Conserve Water

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
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WHEN LESS IS BEST

YOU'RE ALL WET

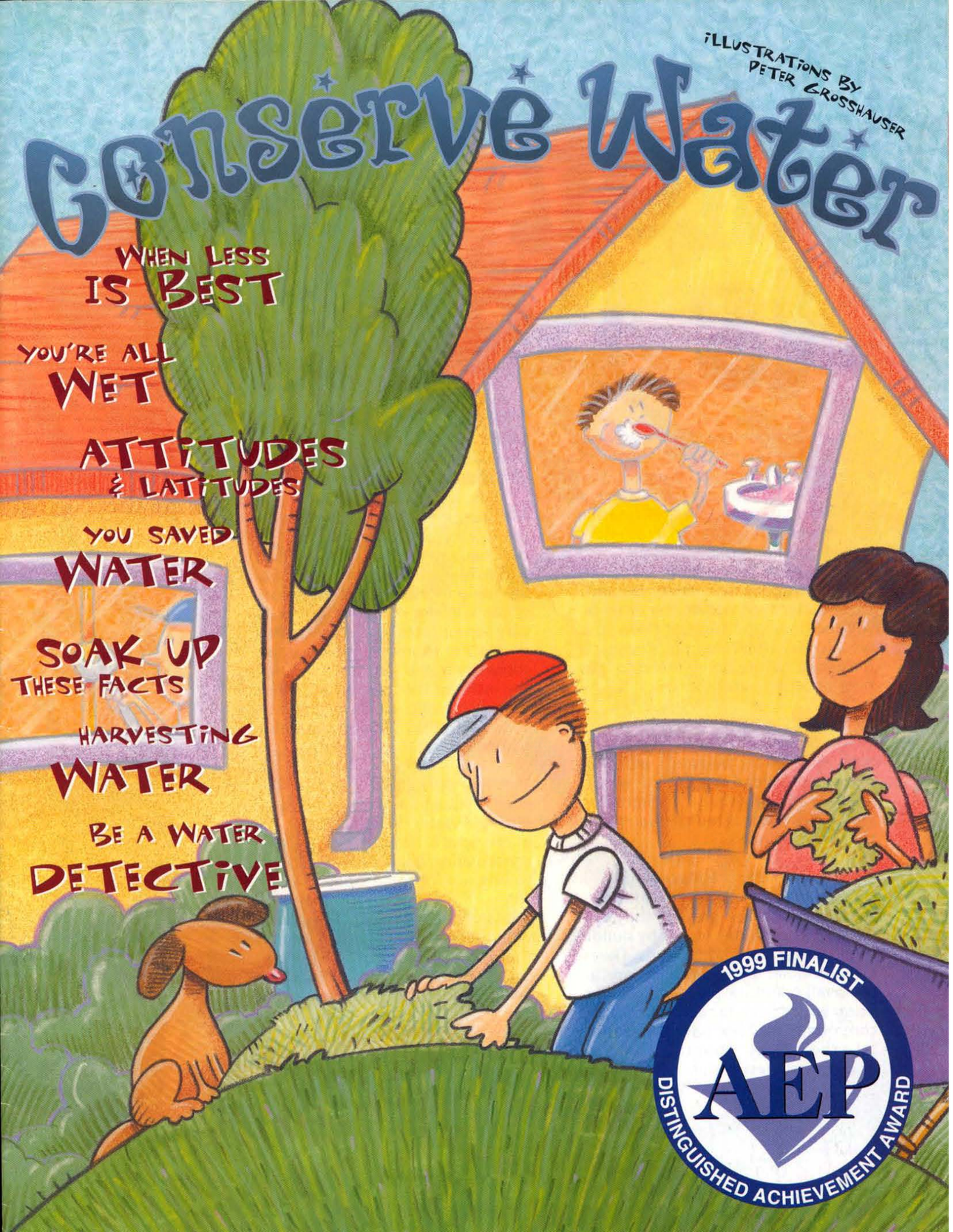
ATTITUDES & LATITUDES

YOU SAVED WATER

SOAK UP THESE FACTS

HARVESTING WATER

BE A WATER DETECTIVE



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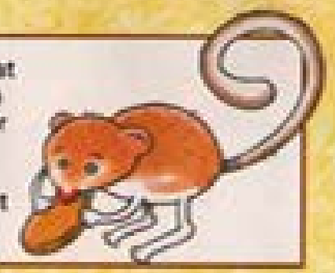
Soak Up These Facts

The water-holding frog lives in the hot, dry interior of Australia. It spends most of its time buried underground sealed in a cocoon made of discarded skin. When it rains—sometimes not for two or three years—the frog leaves its burrow and comes to the surface where it absorbs and stores lots of water in its bladder. When the rain stops, the frog burrows underground again. **Aborigines** (abba-RIJ-uh-neez—native people of Australia) know how to find these frogs. They sometimes dig them up and squeeze water from them to drink. (This does not harm the frogs.)

The kangaroo rat of the American Southwest never drinks water. It gets all it needs from the seeds it harvests.

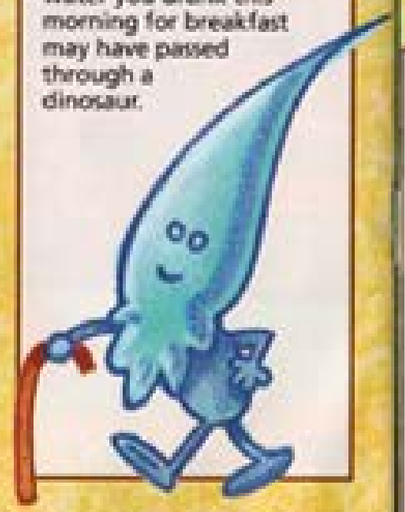


Many insects need water. Bees are a sure sign of water nearby, and a dense cloud of flies swarming over a place can be a clue that water was there a short time ago. It's probably worth digging in this spot.

Explorers have saved their own lives by tying rags to their ankles and walking through desert grass before sunrise to collect water. The rags soak up dew from the surface of the grass, which is then squeezed into the mouth.

When water is present in a desert, a lush, green area called an **oasis** (o-AY-sis) develops. Often, a water hole is near the center of a group of palm trees or other plants.

Did you know the world has the same amount of water today as when water first formed on Earth long ago? The same water you drank this morning for breakfast may have passed through a dinosaur.

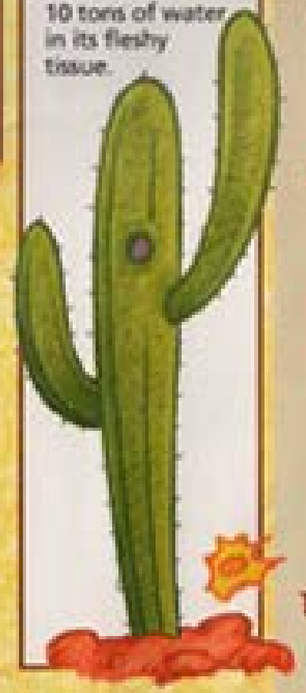


The koala–not really a bear–never drinks water. It gets all the water it needs from the leaves of the **eucalyptus** (yoo-cuh-LIP-tuss) tree, its only source of food.

Camels drink about 50 gallons of water at a time and can go nine days without a drink.

In the Sahara desert in Africa, **Bedouins** (BEH-doo-inz—nomadic tribesmen) dig up cool stones just before sunrise and wait until dew settles on them. Then they lick the water from the stones. They also listen to the twittering of birds and watch where they fly, following them to water.

A saguaro cactus in the Sonoran or Chihuahuan deserts of North America can store as much as 10 tons of water in its fleshy tissue.



WATER SCRAMBLE

Test your skills. Unscramble the words to complete the following sentences. Not all the words are found on these two pages.

1. Your _____(doyb) is mostly water.
2. A_____(aloka) gets all its water from eucalyptus leaves.
3. A single_____ (argusao) cactus may hold several_____(onts) of water.
4. Aborigines in Australia find water by digging up water-holding_____(srfog).
5. A camel drinks 50_____(lagolsn) of water at one time and can go_____(einn) days without drinking again.
6. Bedouin tribesmen listen for the sound of_____(sdrbi) and follow them to_____(tarew).
7. The_____(ragkonoa) rat never drinks water.
8. A lush, green area in the desert is called an_____(iasos) and usually has a water_____(leoh) near its center.
9. Scientists figure that about three-fourths of our _____(nelpat) is covered by water.
10. Island people rely on rain for many of their water needs. They store rain in a tank called a _____(nreitsc).

You Saved Water

Number of players: two to four

You need: playing piece (coin, small stone, button); four small pieces of paper numbered one through four; a strip of paper for each player to record the gallons of water saved. Place numbered papers in a small bag. Each player draws a number to decide who starts, then returns the number to the bag.

The point is: to move through the house from start to finish, landing on icons that show you have saved water. Follow the arrows. Do not go backwards.

Here goes: Take turns drawing a numbered slip from the bag and moving that many spaces on the board. Return your number to the bag. If you land on an icon, find the same icon around the border of the game, read aloud the words next to it and write down on your strip of paper the gallons of water you saved. Each time you land on an icon and save water, you get to take another turn. If you land on a blank space, your turn is over.

You win if: after all players have reached the finish and added the number of gallons on their strips of paper, you have saved the most gallons of water! *

*The number of gallons saved are estimates and are based on the average of four gallons/minute if water is allowed to flow freely from the faucet.

Certain icons have a dollar sign next to them to show that this action costs money. To save water, you must sometimes invest money.