



# Jason and the Space Creature

by Claire Tan  
illustrated by Remy Simard



**HOUGHTON MIFFLIN**

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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT  
School Publishers

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Printed in China

ISBN-13: 978-0-547-02543-8

ISBN-10: 0-547-02543-2

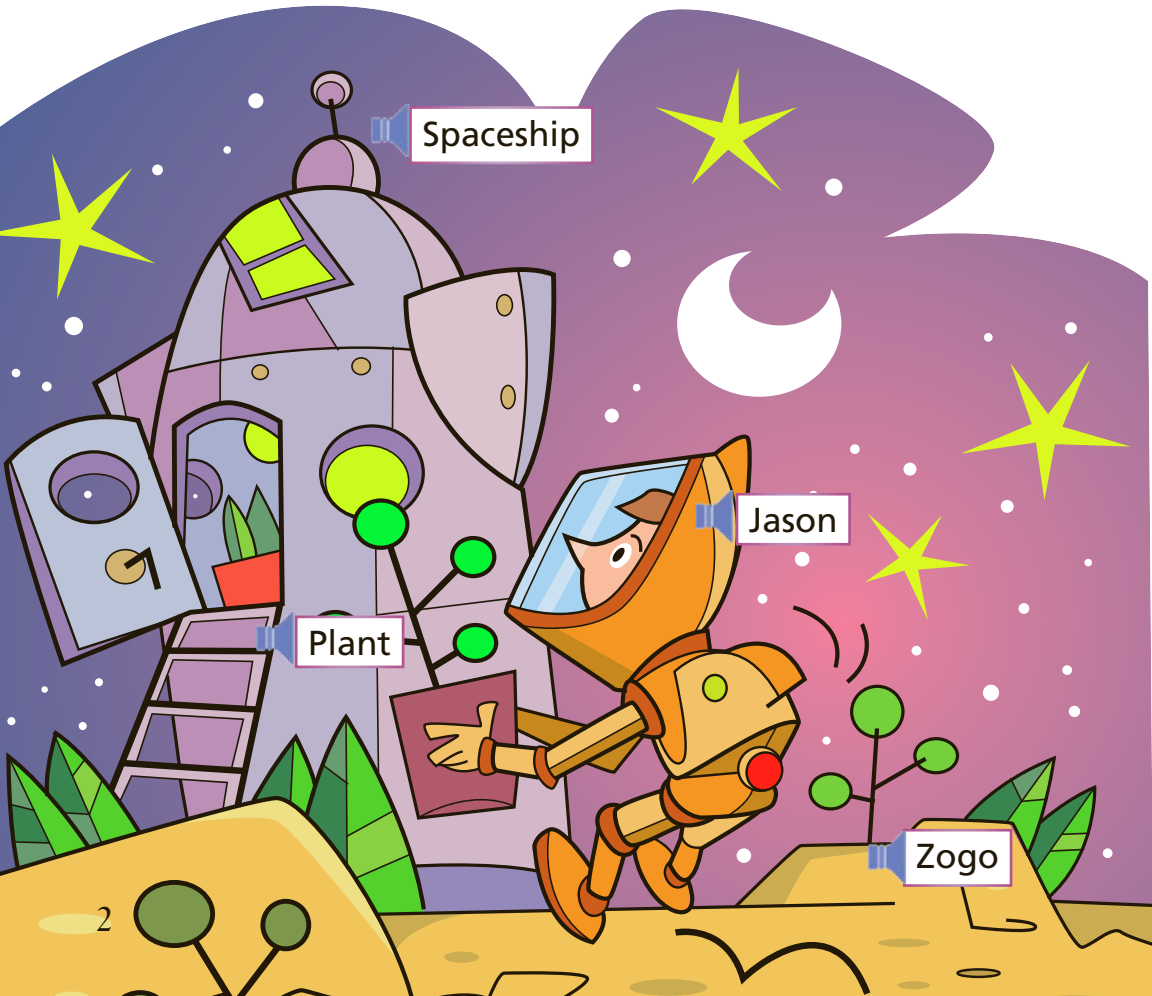
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Jason looked around the planet Zogo. He saw a few plants, but everything else was dry and dusty. Zogo was a lonely planet.

Jason was the captain of a spaceship. He traveled in space to see places like Zogo. But now Jason wanted to go home. He wanted to see his family on Earth. Jason picked up a plant to take with him and went into his spaceship.

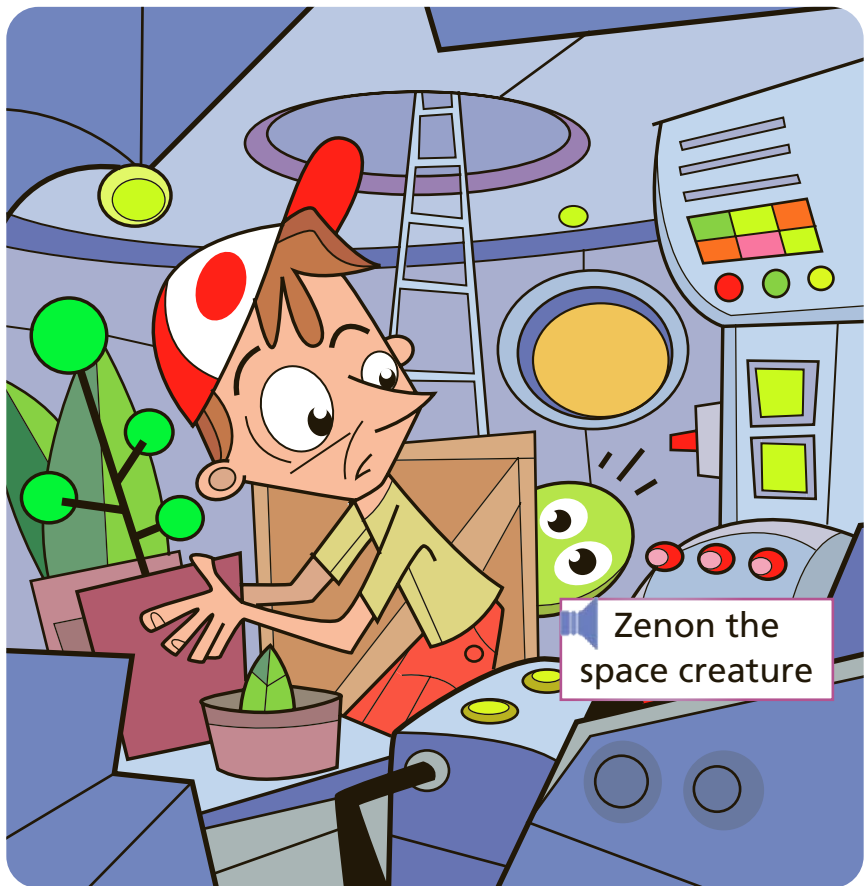


🔊 Inside the spaceship, Jason saw something small and green. It was a space creature!

“Hello!” said Jason.

🔊 The space creature opened its eyes. “Hello!” it said. “My name is Zenon.”

“I’m Jason,” said Jason. “I am the captain of this spaceship.”



🔊 Zenon the space creature


🔊 “You’re the captain!” shouted Zenon.  
“That means you **control** the ship! Can you take me to Earth?”

🔊 Jason looked at his watch. It was almost time to go.

“I’m sorry,” Jason said, “but I can’t do that. You have to get off the ship.”

“Please take me with you!” said Zenon.



 Jason shook his head. “I am sorry, Zenon. You do not belong on Earth.”

Zenon looked sad. He said, “A long time ago, my family left Zogo to go to a planet far away. They left me and my pet behind by mistake! We are very lonely here. Please take us with you.”



🔊 Zenon showed Jason a cage. Inside the cage was a small animal. Jason looked at the cage suspiciously.

“This is Zaggy,” said Zenon. “He is a very smart pet. Look! I have been training him to do tricks!”

🔊 Zaggy tossed three balls in the air and caught them.

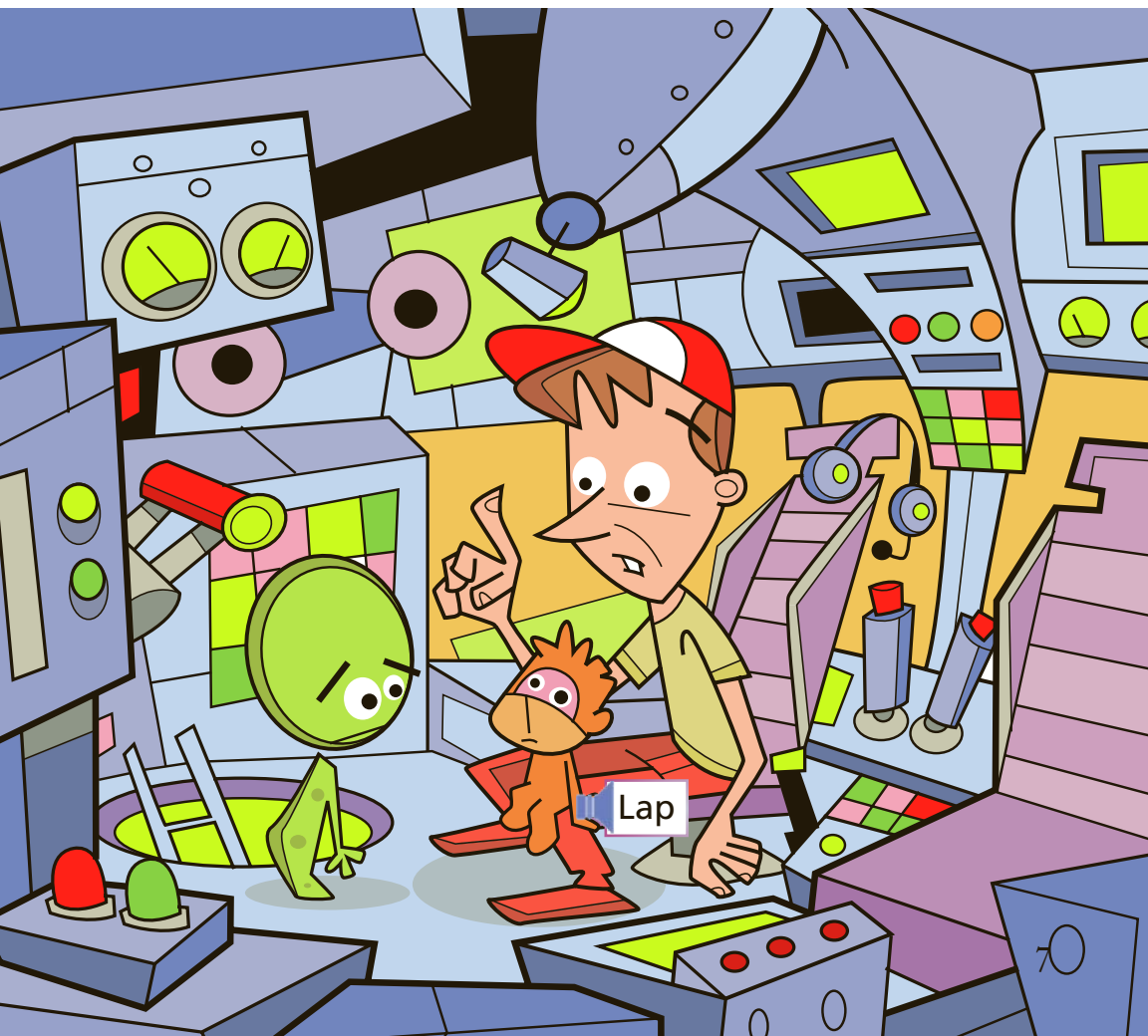
Jason smiled. Then he shook his head again. “I cannot take you to Earth. But soon, another spaceship will come to Zogo. Then you will not be lonely.”



🔊 Zenon was so **upset** he started to cry. “I want to go to Earth now!”

Zenon took his pet out of the cage and put him in Jason’s lap. Both Zenon and Zaggy looked at Jason.

🔊 Then Zenon said, “Everyone on Earth will love Zaggy. Please take us with you.”





Jason said, “Please be more sensible, Zenon. Earth is not your planet. What would you do on Earth?”

Zenon said. “The people of Zogo know a lot about Earth! We look at Earth through our telescopes. We have spaceship captains like you who tell us stories about Earth. Now I want to see Earth for myself.”



Jason looked at his watch again.

“Please,” said Zenon. “I also want to go to school on Earth. I want to learn how to read and write in Earth words. I want to come back to Zogo and teach my people.”

“School? How old are you?” Jason asked. He was **confused**.

“I am 20 years old,” Zenon said. “On Zogo, people start school when they are 21. We live for 500 years.”



Jason stared at Zenon. Five hundred years was a long time! Scientists on Earth could learn a lot from Zenon.

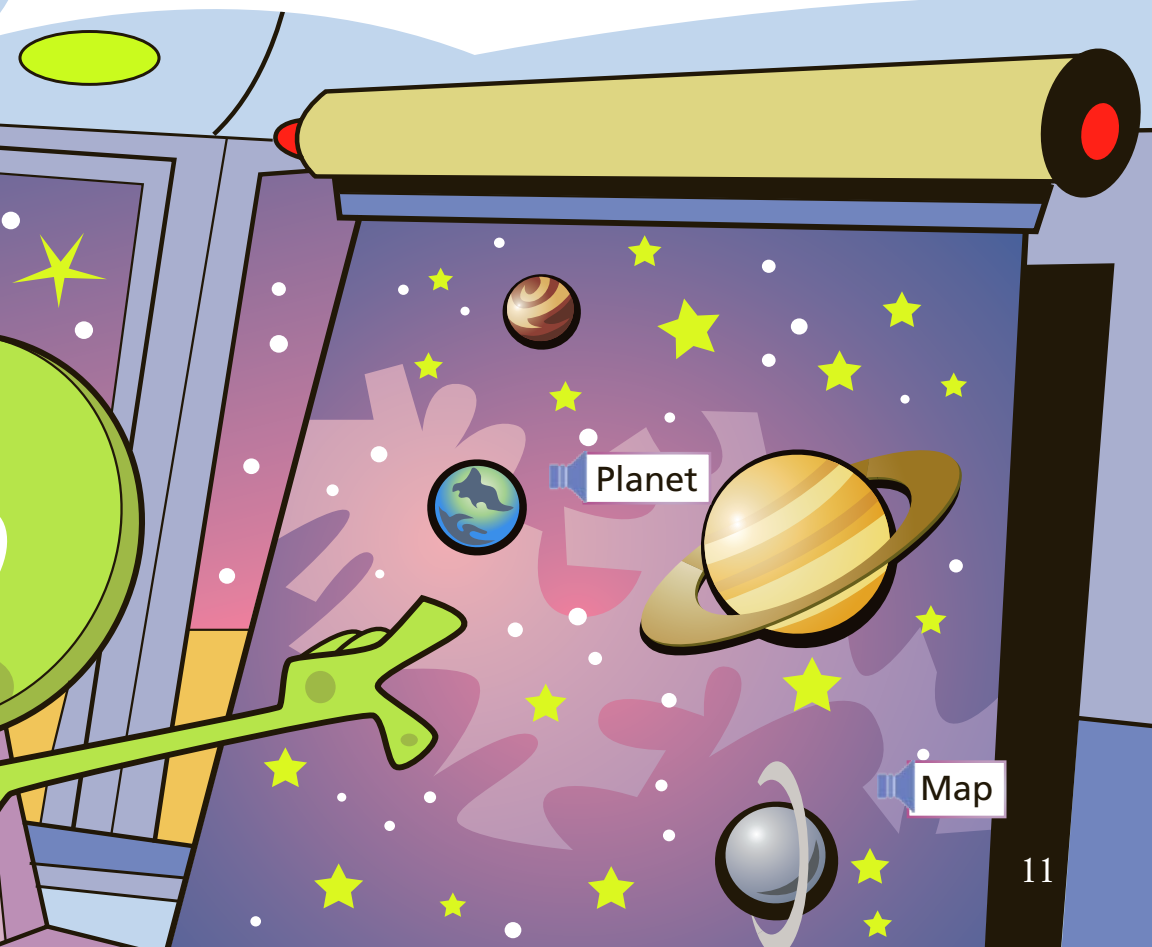
“If you come with me to Earth,” asked Jason, “will you teach us about what life is like on Zogo?”

“Oh, yes!” said Zenon.



“Okay,” said Jason. “I will take you with me. But Earth is very far away. It takes one year to get there.”

“I know a better way,” Zenon said. He showed Jason a map of space. “First, go toward this planet. Next, turn right at this planet. We will be on Earth in ten minutes.”



🔊 “That is amazing! Thank you!” Jason said.

“Everyone on Zogo knows how to get everywhere in space,” said Zogo. “We know the fastest way to get to all the planets!”

Jason and Zenon checked their seatbelts. Then it was time to go!



Jason sent a message to Earth to tell everyone about Zenon and Zaggy. When the spaceship landed, many people were waiting to say hello. Scientists wanted to talk to Zenon. Reporters wanted to take pictures of Zenon with their cameras. Zenon, Zaggy, and Jason got into a special car.



Soon, Zenon started to go to school on Earth. He played the same games as the other children. He ate the same food as the other children. Zenon wanted to be an **ordinary** student.

Everyone was happy to meet Zenon. Zenon had many new friends. He was not lonely anymore!



# Responding



## TARGET SKILL

### Story Structure

Who are the characters in the story? Where does this story happen? What happens in the story? Write your answers in the chart.

<b>Characters</b> Zenon, Jason, Zaggy	<b>Setting</b> ?
<b>What Happened</b> Jason finds Zenon on the spaceship. ?	



## Write About It

**Text to Text** Think of another space creature you have read about. Write a few sentences telling how the creature was alike and different from Zenon.



**TARGET VOCABULARY**

cage

confused

control

ordinary

sensible

suspiciously

training

upset

**TARGET SKILL**

**Story Structure** Tell the setting, character, and plot in a story.

**TARGET STRATEGY**

**Infer/Predict** Use clues to figure out more about story parts.

**GENRE** A **fantasy** is a story that could not happen in real life.

**Level:** K

**DRA:** 20

**Genre:**

Fantasy

**Strategy:**

Infer/Predict

**Skill:**

Story Structure

**Word Count:** 643

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