



# Tarby

comes out of his shell

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# ***Tarby Comes Out of his Shell: A Guide for Parents and Speech-Language Pathologists***

**Written by: Mary Weidner & Craig Coleman**

The purpose of this book is to discuss children's reactions to stuttering and other speech/language disorders. Many children may internalize or outwardly express negative reactions to their speech and language disorders. For example, they may cry, show anger, avoid talking, or exhibit adverse behaviors. They may have difficulty discussing their emotions because they have limited vocabulary or experience in discussing these issues. The relatable characters in "*Tarby Comes Out of His Shell*" act as a concrete reference point for children to effectively express these affective components. The book can be used with a variety of ages, but may be most effective for children between the ages of 4-10.

The story targets four primary themes that children with speech and language disorders may experience. As you read the book, you may use Tarby and friends as a reference for any of the following discussion points:

## **1. Perception of others' reactions to the child's speech/language disorder**

This area is addressed in Tarby's interactions with his mother. At the beginning of the story, Tarby feels rushed and believes that his mother did not want to listen to him. This conflict is resolved at the end of the story, as his mother apologizes for rushing to work and not listening to him. Throughout the story, Tarby comes to realize that he can verbalize his emotions, rather than try to hide them.

We have found success with the following prompts:

- Do you ever feel rushed when talking to other people?
- What do you do when you feel rushed?
- What can you do when other people rush you?

## **2. Reactions to child's speech/language disorder**

This is evidenced when Tarby begins to cry and goes into his shell. He does not want to come out because he is afraid of facing his emotions.

We have found success with the following prompts:

- Have you ever felt like Tarby? When?
- Do you ever feel angry or upset that your speech sometimes sounds different than other kids'?

### **3. Isolation/bullying**

When Tarby enters his shell at the park, the other children do not realize he is a turtle because he has lost his identity. This leads to the children doing things to Tarby that could have been avoided, had he just talked with them.

We have found success with the following prompts:

- Has anyone ever teased you about your talking?
- How does it make you feel when people tease you?
- What do you say when people tease you?
- Do you ever tease other people?

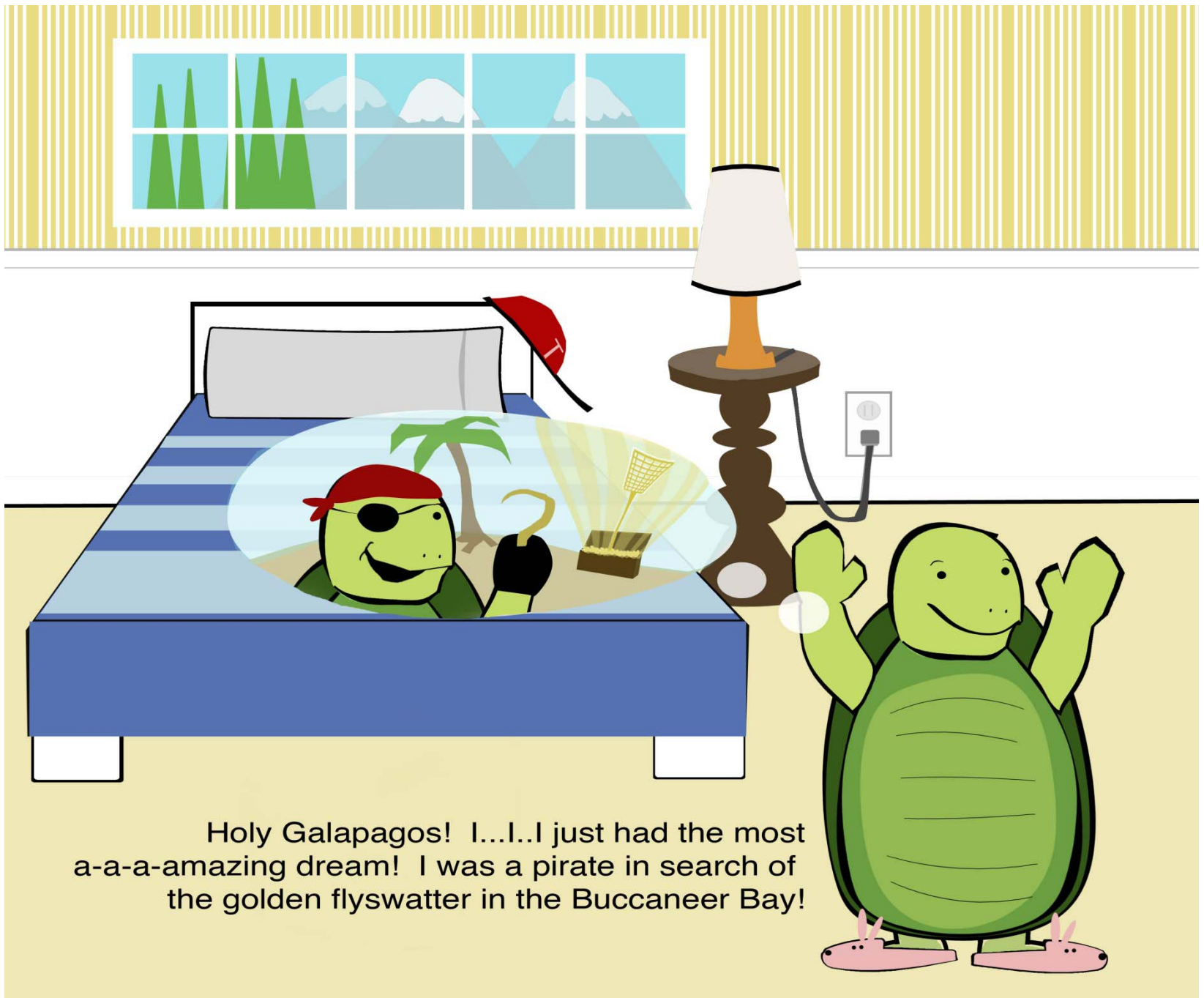
### **4. Individual differences**

When Tarby is talking with the owl and the other animals, they talk about how they are each different from everyone else. Tarby begins to feel better about stuttering, the thing that makes him different.

We have found success with the following prompts:

- What are some things that make other people different? (glasses, hair color, etc)
- How are you different? Is it bad to be different?

We hope that you will use this book to help target emotions related to stuttering. Parents, children, and speech-language pathologists must work together to target this important, yet often overlooked, area of the disorder. Keep in mind that it can be difficult for adults to express their emotions, so be patient with the child and go at a pace they are most comfortable with in discussing these issues.



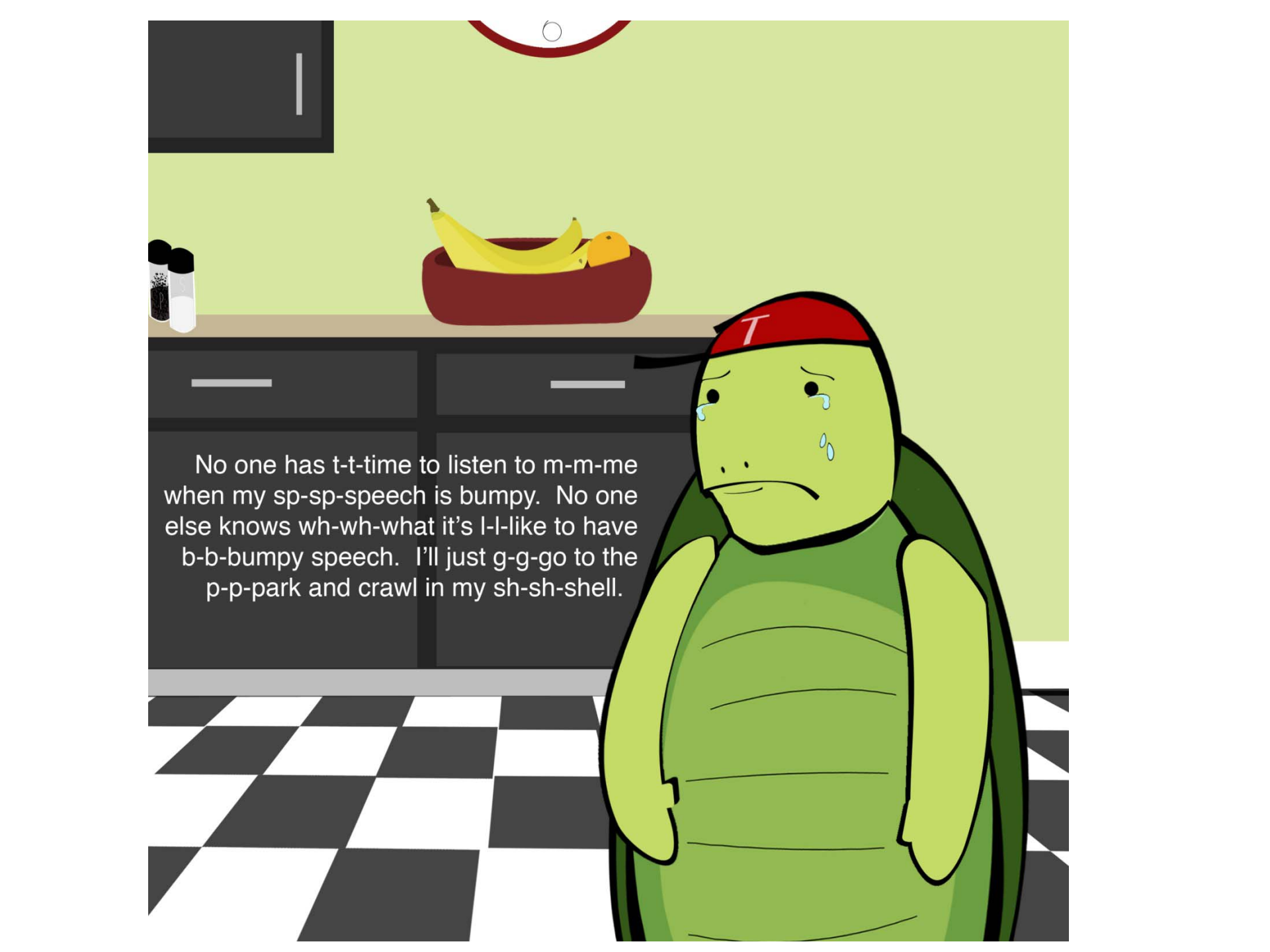


Tarby, I don't have time for your stories. I am late for work. I am teaching my class how to wax their shells today.



M-m-mom, I just had the m-m-most amazing d-d-dream! I was a p-p-pirate and...






No one has t-t-time to listen to m-m-me when my sp-sp-speech is bumpy. No one else knows wh-wh-what it's l-l-like to have b-b-bumpy speech. I'll just g-g-go to the p-p-park and crawl in my sh-sh-shell.



I-I-I am just g-g-going to sit here in my sh-sh-shell so I don't have to t-t-talk.



Cool! Look at that awesome rock!  
Let's jump on it!



It's not a rock; it's a soccer ball!  
Let me kick it to you!



Guys, it isn't a soccer ball...  
it's a football! Go long!

Having b-b-bumpy speech is  
a p-p-pain in the shell!






**ANIMAL  
PARK  
TREE  
MEETING  
TODAY**



Holy hoot, Tarby! Why are you flying through my tree? Is everything alright?



I f-f-feel different from everyone  
b-b-because my speech gets  
b-b-bumpy s-s-sometimes. I think  
l-l-l am going t-t-to stay in my  
shell f-f-forever.



Ahh yes. Everyone is different.  
Sometimes your speech is bumpy.  
I am different because I ask too many  
questions. WHoo. WHoo.



I am different because my neck is so long I can't even play hide and go seek!

I am different because sometimes I forget to take a bath. Sometimes people call me Smelly Sally.

I am different because sometimes people think I am a dalmation since I have spots. I don't know the first thing about fighting fires.



You see, Tarby, everyone is different. Having bumpy speech doesn't make you a bad turtle. It just means that's how you're different.



S-s-so you don't mind if I  
have bumpy s-s-speech  
sometimes?

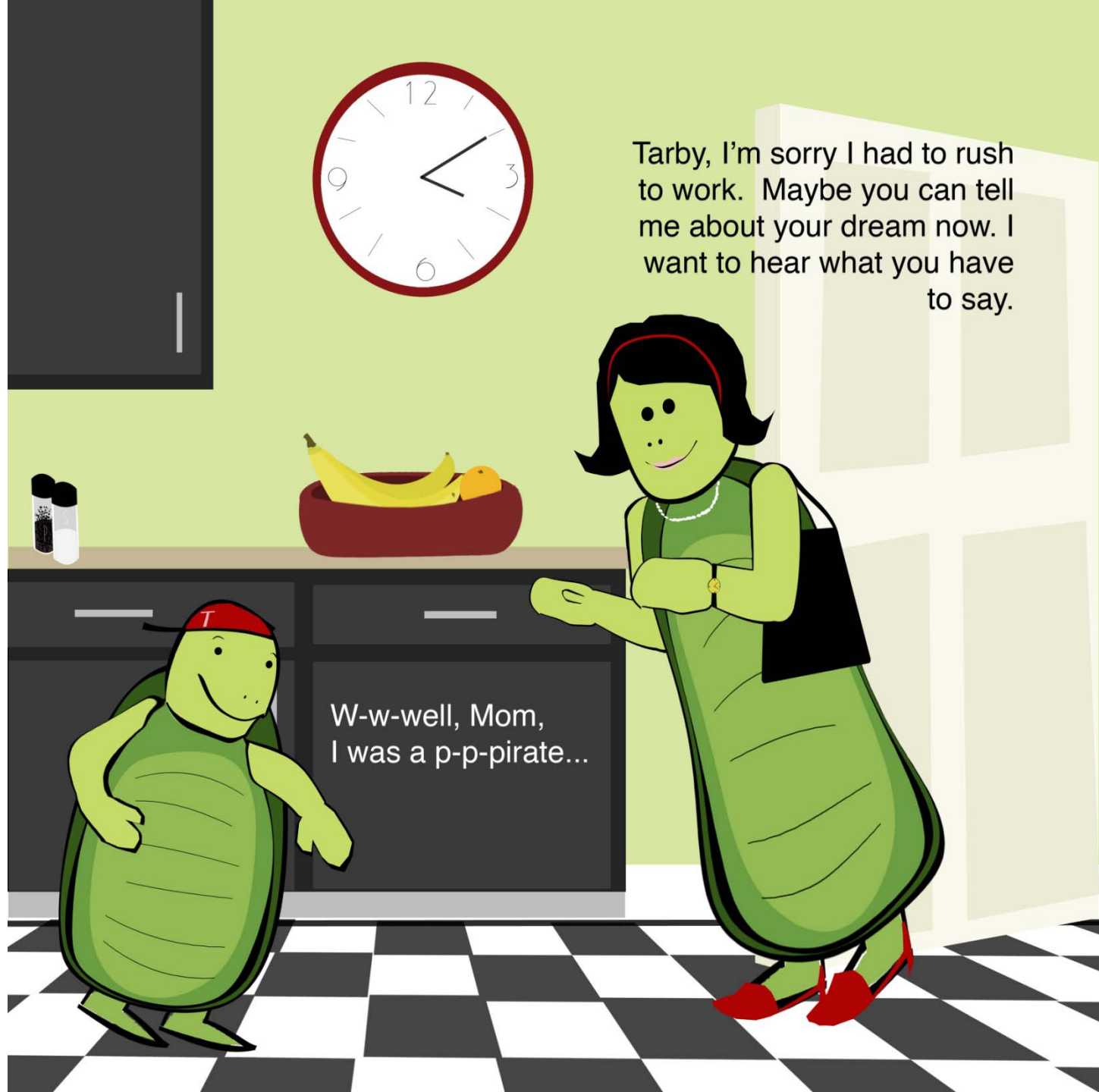
No, Tarby, we don't mind if your speech is bumpy  
sometimes. We want to hear what you have to say.  
Talking is the most important thing.



Th-th-thank you, friends! I feel  
m-m-much better. I-i-it is getting  
late, I n-n-need to go see my  
mom.



Tarby, I'm sorry I had to rush to work. Maybe you can tell me about your dream now. I want to hear what you have to say.



W-w-well, Mom,  
I was a p-p-pirate...