

PM+

The Freeway Turtles

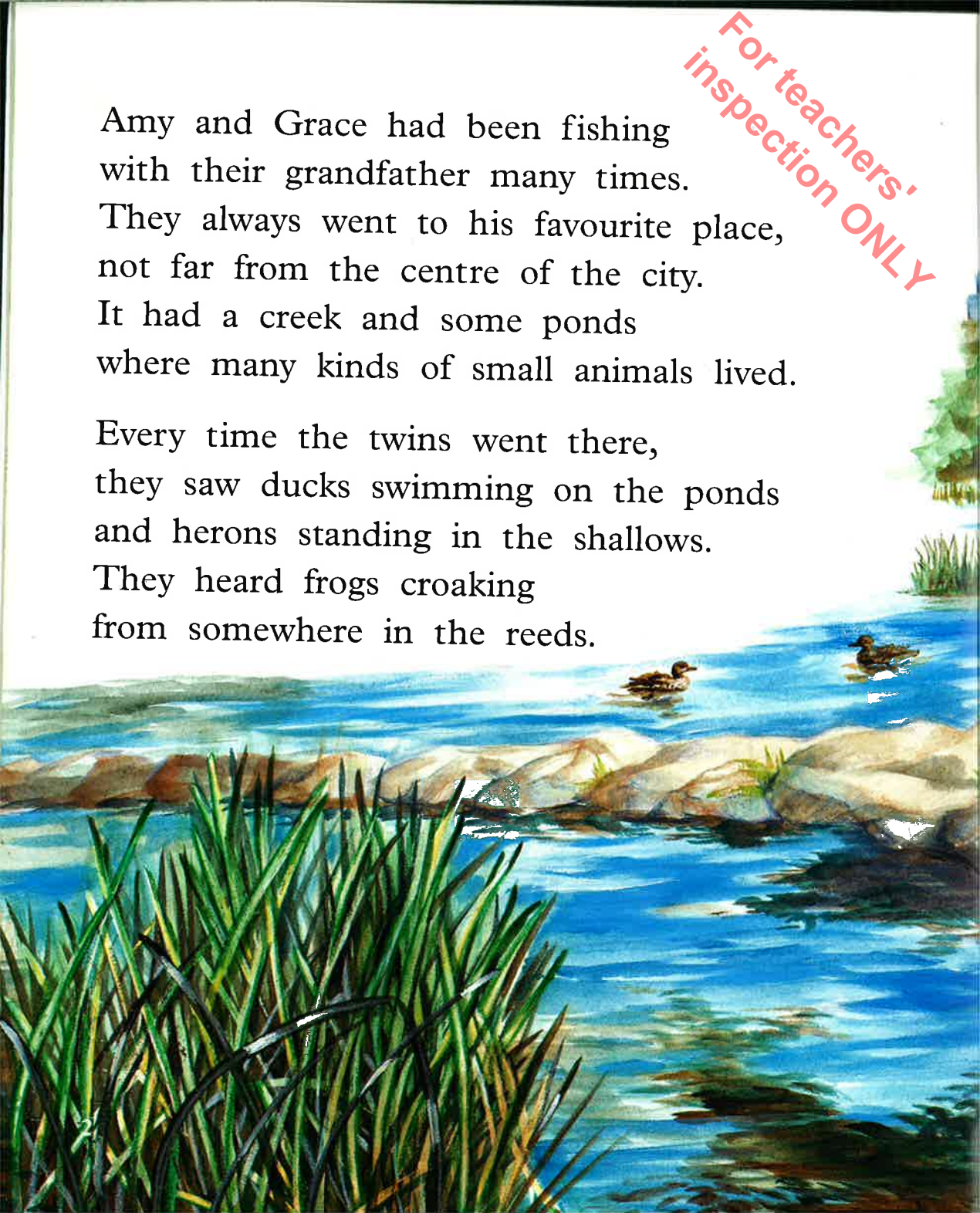
Story by Corinne Fenton

Illustrations by Jenny Mountstephen

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Amy and Grace had been fishing
with their grandfather many times.
They always went to his favourite place,
not far from the centre of the city.
It had a creek and some ponds
where many kinds of small animals lived.

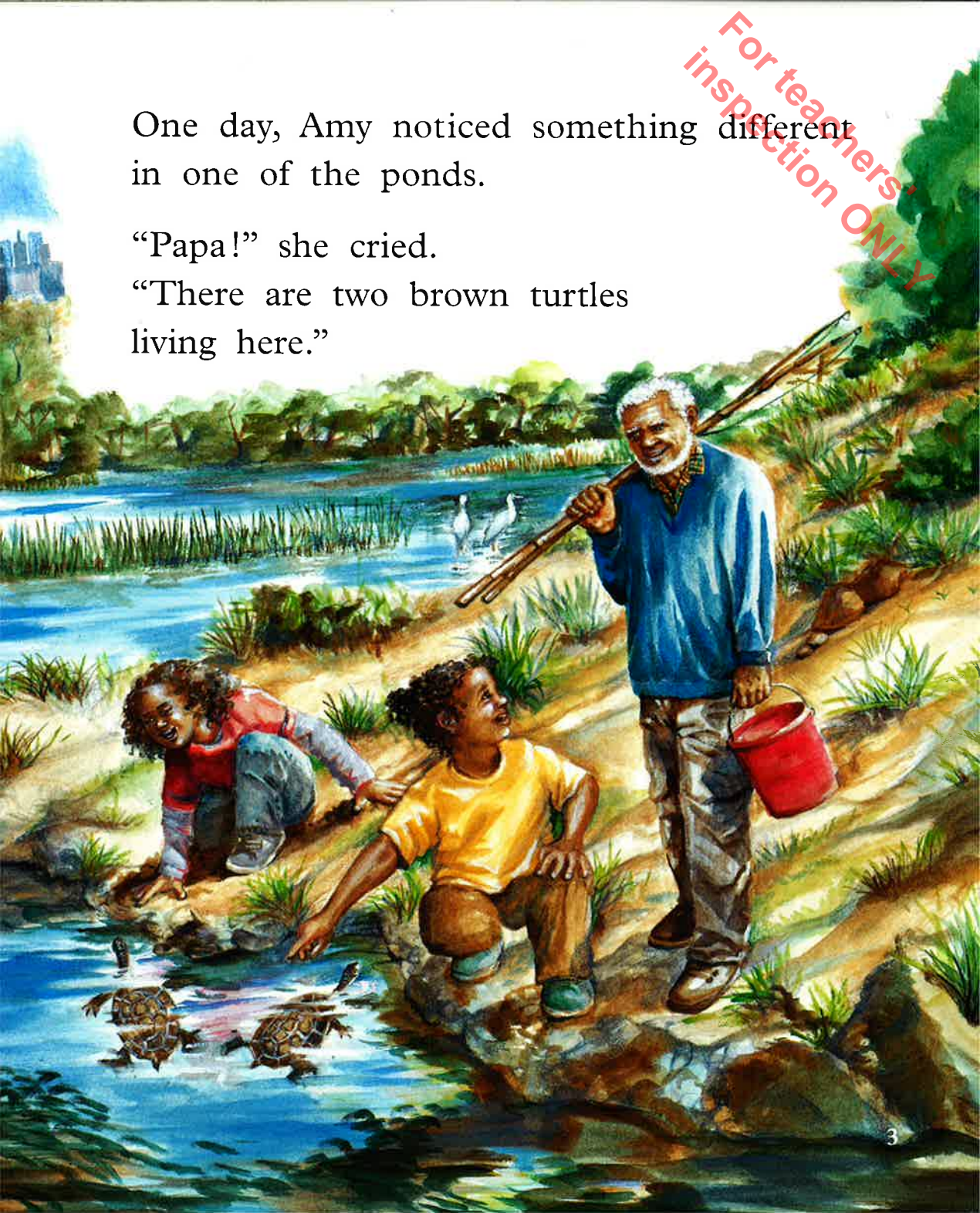
Every time the twins went there,
they saw ducks swimming on the ponds
and herons standing in the shallows.
They heard frogs croaking
from somewhere in the reeds.



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One day, Amy noticed something different in one of the ponds.

"Papa!" she cried.
"There are two brown turtles living here."

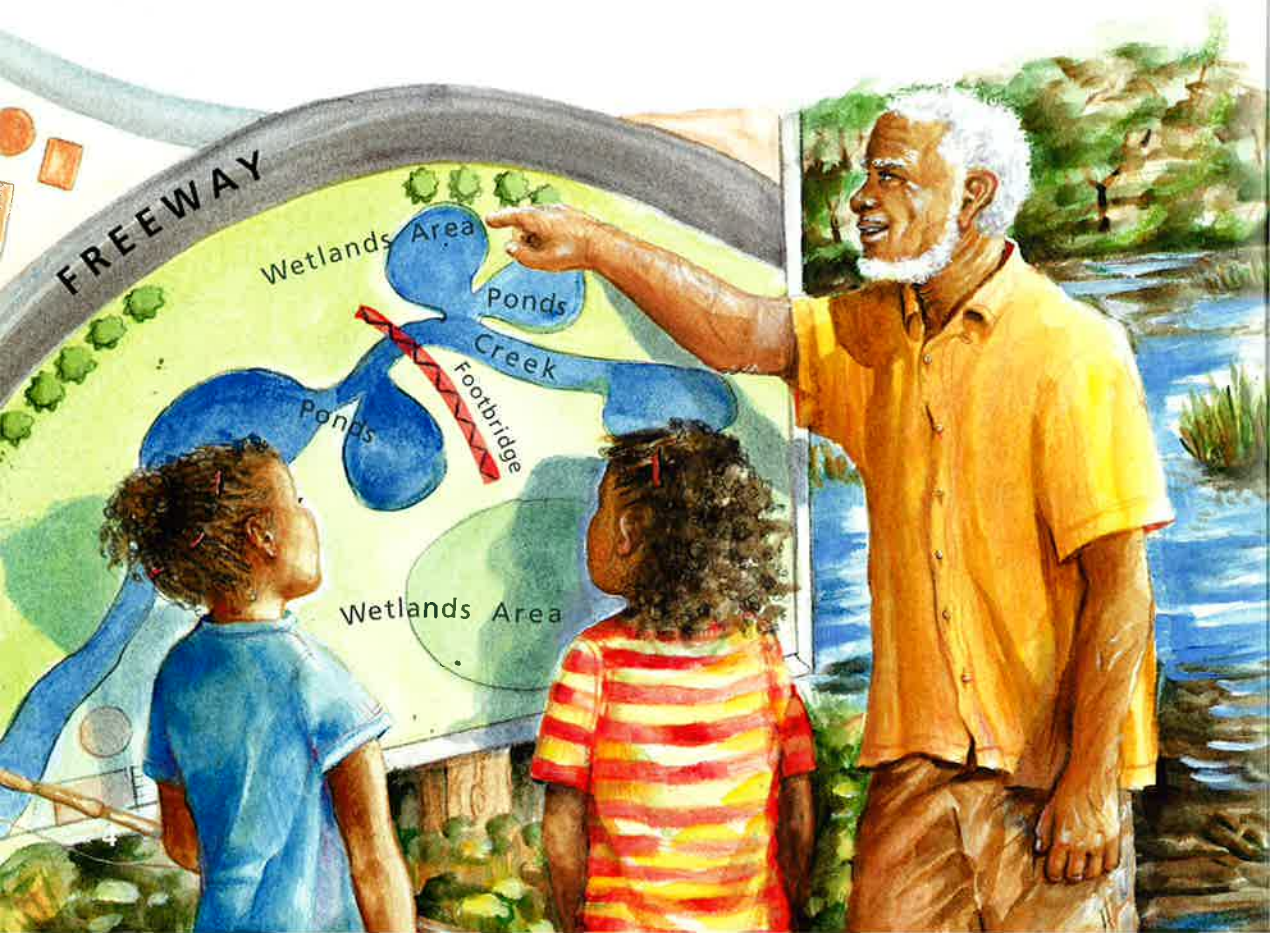


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A few weeks later,
when they went back to the creek,
they saw a large sign with a map on it.

"A freeway is going to be built here,"
said Grace. "Right by our fishing spot."

"What will happen to the animals and birds?"
asked Amy. "Won't they be frightened away?"



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"This will be a wetlands area,"
replied Papa, reading from the sign.
"It will still be a home for the wildlife."

He pointed at the map.
"You can see where the freeway
is going to be built beside the creek
and the ponds," he explained.
"There's a very good chance
that the wildlife will stay here."

"Oh, good," said Amy.
"Now let's go and look for our turtles
before it gets dark."



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As the girls walked towards the pond
they saw one of the turtles
moving slowly up the bank,
not far from where they were standing.

"Where's it going, Papa?" asked Grace.

"She could be going to lay some eggs,"
answered Papa.

They kept very still and quiet
and watched the turtle.

First of all, she dug a hole in the bank
with her back legs.
Then she laid some eggs
and covered them over with sand.

