

Race to the Checkout



“Not the supermarket!” moaned Caitlin from the back of the car. Caitlin hated the supermarket.



She hated the busy car park full of noisy cars backing into parking spaces.

She hated wandering up and down the aisles searching for the things on Dad's list.



She simply hated the supermarket.



As her dad's shiny, red car pulled into the car park, Caitlin could see a long line of dull, silver trolleys waiting for the next customers.

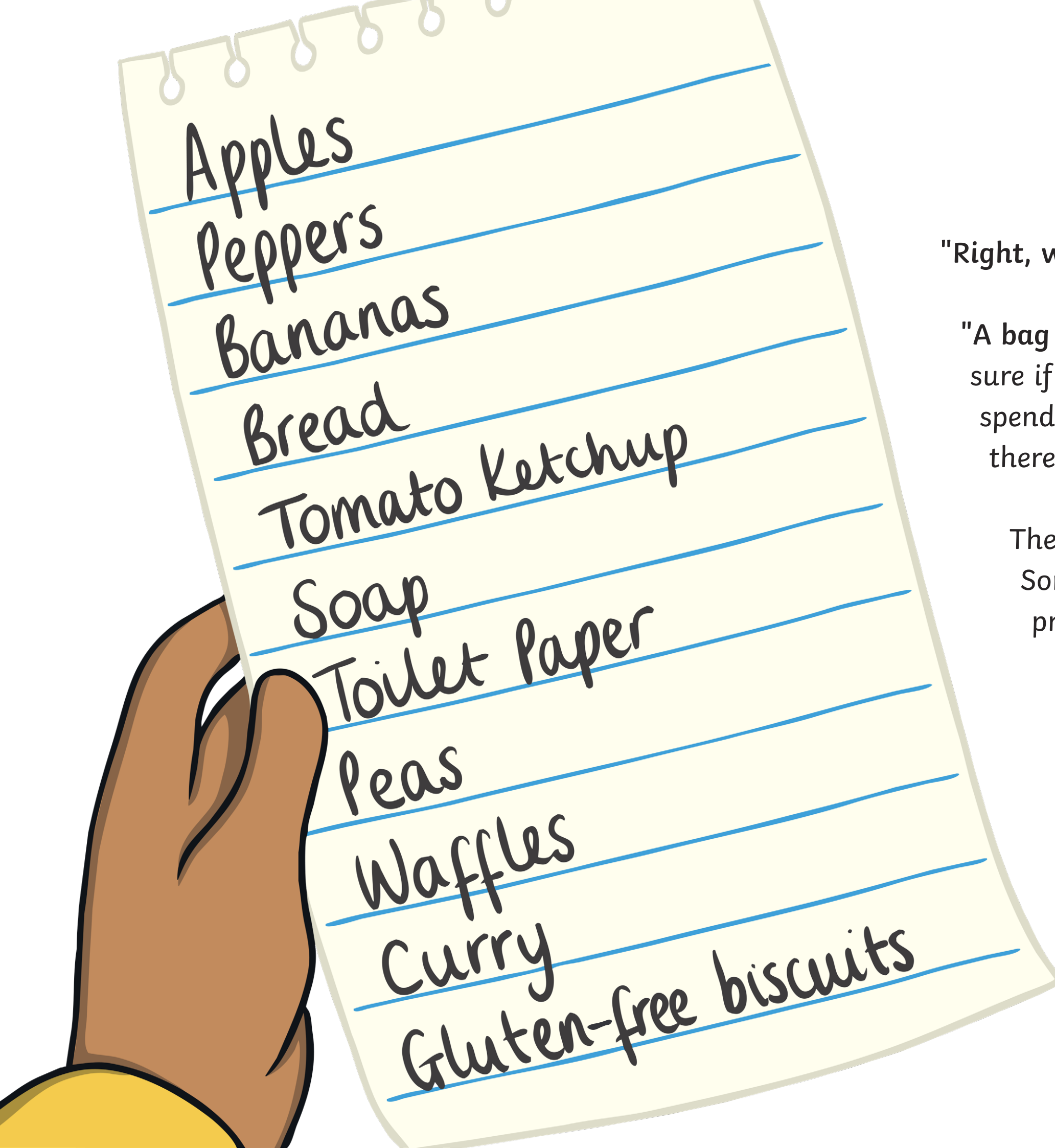


"Come on, it'll be an adventure," smiled Dad. "Imagine you are in a race. We can see how fast we can find all of the shopping. You can cross things off when we find them if you like."



"I suppose," Caitlin replied quietly. Dad collected a trolley from the long, snake-like line that had formed near the entrance.





Apples

Peppers

Bananas

Bread

Tomato Ketchup

Soap

Toilet Paper

Peas

Waffles

Curry

Gluten-free biscuits

"Right, what's first?" Dad asked cheerfully.

"A bag of apples," Caitlin sighed. She wasn't sure if there was a more boring way to spend her day but was pretty certain there wasn't.

Then, an idea flashed into her mind. Something Dad had said, suddenly presented the solution to her problem.

"Hey, Dad?" she said.

"Yes, sweetheart?" said Dad, staring blankly at rows of brightly coloured peppers.

"Why not have an actual race?" Caitlin suggested.
"We split the list in half. First one to find everything on their list wins!"

"You're on!" said Dad. "Here's your half."

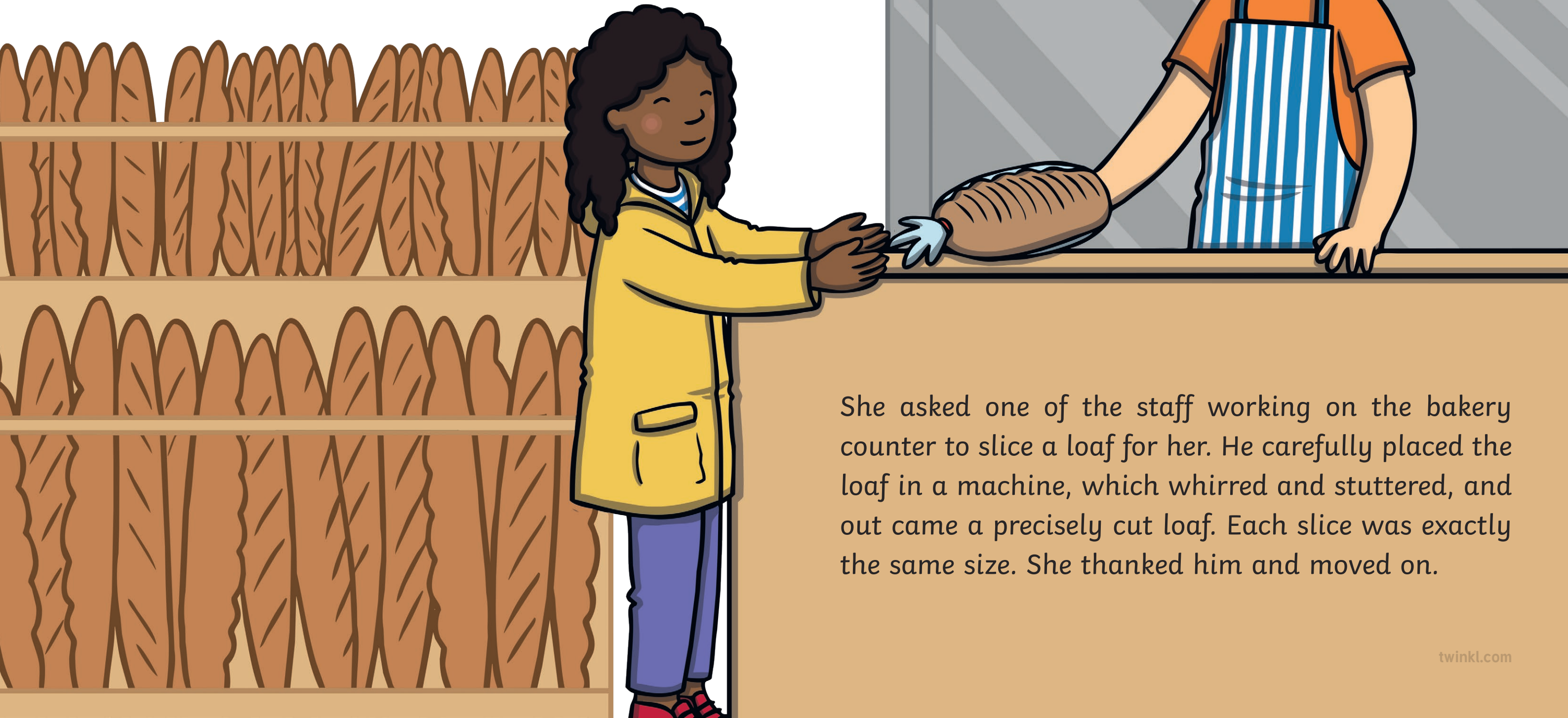


Before she had even looked at her list, he was gone, a dad-shaped blur, whizzing towards the bananas.

She grabbed the nearest trolley, checked her list and flew towards the bread.



The bread was easy to find. She just followed her nose, tracking the wonderful smell which drifted from the back of the store. When she got there, the bakers were pulling trays of golden brown rolls out of the ovens. 'There is nothing better than freshly baked bread,' she thought to herself.



She asked one of the staff working on the bakery counter to slice a loaf for her. He carefully placed the loaf in a machine, which whirred and stuttered, and out came a precisely cut loaf. Each slice was exactly the same size. She thanked him and moved on.

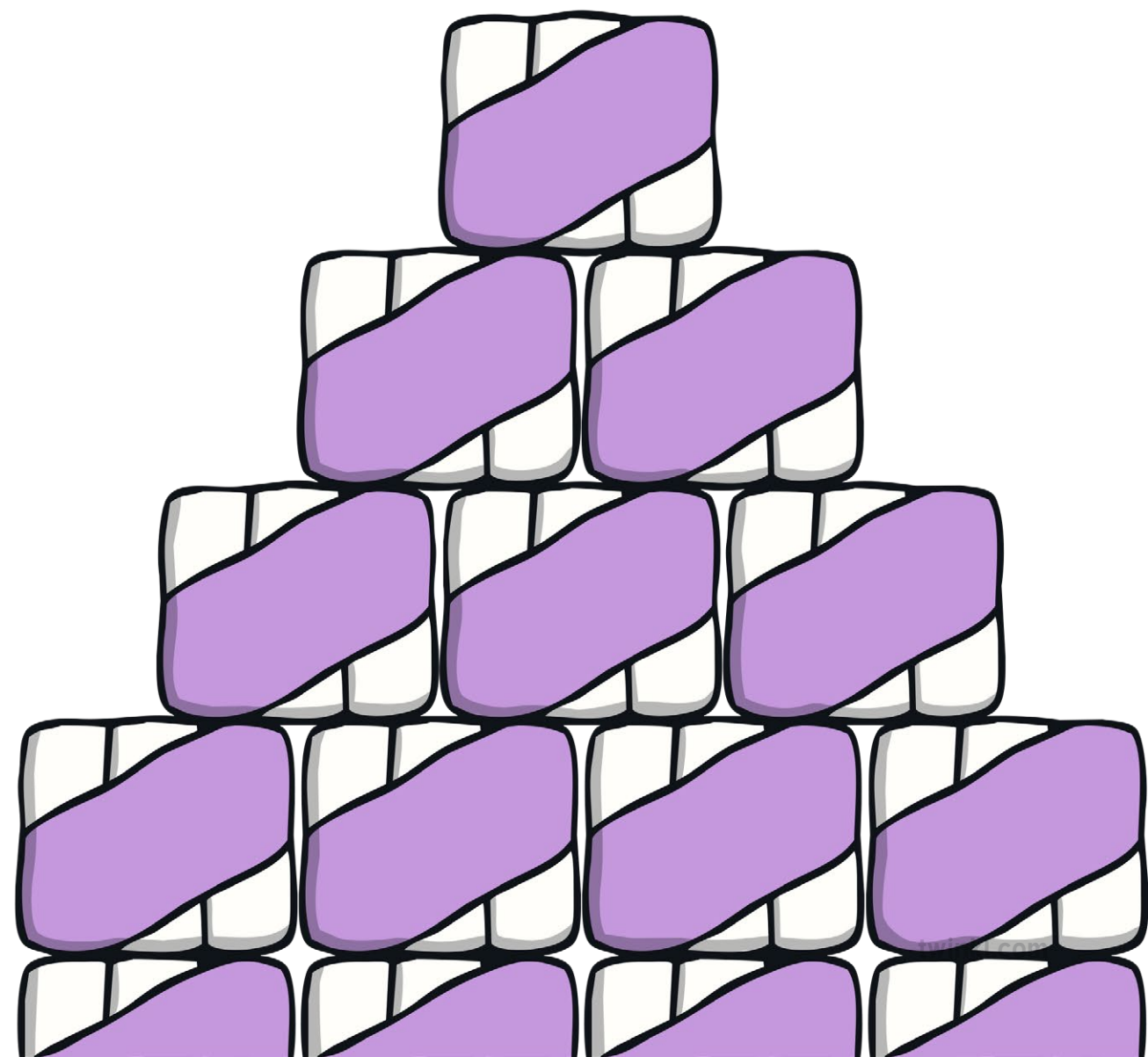
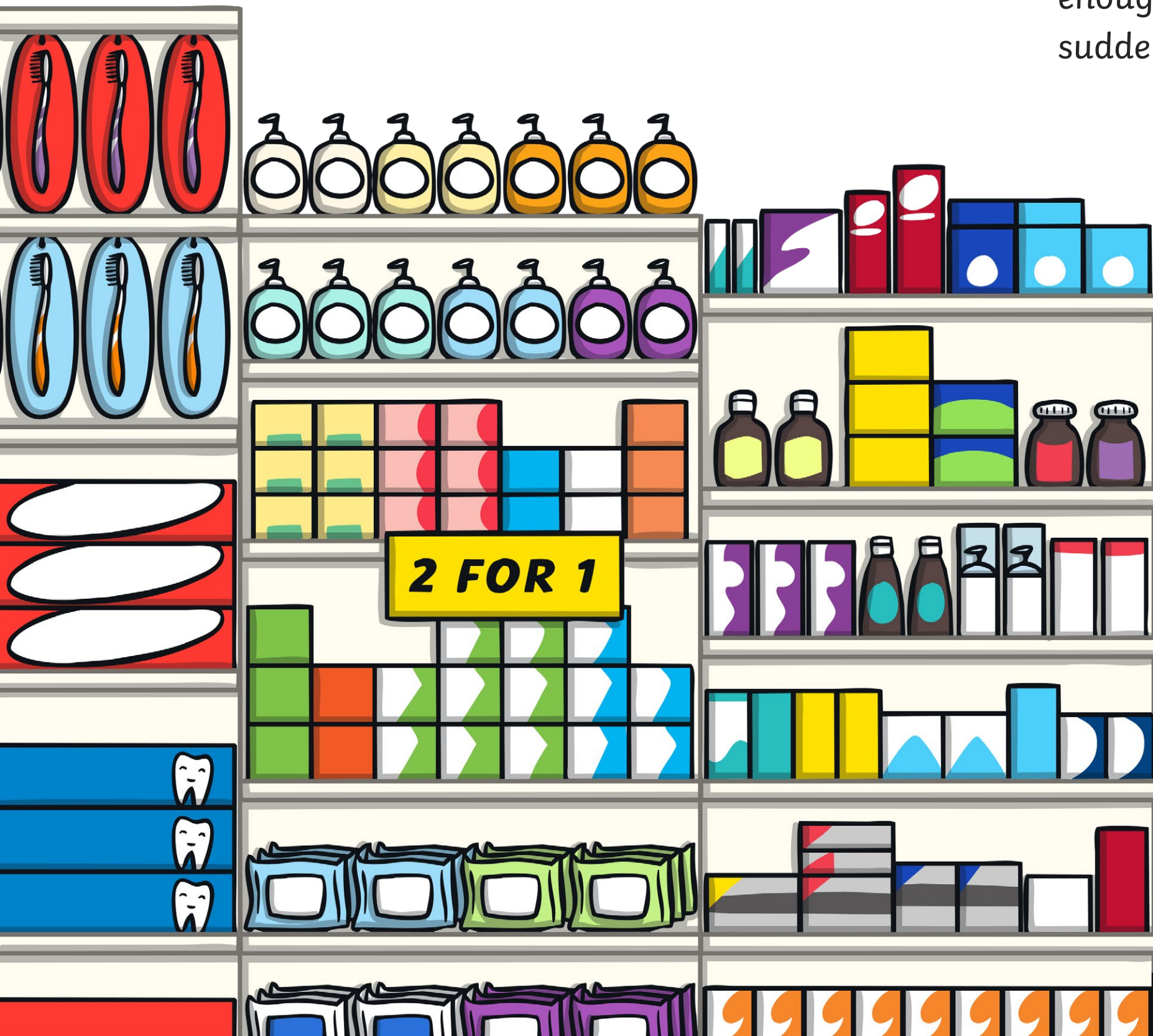
She needed tomato ketchup next but didn't know where it was. She **did** know that supermarkets put products that were the same next to each other, so she looked for any sauces you could put on your food.

She spotted salad cream in a section called 'condiments' and knew ketchup would be there. Seconds later, it was in her trolley and on she flew.



The next items on her list were soap and toilet paper. She knew they weren't kept with the food so sprinted to the other end of the shop.

She picked up two bars of Mum's favourite, hand-softening soap as there was a 'Buy one, get one free' offer on. She also grabbed a pack of toilet rolls big enough to be used as a life raft if they go stuck in a sudden flood on the way home!



She was glad she was still wearing her coat when she arrived in the freezer section. The list called for peas and waffles and she felt like an Arctic explorer, looking for the North Pole in the ice-covered cabinets.

She'd never realised you could buy frozen grated ginger, duck breasts and even mashed potato! She was sure that if she kept exploring, she'd find food from everywhere in the world.

But the race was on, so she grabbed the items she needed, rubbed her icy hands together and headed for warmth.



It only took a couple of minutes for her to finish her list and sprint to the checkouts.



Now, she had the ingredients for a curry, her favourite, and some gluten-free biscuits for her brother, added to her earlier finds. She was impressed by the Free From section, which had loads of choice. Her brother got fed up when he couldn't have the foods he liked.

She looked around just as her dad appeared and she threw her hands in the air in celebration.



"Well done," wheezed Dad, who had clearly gone as fast as he could. "How about I take you out for lunch as your prize?"

'Maybe going to the supermarket isn't that bad,' she thought to herself.

