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E. Nesbit

# Five Children and **IT**

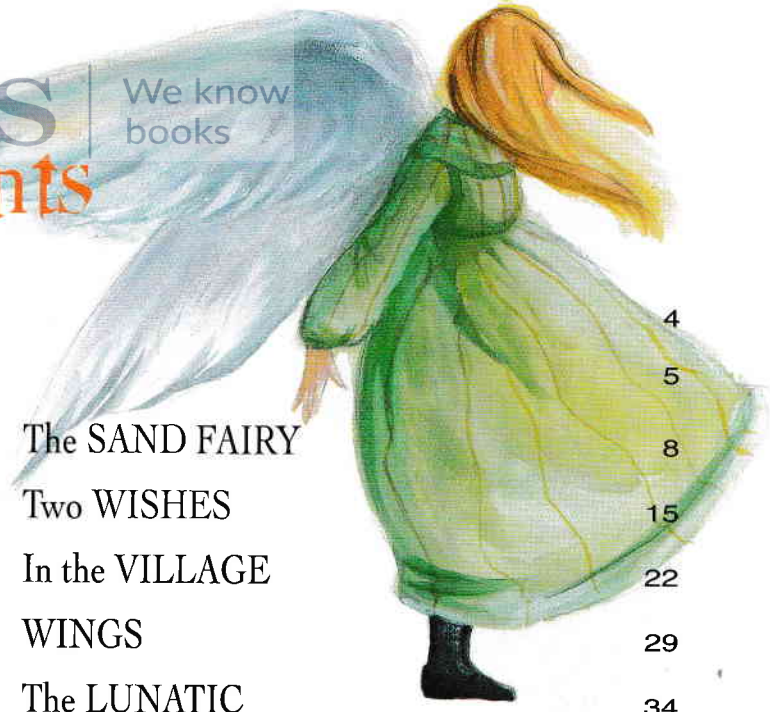
Retold by Cheryl Thompson



Illustrated by Chiara Fedele

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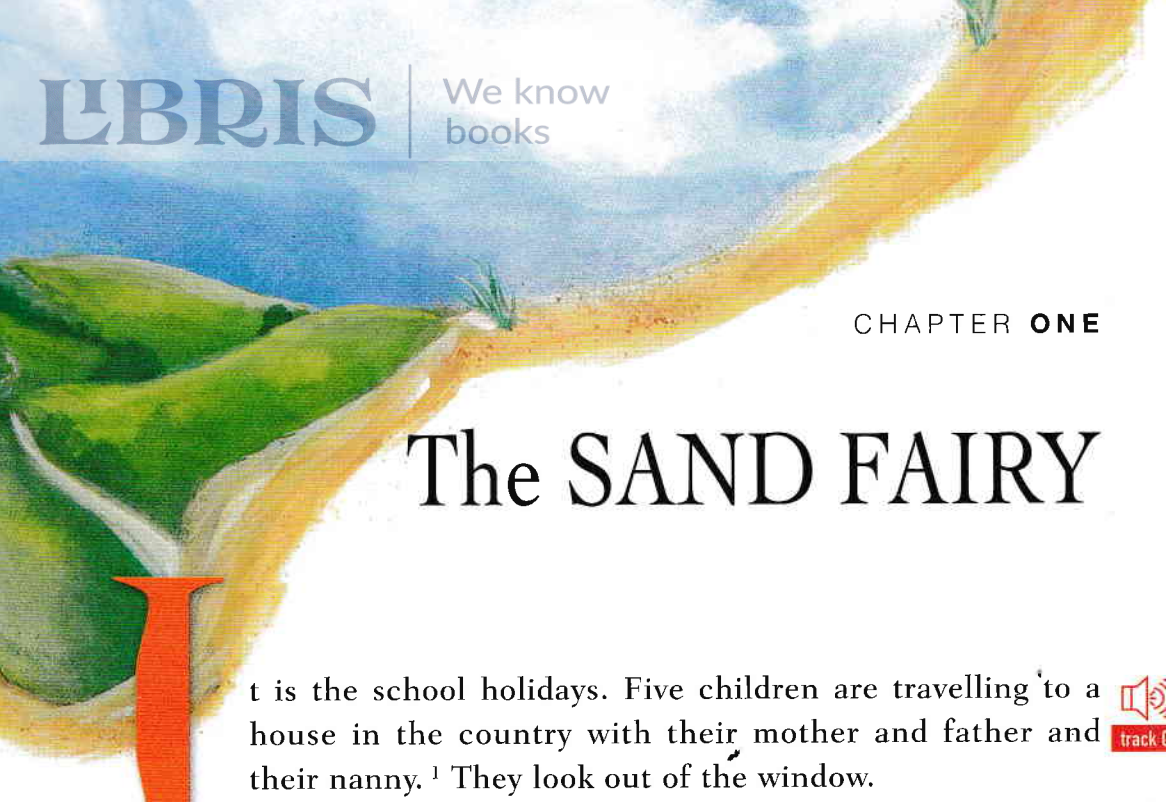
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The text is recorded in full.



These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the extracts linked to the listening activities.

# The SAND FAIRY



**I**t is the school holidays. Five children are travelling to a house in the country with their mother and father and their nanny.<sup>1</sup> They look out of the window.

‘Are we there?’ asks Anthea.

‘Is this the house?’ asks Jane, her little sister.

‘Is that the house?’ ask their brothers, Cyril and Robert together.

‘No, it isn’t,’ says their mother impatiently.

Suddenly, at the top of the hill, they see a beautiful, white house. It has a big garden and lovely trees.

‘That’s our house,’ says their mother.

The children are all happy. They live in London and there is nowhere like this to play in a big city.

A few days later their father goes away on business, and their mother goes to visit their grandmother because she is ill. The five children are all alone with their nanny, Martha.

They become bored and so they decide to go and play in the gravel pit near the house. They want to have an adventure.

‘Let’s go and play in the gravel pit,’ says Cyril. ‘We can bring our buckets and spades so it’s like the seaside.’

1. **nanny** : this person’s job is to look after children.

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'Yes, and we can dig<sup>1</sup> holes in the sand. Maybe we can find some treasure,' says Anthea.

'Good idea,' says Robert. 'Let's take the Lamb.' They call their baby brother 'the Lamb'<sup>2</sup> because he only says 'Baa!', like a sheep.

The gravel pit is very big. At first the children build a sand castle. Then they decide to dig a hole to Australia. They dig and dig until their hands are hot and red. The sand at the bottom of the hole is soft and dry. It is like the sand you find at the seaside.

The Lamb is sleeping near them.

'Look!' cries Jane. 'There are little seashells here.'

'Cyril, come here!' Anthea suddenly cries. 'It's alive! Quickly!' Cyril, Robert and Jane run to Anthea.

'What is it?' they ask excitedly.

'I don't know, but it has feet and fur,'<sup>3</sup> cries Anthea. 'Keep digging.'

Suddenly the children hear a voice in the sand. 'Leave me alone,' says the voice. The children are scared so they jump back.

'Who are you?' asks Robert bravely. 'We want to see you.'

'Yes,' cries Anthea. 'Please come out.'

'Oh, alright,' says the voice.

Then something brown, fat and furry comes out of the hole.

The children look at the strange creature. It has the eyes of a snail. They move in and out of its head. It has the ears of a bat, the hands and feet of a monkey, and the body of a spider.

'What is it?' says Jane. 'Can we take it home?'

The creature looks at her and says, 'Do you always say silly<sup>4</sup> things?'

'She doesn't want to say silly things,' says Anthea trying to be nice to the creature. 'Please, don't be scared. We don't want to hurt you.'

'Hurt me,' it says. 'Me, scared. Do you know who I am?'

1. **dig** : make a hole in the ground.

2. **lamb** : a baby sheep.

3. **fur** : thick hair on an animal.

4. **silly** : stupid.

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KET

### 1 COMPREHENSION

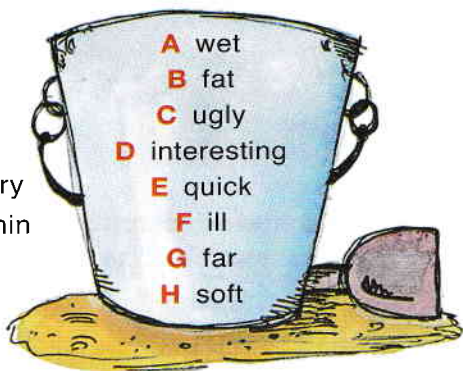
Are these sentences 'Right' (A) or 'Wrong' (B). If there is not enough information to answer 'Right' (A) or 'Wrong' (B), choose 'Doesn't say' (C). There is an example at the beginning (0).

- 0 The five children are going to a beautiful, white house in the city.  
 A Right                      B Wrong                      C Doesn't say
- 1 The children's adventures start at a gravel pit.  
 A Right                      B Wrong                      C Doesn't say
- 2 They want to dig a hole to Austria.  
 A Right                      B Wrong                      C Doesn't say
- 3 Cyril is almost ten years old.  
 A Right                      B Wrong                      C Doesn't say
- 4 Anthea finds a strange creature in the gravel pit.  
 A Right                      B Wrong                      C Doesn't say
- 5 The sea is about 200 kilometres away.  
 A Right                      B Wrong                      C Doesn't say
- 6 The sand fairy has no magic powers.  
 A Right                      B Wrong                      C Doesn't say

### 2 VOCABULARY

Find the opposite of these words in the bucket.

- 1 hard    2 well    3 near    4 dry  
 5 slow    6 beautiful    7 boring    8 thin



KET

### 3 WRITING

Imagine you are Anthea. Complete this postcard to your friend, Harriet. Write one word in each space (1-10).

Dear Harriet,

I'm here in (0)...the..... country with (1)..... brothers and sister. We're staying (2)..... a beautiful white house and you're never going to guess our news!

There's a gravel pit and we take (3)..... buckets and spades there. It's just like the seaside! We (4)..... having a real adventure, like the ones you read about in books. I really want you to be (5)..... with us. There's a