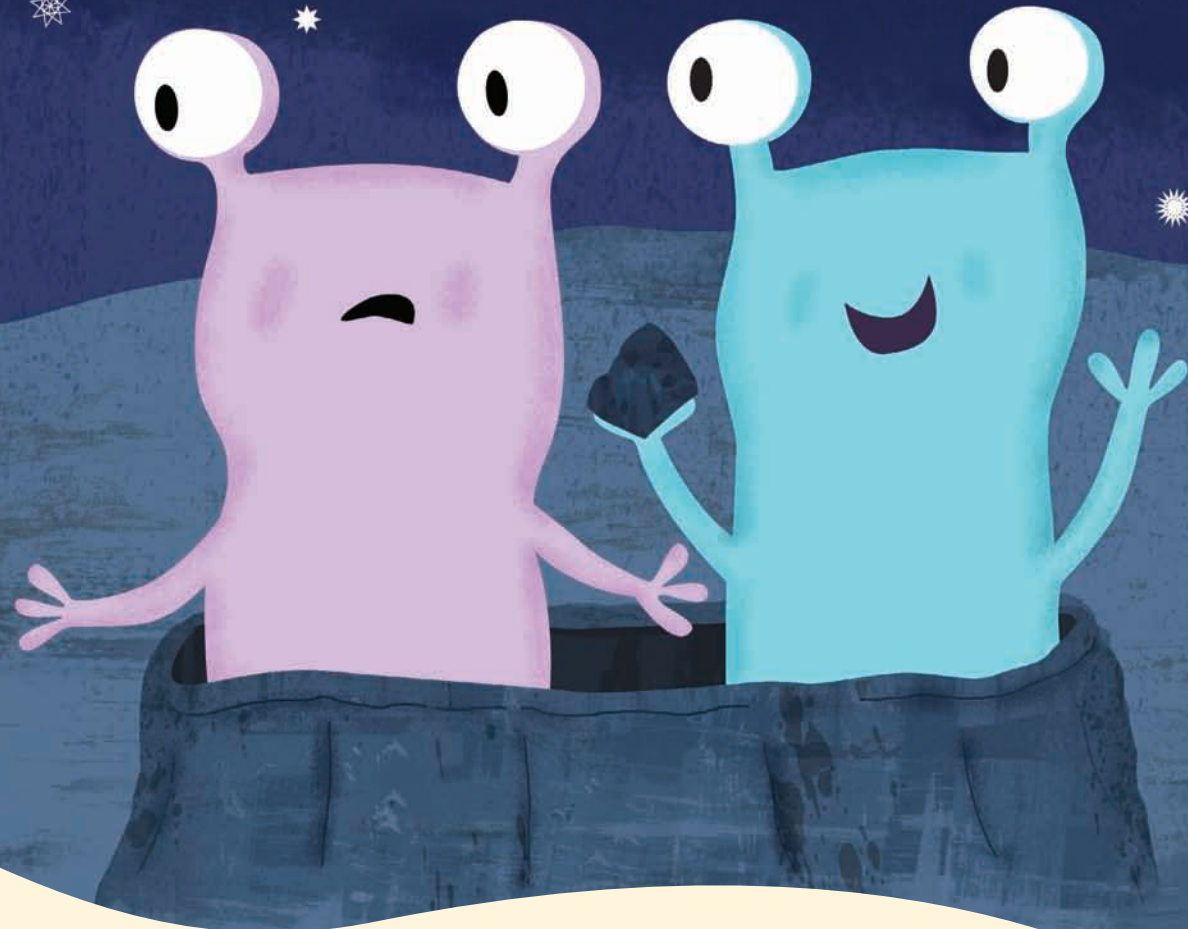


# I SPY

by Simon Cooke



“I spy with my little eye ...,” said Stone.

“Don’t tell me,” sighed Pebble. “It begins with R, and the answer is rock.”

Stone and Pebble were playing in their hideout. It was in a crater on their home planet, Rock 2.

“Wow!” said Stone. “You’re brilliant, Pebble! How did you know?”

“Because it’s always rock,” she grumbled. “There’s nothing else on this planet. Just rocks, rocks, and more rocks.”

Stone picked up a rock and ate it. “I love rocks,” he said. “I could eat them for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.”

Pebble groaned. “You do. That’s all there is to eat here. Rock flakes for breakfast. Rock sandwiches for lunch. Roast rock with boiled rocks for dinner. And crushed, frozen rock for pudding.”

When Pebble got home, her mum gave her a hug. "What's the matter, my little rock hopper?"

"I'm bored with rocks," cried Pebble.

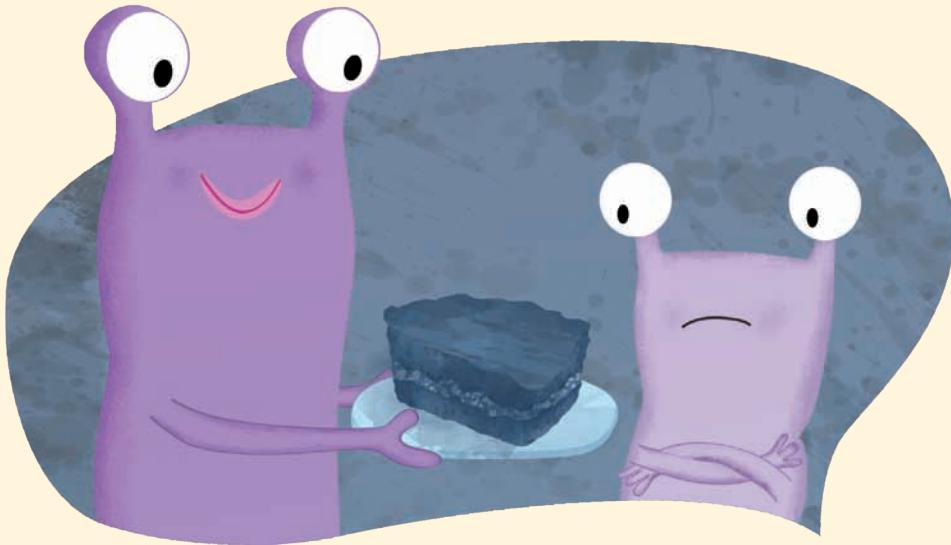
"How can anyone be bored with rocks?" asked Mum. "Rocks are a hundred times more exciting than anything else."

"But there is nothing else," said Pebble.

"That's the problem!"

"This might cheer you up," said her mum.

"Rock cake!"



Pebble crawled into bed. She tried to think of something that wasn't anything to do with rocks. Instead, she had a nightmare. She was being chased by a giant boulder, and it was trying to make her eat a big piece of rock pie.

The next morning, Pebble got up early and went to the hideout. She wanted to be by herself. She lay down and looked up at the dark sky. Why did they have to live on a planet that was all rock?

As she lay there, she noticed something moving above her – a bright light high in the sky – and it was getting closer. It got bigger and bigger. It was some kind of spaceship. The thing landed with a huge roar of flames. Scared, Pebble hid behind a rock and watched.



Two creatures climbed out of the spaceship. Pebble watched as they put a blanket on the ground and spread out a lot of strange coloured objects. The creatures sat on the blanket and ate the objects, then they climbed back into the spaceship and took off with another roar of flames.

After the spaceship had gone, Pebble crept out from behind the rock. One of the coloured objects had rolled off the blanket and been left behind. It was roundish and red.

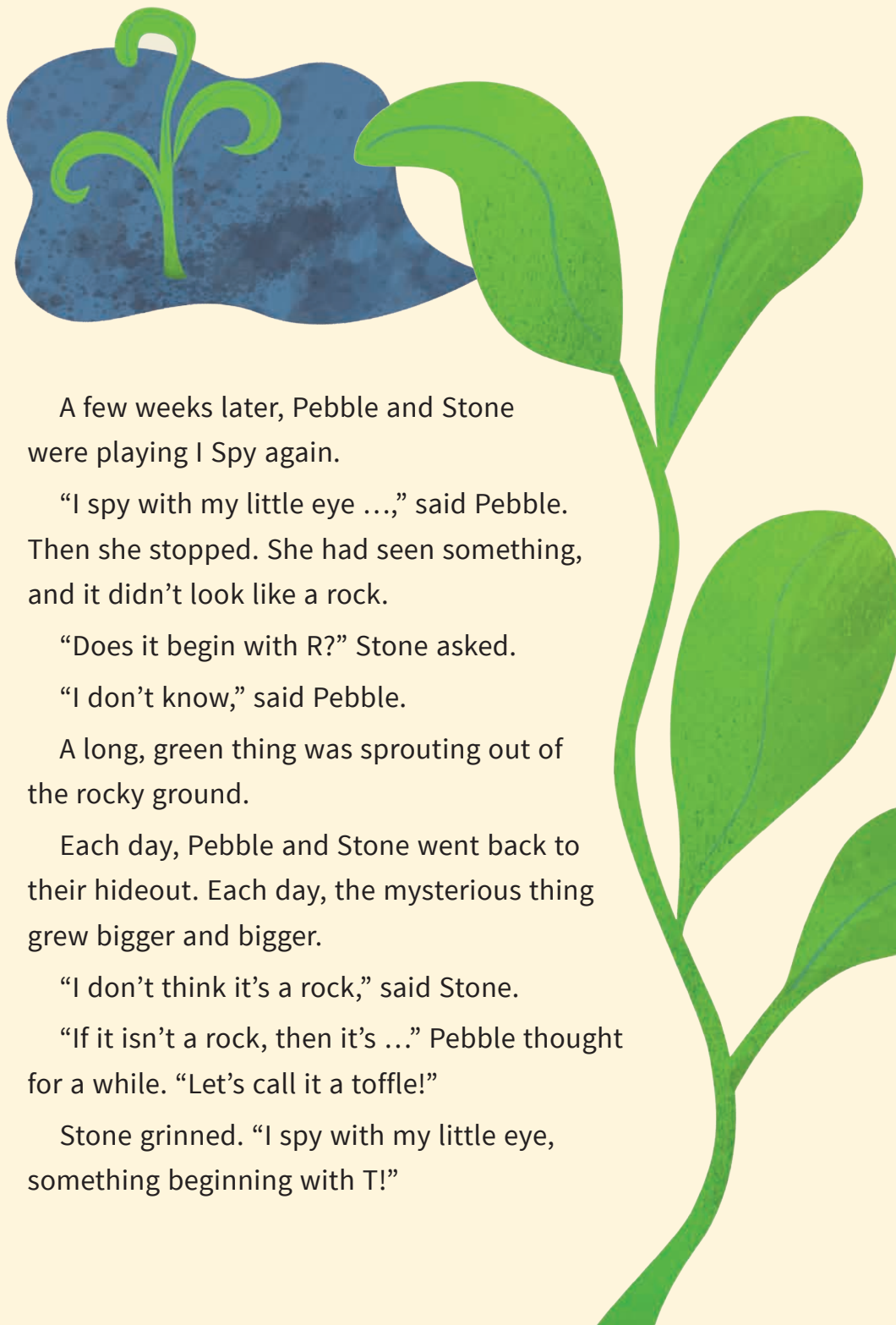
“I spy with my little eye,” said Pebble happily. She ran and got Stone.

“That’s a funny looking rock,” said Stone. He turned it over in his hand and tapped it with one finger. “It feels a bit soft,” he said. Then he tossed it into the air, but when he tried to catch it, he missed. The thing hit the ground and smashed. Pieces scattered everywhere. The inside was white with little dark specks.

“Sorry,” said Stone. “I think I broke it.”

Pebble sighed. “That’s OK. We should go home anyway. It looks like it’s going to rain.”





A few weeks later, Pebble and Stone were playing I Spy again.

“I spy with my little eye ...,” said Pebble. Then she stopped. She had seen something, and it didn’t look like a rock.

“Does it begin with R?” Stone asked.

“I don’t know,” said Pebble.

A long, green thing was sprouting out of the rocky ground.

Each day, Pebble and Stone went back to their hideout. Each day, the mysterious thing grew bigger and bigger.

“I don’t think it’s a rock,” said Stone.

“If it isn’t a rock, then it’s ...” Pebble thought for a while. “Let’s call it a toffle!”

Stone grinned. “I spy with my little eye, something beginning with T!”

Soon, the toffle had long brown arms, and on each arm, there were green, flat bits.

“Let’s call the flat bits blurps,” laughed Pebble.

“I spy with my little eye, something beginning with B,” said Stone.

The next week, there were pretty, white shapes among the blurps.

“Let’s call those plogs,” said Pebble.

Then one day, they noticed that the plogs had gone, and there were tiny objects on the toffle.

“Look at those,” said Pebble. “They’re a bit like the thing that the space creatures left behind. But they’re smaller, and they’re green.”





Over the next few weeks, the things grew bigger than Pebble's fist. They turned a shiny red.

"What shall we call them?" asked Stone, as they sat eating a bag of rock balls.

Pebble grinned. "I know. Let's call them gloses."

She picked one of the gloses and looked at it carefully. "I'm so tired of eating rocks," she said. "I wonder if this glose tastes any better."

"I don't think it will," said Stone. "It's too soft."

"Well there's only one way to find out," Pebble said, and she took a big bite.

Stone waited for Pebble to spit it out. But she didn't. It tasted wonderful! Better than boiled rock! Better than roasted rock! Better than fried rock!

Juice dribbled down Pebble's chin. She picked another glose and gave it to Stone.

"Try it," she said.

Stone took a small bite, then a bigger one. He kept on eating until only the middle was left. With a full mouth, Stone mumbled happily, "I spy with my little eye, something beginning with D."

"I know," laughed Pebble. "Dinner!"

# I Spy

by Simon Cooke

illustrations by Vasanti Unka

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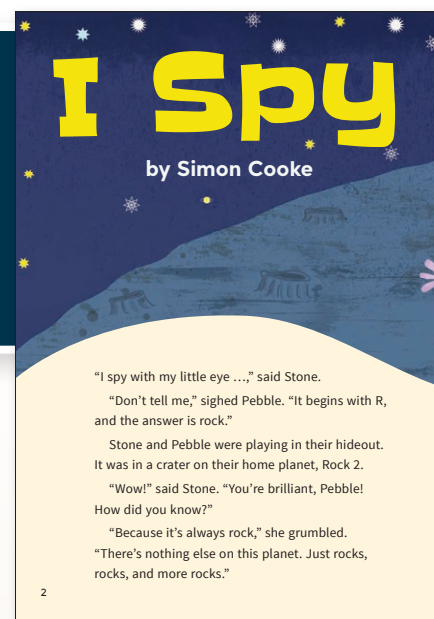
Published 2015 by the Ministry of Education  
PO Box 1666, Wellington 6140, New Zealand.  
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Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

ISBN 978-0-478-44647-0 (online)

Publishing services Lift Education E tū  
Series Editor: David Chadwick  
Designer: Liz Tui Morris  
Literacy Consultant: Kay Hancock  
Consulting Editors: Hōne Apanui and Emeli Sione



[New Zealand Government](http://www.govt.nz)



## JUNIOR JOURNAL 50

<b>Curriculum learning area</b>	English, Science
<b>Reading year level</b>	Year 3
<b>Keywords</b>	science fiction, seeds, mystery, space, plants, games, vocabulary, etymology