



The Ball Game Between the Birds and Animals

DO NOW

Describe how you think the two animals move through the air.



The first animal looks like it can _____.

The second animal looks like it can _____.



LEARNING GOALS

I will learn how to . . .

- Summarize a folktale.
- Read and form plural nouns.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

I will be able to . . .

- Summarize "The Ball Game Between the Birds and Animals."
- Read plural nouns in a story and form plurals of nouns that end in -y.

Unlock the Text

Vocabulary

Read each word, definition, and example sentence in the chart.

Word	Definition	Example Sentence
flapped (v.)	moved up and down	The bats flapped their wings silently during flight.
glid•ed (v.)	moved smoothly	The birds held their wings still as they glided to the ground.
soared (v.)	flew upward; flew at a great height	Eagles have often soared high above where other birds fly.

Complete the sentences to show your understanding of the vocabulary words.

- I watched as the _____ **soared** high in the sky.
When it **soared**, I think it felt _____.
- As the owl **glided** through the air, it was _____.
When it **glided** above me, I could hear _____.
- The bat needed to _____, so it **flapped** its wings.
It **flapped** so hard it _____.



Background Knowledge

Folktales are traditional stories that often have animals as main characters.

Look at the pictures of characters from today's text. Decide if each one is found in the sky or on land. Write L for *land* or S for *sky* below each animal.



L



TALK ABOUT IT

Choose one of the animals shown on this page. Tell a partner whether the animal would flap, glide, or soar. Explain your thinking.

A ___ might glide when it ___.

This ___ would soar when ___.

THE BALL GAME BETWEEN THE BIRDS AND ANIMALS



Purpose for Reading

Read to find out how the birds help small creatures become part of their team.

ancient: *long ago past*

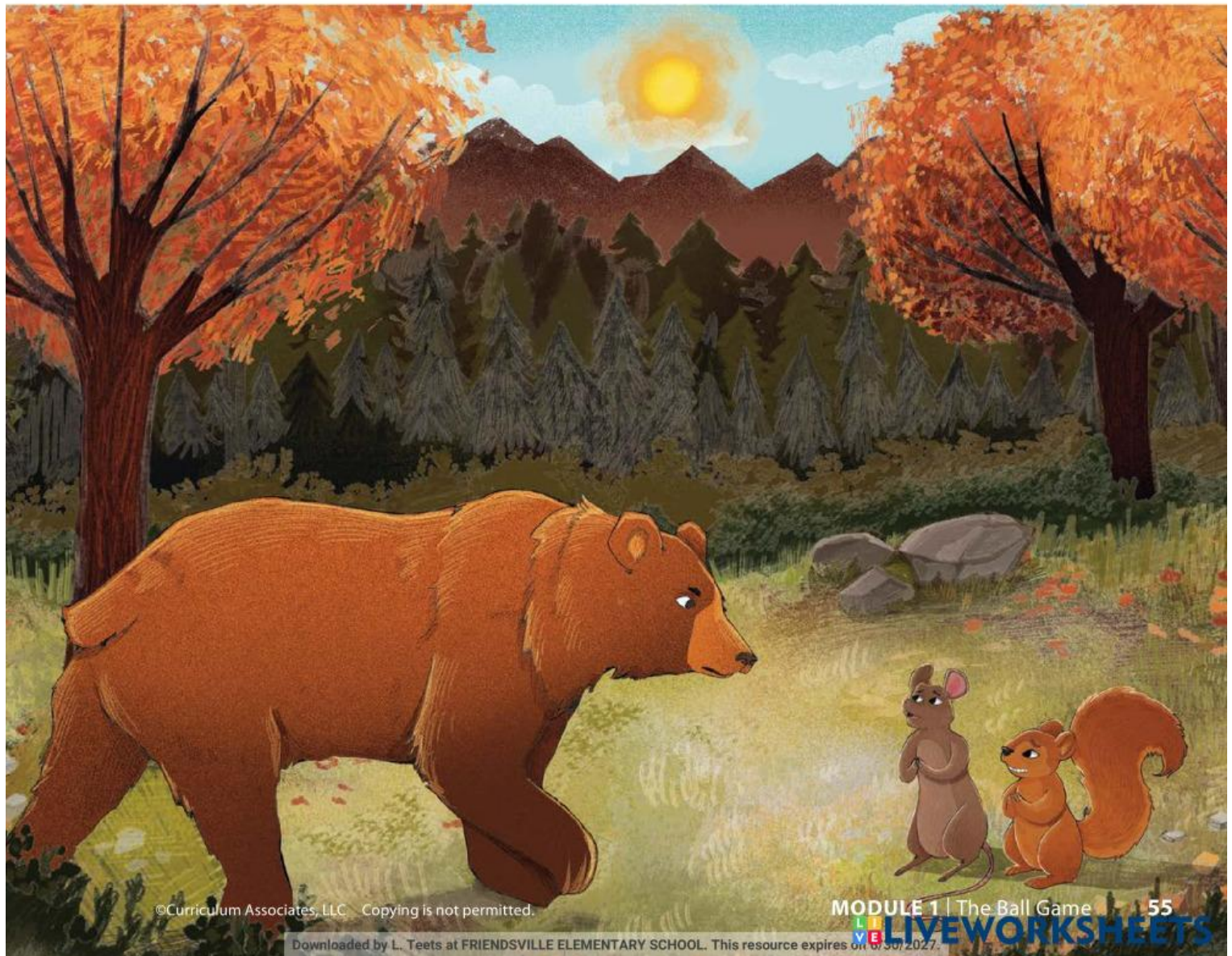
boastful: *too proud*

Retold by James Bruchac and Joseph Bruchac

- 1 In the **ancient** times, the four-legged animals of the forest had one of the toughest ball teams in the land. Mountain Lion, Wolf, Fox, Bobcat, and Deer were all members of the team. The captain of the team was Bear. Bear was very **boastful**.
- 2 “No team in the land can beat us,” Bear would often say.
- 3 The birds of the sky also had a very good team. Their captain was Eagle. The other winged creatures included Hawk, Falcon, Raven, Crow, Kingfisher, and swift little Hummingbird. One day it was decided that these two teams should play a game.
- 4 The night before the game, both teams had a great dance. As the four-legged team prepared for their party, two little creatures approached Bear.
- 5 “We would also like to play,” the two little ones said. “May we join your team?”
- 6 “Ha, look at the size of you!” laughed Bear. “How could you ever help my team?”
- 7 “We may be small, but we will try very hard,” the little creatures replied.
- 8 “Go away,” Bear growled. “We have no time for creatures as small and weak as you!”



- 9 With their heads hung low, the two creatures walked away. But they did not give up. They went to the place where Eagle's team was dancing.
- 10 "Can we join your team?" they asked Eagle.
- 11 "Anyone who wants to play and can fly is welcome to join us," Eagle said.
- 12 "But we do not have any wings," said one of the little creatures.
- 13 "We can help with that," Eagle replied.



14 Then Eagle turned to Kingfisher with his sharp scissor-like beak. "Take our old drum," Eagle said, "and cut out some wings for these creatures."

15 Kingfisher did as Eagle said. He cut out one pair of leather wings and attached them to the first of the little creatures.

16 "Now," Eagle said, "try to fly."

17 Standing on the branch of a tree, the little creature jumped up, **flapped** its new wings, and began to fly.

18 "Thank you," said the little creature, who is now known as Bat. "These wings work very well."

19 Now it was time to help the second of the little creatures. But there was not enough leather for another set of wings.

20 "Do not worry," Eagle said. "We will do this another way."





21 Eagle called over Hawk and Raven. Grabbing hold of the second little creature, they pulled hard on each of his sides, stretching his skin out as far as it would go. Then, Hawk carried the little creature to the top of a tall tree.

22 “Now jump,” said Hawk.

23 Stretching out his legs, the little creature jumped off the branch and **glided** through the air. That little one, now known as Flying Squirrel, scampered to the top of the pine, leaped off, and glided through the air to another tree.

24 “Thank you for our wings,” said Bat and Flying Squirrel. “Now we are ready to play ball.” The next day, both teams gathered for the big game. As soon as the game started, Bear grabbed the ball and ran down the field to make the first goal.

25 “I told you this would be easy!” Bear laughed.

26 But when the game began again, Hawk got the ball and threw it to Eagle, who **soared** past Wolf to score the first goal for the birds.

27 So it went, back and forth all day. As the day was **drawing to a close**, the game was tied. The sun was about to set. The team that scored next would win.

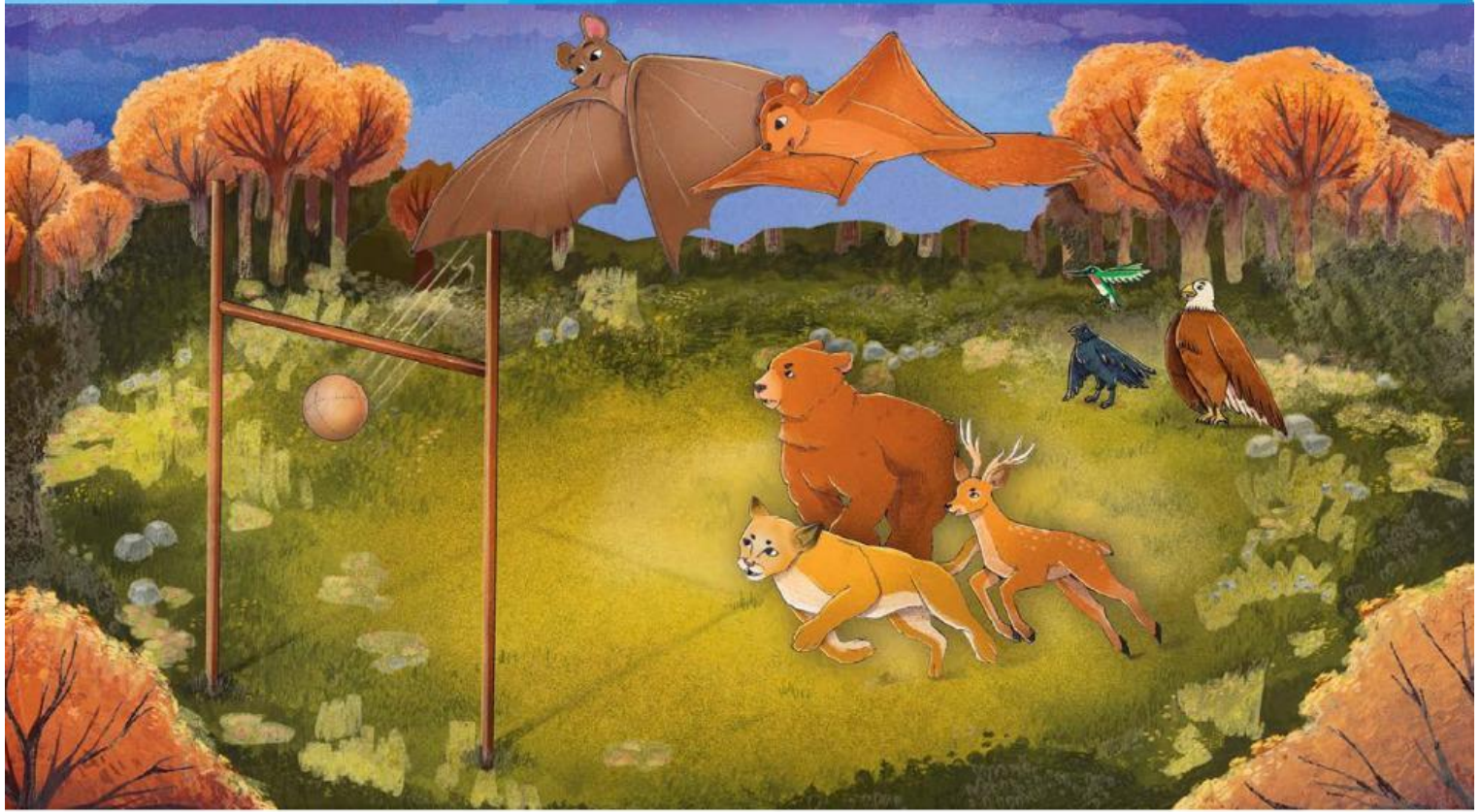


Stop and Discuss

What do the birds do to change the small creatures? Why?

Underline details in paragraphs 14–24 that help you answer the question.

drawing to a close:
ending



darting: moving quickly

rejoicing in: feeling happy about

Stop and Discuss

How does Bat help the team win the game?

Underline details in paragraph 30 that help you answer the question.

- 28 Eagle looked at his team. Everyone was tired—except for Bat and Flying Squirrel, who had not yet touched the ball.
- 29 When play began again, Deer got the ball and raced toward the goal. The birds were so worn out they could not keep up. All seemed lost. Then, out of the trees glided Flying Squirrel. He grabbed the ball from Deer and passed it to Bat.
- 30 Small as he was, Bat was a great flyer. **Darting** up and down, back and forth, he passed Rabbit, Wolf, Mountain Lion, and Bear. As the birds all cheered, Bat carried the ball in for the final goal. The birds had won the game!
- 31 To this day, as evening draws to a close, you may still see Bat darting his way through the night or Flying Squirrel gliding from tree to tree. Still **rejoicing in** their gifts of flight, they are both always ready to play another game.



Summarize

To **summarize** a story, briefly retell in your own words the most important ideas, events, and details from the story.

Complete the chart by recording important characters, events, and details from "The Ball Game Between the Birds and Animals" to help you summarize the story.

Somebody <i>Who are the main characters? (paragraph 4)</i> two little creatures
↓
Wanted <i>What do they want? (paragraph 5)</i>
↓
But <i>What is the problem? (paragraph 8)</i>
↓
So <i>How is the problem solved? (paragraphs 17 and 23)</i>
↓
Then <i>How does the story end? (paragraphs 29 and 30)</i>

TALK ABOUT IT

Work with a partner. Take turns summarizing the story in your own words. Use the "Somebody, Wanted, But, So, Then" structure from the chart to guide you.

How Words Work

Plural Nouns

A **singular noun** is a word that names a person, place, or thing. A **plural noun** is a word that names more than one person, place, or thing.

You can form the plural of most nouns by adding *-s*: wings.

To form the plural of a noun that ends in *ch*, *sh*, *ss*, or *x*, add *-es*: branches.

When a noun ends in *y*, follow the rules in the chart.

Spelling Rule	When to Use It	Examples
Keep final y	If a vowel comes before the <i>y</i> , add <i>-s</i> .	day: <i>day + s = days</i>
Change final y to i	If a consonant comes before the <i>y</i> , change the <i>y</i> to <i>i</i> and add <i>-es</i> .	party: <i>y to i + es = parties</i>

Write the plural of each noun. Follow the spelling rules.

Singular Nouns	Plural Nouns	Singular Nouns	Plural Nouns
sky	skies	ability	
way		baby	
pony		toy	
story		tree	

TALK ABOUT IT

Work with a partner. Discuss your answers in the chart and why you chose the ending that you did.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

