

JACK AND HIS NEW FRIENDS

(to be adapted to children's level of proficiency)

by Silvia Bellet

There was once a boy, called Jack, who often played in the playground next to his house. There were slides, see-saws, mazes, swings, playhouses, hopscotches, sandboxes, jungle gyms ... everything a child would dream of!

One afternoon, Jack went to the playground hoping to meet some friends, but no children were playing in the area. Nobody turned up eventually so he jumped on his feet, left the playground and started to walk in the park.

While strolling along the path, a frog hopped on his way and exclaimed: "Good afternoon, Jack!" Jack couldn't believe his eyes. "Who are YOU? How do YOU know me?" stuttered the boy. "I'm Croak the frog. I often see you play with your friends! How are you?" "I'm fine. I just miss my friends." sighed Jack... and walked off.

A little later, another animal approached him: "Hello, Jack?" Again, Jack halted in great surprise: "Who are YOU and how do YOU know my name?" "I'm Chirp the bird. I sometimes fly over the playground and hear your friends calling you. How are you?" "I feel lonely, that's all!" replied Jack... and walked off.

Then, when Jack almost reached the exit gate, another creature stopped by and greeted him "Hi there, Jack!", said the animal. "Now, who are YOU and how do YOU know my name?" "Oh poor boy. Don't you know me? I'm Squeak the Squirrel. I see you run around from high up, over there!" answered the squirrel who was now pointing to the trees behind the boy.

Jack turned towards the park and finally realised how many new friends he'd just met. He could sing along with the birds, if he wanted, play hopscotch with the frogs, climb the trees and play hide and seek with the squirrels. "I no longer feel lonely!" rejoiced Jack. "Let's go and play, my friends!"