

LEVELED Book • P

I'm the Small One



MULTI
level
J•M•P

Written by George Anthony Kulz
Illustrated by Begoña Corbalán

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Focus Question

What does the main character learn about herself in this story?

Words to Know

advantages
audience
audition
deliver
emerged

grand finale
limbs
posture
rehearsals

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Level P Leveled Book
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Correlation

LEVEL P	
Fountas & Pinnell	M
Reading Recovery	28
DRA	28



At eight years old, I'm smaller than everyone else my age. When I walk in the halls at school, I have to squeeze in between the bigger kids to get by. Sometimes they bump into me or step on my toes. "Sorry, Sophie—I didn't see you," they say.

At the playground, little kids always want to play with me. Some even try to boss me around.

“Don’t climb up that big slide, little girl,” one kindergartner warned me last week. “You might fall and hurt yourself.”

“I think I’ll be okay,” I said.

She watched me slide down, her mouth gaping open.





My best friend, Casey, is one of the tallest kids in second grade. Her legs are so long that when she walks, I have to jog to keep up with her.

Sometimes grown-ups ask her, “Who’s your little friend?”

One day while I was over at Casey’s house, her grandma thought Casey was babysitting me!



“This is Sophie,” Casey explained,
“my best friend.”

“How sweet,” her grandma said.
She leaned toward me and smiled
brightly. “What grade are you in,
Sophie?” she asked.

“Second grade,” I answered.

She blinked in amazement, then
glanced over at Casey. “Is that true?”
she asked.

That really rubbed me the wrong way.

I used to try to make myself taller whenever I could. My **posture** was perfect, straight as an arrow. I hung from the tree in our backyard to stretch out my **limbs**. I ate all my vegetables . . . even the brussels sprouts.

Every day I measured myself to see if I'd grown any taller, but I was the same height every time. It was frustrating.



“Don’t worry,” Mom said. “I don’t let my size slow me down, and neither should you. Besides, being small has its **advantages**.”

I studied Mom in surprise. I’d never thought of her as small, but I suppose she is. Still, I couldn’t see any advantage to it.

One day, Mrs. Alvarez announced to the class that we’d be putting on a spring play.

“You should try out for the lead role,” Casey encouraged me.

“I don’t think I’ll get it,” I sighed.

“Mrs. Alvarez probably wants someone bigger.”

“Once she sees how good you are, you’ll get the part,” she said.

At the **audition**, I waited with my classmates in the back of the auditorium. When it was my turn, I walked up to the center of the stage. I had practiced all the lines, but I never got a chance to **deliver** them.

“Sophie!” Mrs. Alvarez cried. “You’ll be perfect as the elf! You’re just the right size for the costume.”



When the auditions were finished,
Mom was waiting outside for me.

“Mrs. Alvarez made me an elf,”
I grumbled.

“That sounds like fun,” she said.

“I don’t want to be in the play anymore,”
I said.

“Oh, honey,” she said. “I know you
didn’t get the part you wanted, but I
also know you love acting. I’ll bet you’ll
be the best elf in the play.”

*That won’t be hard to do,
I thought, since I’m the
only elf in the play.*





I only had two lines, but I went to **rehearsals** just to please Mom and Dad.

Mia got the lead role—a girl wandering through a magical fairy forest in search of her lost dog. In the last scene, she finds a box under a giant mushroom, and when she opens it, guess what jumps out?

Mrs. Alvarez's dog, Prince, played the dog role. She brought him to all the rehearsals, and when he wasn't onstage, we got to play with him. He liked all the attention from the other kids, but he seemed to like me best.

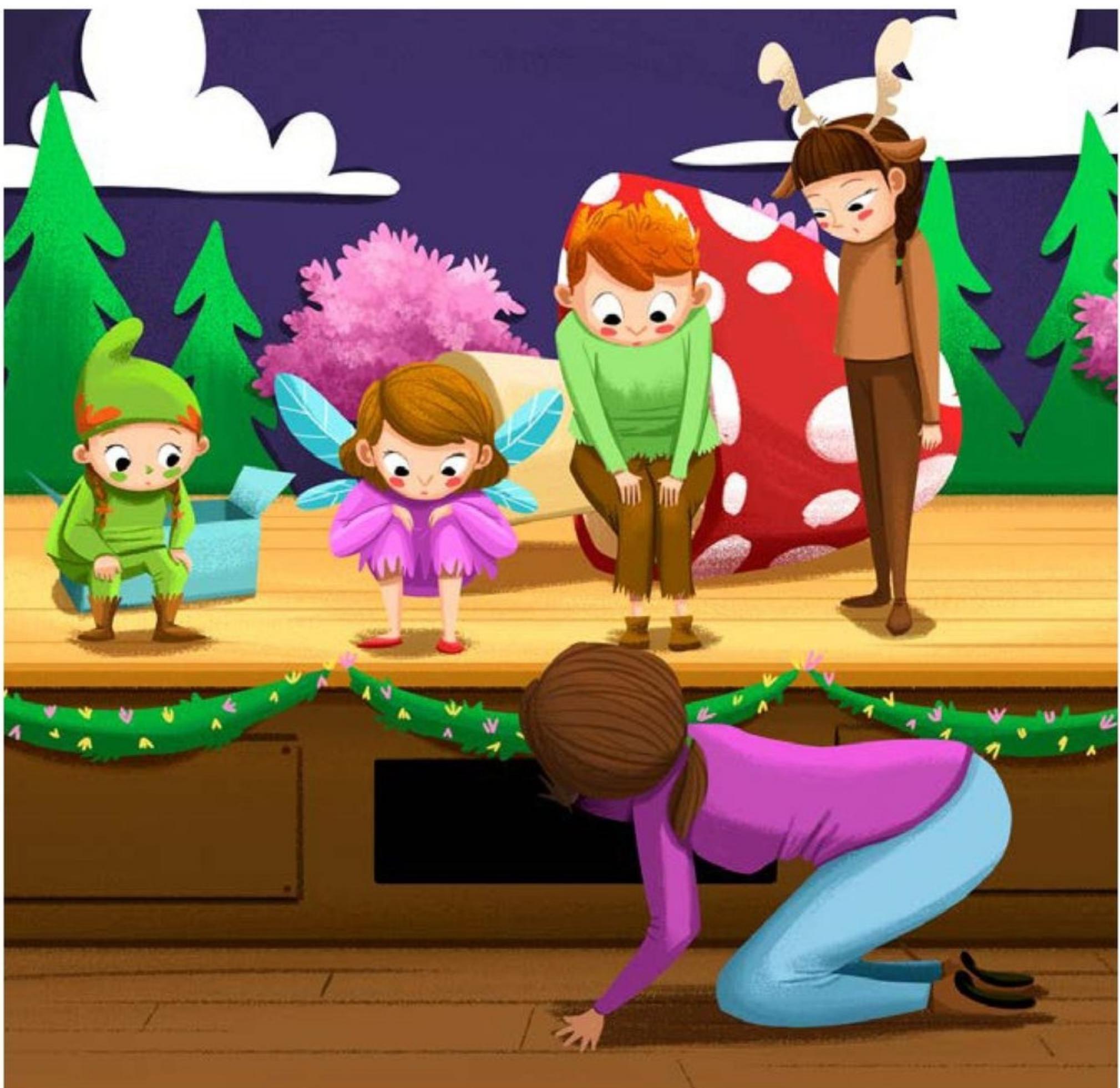
The night of the show, my first line came early: “Let’s ask the Fairy Queen!”

Dramatic stuff.

Since my only other line was toward the end, I waited offstage, taking turns scratching Prince and scratching myself. As a bonus, the elf costume fit me not only like a glove but like a thick, wool, itchy glove.

When it was time for the **grand finale**, Mrs. Alvarez placed Prince inside the box, and then the box was brought onstage.

When Mia opened the box, Prince jumped out as planned, but he jumped into the giant mushroom, which fell over. Not planned. Before Mrs. Alvarez could catch him, the frightened dog leaped off the stage and disappeared underneath it.



Mrs. Alvarez called him, but he whimpered and refused to come out.

The lights came on in the theater, and the **audience** started to fidget in their seats. The entire class gathered at the edge of the stage.

“How are we going to get him out of there?” Mrs. Alvarez asked.

"I'm small enough to squeeze under there," I said. "I'll get him."

I crawled through the dust and the cobwebs beneath the stage until I reached Prince. In the dark, I could hardly see him, but as I talked to him softly, he licked my face.





When we **emerged** together, the audience clapped and cheered. I guess every dog has its day. In fact, we got more applause than the stars at the end of the show. My parents were proud, and so was I.

After that, I stopped worrying so much about my size. In fact, I decided that Mom was right, after all: being small has its advantages.

Glossary

advantages (n.)	positive situations or features, often ones that put a person in a favorable position (p. 8)
audience (n.)	a group of people gathered to see and hear a performance or presentation (p. 13)
audition (n.)	a performance by an actor, dancer, or musician done as a tryout for a new role or position (p. 9)
deliver (v.)	to say something to a group of people, often in a formal or dramatic manner (p. 9)
emerged (v.)	came into view; came out (p. 15)
grand finale (n.)	the end of a performance or show, which is often exciting or extraordinary (p. 12)
limbs (n.)	arms, legs, or wings (p. 7)
posture (n.)	the way someone holds his or her body when sitting or standing (p. 7)
rehearsals (n.)	repeated acts of practicing for a play, concert, or other performance (p. 11)

I'm the Small One

A Reading A-Z Level P Leveled Book

Word Count: 899

Connections

Writing and Art

Draw a picture of yourself.

Label the picture with at least five things you like about yourself.

Math

Measure the height of some classmates.

Record their heights and put them in order from shortest to tallest.



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