

Space Explorers

Yael is surprised when her friend, Rob, tells her girls can't be astronauts. Of course they can! When the Space Alliance holds a nationwide competition, Yael teams up with Rob to not only prove that girls *can* be astronauts, but that women are involved in lots of other aspects of space travel.



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Brown

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Cath Jones

Maverick

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Written by **Cath Jones**

Illustrated by
Letizia Rizzo

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'Space Explorers'

An original concept by Cath Jones

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Illustrated by Letizia Rizzo

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Chapter 1

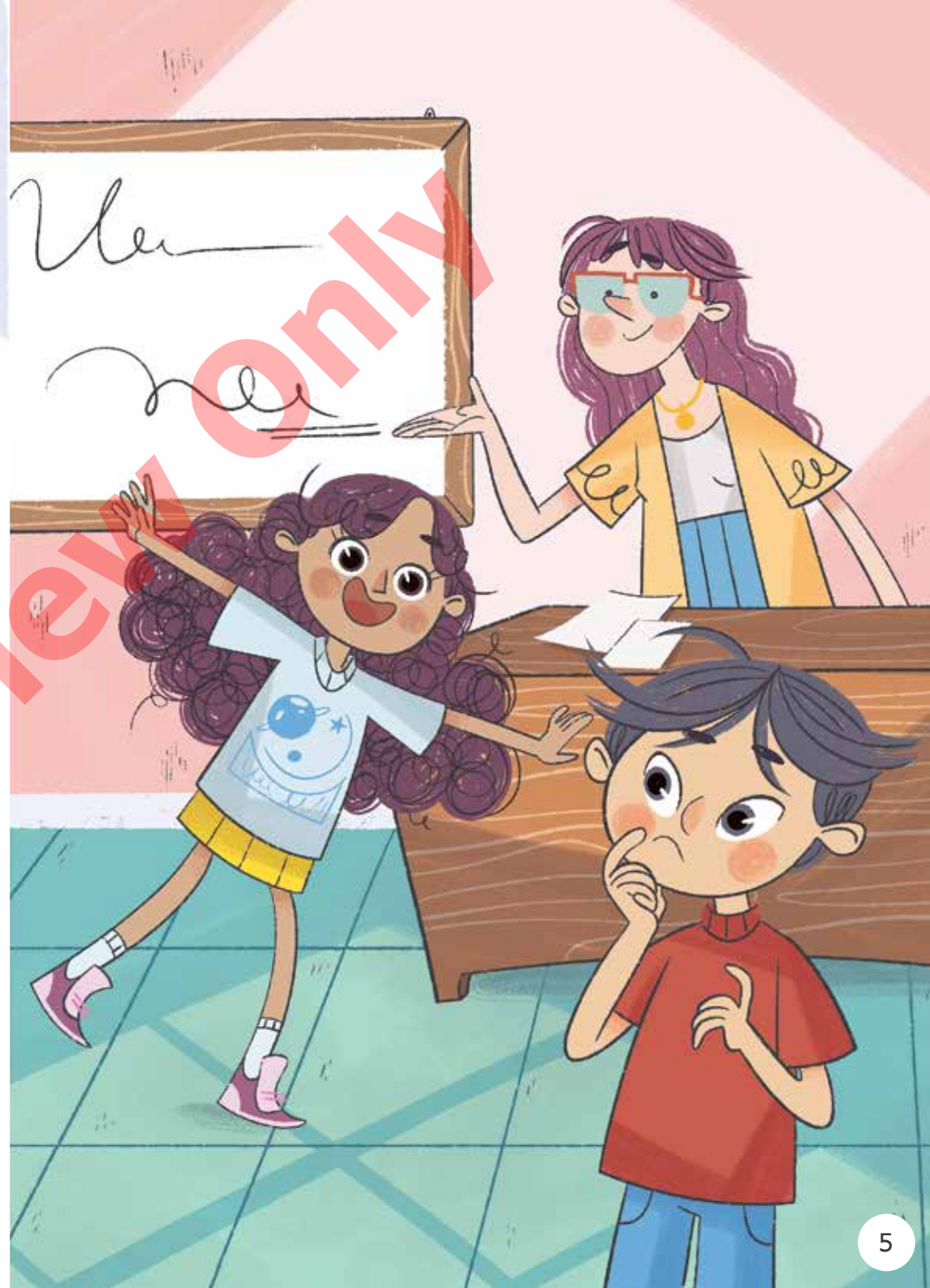


Yael rushed into the classroom. “Rob,” she yelled. “Look at my new t-shirt!” She twirled on the spot and smiled happily.

“The Old Observatory,” read Rob.

“We went there in the holidays,” grinned Yael. “There was an *enormous* telescope and I looked at *space*! You know, planets and stars and stuff. And when you turn off the lights, my t-shirt glows in the dark!”

“Yael, quietly please!” interrupted her teacher, Ms French. “You’ll be disturbing astronauts and aliens.”



“Sorry!” laughed Yael.

Ms French called the class together. “This term’s theme is *Explorers in Space*,” she explained. “Your project work can be anything to do with this subject.”

A dreamy look came into Yael’s eyes. “Imagine being an astronaut exploring space! What an awesome job that would be.”



Rob nodded. “But of course *you* couldn’t be an astronaut.”

“Why not?” Yael demanded.

“Well *obviously* girls can’t be astronauts,” said Rob.

Before Yael could reply, Ms French started to speak. “I have some news about an exciting space competition! Mrs Cobb will reveal the details in assembly. Line up please.”

As they filed into the hall, Yael spotted a picture of a spaceship on the big screen. She muttered to Rob, “I bet girls *can* be astronauts.”

Mrs Cobb, the headteacher, beamed at the pupils. “In a few minutes, we’ll watch a live broadcast from the headquarters of the Space Alliance. They’re about to announce a very special competition.”

Right on cue, a smartly dressed woman appeared on the screen. Dr Jane was the director of the Space Alliance. For the next few minutes, Yael listened intently. The competition didn't sound *too* difficult. They had to come up with an experiment that could be carried out in zero gravity. The winners would visit the headquarters of the Space Alliance and be involved in a 'very exciting, once in a lifetime experience'.

Yael's head almost spun with excitement. "Rob!" she whispered. "Do you think the prize will be a trip into space? To the International Space Station?"

Rob looked doubtful. "I think that might be a bit dangerous."

Yael tugged on his sleeve. "And the director of the Space Alliance is a woman!" she said.

"I know. We just saw her. So?"

A triumphant look came onto Yael's face. "I bet she was an astronaut *before* she was the boss..."

"Maybe," he said.

"I'm sure girls *can* be astronauts. I'm going to prove it!" Yael said.