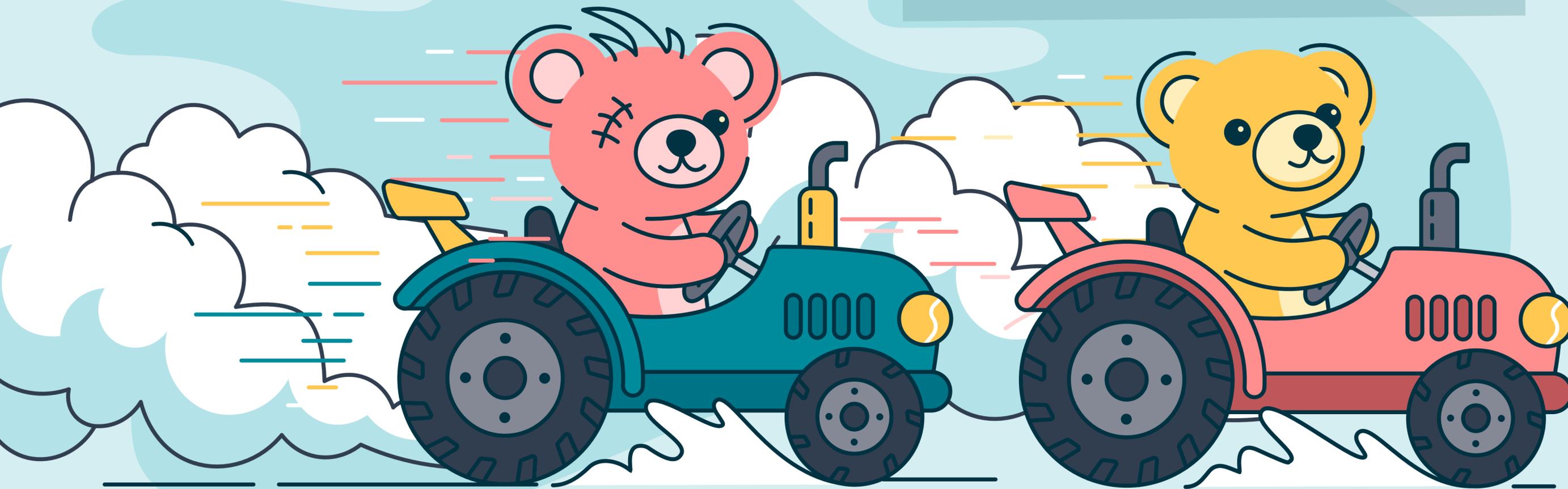




Ellie and the Tractor Time Trials



Ellie loved playing with toy tractors in her garden. She zoomed them over hills of soil and made beep-beep noises as they 'planted' imaginary seeds. She even got Mags and Mabel, her teddy bears, to race one another on toy tractors.





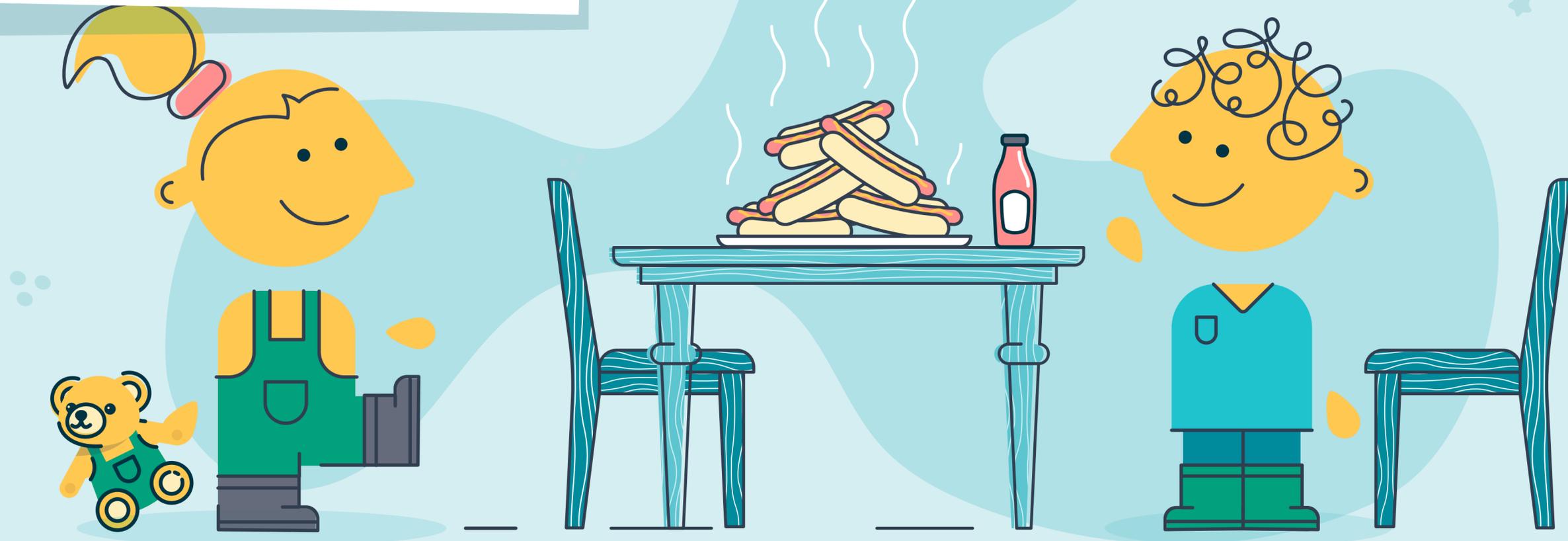
One day, her friend James invited her over to his farm for lunch. “We’re having hot dogs and I can’t wait to show you our new tractor. It’s HUGE!” James said. “It’s the coolest tractor ever!”

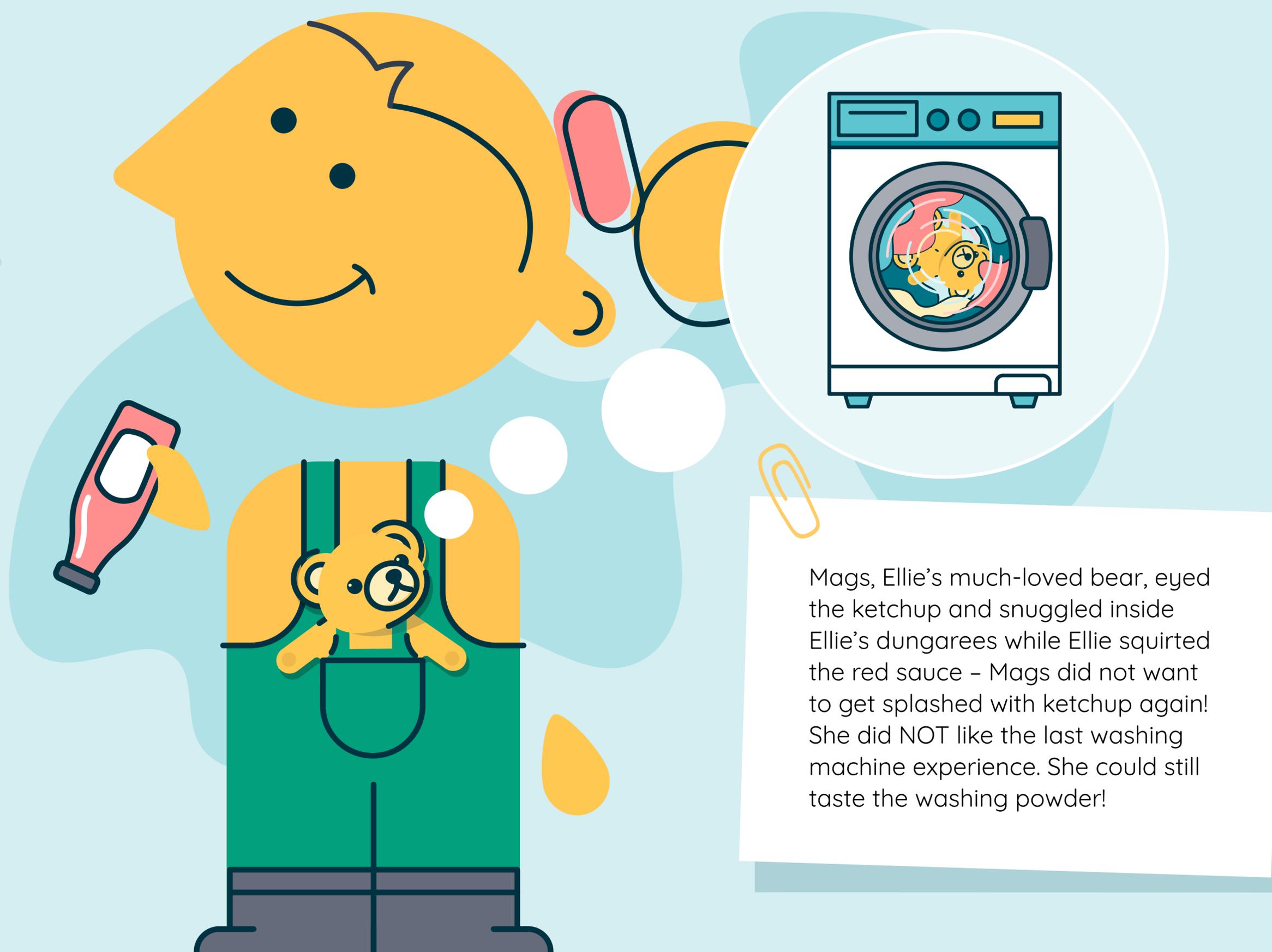
When Ellie arrived, the rain had stopped and the sun was trying to come out.

Jumping out of the car, holding on to Mags, her teddy bear, Ellie ran to the farmhouse to find James.

He was found in the kitchen!

James's mum was just putting a plate of steaming hotdogs onto the big old oak table. A pile of warm bread rolls also sat nearby, waiting to be devoured by two hungry children and one hungry teddy bear!





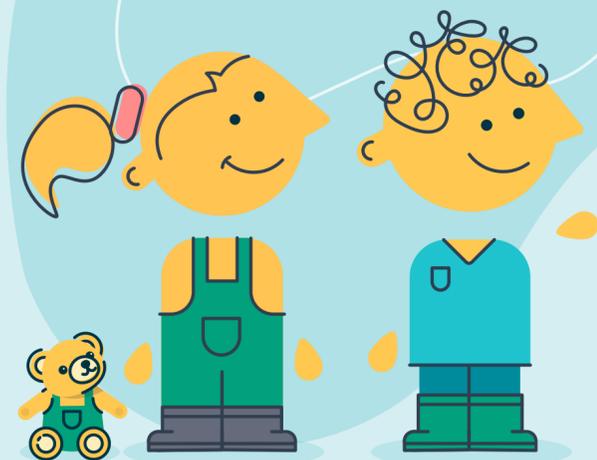
Mags, Ellie's much-loved bear, eyed the ketchup and snuggled inside Ellie's dungarees while Ellie squirted the red sauce - Mags did not want to get splashed with ketchup again! She did NOT like the last washing machine experience. She could still taste the washing powder!



The laughing children and a ketchup free Mags, demolished the food and then ran outside in their wellies to go and see the new tractor.

“Does it have a name?” Ellie asked James.

James laughed back at her: “You always name things! That’s very cute! No name yet but perhaps you’d like to think of one.”





Arriving at the field, Ellie expected muddy boots and noisy engines. But instead, she saw a shiny tractor moving slowly across a field - all by itself!

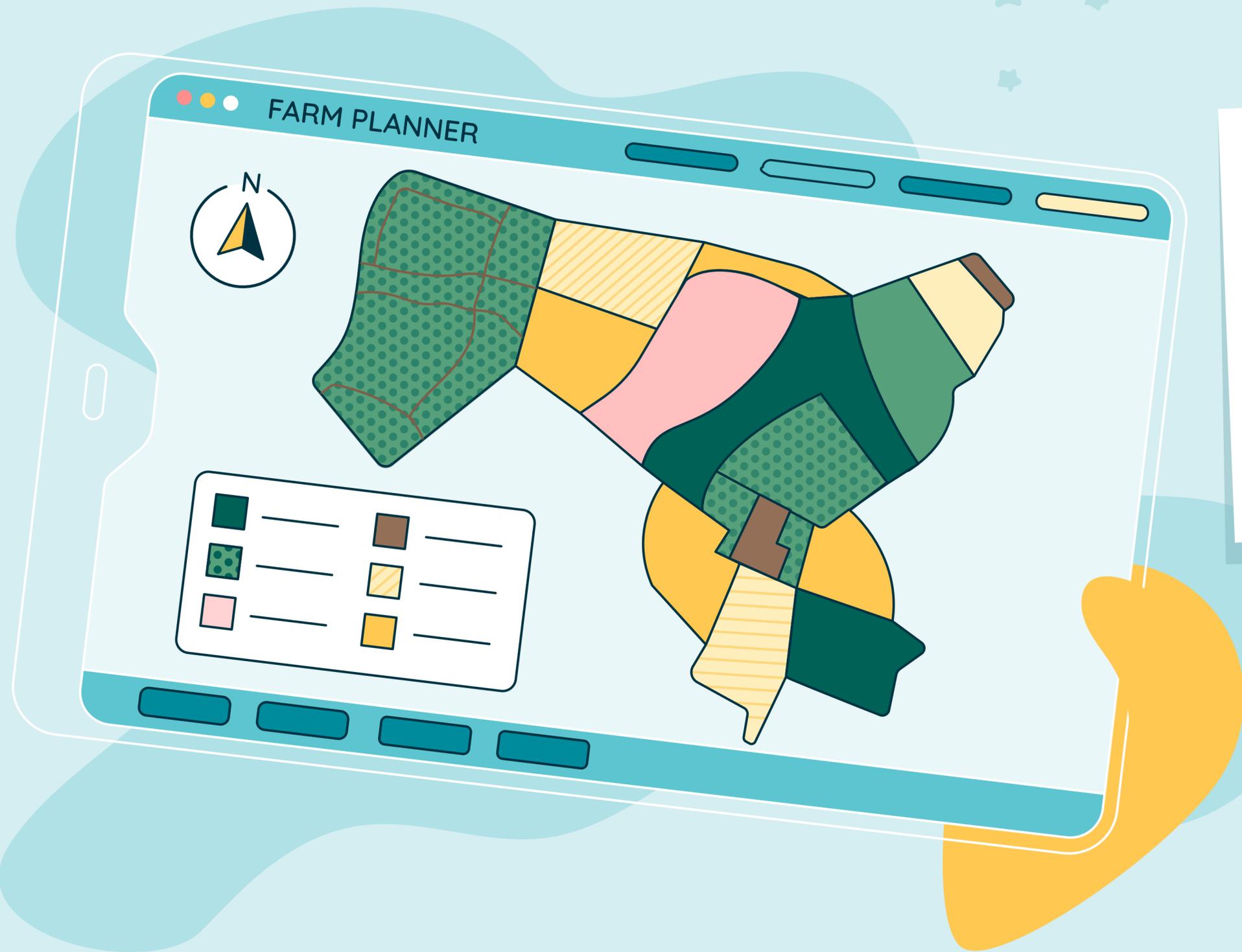
“Is it magic?” Ellie whispered.

“Nope!” said James. “It’s GPS-guided.

That means it uses satellites in space to know exactly where to go!”

Ellie’s jaw dropped. “Like a sat-nav for tractors? A big magic map that tells it where to go?”

“Exactly!” laughed James.



Daddy Farmer, as James's dad was affectionately known, was there too and he showed Ellie a tablet screen with colourful maps and dots.

"This helps us plan where to plant seeds," he explained. "We use computers to make sure we don't waste water or soil."



Ellie pointed to a buzzing sound above. "What's that?"

"A drone!" said Daddy Farmer. "It flies over the fields and takes pictures, so we know which crops need help."

Ellie giggled. "It's like a flying farmer!"



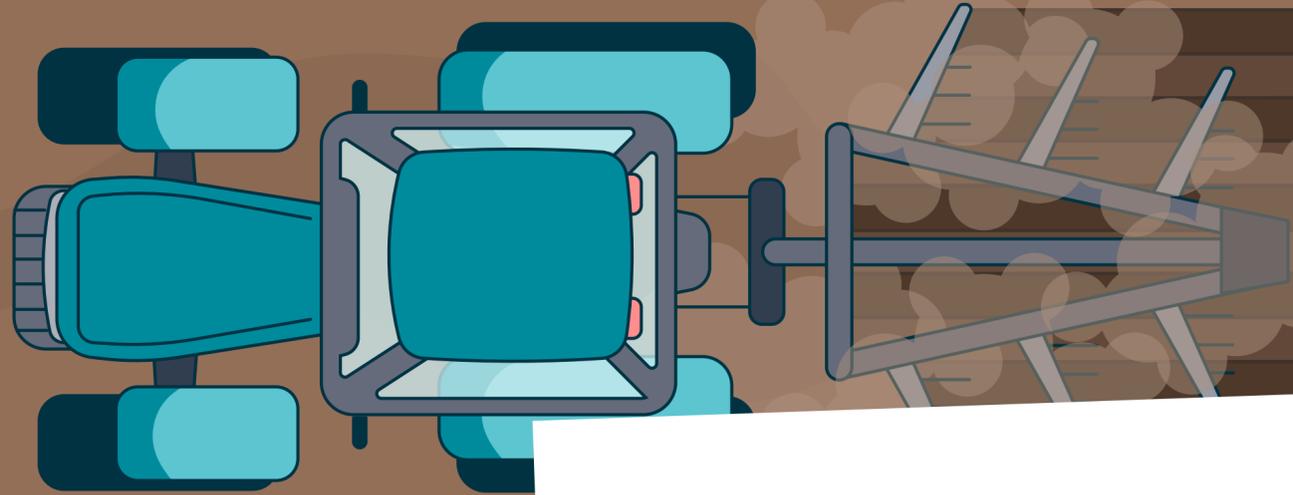
In the corner of the field the old tractor sat. "He's having a much-needed rest," James's dad said. "He's over 30 years old and he's done so much work in his life. He's now going to take it easy and do light work."



Mags remembered the excitement of riding in the cab of the tractor last year. Ellie had asked Daddy Farmer if she could have a ride, but sadly she was too young, so she'd popped Mags in, so that her beloved bear could have the fun.

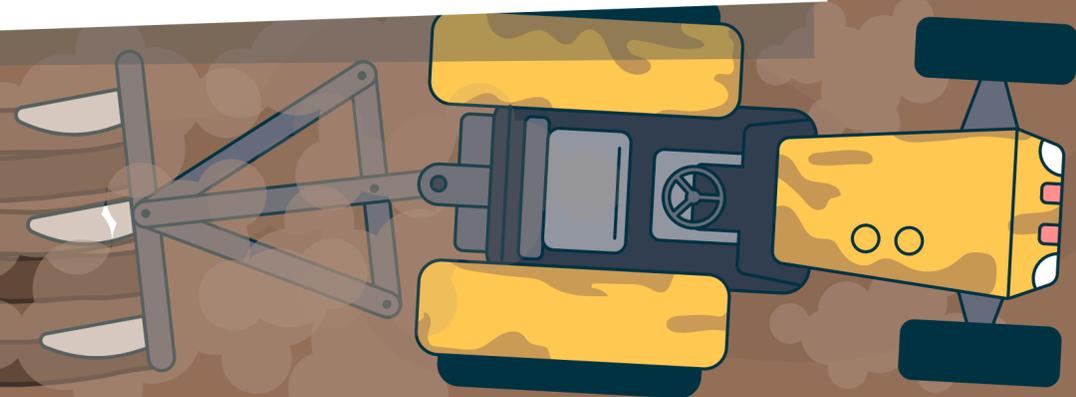
That's when Ellie named the tractor, 'Tom'.





To show how farming has changed, Daddy Farmer set up a race: Tractor Tom versus the new GPS-guided one.

Tractor Tom wobbled and zig zagged. The big smart tractor moved in perfect straight lines.



Sat Nav Sam

Tractor Tracker



“Wow!” said Ellie. “The new one is faster and tidier! What shall we call him?!” she asked the bemused farmer. “I know! How about ‘Sat Nav Sam’ or ‘Tractor Tracker’?”

Everyone laughed and decided to put it to a vote later!

The little group watched the tractor make its way across the field. It really was very smart, Mags thought.

“And it uses less fuel,” added James.
“That’s better for the planet too.”





Soon it was time to go home, and Ellie's stepdad, Kai, came in the family car to collect her and Mags.

Ellie, full of excitement, told her stepdad all about her exciting afternoon.

"I thought farming crops was just digging and planting. But now I know it's full of clever machines and computers! We've even named the new tractor! He's now called Sat Nav Sam!"

Kai smiled. "Sounds like you've had a tractor-tastic day!"

Ellie beamed. "Yes! And I think farmers are tech-tastic too!"





For more stories featuring Ellie,
her family, friends and teddies,
as well as accompanying
teaching resources, visit:
www.abpischools.org.uk



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And with Josh Payne
National Farmers' Union

