

Clever Crows



Written by Elizabeth Charman

Illustrated by Robin Lawrie

Green words

Practises ow, wr, oor, our

crows	shallow	outdoors
sow	overflowing	indoors
willow	furrows	course
throw	wrestled	pour
grow	wrist	four

Red words

Previous red words

work oh after* their

New red words

parent everybody

*This word may be tricky depending on regional accent.

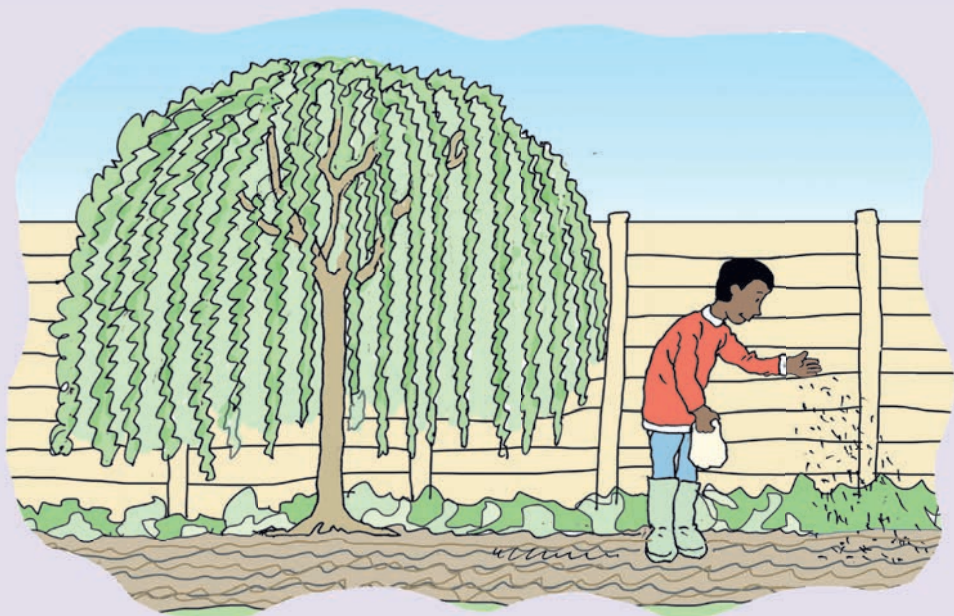


Dad was sowing seeds in the garden. Sam wrestled his boots on and clomped outdoors to join him.



“Can you show me how, Dad?”
asked Sam.

“Of course,” was Dad’s reply.



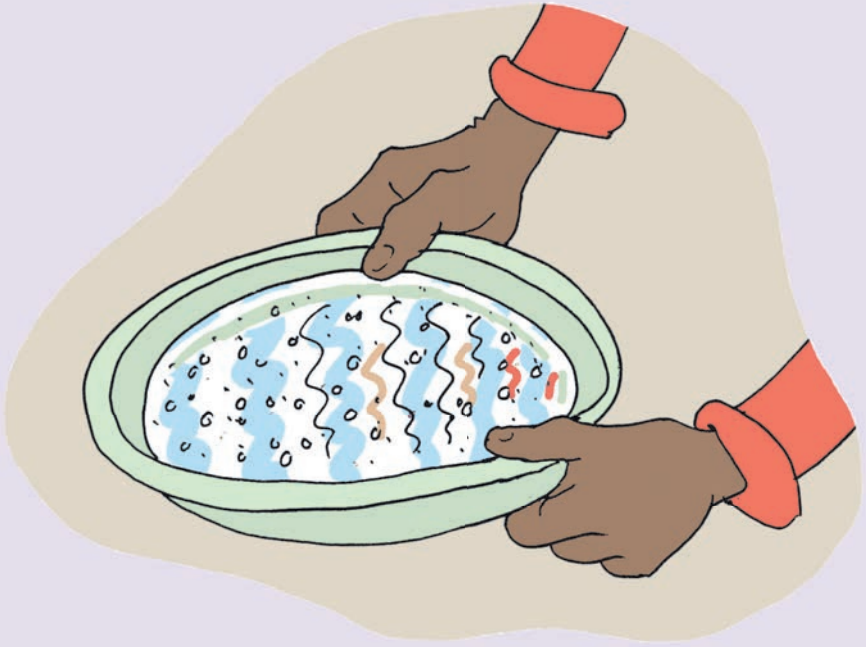
“This is a mix of wildflower seeds. Take the packet to that poor soil by the willow tree. Then pour some into your hand. Take a pinch and scatter it. That’s it – just flick your wrist to throw them.”



“The insects will love the wildflowers,” said Sam happily.

“That’s right. Now I’ve got these ones to sow, too.”

“Why are they in a bowl of water?” asked Sam.



“It helps them grow more quickly than if the husk of the seed is dry,” said Dad. “They were my birthday present from Hafsa’s parents, so I would really like them to grow well.”



“What are they, Dad?”

“Granny’s Bonnet. Do you think Nan will like them?” joked Dad.



“Push each seed into the soil. Shallow is fine. You could do rows or patterns. Each one just needs room to grow.”

They worked side by side until all the seeds were sown.



“Look at the crows up on the pylon, Dad,” said Sam.



“Oh yes, four of them,” Dad replied.
“Clever birds, crows. They will be after the seeds. Well, everybody must eat. If I sprinkle more soil on top, that should protect most of it.”



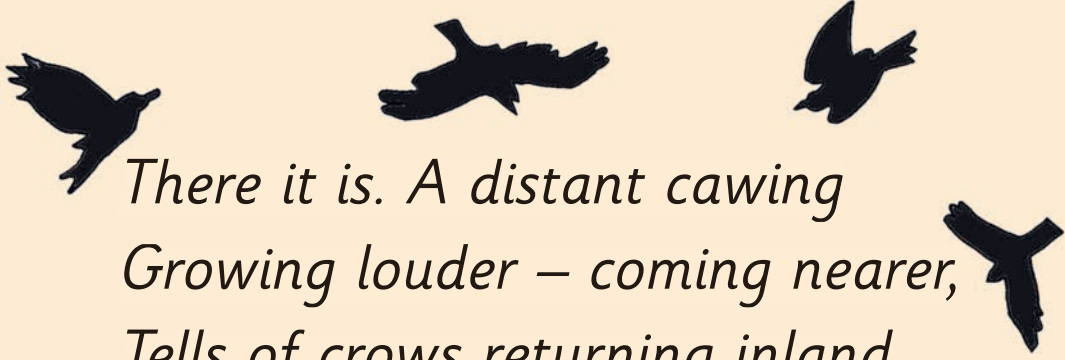
“I could do with a cup of tea,”
added Dad. “Let’s go indoors and
put our feet up.”



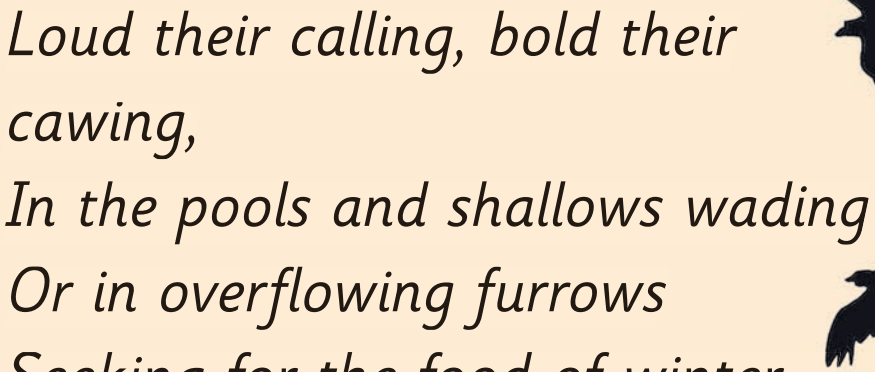
As they sipped, Dad said,
“I remember a poem about crows
from school. I always liked it.
Now, can I still remember it all?”



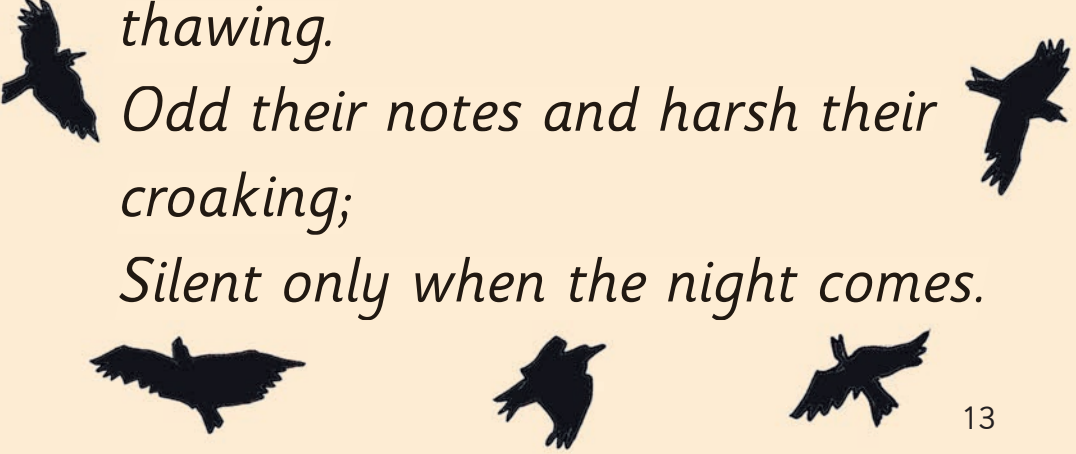
“Try, Dad,” said Sam.

The page is decorated with several black silhouettes of birds in flight, scattered around the text. There are three at the top, one on the right side, one on the left side, and one on the right side near the middle.

*There it is. A distant cawing
Growing louder – coming nearer,
Tells of crows returning inland
From their winter on the marshes.*

The page is decorated with several black silhouettes of birds in flight, scattered around the text. There is one on the left side, one on the right side, one on the left side, and one on the right side.

*Loud their calling, bold their
cawing,
In the pools and shallows wading
Or in overflowing furrows
Seeking for the food of winter –
Scraps and berries freed by
thawing.*

The page is decorated with several black silhouettes of birds in flight, scattered around the text. There is one on the left side, one on the right side, and three at the bottom.

*Odd their notes and harsh their
croaking;
Silent only when the night comes.*



“I got some bits wrong, but that’s more or less it,” said Dad.
“I like the details about how crows sound.”



“I like how it keeps pushing on, not exactly rushing but pressing,” said Sam.



“And how it settles down to stillness at the end,” said Dad.
“Like us!” said Sam.

Questions

Can you answer these questions about the story?

1. Where did Sam sow the wildflower seeds?
2. Look at page 5. What do you think the meaning of 'husk' is?
3. What did Hafsa's parents give Dad for his birthday?
4. Where did Sam spot the crows?
What were they doing?
5. Where did Dad first hear the poem?
6. What did you think of the poem?
Explain your thoughts.

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Poem on page 13 based on 'The Crow'
by Frank Bolles.

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Shared Reader 53

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Letters and Sounds

Phase 5

Will the crows get the seeds that Sam sows?



Success for All 
Phonics

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