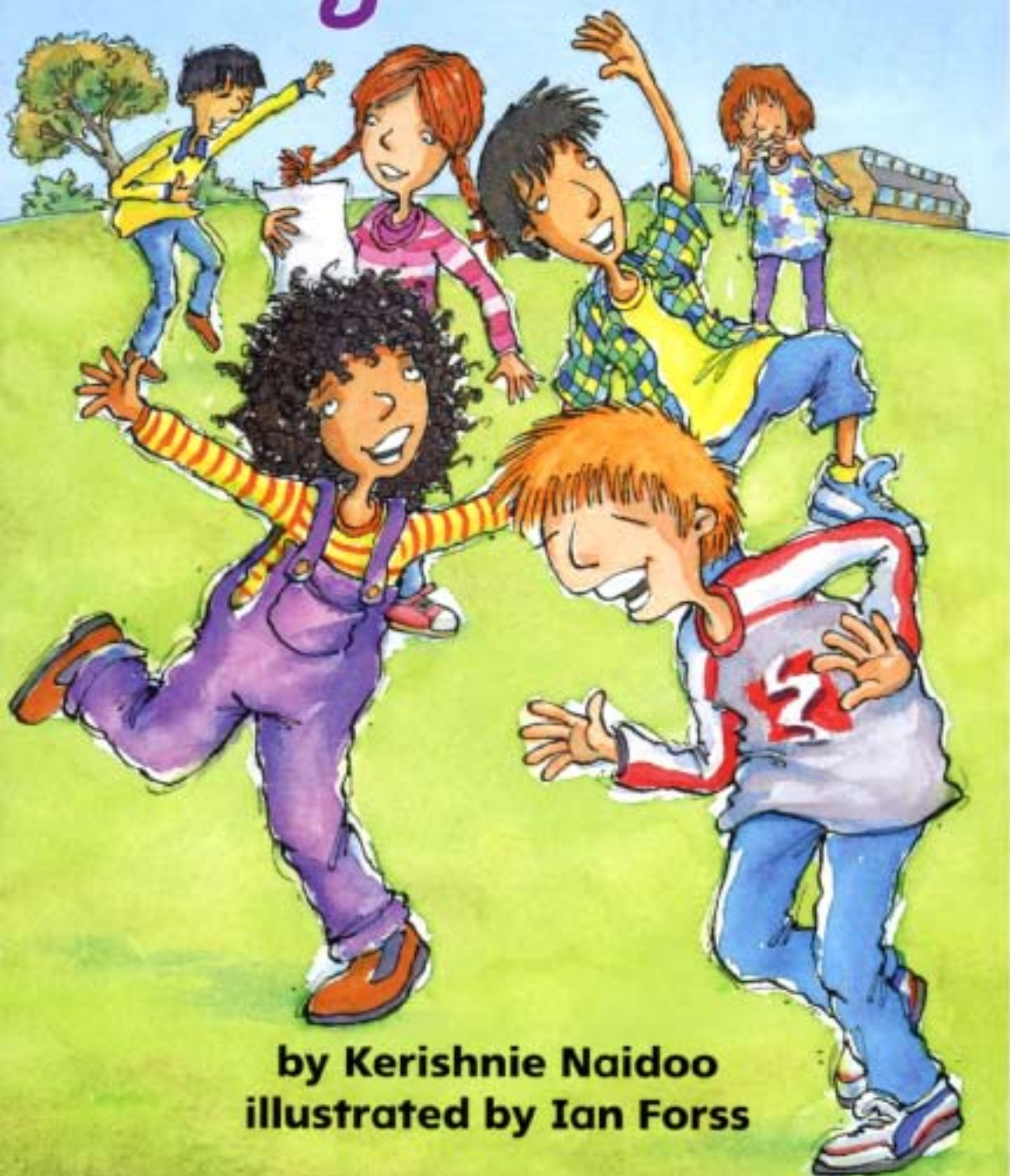


Realistic
Fiction

The Laughter Club



by Kerishnie Naidoo
illustrated by Ian Forss

Read to Find Out

What does Amy discover in the Laughter Club?

STRATEGIES & SKILLS AT A GLANCE

Comprehension

- Strategy: Generate Questions
- Skill: Make Inferences

Vocabulary

- coach, imaginary, practices, starting, tryouts, uniform

Vocabulary Strategy

- Dictionary: Multiple-Meaning Words

Phonics

- long /ō/o, oa, ow

Word count: 728

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Back to School Blues

“Come on, Amy,” shouted Bindi. “Throw the football to me!”

Amy threw the football. It dropped quickly and tumbled slowly along the ground.

She walked away and sat down on a bench. Amy didn't like touch football tryouts. Everyone threw the ball too hard.

Plus, Amy had been sick and out of school for the last two weeks. She still felt lazy.



Bindi ran over. “Come on, Amy,” he said. “Try again! You can do it.”

Amy shook her head. “No, I only want to sit and watch now.”





Coach Redmond saw that Amy was sitting on the bench.

“That’s okay, Amy,” he said. “You can rest. Bindi, let’s keep throwing, please.”

Bindi ran back on the field.

Amy didn’t feel like doing anything or talking to anyone. She felt like going home, but she had to wait for her mom.

That afternoon, Amy’s mother, Jodie, met her at the school gate. She gave Amy a hug.

“Was your first day back at school okay?” asked Jodie. “Do you have a lot of homework?”

Amy shook her head no. She didn’t say a word the whole way home.



When they got back home, Amy went to her room. She flopped onto her bed and picked up her book. Her head filled with imaginary characters as she read. Amy closed her eyes and fell asleep.



Jodie was worried. Amy had always been a little shy, and going back to school again after being sick was not easy for her.

Just then the phone rang. It was Jodie's friend, Mira.

"I'm coming over, Jodie," said Mira when she heard how Amy felt. "Sounds like both of you need cheering up."

Laughter Keeps You Fit

"Jodie, just wait till I tell you what I'm starting up!" Mira said, bursting through the front door. She had brought flowers from her garden. "It's called a Laughter Club!" she added, putting the flowers in a vase.

"What's a Laughter Club?" asked Jodie.

"People who get together and laugh," answered Mira. "Once a week everyone practices telling jokes and being silly. Laughing is very good for you!"

"How do you practice?" asked Jodie, smiling. She already thought the idea sounded funny.

"Many ways," said Mira. "Try one! Make a funny face, and then run toward me. I'll do the same."

Soon they were laughing so hard that they found it hard to stop.

"I think I'd better join your Laughter Club!" said Jodie breathlessly. "It's fun!"



“And all the fun is so good for you!”
said Mira. “Laughing helps stomach muscles,
breathing—just about everything. It keeps
you fit.”

“I believe it,” said Jodie. “I feel much better.
And thirsty, too. Would you like an iced tea?”

“Yes, please,” said Mira.

“Hello, Mira,” said Amy, coming into the
kitchen. “Can I please have something to
drink, too, Mom?”

“Hi, Amy,” said Mira. “Good to see you
looking so much better!”

They all sat down at the kitchen table.

“So tell me more,” said Jodie.

“Not much more to tell,” replied Mira.
“It’s not like a regular sport. Nobody wears a
uniform. Anybody, young or old, can go.”

“You can hold the first meeting here if you
would like,” said Jodie.



Chapter 3

Laughing Along

It was the first night of Mira's Laughter Club. A lot of people were there. Amy came out of her room to watch everyone in the living room. They were all laughing a lot!

They looked so silly, and they were enjoying themselves so much. Amy just couldn't help laughing along.



Then she saw Bindi across the room. He had come with his mother and was watching everyone with a big smile on his face. Bindi waved at Amy. She waved back. He made a funny face. She made one back at him. They burst out laughing together.

Jodie gave Mira a big wink and a nod.

"I think the Laughter Club was a perfect idea," she whispered.

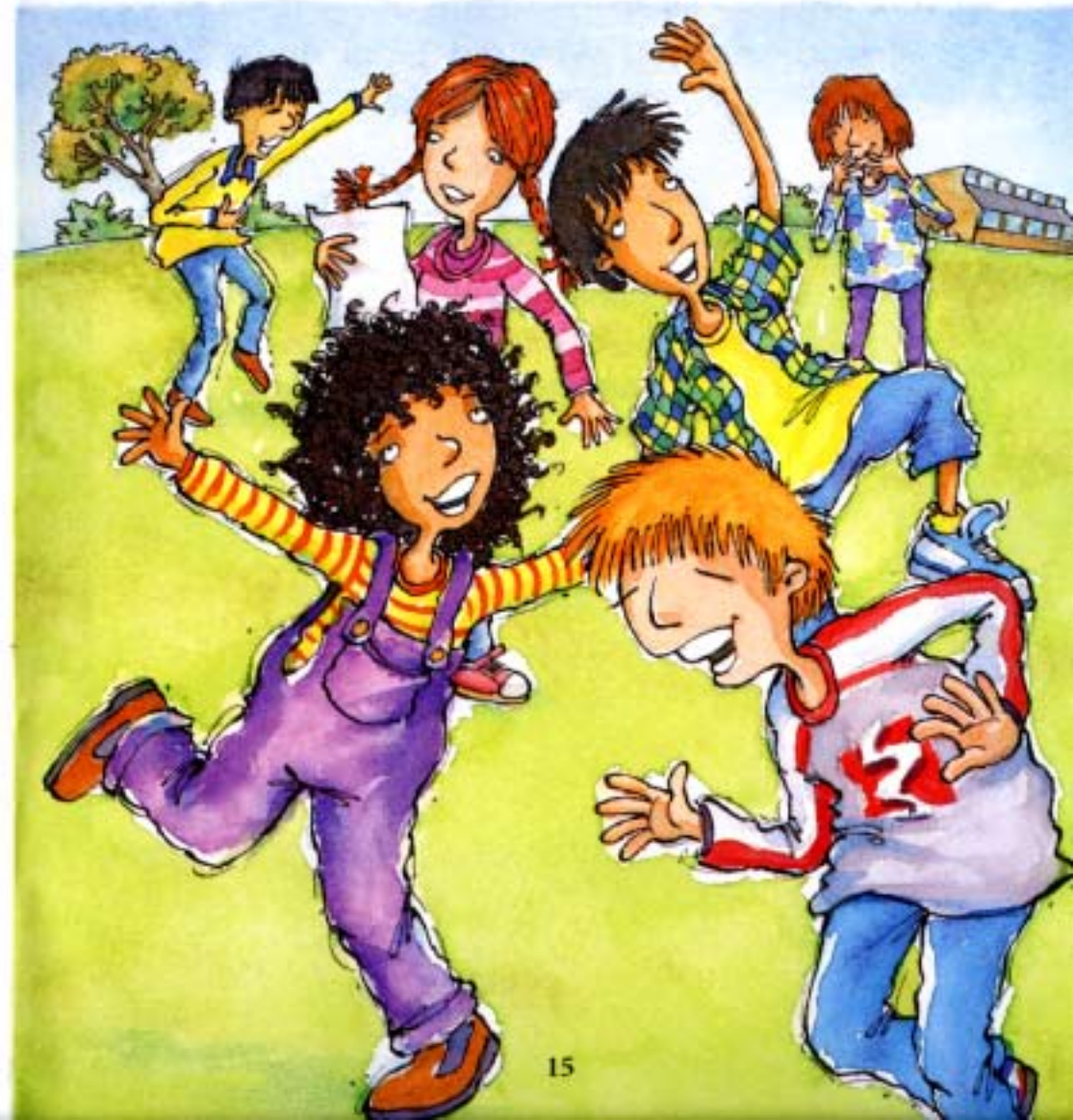




After that night, Amy and Bindi became best friends. Amy felt better about everything, even playing sports. She didn't mind if she wasn't the best on the field. It was fun just to be with friends.

She and Bindi made a lot of other friends as well. They started their own Laughter Club at school.

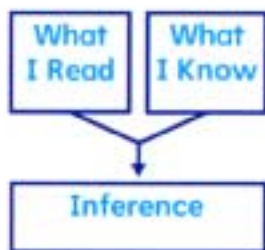
Club members shared jokes each week. They found that sometimes the silliest jokes were the best!



Comprehension Check

Retell the Story

Use an Inference Chart and the pictures to help you retell this story.



Think and Compare

1. Turn to page 13. Why did Bindi make Amy laugh? (**Make Inferences**)
2. How does laughing make you feel? (**Synthesize**)
3. Why do people like to join clubs and groups? (**Analyze**)

Literacy Activities



Laugh Together!

Write an advertisement for your own laughter club. Explain what it is, when it will meet, and why people should join it.



Make a Word Web

In a group, talk about all of the words you can think of that mean *laugh*. Add them to a word web like the one below. Then share the words with your class.



The Laughter Club

Amy is feeling sad and her mom is worried. Will the Laughter Club cheer Amy up?



2.2 Week 5

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