



# Groundhog's New Home



by Keith Yoder  
illustrated by  
Wallace Keller

**HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT**



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School Publishers

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Printed in China

ISBN-10: 0-547-25289-7

ISBN-13: 978-0-547-25289-6

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 0940 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11

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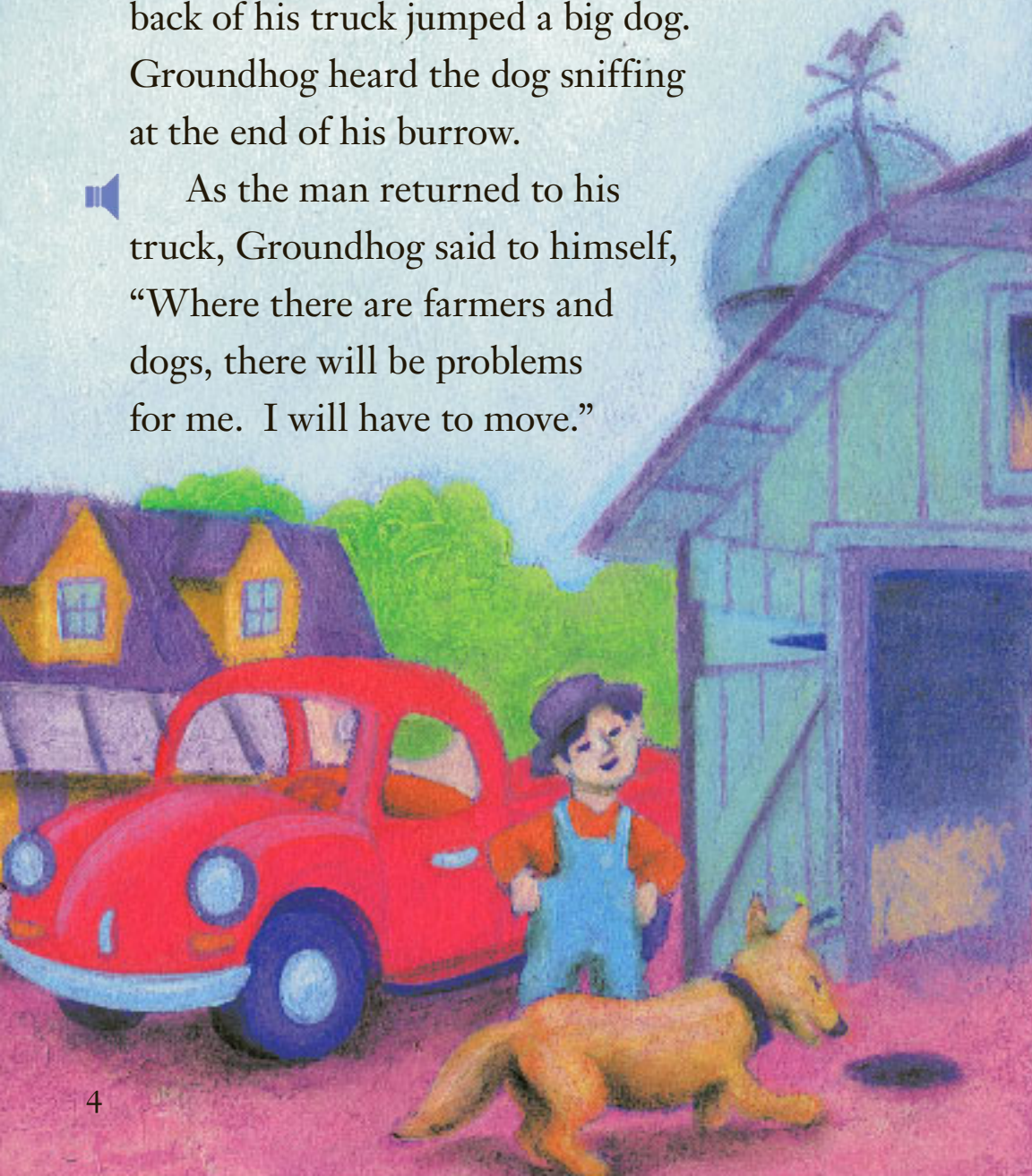
Groundhog had lived on the farm for a long time. Years ago, he had moved into the barn. On cold winter days, a fire **blazed** in a woodstove in the middle of the barn. It kept Groundhog warm even on the coldest winter days.

Days were quiet now because the farmer had grown older and no longer farmed.



One day, a man had driven up and flung farming supplies onto the ground. From the back of his truck jumped a big dog. Groundhog heard the dog sniffing at the end of his burrow.

As the man returned to his truck, Groundhog said to himself, “Where there are farmers and dogs, there will be problems for me. I will have to move.”





Groundhog wouldn't have to move far. He found a perfect place up the hill, along a ridge near a stream.

Returning, he saw the tip of Fox's tail in the distance. Groundhog moved quickly and became tangled in some bushes. Just as Groundhog got back to his burrow, Fox came to the entrance.

"I have overheard that change is coming," said Fox.

"Perhaps so," said Groundhog.

“You will lose this lovely burrow,” said Fox. Groundhog knew that this was true but said nothing.

“I have a plan,” Fox said.

“What plan, Fox?” asked Groundhog. Now Groundhog knew that Fox did not want to help him. Fox had been trying to grab Groundhog for years.





🔊 “Why don’t we trade homes?” said Fox. “I have a cozy den up on the ridge.”

“Wouldn’t you have problems with the man and his dog?” asked Groundhog.

“I am too **swift** and sly for a man or a dog,” Fox said.





Groundhog knew that Fox wanted to catch him away from his safe burrow. Still, Groundhog did need to move.

“Why would you be willing to trade homes with me, Fox?” Groundhog asked.

“I wouldn’t mind being closer to the henhouse,” said Fox.

▶ “How would we switch, Fox?” asked Groundhog. “Surely, you don’t think I’m just going to walk out of here in front of you.”

▶ “Well, since you can see in the dark, let’s trade homes at night,” said Fox. “I will come down the east side of the field, and you go up the west side. That way you will be safe.”



Now, Groundhog knew that Fox could also see at night. He also knew that Fox would never keep his word. He said, “Let’s wait until two nights from now, when the moon is full. That way I will be able to see you along the ridge line if you do not keep your word,” said Groundhog.

“You hurt my feelings,” Fox smiled, “but that is a fair plan.”





▶ Fox, of course, was not going to come down the east side. He planned to come straight down the west side and catch Groundhog.

▶ Groundhog had been thinking very carefully. The agreement to wait until the full moon would give him just the time he needed.





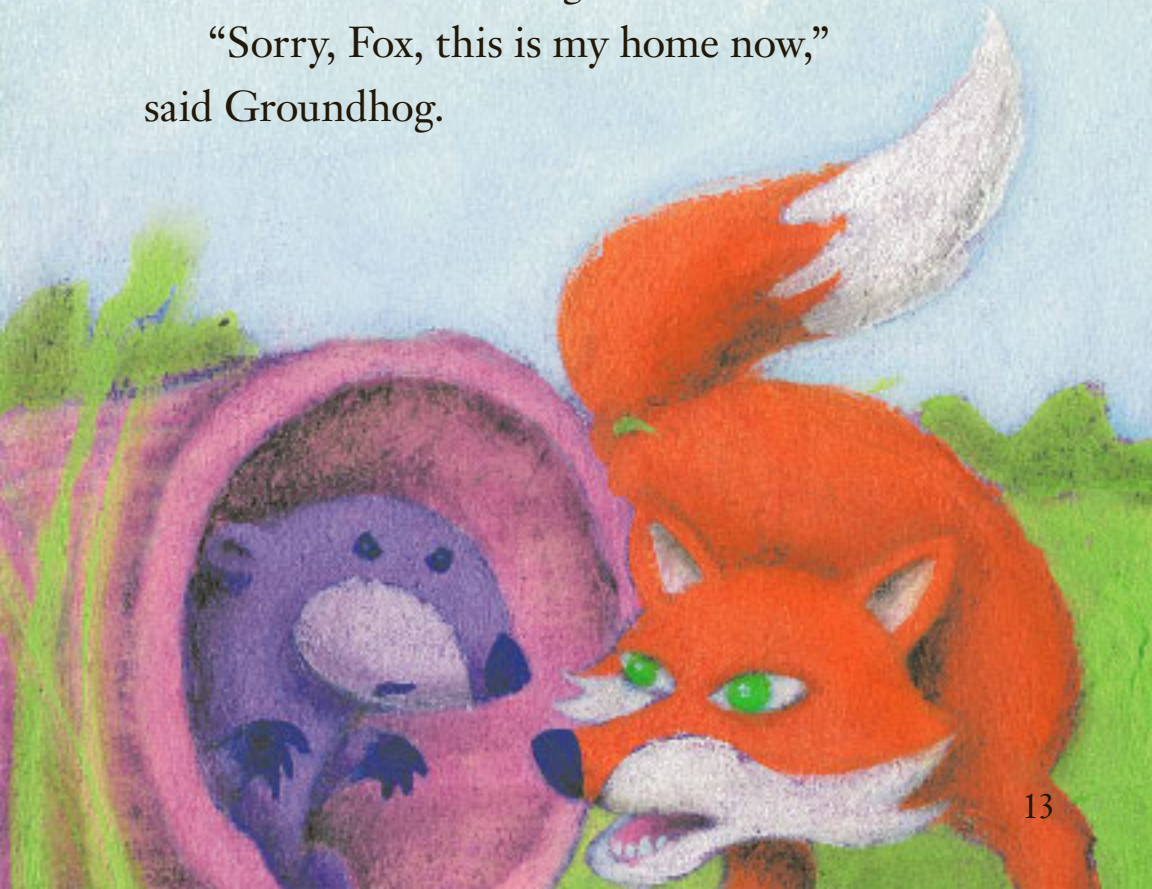
Then, on the day before the full moon, Groundhog climbed back up onto the ridge and found Fox's home. He knew it was empty because Fox was never at home during the day. He began to dig furiously to make a nice, new safe burrow.


That night when the moon was full, Fox set out to find Groundhog. He trotted down the west side of the field just as Groundhog knew he would. Fox searched far into the night for Groundhog. At last he knew that his plan had failed.

“Ah, well, at least there will be chickens for breakfast,” Fox said to himself. Then he squeezed into Groundhog’s old burrow and slept peacefully.

The next morning, Fox stuck his head out and bumped noses with the big dog. Fox ran out of the barn so quickly that he tripped and went tumbling down on his back. He got up and ran towards the ridge and his old home.

“Sorry, Fox, this is my home now,” said Groundhog.





“You tricked me!” yelled Fox.  
“Not so,” said Groundhog. “We have traded homes as agreed. It is true that I traded a little early!”

As Fox slunk away, Squirrel chattered from an oak tree.

“It seems to me,” said Squirrel cheerfully, “that one who tries to trick a wise one only fools himself.”

# Responding



## TARGET SKILL

### Cause and Effect

In this tale, a groundhog was living happily in his burrow. Then a dog moved in nearby. This caused other things to happen. Copy the chart below. Write what happened.

Cause	Effect
Dog moves in near Groundhog's burrow.	



## Write About It

**Text to World** Make notes for a research report about a groundhog. Include details that help readers learn about the groundhog and picture its habitat.





### TARGET VOCABULARY

blazed  
empty  
flung  
peacefully

stream  
swift  
tangled  
tumbling

### EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY

burrow  
den

ridge



### TARGET SKILL

### Cause and Effect

Tell how one event makes another happen.



### TARGET STRATEGY

### Visualize

Picture what is happening as you read.



**GENRE** A **folktale** is a story that is often told by people of a country.

**Level:** N

**DRA:** 34

**Genre:**

Folktale

**Strategy:**

Visualize

**Skill:**

Cause and Effect

**Word Count:** 1,076

2.5.24

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