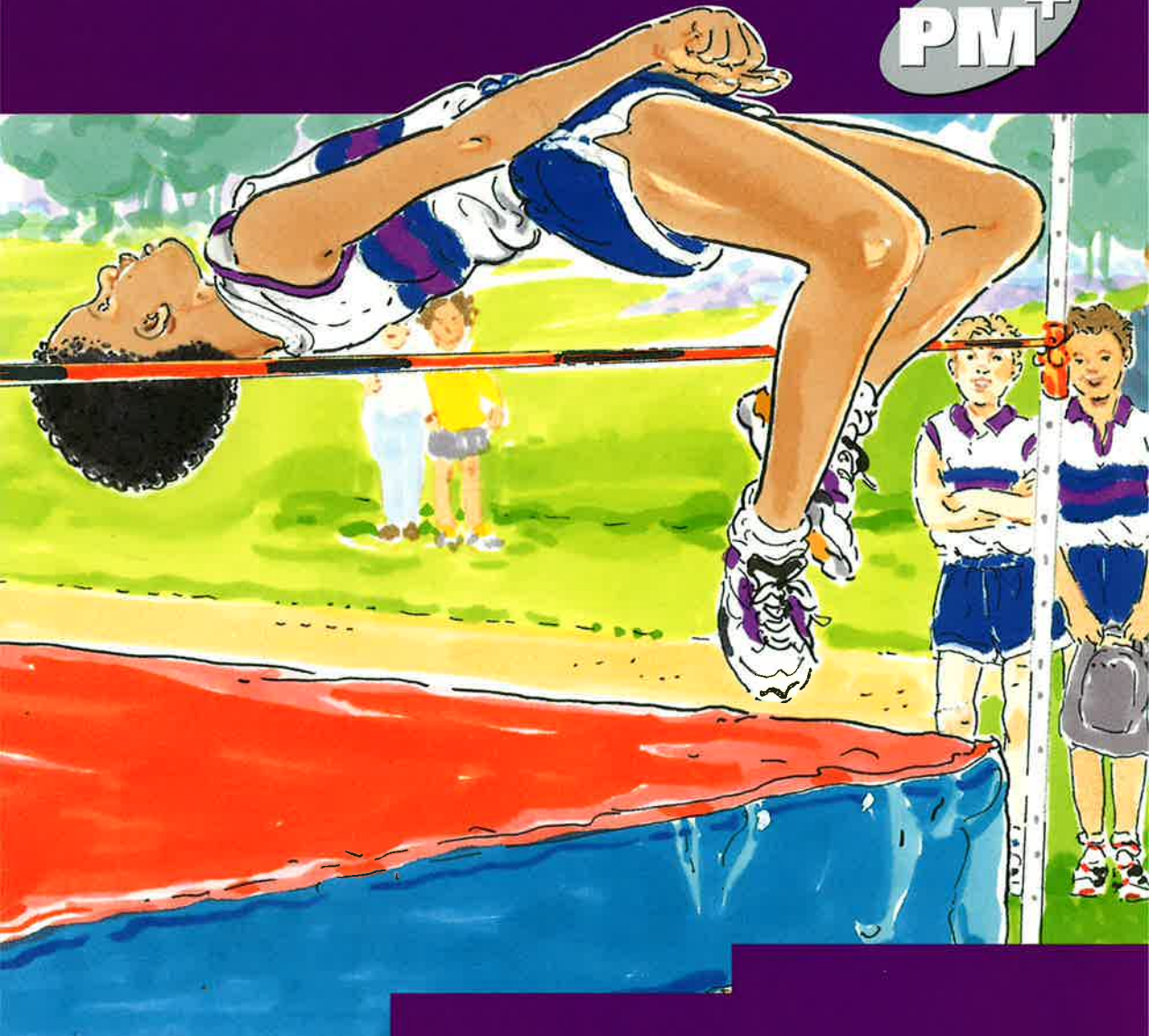
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The Contest

Story by Stephen Harrison Illustrations by Margaret Power

Mrs Taylor called to the boy who was last to have his turn. His name was Michael, and he had only just come to Fairfield School. Shaun and Carl watched as he stood up and stared at the bar for a few moments.



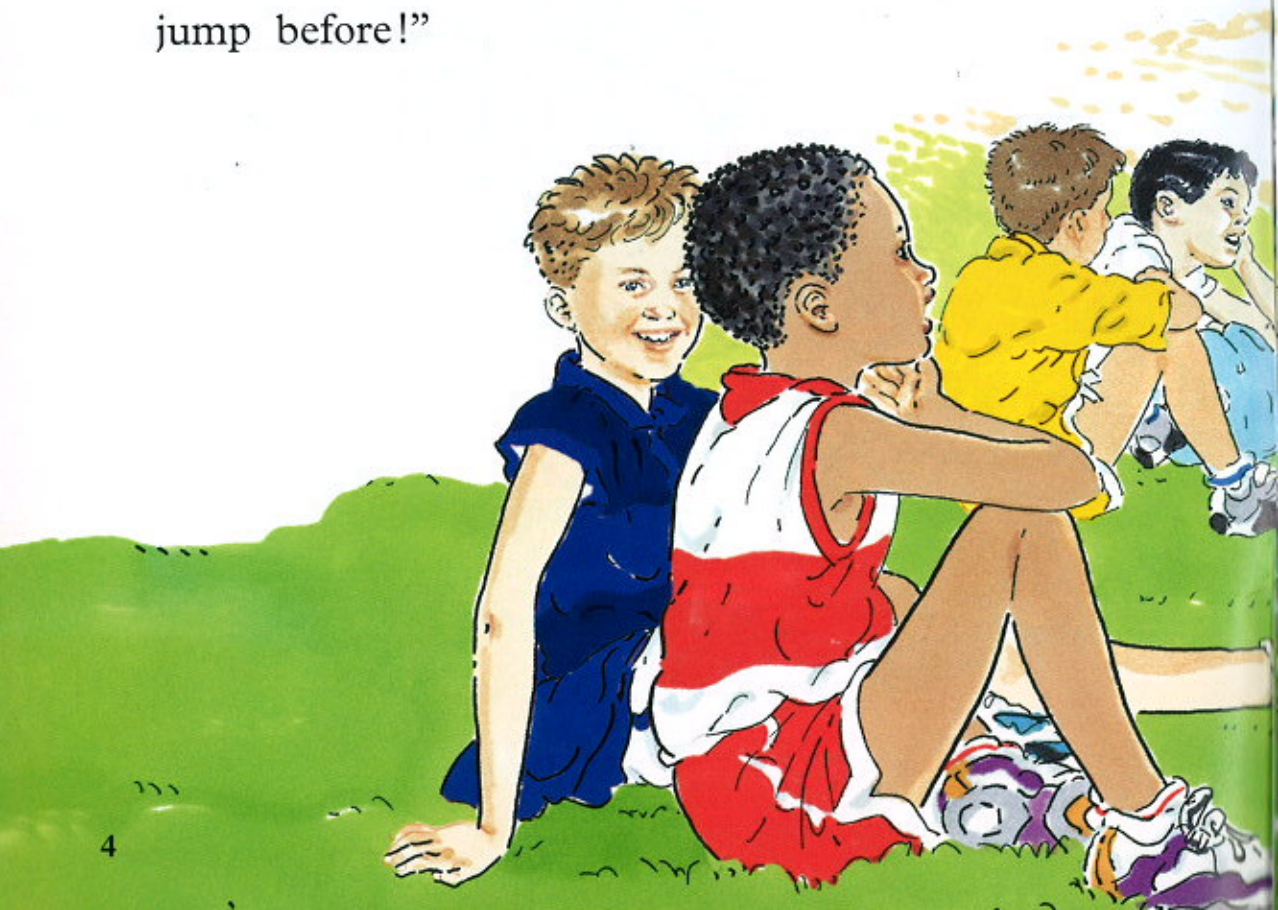
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Very slowly, the new boy raised himself up on his toes, and took a deep breath. Then he approached the bar with several long strides, and leaped over it easily.

"Wow!" said Shaun. "Did you see that, Carl? He jumped as high as you did!"

"That was excellent, Michael!" said Mrs Taylor. "It's obvious that you've done the high jump before!"



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Michael grinned. "I was the champ at my last school," he replied.

Carl began to feel worried. He had been expecting to win easily, but now he would have to compete against Michael.

And the bar would be raised...



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Carl stood and looked at the bar. Suddenly, it seemed very high. He ran up to it and, as he went over, he hit it with his foot. He could hear the bar clattering to the ground as he landed on the mat.

Michael had his turn next. Over he went, and everybody clapped. Then Carl knocked the bar off twice in a row. As it fell down after his final attempt, he knew that he was out of the contest. Michael was the new champion.



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Carl was very disappointed. He sat down beside Shaun and said, "I'm not going to do the high jump any more."

"But you're really good at it," said Shaun. "You can't give up, just like that. Why don't you come to the club with me tomorrow, and do some training?"

Shaun was good at running, and every Saturday morning he went to the Westside Athletics Club, where his father was a coach. He had been trying to get Carl to join, but Carl wasn't interested. "Training is boring," he said.

