The Leprechaun Trap

A Reading A–Z Level K Leveled Book
Word Count: 360

Reading A-Z

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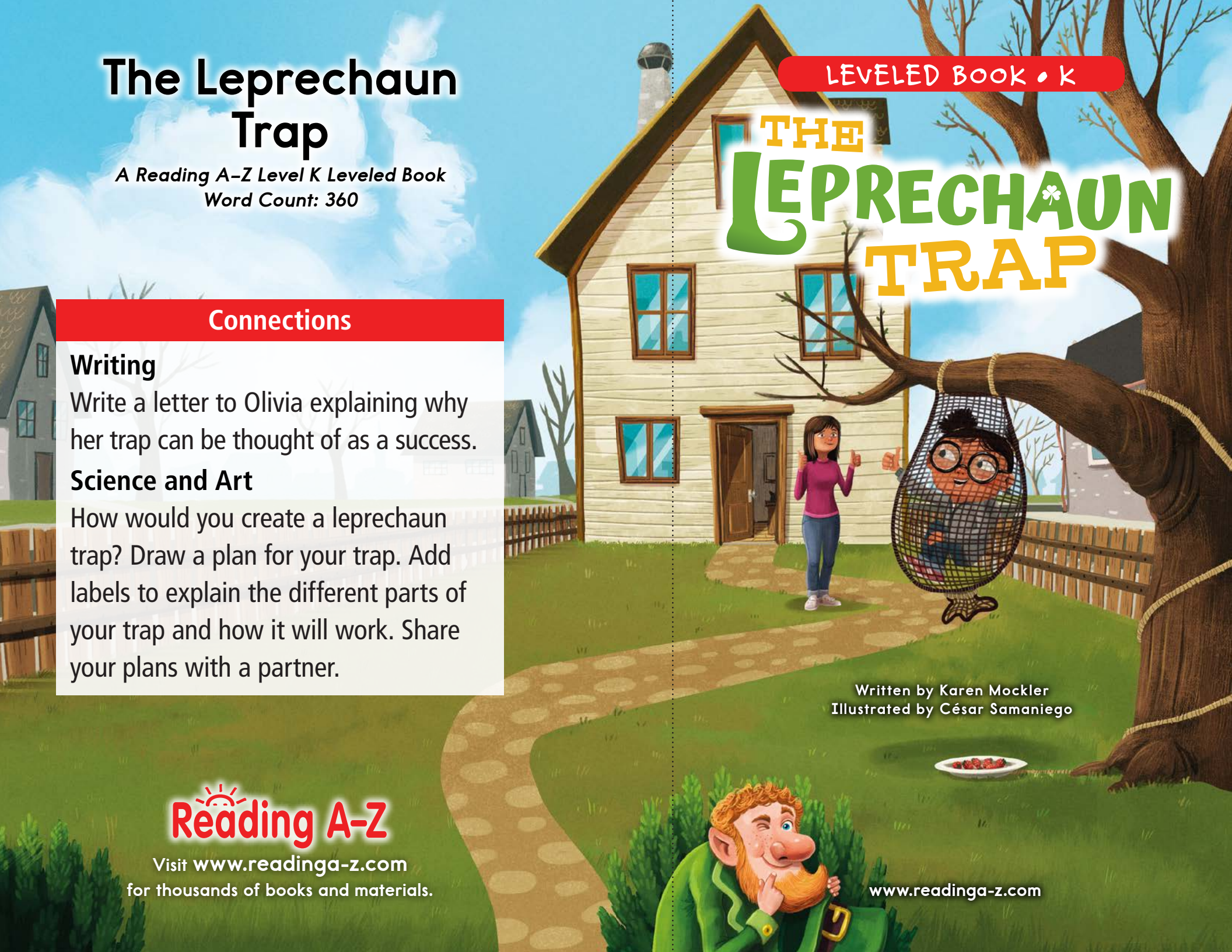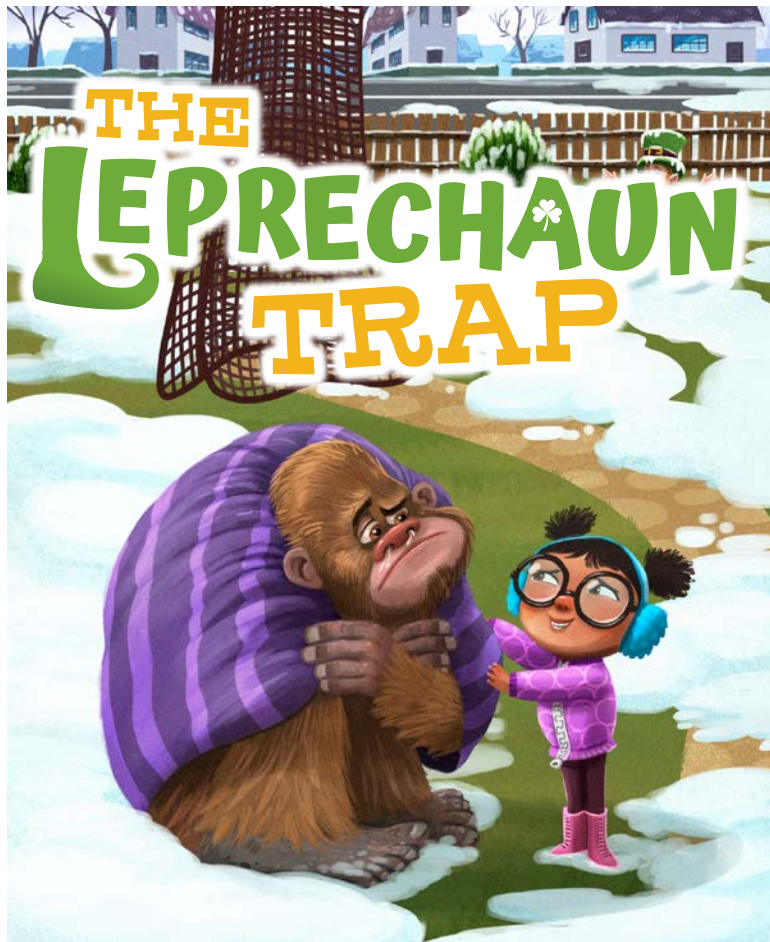
LEVELED BOOK • K

THE LEPRECHAUN TRAP

Written by Karen Mockler
Illustrated by César Samaniego

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Words to Know

bait	exist
career	experiments
disprove	scientist

Focus Question

What does Olivia learn as she experiments with her leprechaun trap?

Correlation

LEVEL K	
Fountas & Pinnell	J
Reading Recovery	17
DRA	18

At Olivia's school, every second grader had to build a leprechaun trap. Everyone's trap was graded. Olivia got a C+ on hers.

I guess I'm not a **scientist**, she thought.

After St. Patrick's Day, they took their traps home. Some kids put theirs in the attic. Some put theirs in the garage. Some put theirs in the trash.

Olivia put hers in the backyard.
She wanted to conduct more
experiments.

Each night for three nights, she set
her trap with different **bait**. She tried
green marshmallows and shamrock
cookies. She tried chocolate coins
wrapped in gold foil. She even tried
corned beef and cabbage.

Each morning she went out to check
her trap.

The first night she caught a jackalope. *That's no leprechaun,* she thought, and let it go.
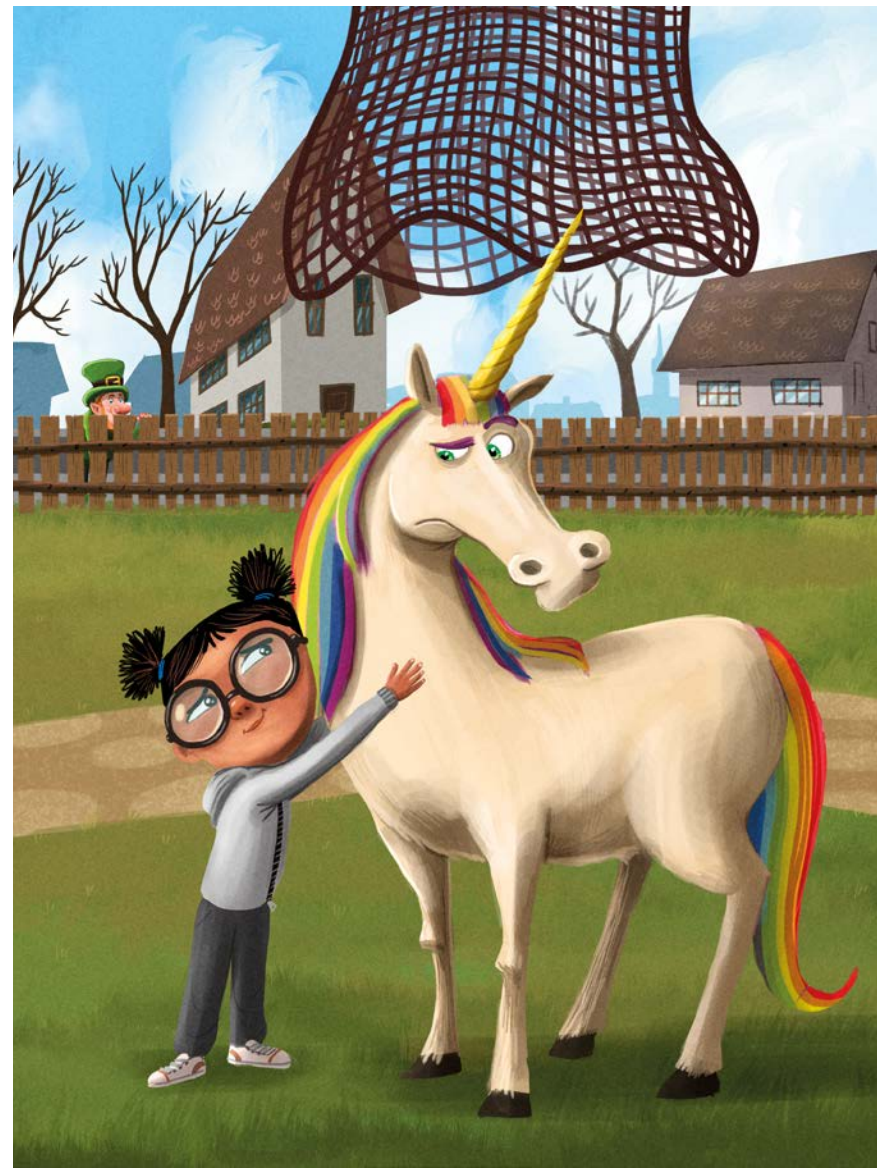
The second night she caught a unicorn. *Nope,* she thought, and let it go.

The third night she caught Bigfoot.
Drat, she thought, and let it go.

Olivia turned and walked inside
with slow, sad steps.

"My trap is a total failure," she told her mom.

"Your trap is a total success!" her mom cried. "You've caught all sorts of creatures."

"Yes," Olivia said, "but not a leprechaun. If you build a leprechaun trap and don't catch a leprechaun, that's not a success."

"Have you considered that your trap's a *scientific* success?" asked her mom.

Olivia shook her head. She didn't know what her mom was talking about, but she was probably wrong.

"You've proven that your trap can catch things," her mom said. "You've proven all these other creatures do **exist**. Maybe the reason you haven't caught a leprechaun is because they *don't* exist."

Olivia considered this for
a long time.

"It's hard to prove some things,"
she said at last. "It's also hard to
disprove them. Like a leprechaun—
maybe I can't catch one because they
don't exist. Or maybe I can't catch
one because they're just too tricky.
Science is interesting, isn't it?"

"Yes," her mom said. "It really is."

"Maybe I *am* a scientist," Olivia said.
"I mean, I *feel* like one, and maybe
that's a start."

It *was* a start—the start of a great **career**.

Glossary

bait *(n.)* food or other things used to attract humans or other animals (p. 6)

career *(n.)* a job that a person has over a long period of time, usually with opportunities for advancement or greater success (p. 15)

disprove *(v.)* to show that something is not true using facts, reason, or proof (p. 13)

exist *(v.)* to be; to live (p. 12)

experiments *(n.)* scientific tests or trials (p. 5)

scientist *(n.)* a person who works in or studies one or more fields of science (p. 3)