Ages 3–5

Capuchin and the Little Rain Drum

A little adventure about another way

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Plip! A drop slipped from a leaf into a hollow log. Capuchin stopped halfway through a hop. That little log had a voice! She spread a broad fallen leaf across its open top and tapped it with one finger. Tip! Her ears lifted. Between you and me, she had already decided to give a concert. “Four little taps,” Capuchin said. “One for each frog on my front-row stone!” The frogs settled close together. Capuchin bowed so low that her scarf tickled her nose. “No sneezing in the orchestra,” she whispered to her scarf.



Capuchin held one edge of the leaf with her left hand. On her right hand, she lifted four fingers and tucked her thumb away. Four little drummers, all in a row. She tapped with them one at a time. The first note bounced. The next sounded softer. By the fourth, the loose edge had slipped into the log. “That is a very floppy song,” Capuchin said. She lifted the leaf out. It was not torn. It simply needed holding on both sides. The frogs stayed on their stone. They were still waiting for their four taps.



So Capuchin held both edges tightly, one in each hand. This time the leaf stayed flat. She leaned forward to play. But all her fingers were busy holding it. No little drummer was free. “I have made the quietest concert in the world,” she said. She tried tapping with her nose. Her scarf tickled it again. “Not the nose,” she decided. “And not the scarf.” Capuchin sat back. The leaf needed two holders. Her tune needed four fingers. She looked from one hand to the other, slowly this time.



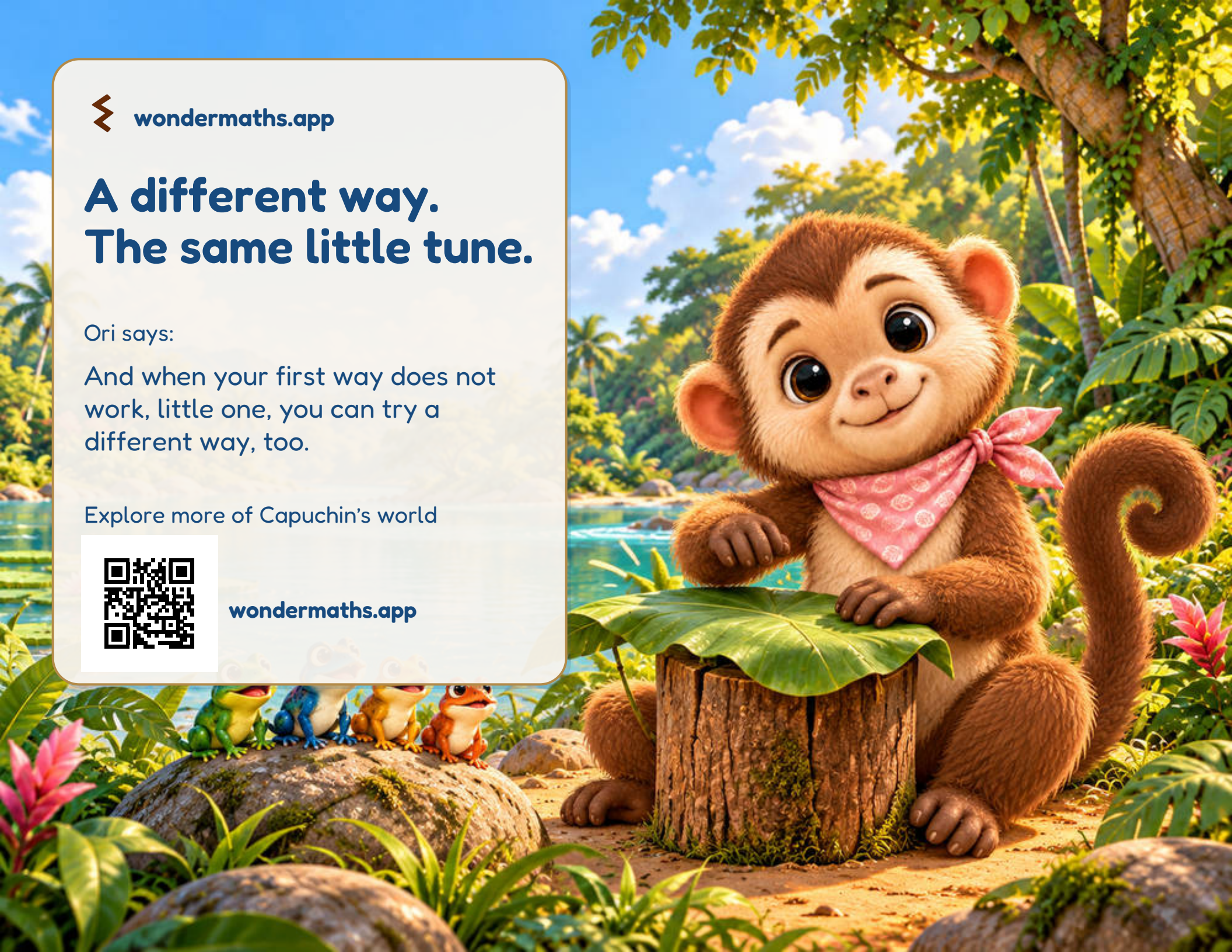
Capuchin rested the leaf edges on the rim. She pressed them down with her thumbs and kept her smaller fingers curled around the rim. Her two longest fingers on each hand could still move. “Try another way,” she murmured. She lifted her index finger and middle finger on the left. Then her index finger and middle finger on the right. “Two here. Two here. Still four! They do not all have to stand on the same hand.” She wiggled those four free fingers. The leaf stayed in place. Capuchin's shoulders settled. This four could hold a concert.



“Try another way,” Capuchin said, and began. Left index finger. Left middle finger. Right index finger. Right middle finger. Four little taps, each with its own turn. Tip, tip, tip, tip! The leaf bounced under every finger, but its edges stayed put. “My four found a new place!” she said. The frogs answered with soft croaks. Capuchin played the four notes again, gently enough to hear their reply. She did not need a louder drum. She did not need more fingers. She had changed the way she used the ones she had.



Just then, the leaf above the log let go of another drop. Plip! It landed on Capuchin's drum. She held still and waited. Another drop was gathering overhead. “A guest drummer!” Capuchin whispered. She played one soft tap. The leaf above answered with two tiny drops. The frogs listened. The smallest concert had room for the smallest guest. Capuchin carried her leaf drum back to her resting root beside the river. She tucked the leaf safely next to the log for tomorrow. “Try another way,” she said, with a little smile. And when your first way does not work, little one, you can try a different way, too.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A different way.
The same little tune.
Ori says:
And when your first way does not work, little one, you can try a different way, too.
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