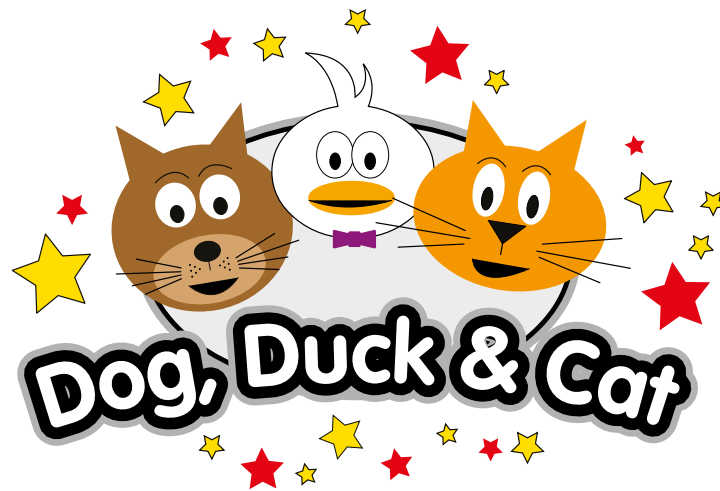




Auntie Duck



Suitable for children aged 6+



Welcomes YOU to their
world of adventures!



This story is written and produced by the Dog, Duck and Cat Trust
and has been created in partnership with Sandwell Council's
Public Health Air Quality team.

Auntie Duck

Are you sitting comfortably?
Then let's begin...



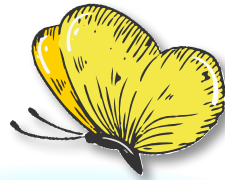
In a town, not too far from here,
lived a Dog, a Duck and a Cat. They were the best
of friends and always looked after each other,
because that is what good friends do!



It is a very exciting day today because Auntie Duck
is coming to visit.



Our little friend Duck and his Mom live in a town,
but Auntie Duck was quite different to them.



She lives out in the wild and flies to all sorts
of different places around the world.



Duck thought his Auntie
was very cool indeed and was
really looking forward to her visit.



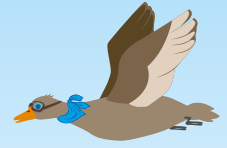
Duck's Mom's phone sent out a 'ping' to let her know she had a message.

Auntie Duck had used the wings free feature on her phone to drop them a message, 'I'm 5 minutes away, so keep a look out in the sky, because I'm on my way!'

PING!!



Duck rushed to the garden and started to look up at the sky. It was a nice day, but the sun made it hard for him to see clearly as it was so bright.



But, in the distance, he saw a very small dot that was starting to get bigger. Auntie Duck looked awesome flying in the sky, Duck was so excited he was almost shaking.





As she got closer,
Duck heard Auntie call out to him.

‘Hello young Duck,’ said Auntie as she glided into the back garden, landing with an elegant little plop.

‘Come over here so I can see you clearly,’ she said with a huge smile on her face. Duck quickly ran over to her. He was so happy to see her. ‘Are you still giving out those amazing hugs you used to do Duck?’ said Auntie, ‘absolutely,’ said Duck, and he almost jumped on Auntie to give her the biggest squeeze he possibly could!

Duck's Mom then came outside and also gave Auntie a hug, they were very pleased to see each other too.

Now I will just say this here, Auntie wasn't actually Duck's real Auntie, she was a very close friend of his Mom, so he called her Auntie, and this suited everyone just fine.



'How are you Auntie, how was your journey here?'
said Duck.

'Let's all go inside so I can take the weight off my flippers,
and I'll tell you all about it,' said Auntie as they all
went indoors.



Mom got Auntie a warm drink and made her feel at home.

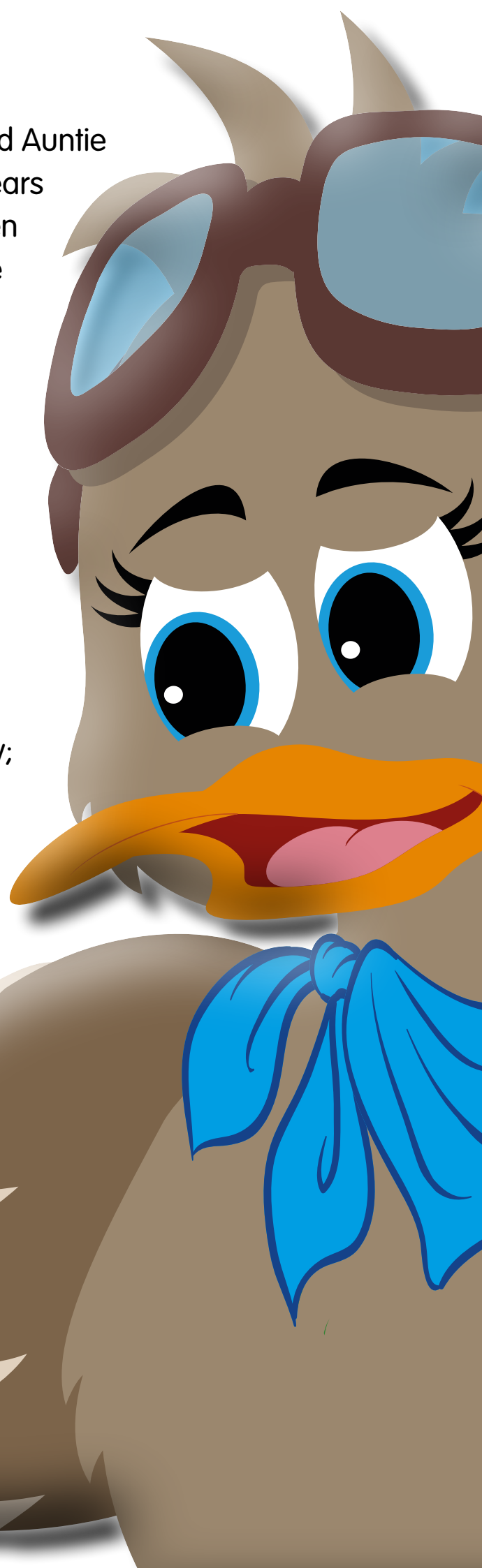
She started to describe her journey, but it was a surprise to Duck what Auntie actually said.



'Flying is just not like it used to be,' said Auntie with a sad look on her face. 'As the years have gone by, I have noticed that when I'm flying I get out of breath a lot more than I used to.'

'I thought at first it might be because I was getting a little older, but all the young Ducks and other birds I know said they were having the same kinds of problems, so we knew that wasn't the reason.'

'My friend Moggy has asthma,' said Duck. 'That means he takes medicine to help him breathe properly; you haven't got asthma have you Auntie?' said Duck.





'Well, I wondered that too Duck, but I went to the doctor and she could not find anything wrong, so I haven't got asthma,' said Auntie smiling, 'the problem I discovered wasn't a problem with me, but with the air I was breathing.'

'It's quite simple really; the quality of the air we are all breathing now, is having an impact on our health and wellbeing. Let me tell you more about what I found out...'

'I did some research online and I discovered some information that the very clever scientists who work for the World Health Organisation (WHO) had put together.'

[https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health)

'They are very clever people that try to look after all of us and try and keep our planet healthy. What they said was quite complicated, so I am going to try and explain it in the easiest way I can for you Duck, but if you aren't sure what I mean, please do ask and I'll do my best to make it as clear as I can for you.'

They said:

1

'The air we breathe is often not good because of all the different sorts of pollution that we and humans make.'

4

'If you could zoom in to look at the air more closely, like you do when you zoom in on a picture on your phone, tablet, or laptop, you'd see the air has changed; you'd see that the air we breathe is actually quite dirty.'

6

'Being able to breathe clean air is really important especially for anyone with a breathing condition like asthma.'

2

'Pollution comes from factories that make things, from power stations that give us energy, from the fires we light to keep us warm and the cars, motorbikes and planes we use to get us about.'

3

'But if the air quality is poor, it affects everyone, and that's the reason I find it harder to breathe when I am flying.'

5

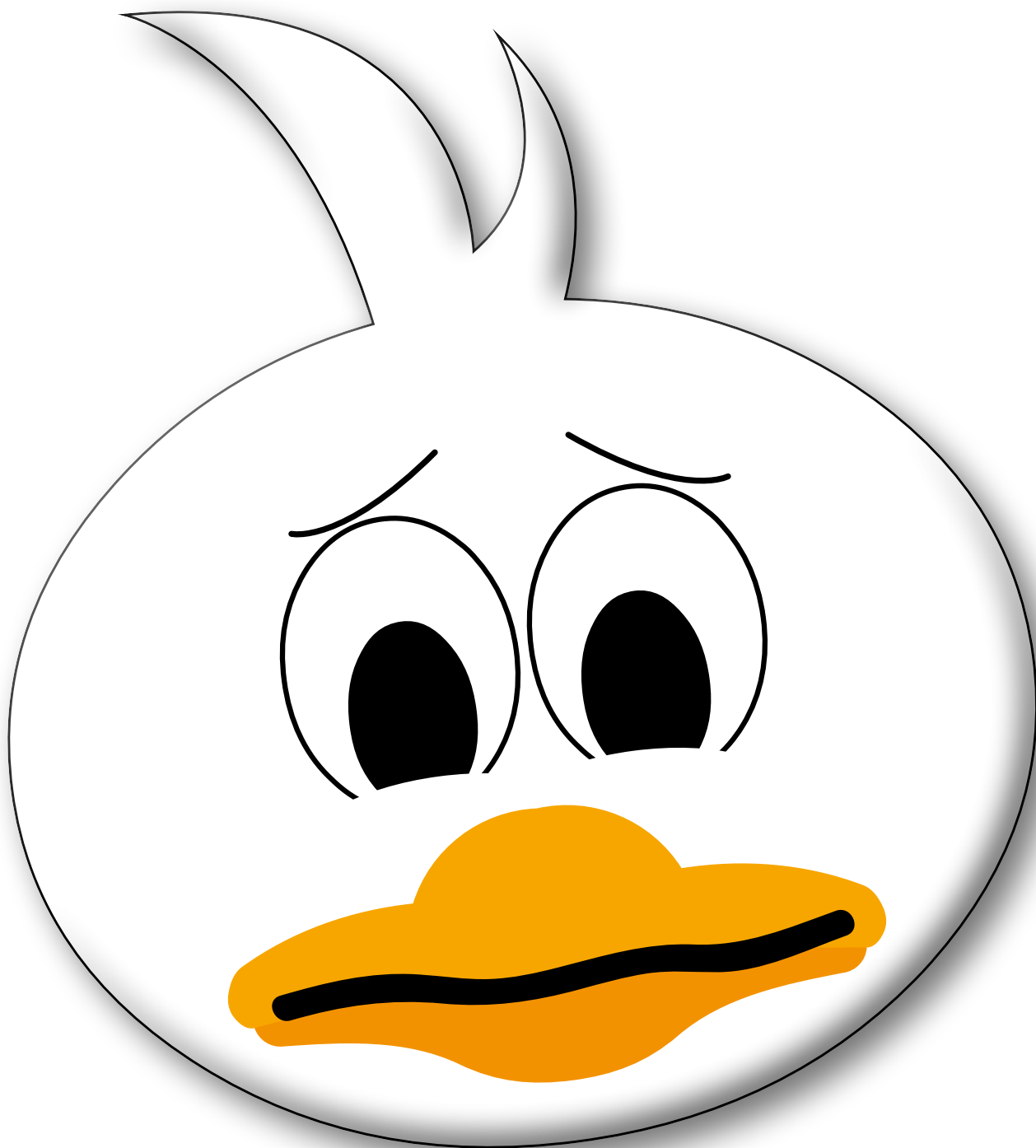
'You often can't see this pollution with your eyes, because it is all so tiny, in fact the air we look at often looks very clean.'

7

'Anyone with asthma would definitely be affected. Your friend with asthma Duck, may be affected by poor air quality, but they might not even know that!'

Duck now looked quite worried. He was thinking that the air he breathed was unsafe, which meant he was in danger.

Auntie has guessed this by looking at his face and carried on speaking.





‘Duck,’ said Auntie, ‘you don’t need to worry too much, whilst the air quality in this country is not as good as it should be, for anyone with healthy lungs it is not normally too dangerous, so you’ll be ok. But, as I said before though, for people with breathing issues and conditions like asthma, the air can be dangerous, even in this country, and we would all feel better if it was cleaner.’

'What can we do?' said Duck.

'Well,' said Auntie, 'here are some excellent things we can all do to help:'

1

'We can use cars, motorbikes and planes less to reduce their impact and cut down on pollution and this will improve air quality.'

3

'Did you know that when a car is parked, and the engine is left running for just 1 minute, it releases more harmful carbon monoxide gas into the air, than 60 cigarettes being smoked!'

5

'We can do some air quality tests near where we live to see what the air is like'
[CLICK HERE](#)

2

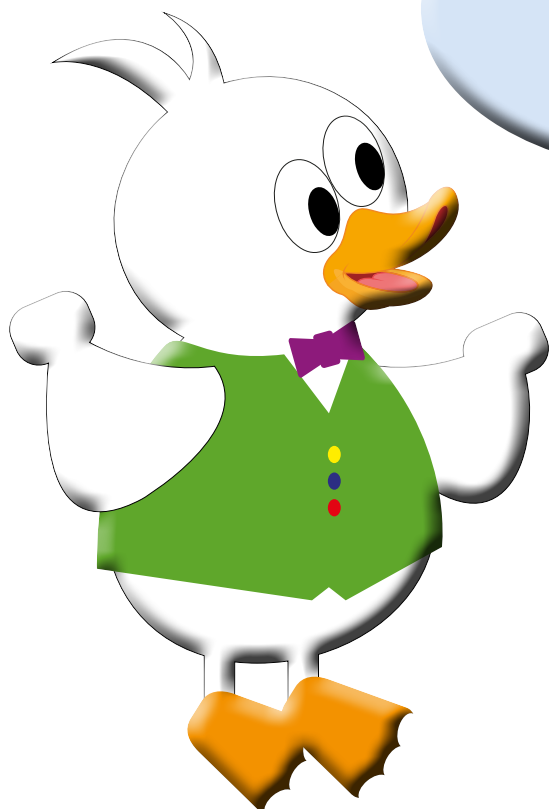
'If we wheeled, walked, scooted or cycled more it would reduce the amount of pollution as we wouldn't be turning our cars or travel machines on.'

4

'That means that in only 1 minute, an idling car engine, can produce enough toxic gases to fill 150 party balloons. So, by just turning a car off when it is parked up it can have a massive impact on air quality.'

6

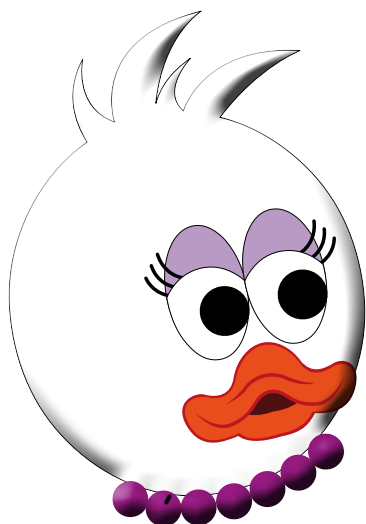
'And, we can all work together to try and make the air we breathe as clean and safe as it can possibly be.'



**Thank
you...**

'Thank you for telling me all about air quality,' said Duck to Auntie, 'it was very interesting, and I learnt a lot!'

'Can we do an air quality test in our garden Mom,' said Duck. 'I'd like to know what the quality of the air is like around here, would that be ok?'



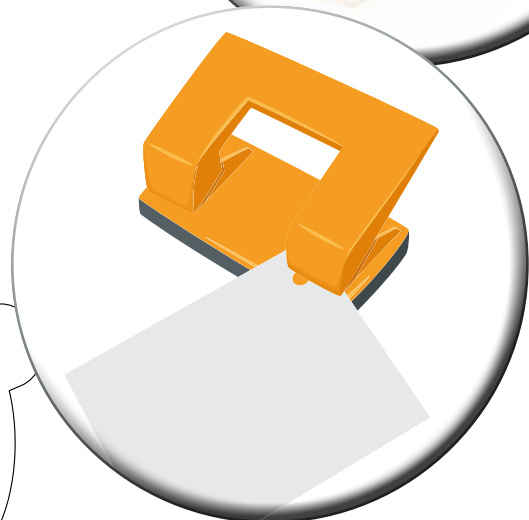
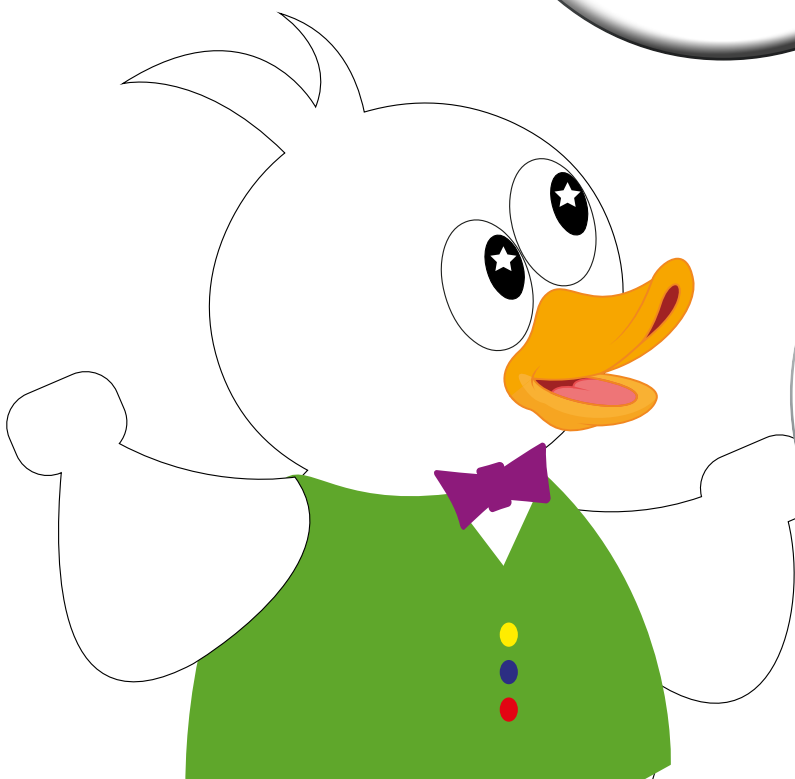
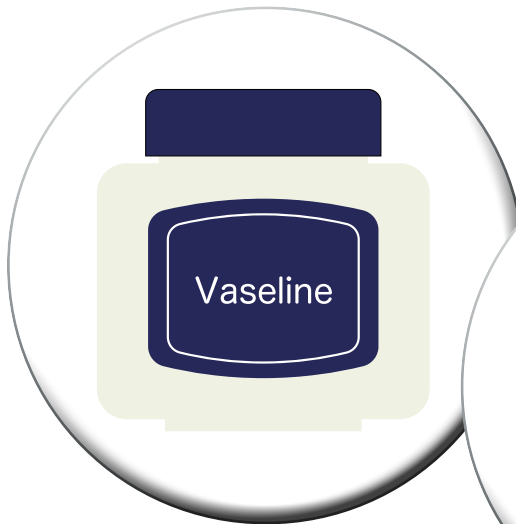
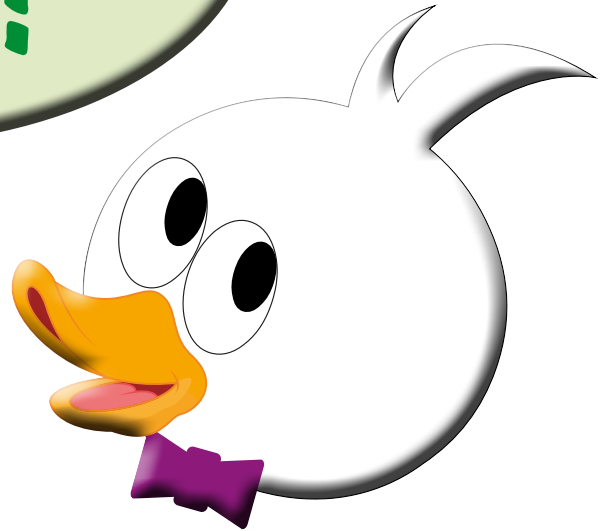
**Why
don't we all do
it together!**

Why don't we all do it together!' said Mom and Auntie at the same time. They both laughed as they knew each other so well they often came up with the same ideas.



That sounds great!

'That sounds great,'
said Duck, and he shot off to
start gathering all the things he
needed to make his own air quality test.



Mom and Auntie sat in the lounge together. Mom thought Auntie Duck seemed a little sadder than she had let Duck believe, so she said to her very good friend; 'Are you sure you're ok Auntie?'

'It just worries me that the air we breathe, that you and Duck breathe, isn't very good. Whilst it is not terrible here now my worry is it will become worse.'



'You live in a country that is trying to reduce air pollution and that helps people who are poorly free of charge; not everywhere in the world does that. My friend Macaw, who lives on the other side of the world, tells me that it is quite bad there.

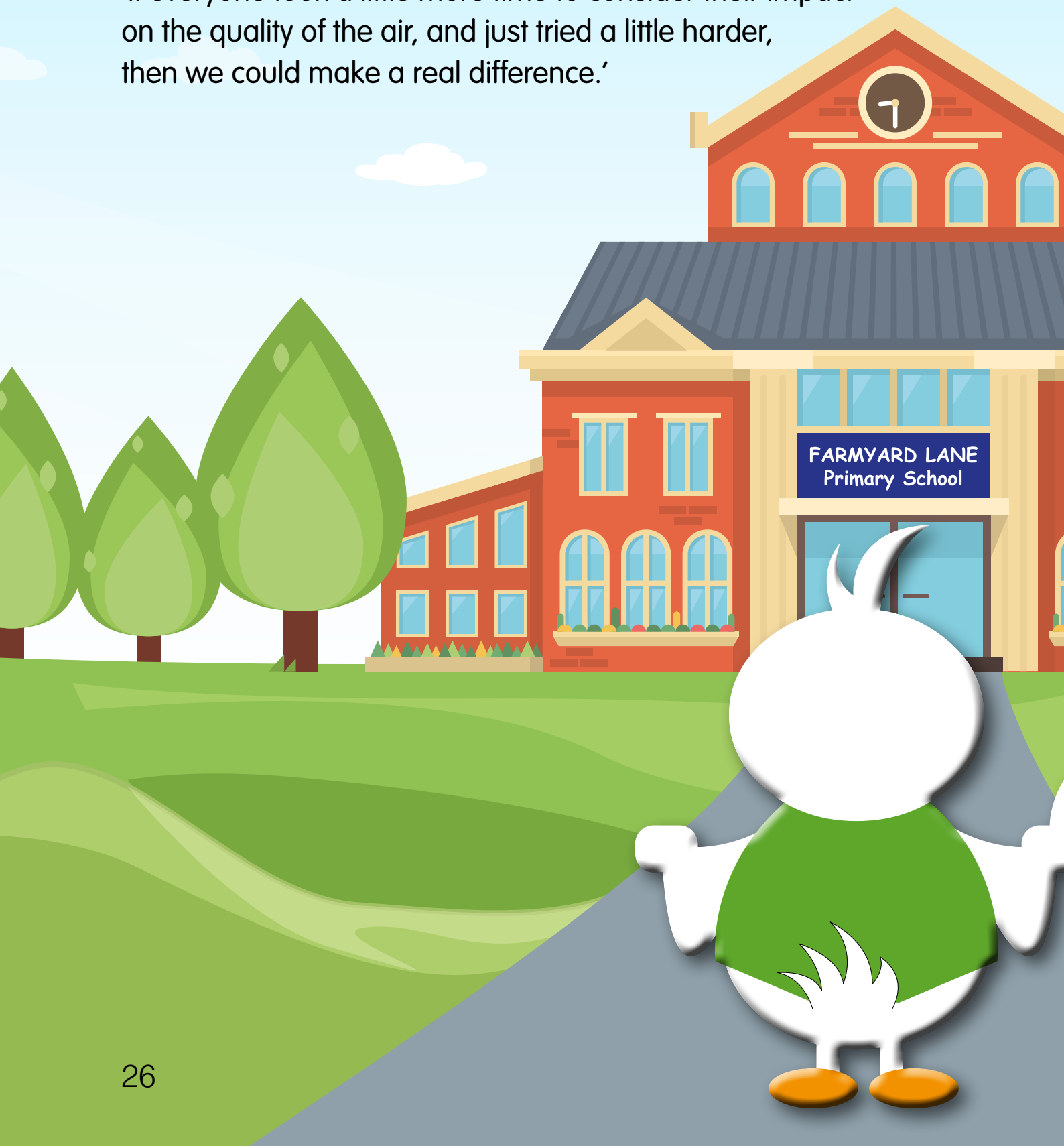
It's also the same in other poorer parts of the world. Sadly, the air they breathe has the potential to make them very ill. You and Duck are very lucky.'



'That's very sad to hear,' said Mom. 'I'm going to make sure me and Duck do all we can to lessen our impact on the quality of the air, for us and everyone else on the planet.'

'That's wonderful to hear,' said Auntie.

'If everyone took a little more time to consider their impact on the quality of the air, and just tried a little harder, then we could make a real difference.'



'If we wheeled, walked, scooted or cycled just once a week to school that would make a massive difference. Think how many thousands of car journeys across the country that would be stopped every week just by doing that! Also, it would help us all to feel happier and healthier and save some money too!'



'You're absolutely right,' said Mom.

'I will spread the word to all my friends, and I'll also be letting Duck's school know all about this, I'm sure they'll want to help as we all want to make sure we, and those we care about, can breathe easily today, tomorrow, and every day.'



'Duck and I are definitely going to leave the car at home one day a week and walk or scoot to school, but if we can do that more often, we will, it's that important for me I'm willing to make that promise right here and now!'

We'll also go to the park without the car, it will be nice to make the journey there and back part of our trip out. We can play i-spy or have a chat, and I won't be distracted by having to drive.'





Auntie Duck had made a real impact on Duck and his Mom.

They were both now determined to help improve the quality of the air by making some simple and easy changes to how they lived their day-to-day lives...

Let's all



help look after our world!



...maybe we
could all do
the same too?



There's lots more...

Have a look at all our stories and activities, there's
lots for you to enjoy!

Here are some of the other characters you will get
to meet!

