



The duck sits on the nest.

X
4



The duck has eggs.

X
5



X
2

Moggy the cat is dull.



She sleeps, sleeps, sleeps!

X
3



Cat and Tiger pushed the buttons.
Time to play – but what to do?



X
2

Tiger had a micro-buggy.



X
3

A noisy start

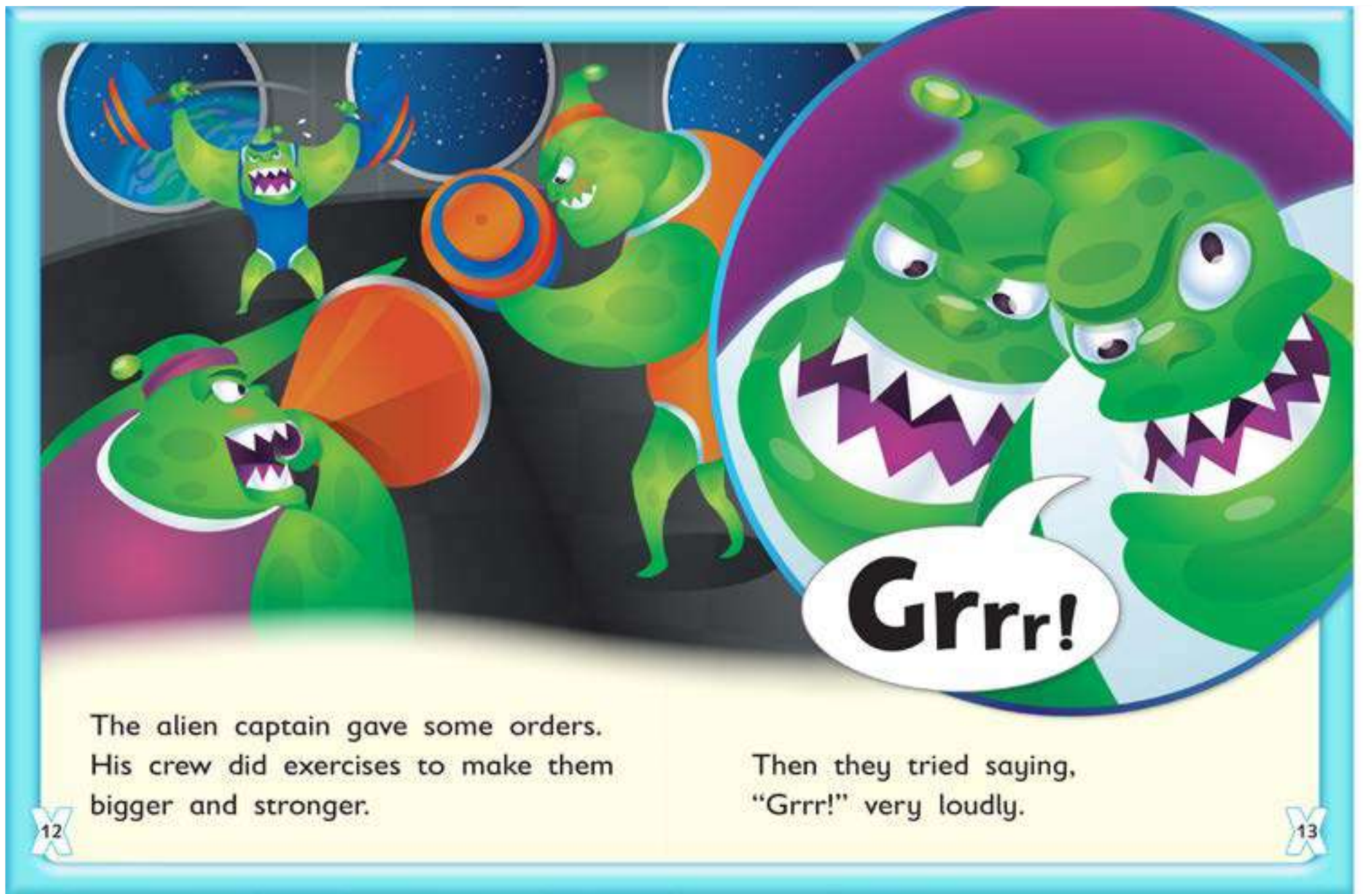
We all make noise.
We start as soon as
we are born.



Noise is measured in
decibels. A baby crying
is 60 decibels on the noise-o-meter.

That is as
loud as my
alarm clock!





Dragon stories

About 100 years ago, people began to hear stories about real-life dragons. The dragons lived on an island called *Komodo*.

An **explorer** in New York heard about the dragons. He wanted to go to Komodo. He wanted to find out if the stories were true. His name was *W Douglas Burden*.

Look out! It's a dragon!



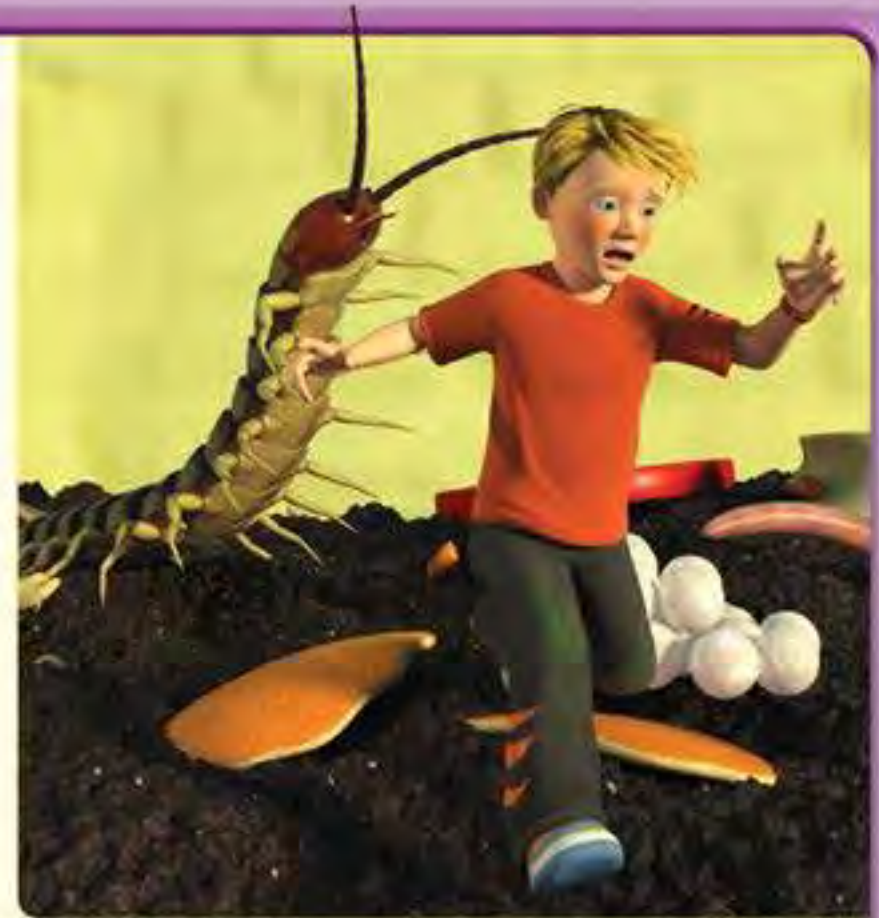
Komodo is a long way from New York.

Ant finished the note.

"Carnivore!" read Tiger in alarm. He turned and stared up into Sydney's open mouth. He looked at Sydney's sharp pincers. "Help!" he yelled.



X
14



Tiger dived to one side just in time. The centipede snapped its pincers together angrily. Tiger scrambled towards the hatch. The centipede was close behind.

"I'm not going to make it!" he yelped.

X
15

Previously ...

In the book *The Thing in the Cupboard*, micro-sized Tiger meets a strange robot. It looks like a scary metal spider.



Tiger escapes but the Thing gets squashed. Max asks Miss Jones if he can try and fix it.



Miss Jones thinks the Thing is just a toy. Max is not so sure ...



Sometimes the micro-surfboards broke.
The children didn't mind – it just meant that
they had to eat more ice cream!



24



The day before the competition, they had
a last practice session. This time they didn't
practise in the shelter of a rock pool. They
found a quiet part of the beach and practised
in the sea.

25

"Oh, come on, Joe," Leo begged.
"I'll make a deal. You wanted to borrow my rubber spider to hide in Hayley's school bag, remember? Well, I'll bring it in on Monday."

The big green eyes sparkled with delight and winked at the other ice cream cone.

"Is it a deal?" grinned Leo.

The ice cream cone gave the thumbs up and led the boys into O'Neil's Ice cream Parlour.



While the sharks polished off their ice cream, Mrs O'Neil moaned about McHaddock's serving cheap ice cream and stealing her customers.

"That ice cream was cool, Joe – ice cool!" joked Leo. "So it's a deal. One scary spider in Hayley's bag on Monday."

Suddenly Matt gave Leo a nudge. Joe O'Neil wasn't in the ice cream suit at all. In fact, Joe had just walked into the ice cream parlour.

Introduction

We would like the world to be a peaceful place.
But people will always have differences of opinion.
Arguments can follow and then – in the worst cases –
armed **conflict** can break out.

An army from southern Europe led by Alexander the Great fights against the Persians to win control of Asia in 333 ac.

That's a
huge battle!

This is a book about big
conflicts in the past: wars
between people from different
parts of the world. In most
of these wars, the two sides
fought for control of certain
lands or countries. Then the
winners could rule over the
losers and take the losers'
wealth for themselves.



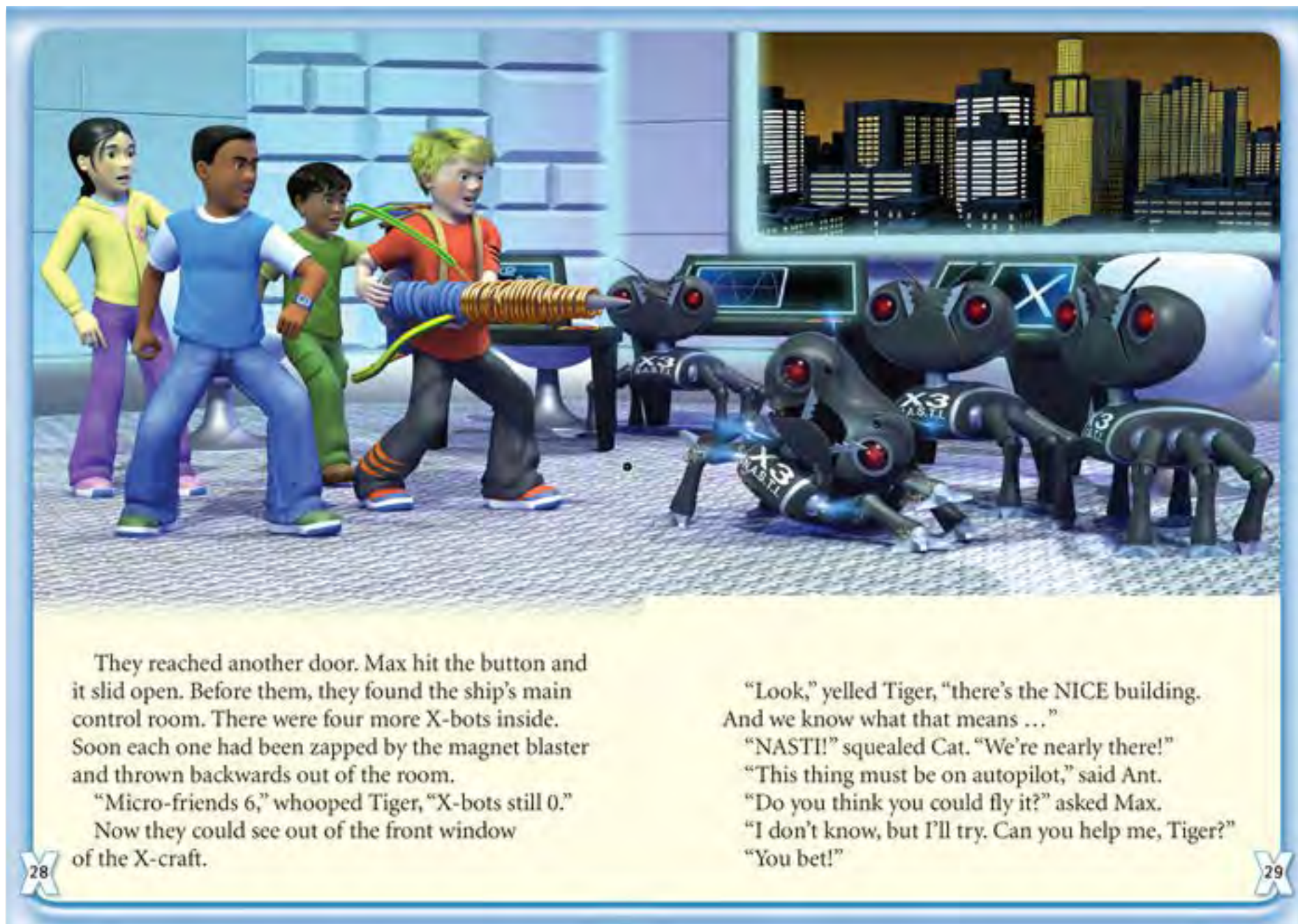
Alexander the Great (356-323 ac) was a Greek king
who had one of the largest **empires** in history.

Trying to limit the damage

Once wars start, it is hard
to stop them getting out of
control. In the past, people
have tried to limit the damage
done by war by putting rules
in place. Read on to find out
how knights were supposed
to behave ...

Medieval knights were the
top warriors of their time.





They reached another door. Max hit the button and it slid open. Before them, they found the ship's main control room. There were four more X-bots inside. Soon each one had been zapped by the magnet blaster and thrown backwards out of the room.

"Micro-friends 6," whooped Tiger, "X-bots still 0."

Now they could see out of the front window of the X-craft.

"Look," yelled Tiger, "there's the NICE building. And we know what that means ..."

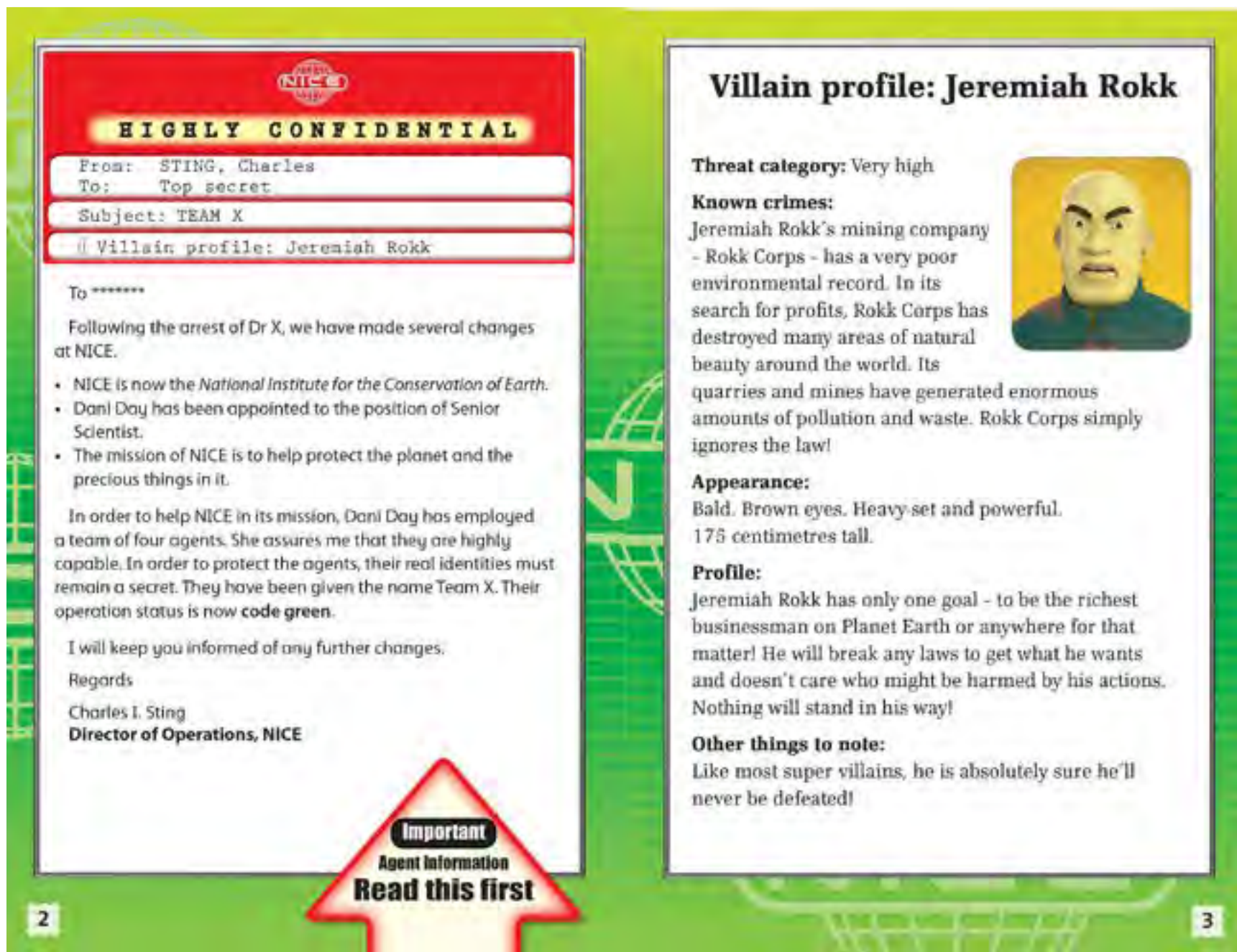
"NASTI!" squealed Cat. "We're nearly there!"

"This thing must be on autopilot," said Ant.

"Do you think you could fly it?" asked Max.

"I don't know, but I'll try. Can you help me, Tiger?"

"You bet!"





HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL

From: STING, Charles
To: Top secret
Subject: TEAM X
Villain profile: the Collector

To *****

Following the arrest of Dr X, we have made several changes at NICE.

- NICE is now the *National Institute for the Conservation of Earth*.
- Dani Day has been appointed to the position of Senior Scientist.
- The mission of NICE is to help protect the planet and the precious things in it.

In order to help NICE in its mission, Dani Day has employed a team of four agents. She assures me that they are highly capable. In order to protect the agents, their real identities must remain a secret. They have been given the name Team X. Their operation status is now **code green**.

Team X have been monitoring a new villain. He calls himself the Collector. The Collector is known to have carried out some serious crimes (see file attached).

I will keep you informed of any further changes.

Regards

Charles L. Sting
**Director of Operations,
NICE**

Important

Agent Information

Read this first

Villain profile: the Collector



Threat category: High

Known crimes:

- Theft of the entire population of cod in the North Atlantic.
- Theft of the White Cliffs of Dover.
- Attempted theft of the Sphinx at Giza. The robbery failed, but he did get away with the Sphinx's nose.

Appearance:
Dark hair. Brown Eyes. 182 centimetres tall. Snappy dresser. Bionic hand. Spectrum retina enhanced implant.

Profile:
The Collector is a billionaire. How he made his fortune is not known. His goal is to own the biggest collection of snow globes in the world. Using advanced micro science he shrinks and steals valuable objects. No target is too big. He does not care about the consequences of his actions.

Other things to note:
He likes to send snow globes to taunt his victims.

Sample page taken from Just in Time, Project X Origins, Book Band Dark Red

1

A ravine cut across the ground from north to south. It was too wide to jump and too long to travel round. Its overgrown banks went down sheer into the darkness.

On its western side, a bare, ridged tree rose out of the ground, growing clear of the black forest beyond. It stood tall and pale in the moonlight, topped by a crown of dead branches.

From high up in the crown, someone whistled.

Cam stepped out of the shadows on the eastern side, with the others close behind her. They all stared up at the dead tree across the ravine, hunting for Zak's silhouette among the branches. He called out to them, and the words drifted down like sounds from another world.

'Once it was like this. Remember?'

No! said a voice in Cam's head. *No, I won't, I won't—*

But it was too late. Zak had spoken the word they never used and her brain filled with forbidden images. She saw herself racing over the grass, with the world turning under her and the sky wide open above her head. Her hands moved powerfully, commanding fire and water. She soared among the clouds.

Be quiet, Zak. Be QUIET!

But he was way up in the branches, too high to reach. He was beyond her orders.

'Remember,' he called down. 'You were up in the air—above the tops of the trees. Remember the dazzle

of the sun and the space and the speed. You were *there*. Remember . . . '

She couldn't stop him. None of them could stop him. He was beyond the gaping ravine, at the top of the tall, dead trunk. Only Zak could climb well enough to reach those high, cupped branches.

'Remember . . . ' he said again. The sound was relentless. Unbearable.

Cam put her fingers in her ears, turning away, but she could still hear him. They all heard. *Remember, remember . . .* The word battered at them until the darkness vibrated with anger and pain, and there was no way of stopping it. No way of silencing Zak.

Except the rope.

The rope-ends were on the ground, at Cam's feet. The great twelve-strand rope stretched across the ravine and back again, looping twice round the trunk of Zak's tree. As he called again, Cam stooped blindly, grabbing at one of the ends.

The others stooped too, jostling to find a place. A dozen hands clamped round each length of rope.

'Remember,' Zak shouted—and Cam began to pull, straining at the rope. Putting all her rage and pain into that single action.

Zak's voice grew louder. 'Remember! You were high in the air! Above the tops of the trees, in the full dazzle of the sun! But—all in a flash—you came tumbling down, out of the music and the buzz and the energy,