

The Cocoa Stand

► Mark and his brother Sam wanted to go to the movies, but they needed money. In the summer they sold cool drinks, but it was very cold outside.

“I have an idea,” said Sam. “We can make hot cocoa, because on such a cold day, everyone will want some cocoa to warm them up.”

Mark loved hot cocoa, but he could not make it. Sam was fifteen, so he could make cocoa, but what could Mark do?

“You can help, too!” said Sam. “I will work the stove, but you can help mix it together.”

Sam told Mark what they needed to make cocoa. While Sam heated the milk, Mark mixed the cocoa and sugar in a bowl. He added a small amount of vanilla and a tiny bit of salt, and then Sam brought over the hot milk and carefully poured it in. Mark got out a big thermos and Sam poured the hot cocoa into it. Then they put on their warm clothes. They also got out chairs and a card table. Sam made a sign that said “Hot Cocoa for Sale!” and Mark drew a picture of a cup of hot cocoa. They went outside to sell their drink.

Their neighbor, Ms. Martin, came by. “I’ll buy a cup,” she said. Sam gave her a cup and she tasted it. “This is really good,” she said. “It’s the perfect drink for a cold day. Who made such good cocoa?”

“We both did!” the brothers said.

Parts of a Tree

► Trees are very tall plants. They come in different shapes and sizes. Yet all trees have the same parts.

The leaves are the green parts of the tree. Some leaves are big and flat. Others look like thin needles. No matter their size or shape, leaves take in air and sunlight. Trees need air and light to live and grow.

The hardest, tallest part of the tree is the trunk. The trunk holds up the tree. The bark is the part of the trunk that we see. Tiny tubes inside the trunk move water and nutrients throughout the tree. The bark protects the tubes from animals that visit the tree and from hot and cold weather.

We cannot see the roots of the tree. The roots grow deep into the dirt. They keep the tree from falling over. Roots also have little tubes inside. They take in water and nutrients from the dirt and move them up into the trunk. These things make the tree strong and healthy.

Seeds are another tree part. They may form in flowers, cones, or nuts. They fall on the ground and start to grow. It will take many years, but a tiny seed will one day grow into a tall tree.

Going to Market

► Four baskets were filled with fish. Now it was time to take them to the market. Ken helped his father load the baskets onto the family's boat. Ken's family lived on a large island off the coast of Africa. They used the boat to sail to market.

Ken jumped into the boat. His father pushed the old wood boat off the sand and into the clear blue water. After climbing in, Ken's father lifted the big triangle sail. The wind filled the cloth, pushing the boat out to sea. The trip would take about an hour, so Ken sat down in the front of the boat. There were often interesting plants and animals to see along the way. He did not want to miss any of them.

Ken's father kept the boat close to the land. Ken could see clean white beaches lined with coconut trees. A big sea turtle came up for air near the boat. It went back under when the boat got closer. Before long, Ken saw some dolphins. They raced beside the boat for several minutes. Looking back at the coast, Ken saw some monkeys. They were leaping from tree to tree.

The trip seemed too short. Ken's father turned the boat to the shore and let the sail down. Ken heard the wood scrape on the sand. Now it was time to take the fish to the market. Ken hoped they would sell all their fish quickly. He wanted to sail in the boat again.
