

# Hero



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Oxford  
Reading  
Tree



### **What is the story about?**

Ben and Amy go to a farm to choose a new puppy. They pick one that isn't scared of them, and call him Hero. But when they take him home, he won't sleep and howls all night. After two sleepless nights, they put things into Hero's basket that remind him of his mum, and at last he sleeps.

### **Talk together**

Look at the cover and read the title together. Talk about the cover illustration, and ask your child who he/she thinks is the hero in the story. Look together through the book and at the illustrations. Point out the words 'Howl! Howl!' on page 8. Ask your child why he/she thinks the puppy is howling.

### **Read the story**

- Encourage your child to read the story aloud to you, and join in with the enjoyment of the story.
- If your child has difficulty with some of the longer words, e.g. 'newspapers' on page 6, show how the word is made of two smaller words ('news/papers').
- If your child misreads words, ask him/her to reread the sentence and check it makes sense, but don't let your child struggle for long or the sense of the story may be lost.
- Encourage your child to notice the punctuation of spoken words, and to read with expression, e.g. emphasising words when there is an exclamation mark.
- Encourage your child to read 'Howl! Howl!' with expression.
- On page 15 ask, "Does Ben or Amy feel sorry for the puppy?"
- At the end of the story, ask your child if he/she thinks Hero will stop howling now.

# Hero



Story by Jane Langford  
Pictures by Dawn Vince

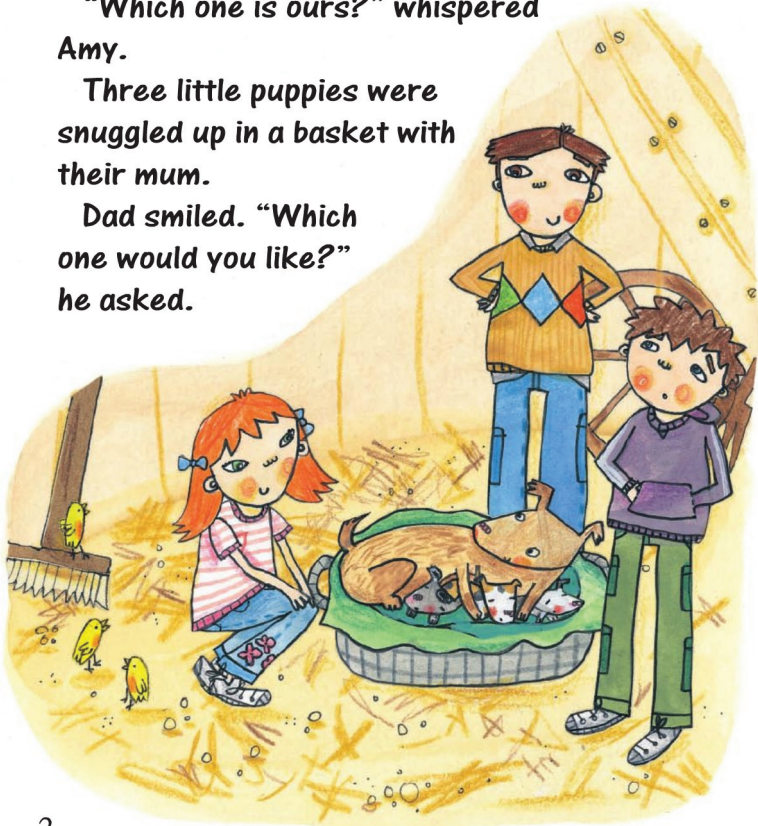
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Ben and Amy went to the farm to choose the new puppy.

“Which one is ours?” whispered Amy.

Three little puppies were snuggled up in a basket with their mum.

Dad smiled. “Which one would you like?” he asked.







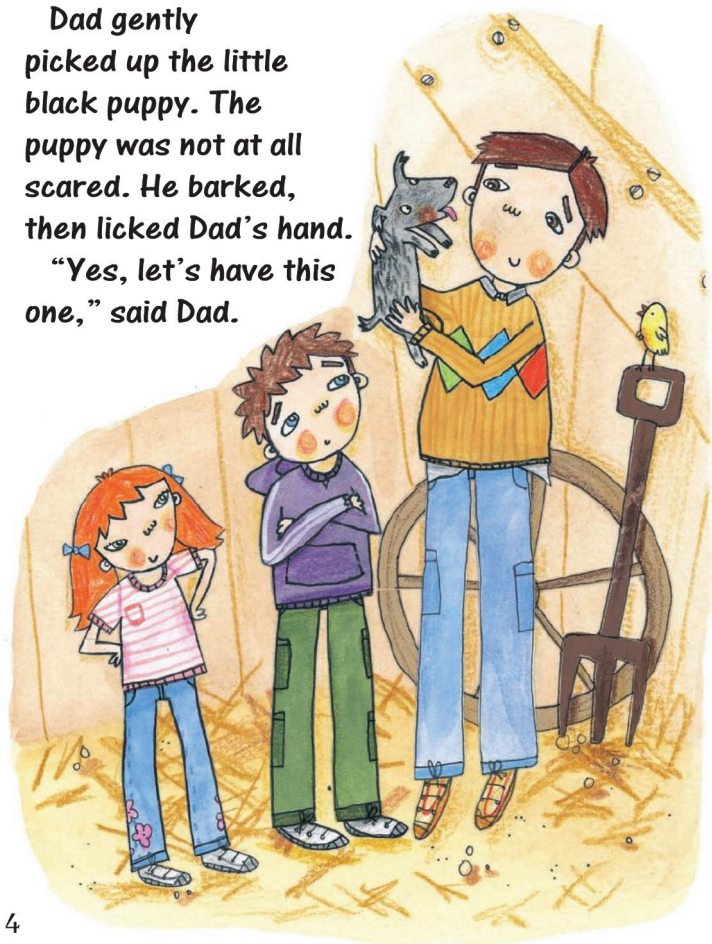
“I’d like this one,” said Ben. He pointed at a brown puppy with white paws.

Amy shook her head. “No!” she said, “I’d like that one over there!”

A tiny black puppy bravely peeped out from behind his mum and wagged its stumpy tail.

Dad gently  
picked up the little  
black puppy. The  
puppy was not at all  
scared. He barked,  
then licked Dad's hand.

"Yes, let's have this  
one," said Dad.



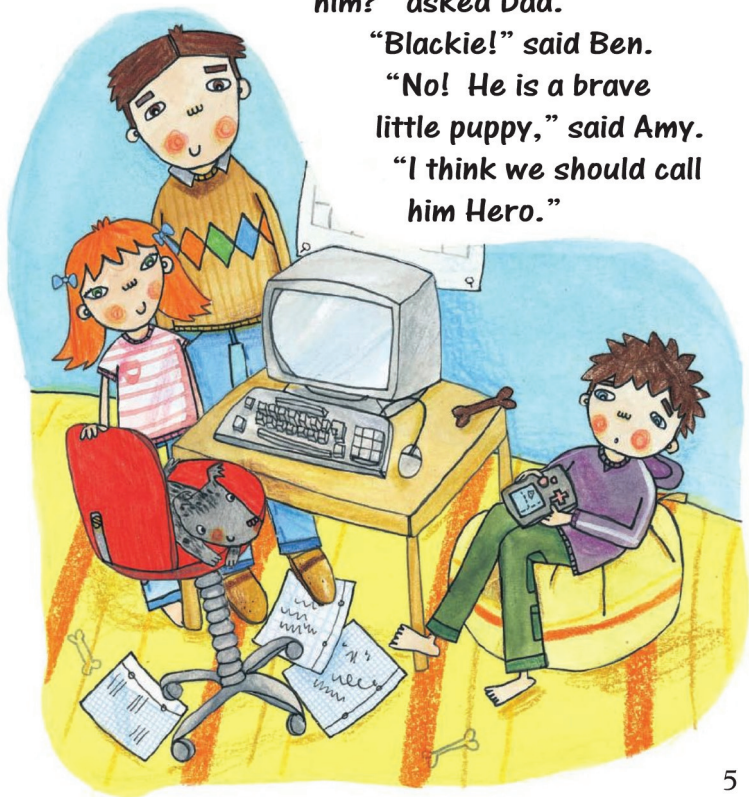
At home the puppy quickly settled in. He jumped on Dad's favourite chair.

"What are you going to call him?" asked Dad.

"Blackie!" said Ben.

"No! He is a brave little puppy," said Amy.

"I think we should call him Hero."



Hero kept everyone  
very busy. Dad covered  
the floor with  
newspapers. Hero  
ripped them up.



Amy put water in his  
bowl. Hero spilt it on  
the floor.

Ben brushed his fur.  
Hero bit the brush.





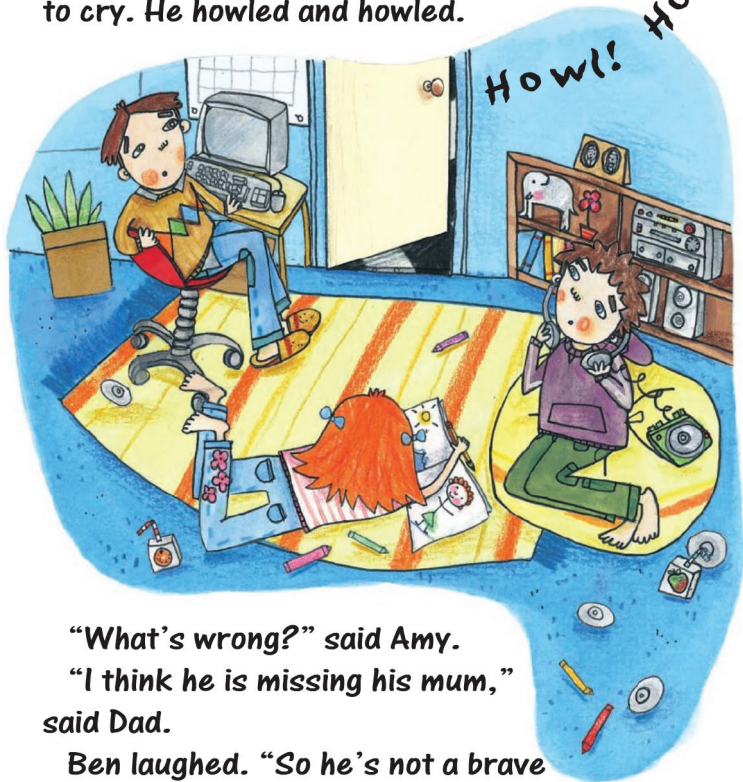
After tea, Ben and Dad found a basket for Hero to sleep in.

The tiny puppy snuggled up in the basket and yawned.





Ten minutes later, Hero started to cry. He howled and howled.



“What’s wrong?” said Amy.

“I think he is missing his mum,”  
said Dad.

Ben laughed. “So he’s not a brave  
hero after all!”

A cartoon illustration of a young boy with brown hair, looking down with a worried expression at a book he is holding. He has large, round, orange-red cheeks and a small, downturned mouth. He is wearing a brown sweater over a white collared shirt. The background is a simple green and yellow gradient.

**“And you!” said Ben. He put Hero in his basket.**

But Hero did not sleep for long. He woke up  
in the middle of the night and cried.

Ben and Amy both jumped out of bed.

“I’ll go to him!” shouted Amy.

“No, I will,” said Ben.



Dad told them to go back to bed.

“You go back to sleep,” he said, “I will look after the puppy.”

But Amy and Ben could not go back to sleep.  
The puppy cried and cried.





The next morning, everyone was very tired.  
Ben and Amy came downstairs.

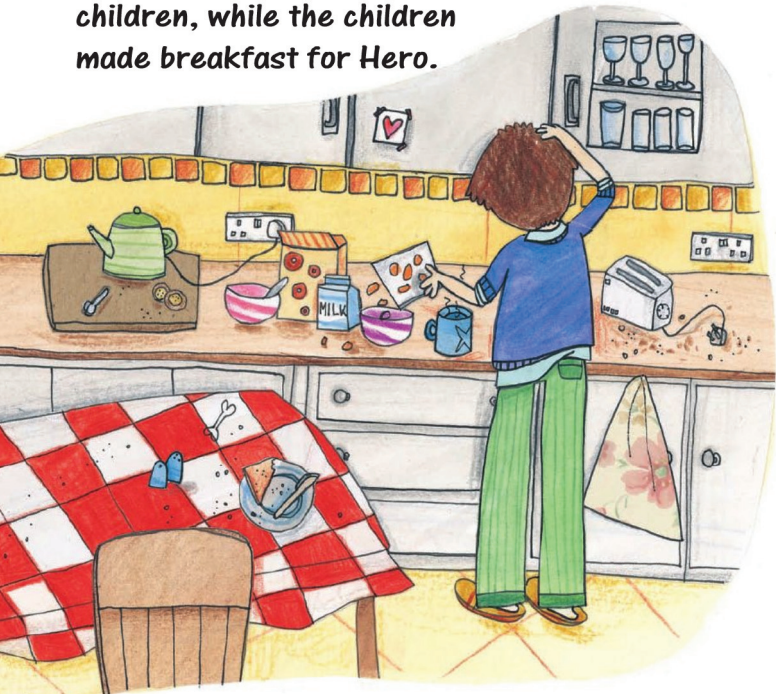
“Good morning Hero,” mumbled Amy.

“Good morning Howler!” said Ben.





Dad made breakfast for the children, while the children made breakfast for Hero.



Hero made a puddle on the floor.  
“You can clear that up!” said Ben.  
“No! You can!” said Amy.

Dad put fresh newspapers on the floor in case Hero made any more puddles.



By lunchtime they had run out of newspapers.

“You will have to learn to go in the garden!” said Ben.

That night, everyone went to bed early.  
Ben put Hero in his basket. Amy tucked  
a blanket around him.

But Hero was not happy.  
He howled and howled.

Howl! Howl! Howl!

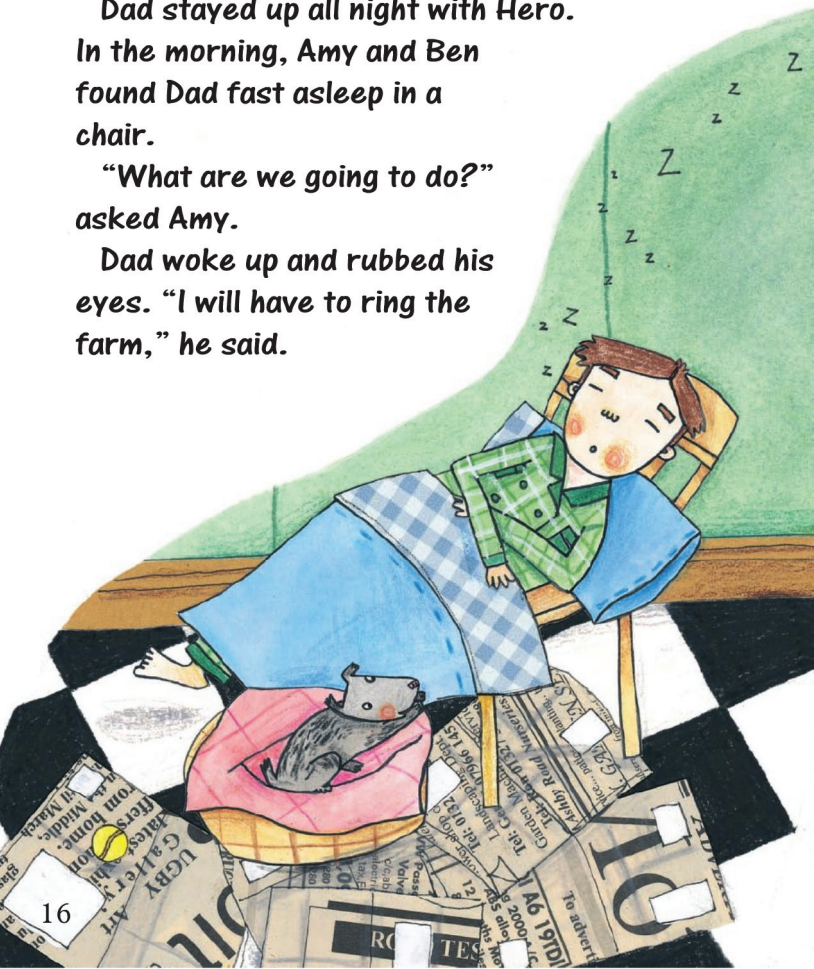


“Poor puppy!” said Amy.  
“Poor us!” said Ben with  
his hands over his ears.

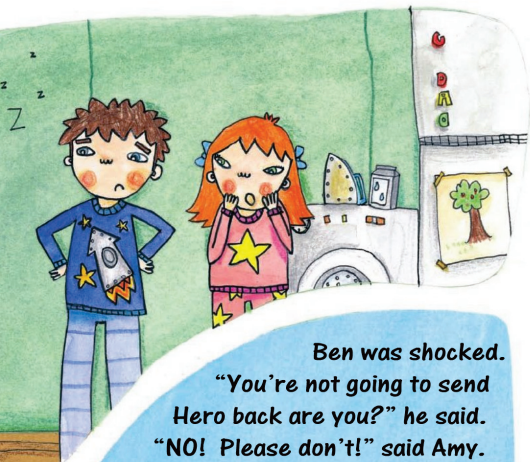
Dad stayed up all night with Hero.  
In the morning, Amy and Ben  
found Dad fast asleep in a  
chair.

“What are we going to do?”  
asked Amy.

Dad woke up and rubbed his  
eyes. “I will have to ring the  
farm,” he said.







Ben was shocked.  
“You’re not going to send  
Hero back are you?” he said.  
“NO! Please don’t!” said Amy.  
“I won’t,” said Dad. “I’m just going  
to ask the farmer  
what to do!”





After breakfast, Dad  
rang the farmer.



“What did he say?”  
asked Amy.

Dad grinned. “He said  
that we have to find an  
old clock, a teddy and  
a hot water bottle.”



Amy found a hot water bottle in the bottom of the bathroom cupboard.



Ben found an old teddy in his toy box.  
“But what about an old clock?” said Amy.



**“It has to be a wind-up clock,”  
said Dad, “one that goes  
TICK TOCK TICK TOCK!”**



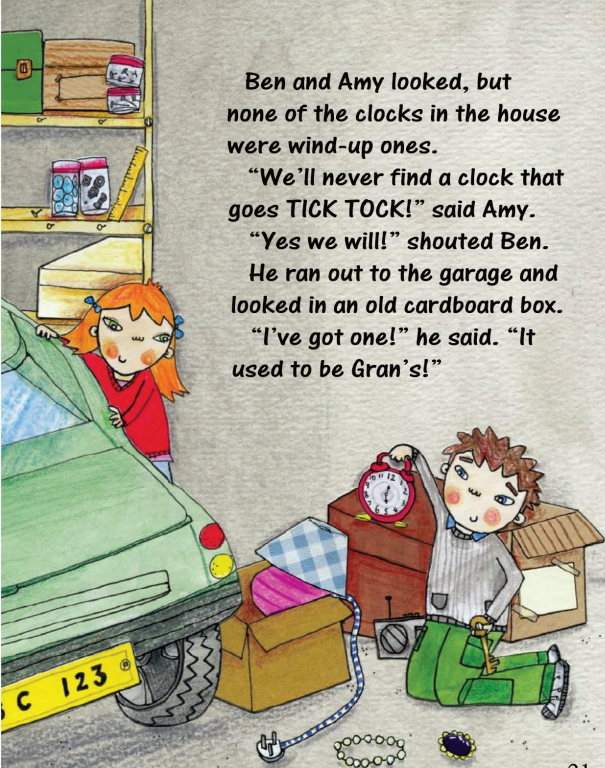
Ben and Amy looked, but none of the clocks in the house were wind-up ones.

“We’ll never find a clock that goes TICK TOCK!” said Amy.

“Yes we will!” shouted Ben.

He ran out to the garage and looked in an old cardboard box.

“I’ve got one!” he said. “It used to be Gran’s!”



That night Dad wound up the clock and put it into Hero's basket with the teddy and the hot water bottle.

"Now what?" asked Amy.

Dad put his finger to his lips. "Ssh! Just wait and see."

Ben and Amy held their breath and watched.

Hero put his head against the ticking clock. It was just like the drumming of his mum's heart.

He snuggled up against the teddy. It was soft and furry like his mum's coat.

He lay close to the warm bottle and blanket. It was just like being next to his mum's warm body.





Ben and Amy gently shut the door and crept upstairs to bed.

“Do you think he will sleep?” asked Amy.

“Yes,” said Dad.

And he did. Hero slept like a log all night long.

So did everyone else.





**“What a hero!” laughed Ben.**

## **Play a game**

### **What do they say?**

This game will help your child recognise spoken words in stories, and read them with expression, which will help him/her understand and enjoy reading.

- Talk with your child about the characters in the story.
- Discuss what they are like and how they say things.
- Look through the book together, and take turns to read the spoken words to each other, as if you are the characters in the story.

### **Other ideas**

- Look at 'Howl! Howl!' in the text. Ask your child to think of other noises a puppy might make, and write them down in a similar way, e.g. 'Woof! Woof!', 'Whine!, Whine!' Say them aloud in an expressive voice.
- Talk about keeping pets, especially very young ones, and how they need looking after.

Story by Jane Langford

Pictures by Dawn Vince

# Hero

The new puppy is supposed to be brave, but he won't go to sleep.



This story practises these words:

bed but his made night not one put that  
what will with

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