



## Stuck in the Mud

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### Phonics Skill

g, j, dge /j/; s, c /s/; c, k, ck, ch /k/

school  
echoed

ridge  
silly

city  
stuck

cell  
acting

Jake  
gentle



Jack and Jake lived on the ridge far above the city lights. Every morning the twins rode the school bus down the gentle slopes to Oak Trail School on the south edge of town.

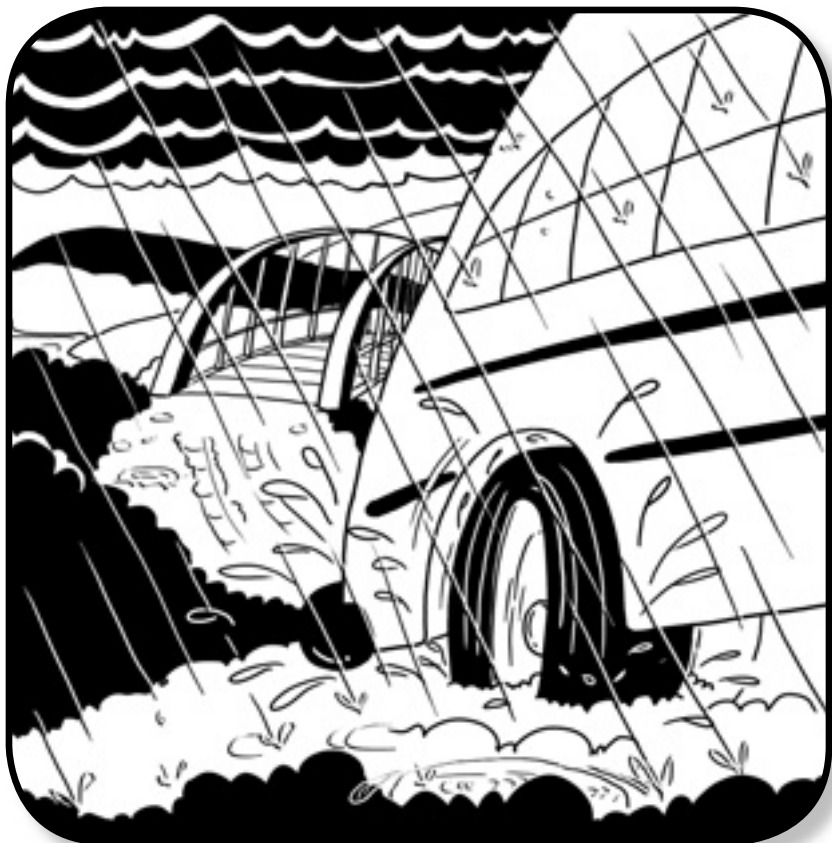
After school Jack ran with the track team. Jake went to acting club. He liked being on stage. Then Jack and Jake went home on the bus.





On this rain-soaked day, Jack and Jake would get a chance to help out by using their track and acting skills. It had rained since morning. Suddenly, hail the size of ice cubes pelted down. Lightning flashed and loud cracks of thunder echoed around the bus.





That's when it happened! The bus crossed Old Creek Bridge and then slid. One tire ended up in a large roadside mud puddle. Mr. Ford rocked the bus back and forth, but the tire dug deeper and deeper. It was stuck in mud.





Mr. Ford tried his cell phone, but it did not work in storms. He had no way to phone for help. Jake suggested that someone go for help. "Jack is on the track team. He can run back to school."





Jack agreed. "It's not far. I will get help. The school will send a tow truck."

Mr. Ford decided that might be the best plan. He gave Jack a poncho and told him to be careful.

Jack waved and then raced down the hill. He tried to pace himself so that he would not tire out too quickly.





Jack saw Miss Sealy. He pounded on the door. "Jack, you are soaked. Why are you here?" she asked.

Once she heard Jack's story, she phoned for a tow truck. She phoned moms and dads telling them what had happened. She and Jack got in her car. She was sure kids on the bus would be upset.







When they got there, kids on the bus were not upset. Jake was making silly faces and voices. He was acting out “The Three Little Pigs” by himself. The kids were enjoying his play.

Jack and Jake had saved the day.

