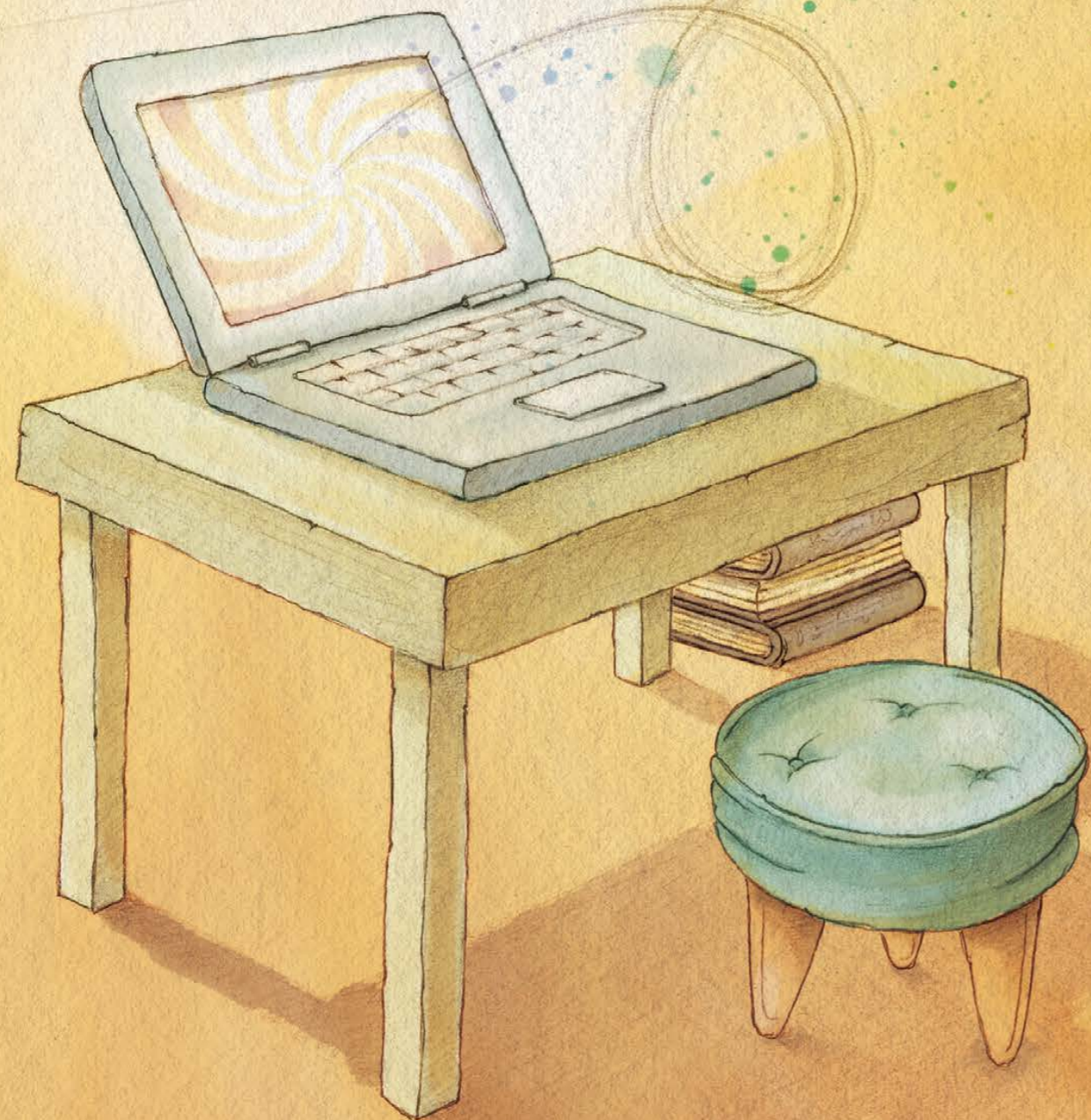
All of a sudden, a mysterious glow filled the room...



A dazzling flash and a loud

soon had Digiduck sitting up in bed wide awake!

wheeee



He watched in amazement as a large ball of feathers hurtled out of the screen and rolled across the floor.

Digiduck was looking at an old owl, grey from tip to tail. “Wise_Owl,” said the owl, peering over his spectacles and holding out a wing to shake.



“Ooof! I always have trouble with the landing,” muttered the tangle of feathers as it straightened itself up and dusted itself down.

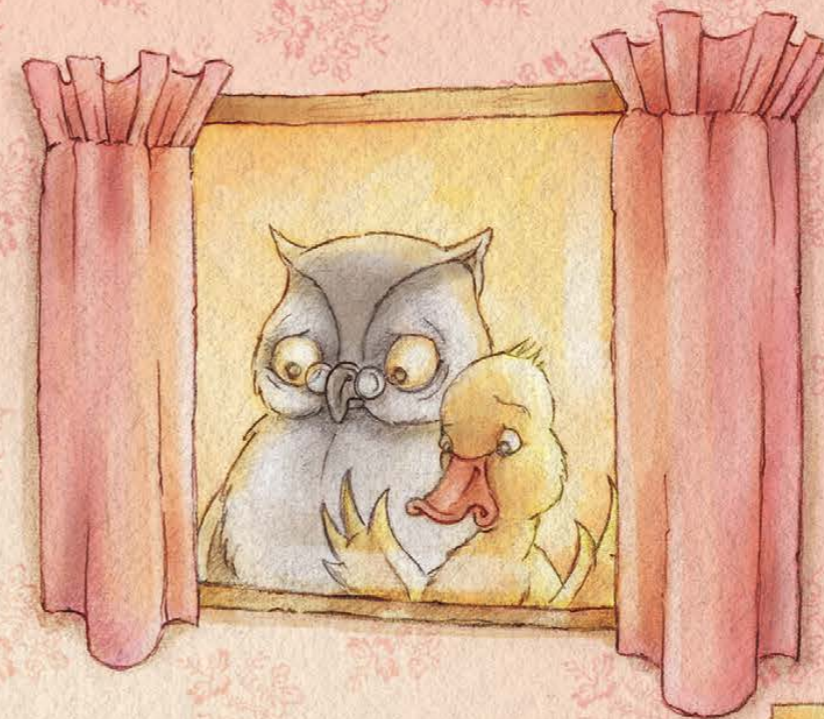
“I know you!” exclaimed Digiduck.
“You’re in charge of the Farmyard website.”
Wise_Owl smiled and said, “I’m here for
a very important matter. You’re thinking
of sending that photo, so I’m going to show
you what might happen if you do.”

There was no time to ask what on earth
Wise_Owl was talking about!



He swiftly scooped Digiduck up and they flew
out into the night, off through time, to the future...

After a bumpy flight they landed outside Shy-Sheep's cottage. Digiduck peered inside and saw his best friends gathered together.



Cool.cow had brought a game that they all wanted to play.

“Why am I not there?” asked Digiduck, confused.
“We always play together.”
“Unfortunately you haven’t been invited,”
replied Wise_Owl.

“After you sent the photo, Shy-Sheep found Proud.pig crying in the playground. She was very sad to see Proud.pig so upset, especially as the picture had come from you Digiduck. You’re supposed to be friends.”

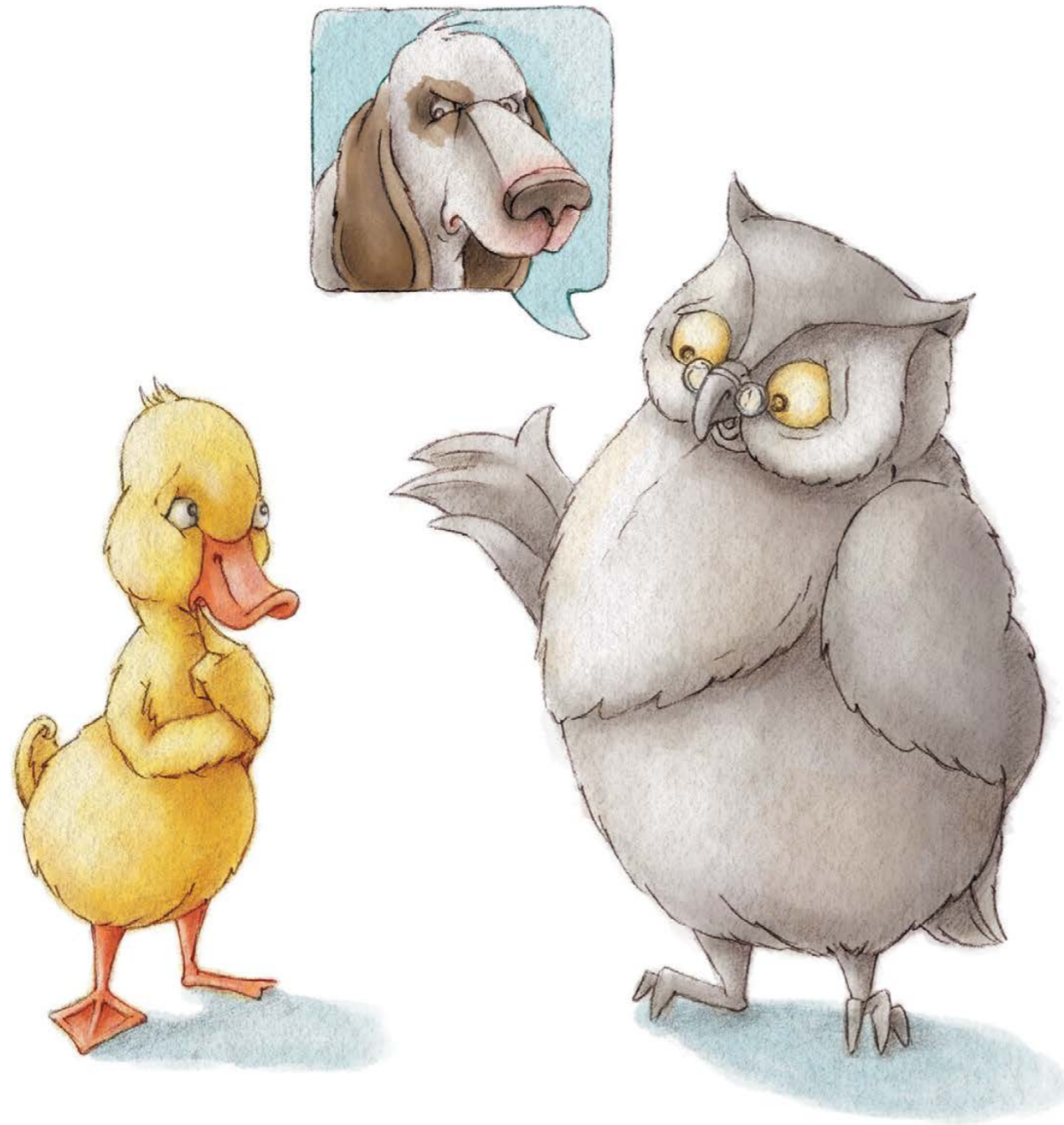


“It was only a joke!” said Digiduck in surprise. Wise_Owl picked him up and off they zoomed.

Next they flew across a field and hovered over a barn. It was Proud.pig’s party and DJ-Dog was playing!



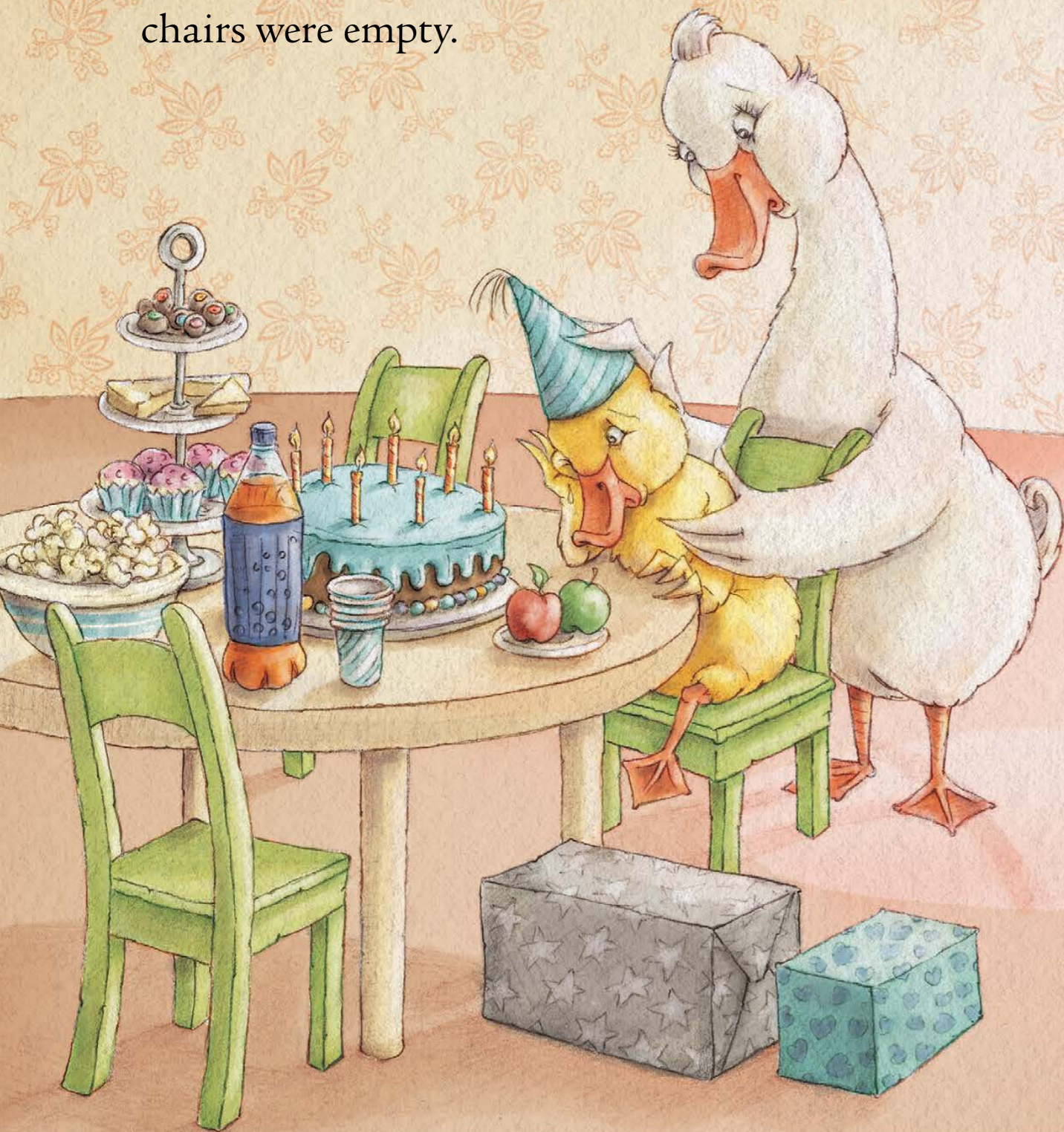
“I’m not there either,” noticed Digiduck.
“I’m afraid Proud.pig changed his mind,”
said Wise_Owl. “Everyone at school was calling
him names after they saw his photo and
DJ-Dog was very cross that you had sent it.”



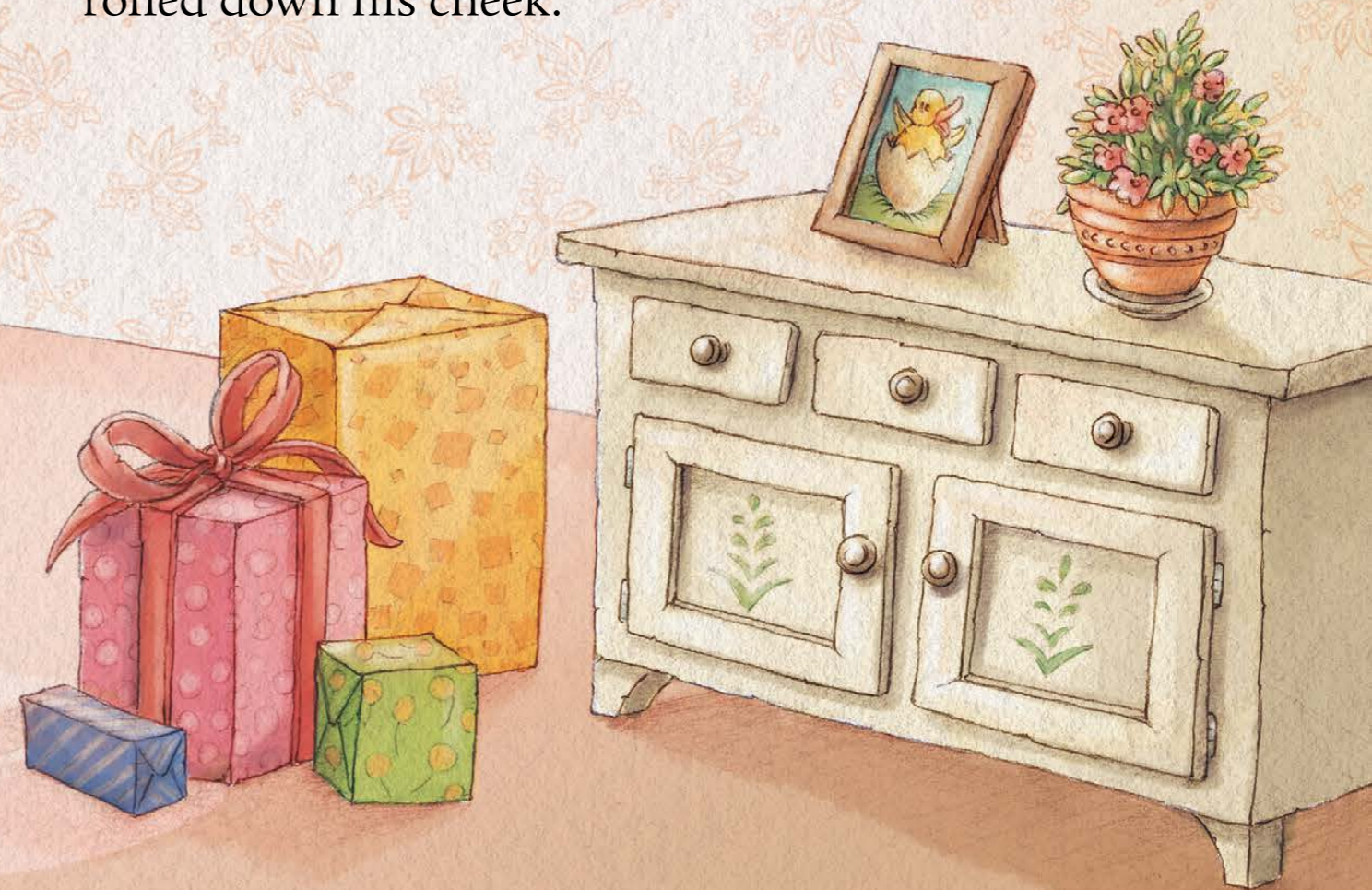
“Oh,” mumbled Digiduck,
“I was looking forward to that party.”
Wise_Owl nodded and off they sped.
The last stop looked very familiar.
“This is my house!” cried Digiduck.



Through the window, Digiduck saw himself sitting at the table. In front of him was a delicious cake with candles and colourful frosting. However, all the other chairs were empty.



“It’s my birthday, where are all my friends?” wept Digiduck, as tears rolled down his cheek.



Wise_Owl knew that Digiduck had seen enough. He wrapped his wings around him and off they whizzed.



“And it didn’t stop there,” continued Wise_Owl.
“People laughed at Proud.pig for a long time because his picture was on the internet. Your friends were very worried that you might make fun of them too.”

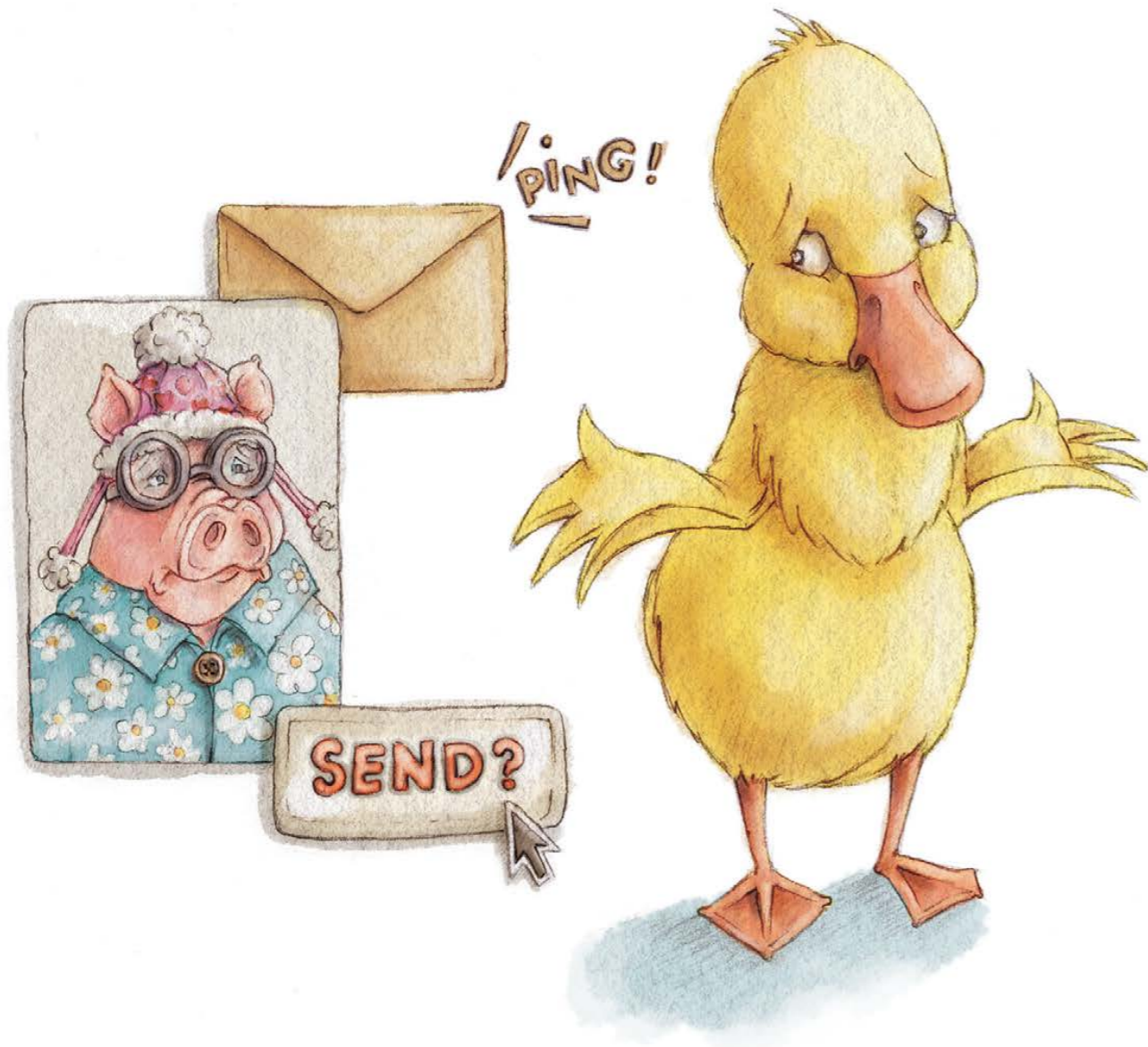
On the journey back through time, poor Digiduck was feeling sad and puzzled. He really needed some help, so Wise_Owl explained everything.

“It all started when you sent that photo to your friends. Everyone in school had seen it by lunchtime. Proud.pig was extremely upset.”



Digiduck suddenly understood that if he sent the photo, it could cause a terrible muddle.
“I didn’t think anyone would mind,
I just wanted to make my friends laugh.
Sometimes we say and do silly things...
but I never mean to be unkind,” he whispered.

Back in Digiduck’s room, Wise_Owl drew the covers and comforted him softly,
“I know that, but sadly your friends didn’t.”



“Digiduck,” he said gently, “you are a lovely duck and a great friend. The internet is a wonderful place to have fun, but you need to behave as you do in the real world. Say kind things to your friends and make sensible choices.”

And with that, Wise_Owl vanished.
The sun rose in the sky and Digiduck woke up.
“The photo!” he remembered.



He rushed across the room and the message was still there, just as it was last night. Digiduck was over the moon! He skipped and sang, "I can do the right thing!"



"But what should we do? Who should we tell?" asked Mummy Duck. "We must tell the Family Farmyard website!" replied Digiduck happily.



Mummy Duck removed the picture and they sent it back to Wise_Owl. Digiduck smiled, Wise_Owl would be so pleased with him.

Proud.pig's party after school was terrific and Digiduck enjoyed it more than anybody knew. He brought his camera and took photos that he and his friends all agreed were magnificent.

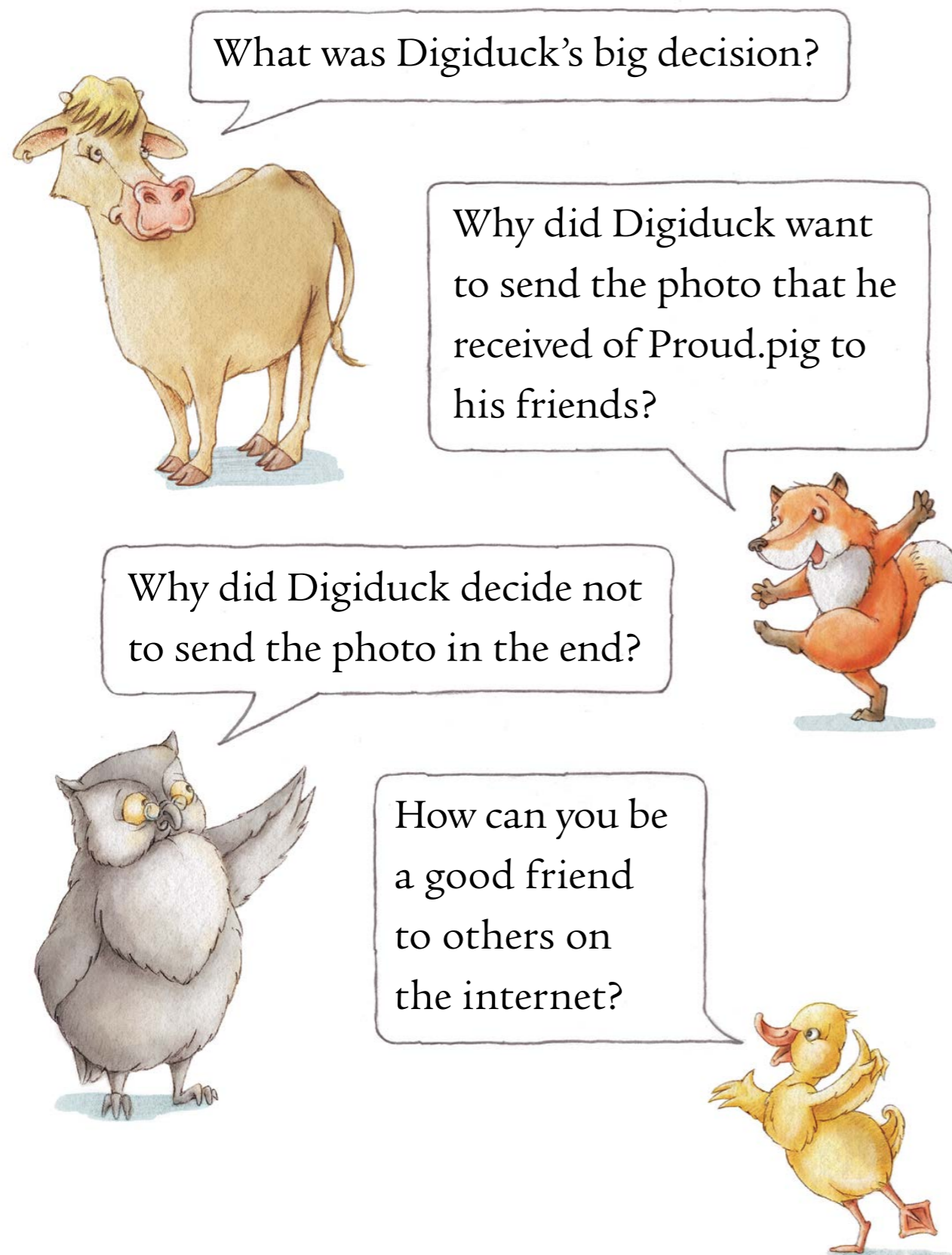


Digiduck knew he had been given a second chance and promised to do his best to look after others on the internet.



As he shared his photos with his friends, he cheerfully looked forward to everything that they would enjoy together in the future.

Talk about the story



For parents and carers



Keeping children safe online

Children love using technology and are learning to navigate websites, online games and consoles, and touch screen technology like iPads and smartphones from a young age. Children need support in these environments, to get the best out of using the internet right from the start.



Where do I start?

The best way to keep your family safe online, and to understand your children's internet use, is to use the internet together. Be positive and embrace the technologies that your children enjoy using, and look out for any safety features that may be available.



Should I set any rules?

Creating a family agreement is a useful way to establish your expectations regarding online activities. It might include time spent online, sites that can be visited, and behaviour expected; remember, what's right and wrong offline is also right and wrong online.



How can I supervise my child?

Placing your computer or laptop in a busy part of the house can make it easier for you to be involved in your child's technology use. Portable devices, for example smartphones, iPod Touch, games consoles and tablets can still be supervised and used where you can see them.



How much time is too much time?

There are some strategies that can be used to help manage time spent online, such as agreeing time limits or using time limiting tools, designating weekly times to use the internet together, or removing portable devices from your child's bedroom at night to avoid tiredness.



Are there tools to help?

Your internet service provider, and your mobile phone operator, will provide free filters to help block age inappropriate content for children. The websites of device manufacturers (e.g. games consoles) also outline the controls to which you have access. Parental controls are a great help, but not a complete solution, and work best in combination with supervision and engagement, to help your children understand how to stay safe online.



What advice can I give my child?

Education is the best tool that a child can have, so discuss the importance of telling an adult immediately if someone, or something, upsets them online. Other immediate strategies to deal with unwanted content or contact could include; switch the screen off, close the laptop, exit the website, or turn the iPad or phone over and put it down. It is also important that your child realises that other internet users may not be who they say they are and that 'friends' made online are still strangers, so all personal information should be kept safe.



What games are ok for my child to play?

There are many different online games and playing experiences, e.g. computers, consoles, internet games and apps. Gaming may be the first way that your child encounters life online. Some games however are for older audiences and contain language or images that are not suitable for children. Therefore it is important that the games your children play are the correct age rating, which is determined by the game's content.

Playing games yourself can be fun and will also enable you to identify the safety features provided, such as reporting to a moderator, and help you identify whether in-app adverts are displayed or purchasing is allowed. You can disable 'in-app' purchasing on a number of devices within the settings.



Where can I report?

Reports can be made to websites through safety/help centres and moderation services. If you are suspicious about the behaviour of others online, reports can be made to CEOP and inappropriate media content, online and offline can be reported via Parentport. Criminal content online can also be reported to the IWF.



For the full advice, visit childnet.com/parents-and-carers.



Childnet

Childnet International is a UK-based charity working in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children and young people. Since January 2011, Childnet has formed part of the UK Safer Internet Centre and was an original member of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).

Childnet focuses on education, awareness, and policy, for a range of audiences – children and young people, parents and carers, those working with children, and those providing the internet services that they use. Our education work in schools aims to enable children of all ages to use interactive technologies safely and responsibly.

For more information and advice, please visit www.childnet.com



UK Safer Internet Centre

Childnet International is a partner in the UK Safer Internet Centre with the South West Grid for Learning and the Internet Watch Foundation. This project is co-funded by the European Union through the Safer Internet plus programme.

For more information, please visit www.saferinternet.org.uk



Microsoft

Learning how to be a good friend online is now a key part of a young person's development. Parents play an important role in teaching kids how to safely navigate the many positive opportunities the Internet and new technologies provide. *Digiduck's Big Decision* will help you talk with young children about how their actions online – even in fun – can affect others. This tender tale of a young duckling makes a strong point about how to be considerate online.

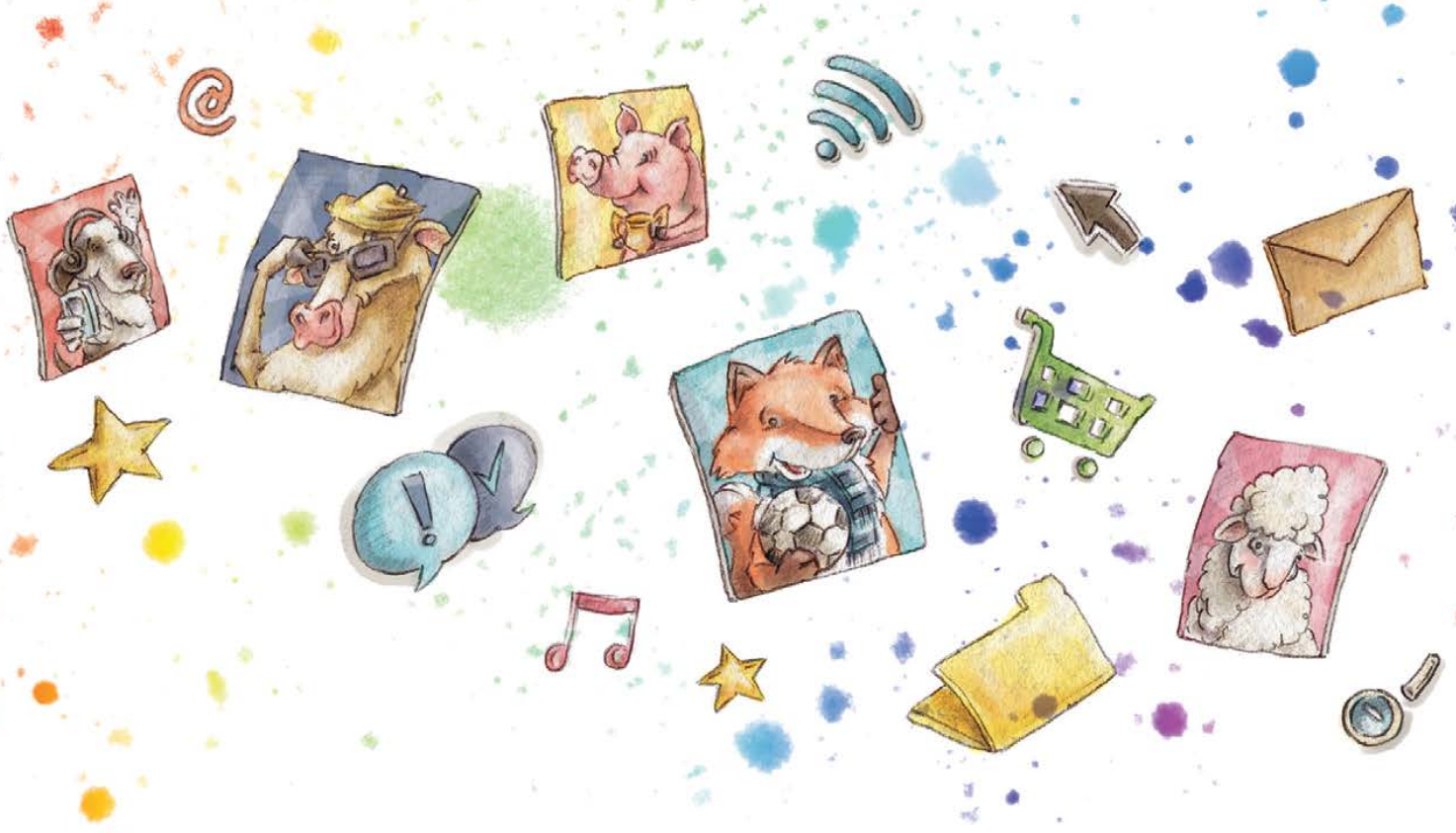
Microsoft is pleased to support the publication by Childnet International of *Digiduck's Big Decision* and its contribution to the online safety of families everywhere.

For advice on how to help children and families stay safer online, please visit:

- The Microsoft Family Safety Center:
aka.ms/Family_Safety_Center
- Safer Families in the UK:
www.microsoft.com/uk/saferfamilies

Kim Sanchez, Director of Online Safety





Digiduck's screen went ping and he saw a new message from a friend. "How exciting!" he thought. He opened it and giggled.

Help arrives just in time for Digiduck, when faced with a difficult decision! Follow Digiduck and his pals in this story of friendship and responsibility online.

www.childnet.com



Co-funded by the European Union