The Troublesome Terrarium

Story by
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Illustrations by
Ned Culic



PM

For teachers' inspection ONLY

The Troublesome Terrarium

Level 24

Running Words 1483 **Text Type** Narrative (Imaginative)

Curriculum Area Literacy

Retelling to encourage critical thinking about the content

Ask each student to retell the story in his or her own words.

Record the retelling for further discussion and reflection.

Questions to reinforce meaning and stimulate discussion

Literal

1 Why did the plants in the new terrarium look so different?

2 Who did Michael contact about the problem?

3 What advice did the expert give Michael?

Inferential

4 Why did the terrarium float?

5 Why did Michael seal the door on the communication pod?

6 Why did the vines keep growing after Michael had sliced them with laser scissors?

7 Why was the problem so scary?

8 Why didn't Michael collect the rose dew before he went to bed?

9 Why should Michael have read the instructions for the terrarium first?

Applied Knowledge

10 What type of story is *The Troublesome Terrarium*?

11 How could plants from another planet affect Earth in the future?

12 Could the events in this story really take place in the future? Why or why not?

Links with other PM Guided Reading Books and Cards

Level 24	Card	Narrative	*The Fishbowl Jungle*
Level 23	Book	Narrative	*Percy to the Rescue*
Level 24	Book	Narrative	*The Indoor Forest*

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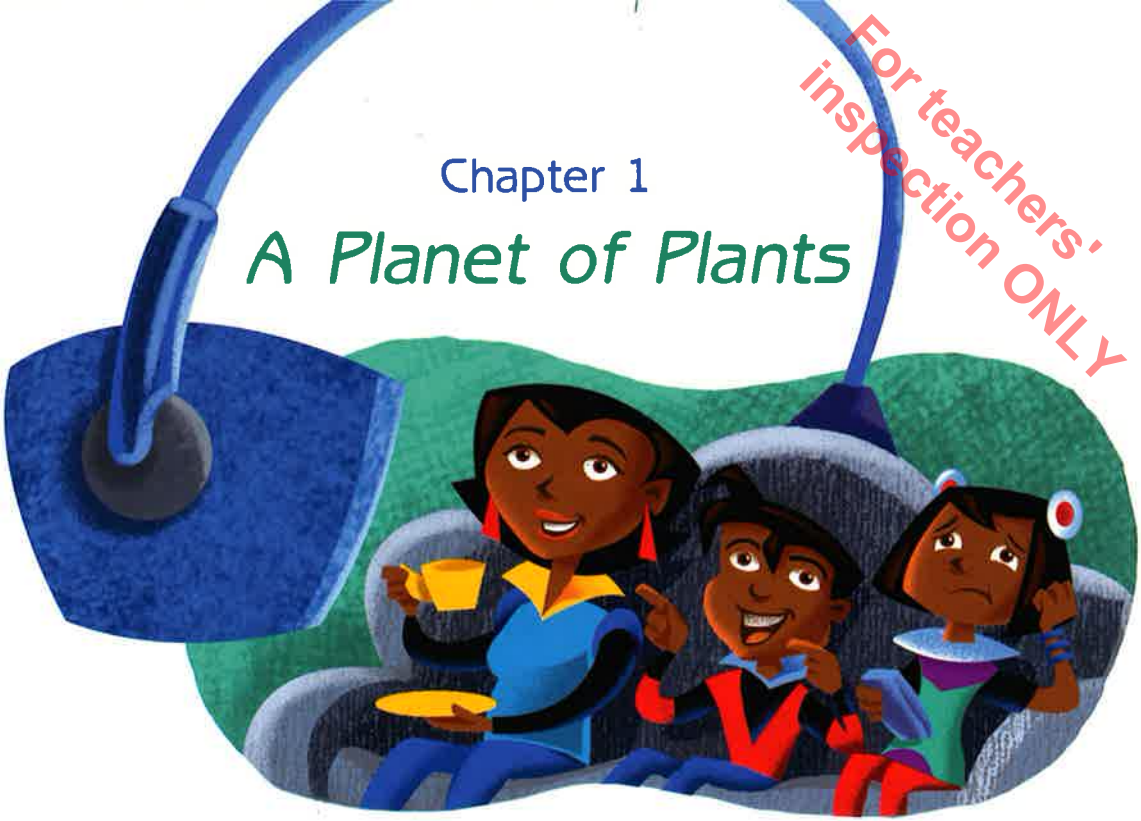
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Chapter 1

A Planet of Plants



I'll never forget the day I heard that Earth had made contact with the planet Zarp. It was February 2098, only one year ago. I was watching the news with Mum and my sister, Lara.

The newsreader told us that the people of Zarp seemed to be very friendly. She also told us that Zarp was full of forests and a huge range of plants. For me, this was the most exciting news of all. If you saw my room, you would understand why.

My shelves are full of plants in pots, and there's a big round terrarium on my desk. I also have a jungle of plants on the balcony of our apartment, which is on the 28th floor.

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Just last week, I came home from school and turned on the TV. While I was watching the news, an advertisement for a ready-made terrarium flashed on the screen. The voice said that the terrarium was full of plants from the planet Zarp. This was the most exciting news I had heard all year.

I begged Mum to order one for me. I reminded her that I still had my birthday money in the bank – just enough to pay for the terrarium.



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The terrarium arrived by space courier the next day. It was full of wild, colourful plants and moss, unlike anything I'd ever seen on Earth. I took it straight to my bedroom and placed it on my desk beside my old terrarium.

Immediately, the new terrarium began to float just above the desktop. They looked fantastic together. Mum and Lara were as impressed as I was.

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Just before bedtime that night, I noticed that my new plants were looking a bit dry. I sprayed them with water from the same bottle I use for my old terrarium.

Suddenly, there was a strange rumble inside the new terrarium. The plants from Zarp seemed to be shivering. Like little arms stretching out, the leaves and vines climbed towards the top of the bowl. After just a few minutes, they were spilling out and creeping down the sides.

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I started to panic. Then I picked up the instruction booklet that came with the terrarium. It clearly said:

> Do not water. Feed only with Zarpian Cactus Sap (not included).

I gulped and closed my door, so that no one would see what I had done.

