

Going to the Cattle Yards



Sophie Worth
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Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeekDesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

www.envirostories.com.au

In 2014, the "Farming Families" Enviro-Stories program provided local kids with the opportunity to write and illustrate stories about farming, farming communities and sustainable farming practices. This program was sponsored by the Cotton Research & Development Corporation, North West and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services.

Cotton Research & Development Corporation

Cotton Research & Development Corporation (CRDC) is a partnership between the Australian Government and the Australian cotton industry. CRDC invests in and manages a portfolio of research, development and extension projects that seek to enhance the environmental, social and economic values associated with cotton production systems for the benefit of cotton industry participants, regional communities and the Australian people.

www.crdc.com.au

Local Land Services

Local Land Services delivers customer-focussed services to farmers, landholders and the community across rural and regional NSW. Local Land Services bring together agricultural production advice, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management into a single organisation. This program has been supported by both the North West Local Land Services and the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services.

www.lls.nsw.gov.au

Going to the Cattle Yards

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The “Farming Families” Enviro-Stories program has been proudly supported by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, North West Local Land Services and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services. This program was held in support of the United Nations 2014 International Year of Family Farming.



The “Farming Families” collection consists of the following books:

- A Farming Family
- Rearing Polly
- Eddie the Echidna
- Mystery in the Chicken Yard
- Mya and Jack’s Experience of Cotton
- Pest Troubles
- Farmer Matt Saves the Day
- A Sustainable Farm
- Going to the Cattle Yards

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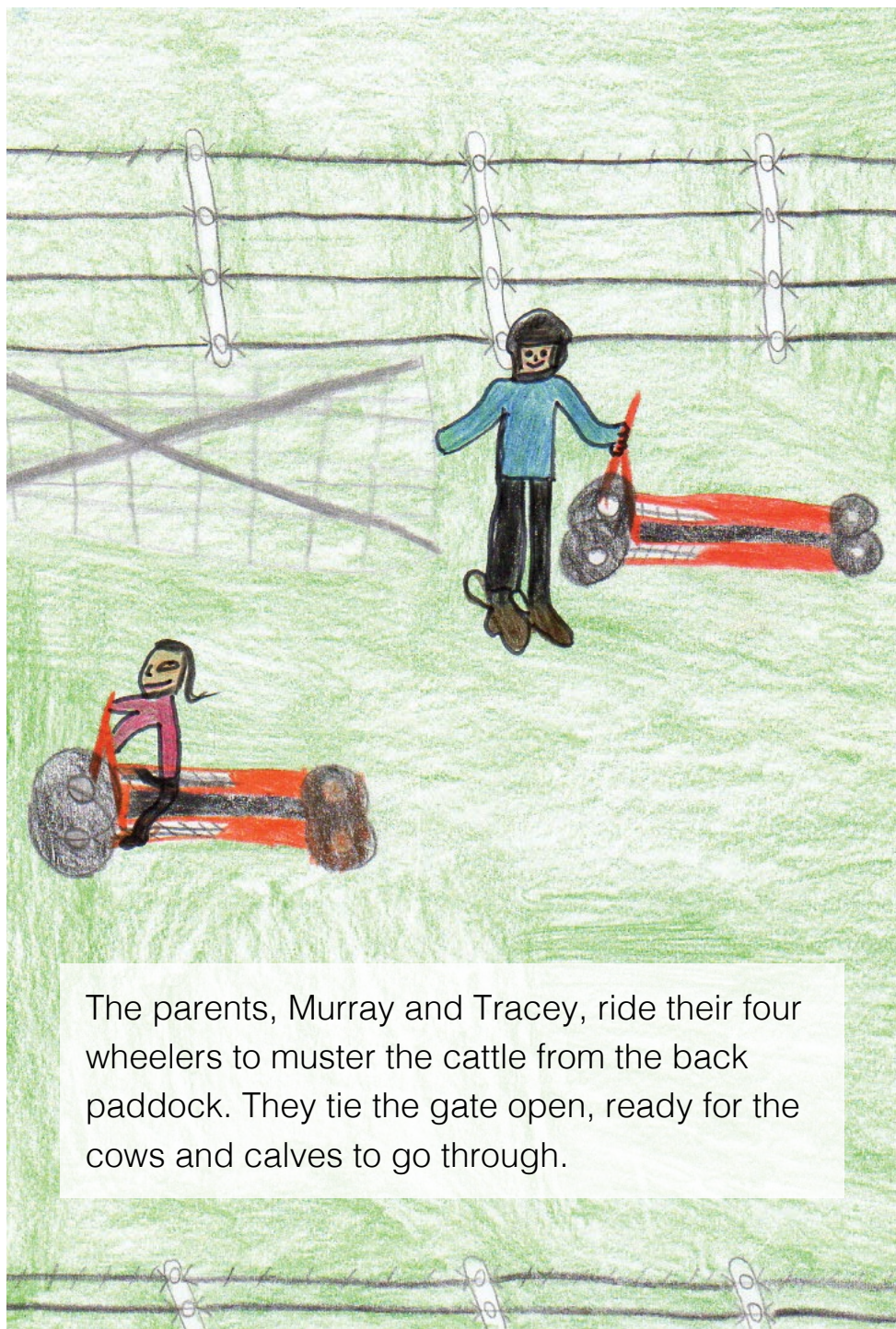
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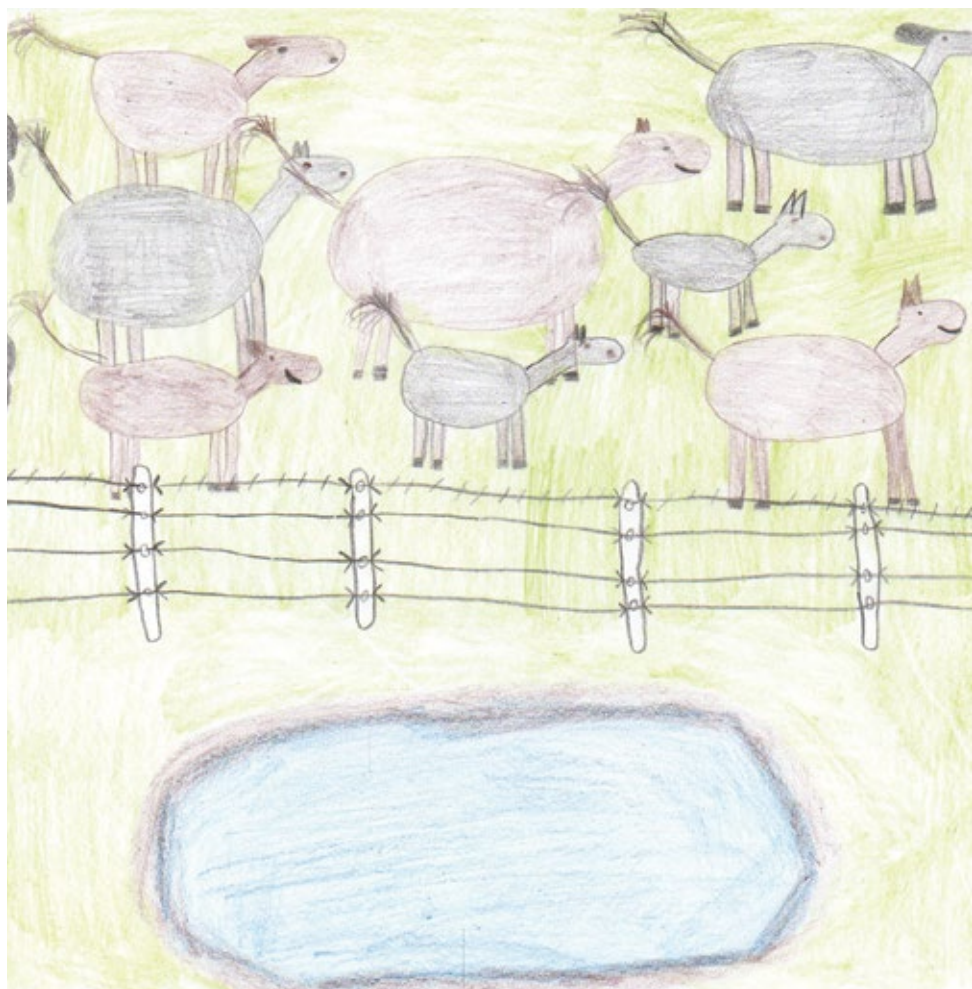
It's calf marking time on the farm. The Worth family has to get the cows and calves to the cattle yards. They all wake up early and eat a good breakfast as it is going to be a long day.

Warm beanies, gloves, jackets and helmets are all put on to fight against the chilly morning air. They get out on the farm bikes as quickly as they can.

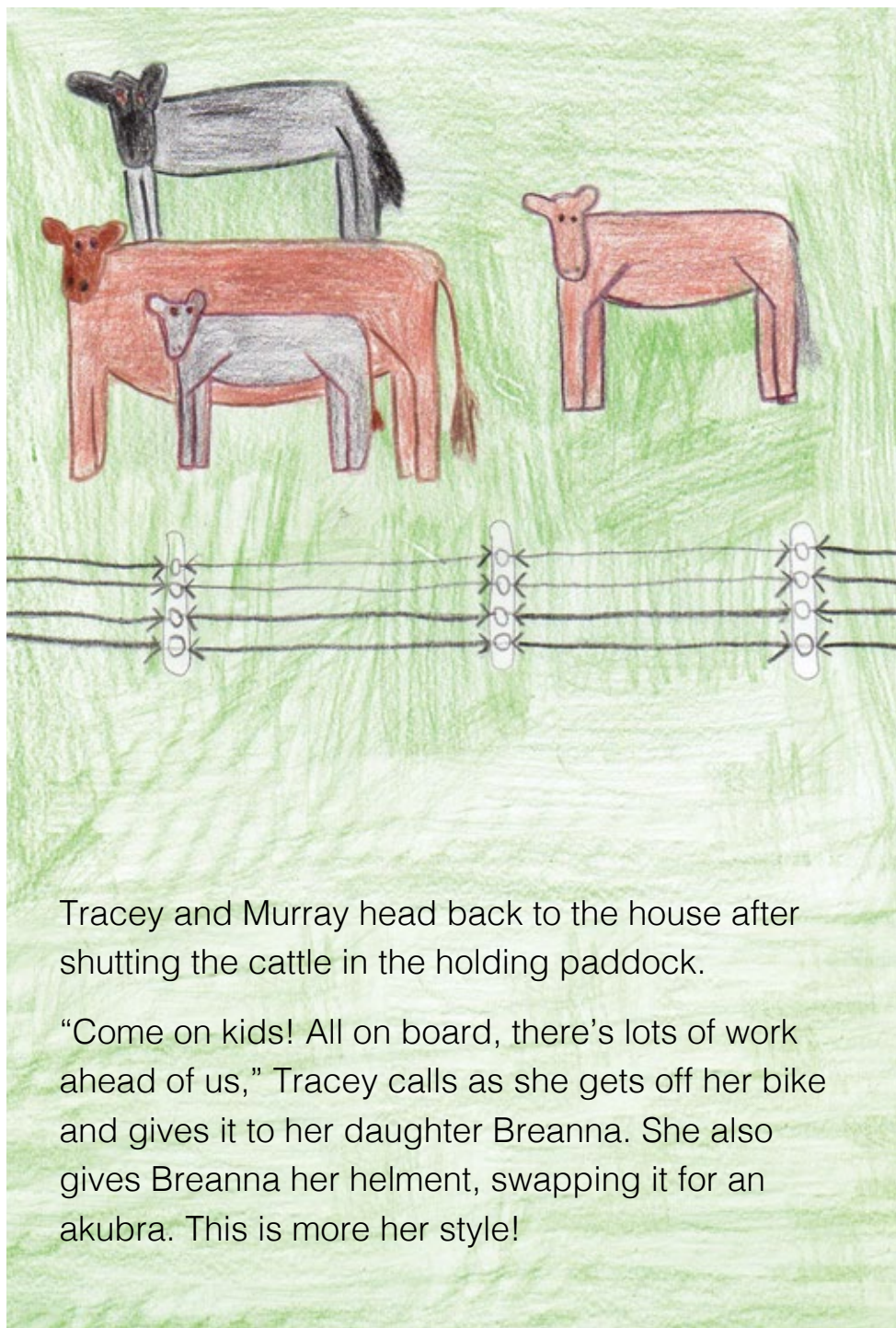




The parents, Murray and Tracey, ride their four wheelers to muster the cattle from the back paddock. They tie the gate open, ready for the cows and calves to go through.



The cattle are chased towards the gate so they will go into the lane. The cows are bellowing and want to stop and eat some grass. Murray and Tracey won't let them; they beep their horns to keep them moving.

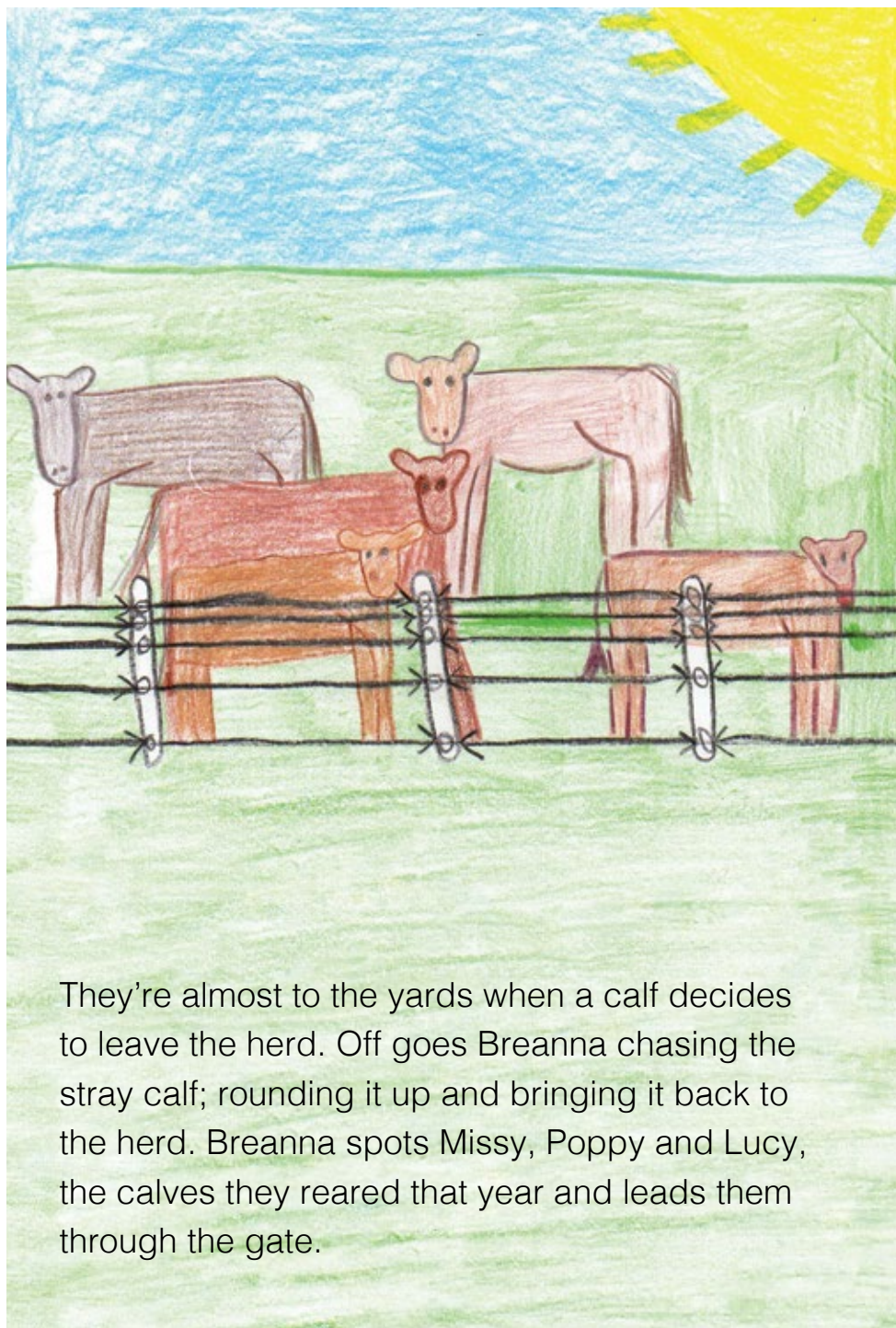


Tracey and Murray head back to the house after shutting the cattle in the holding paddock.

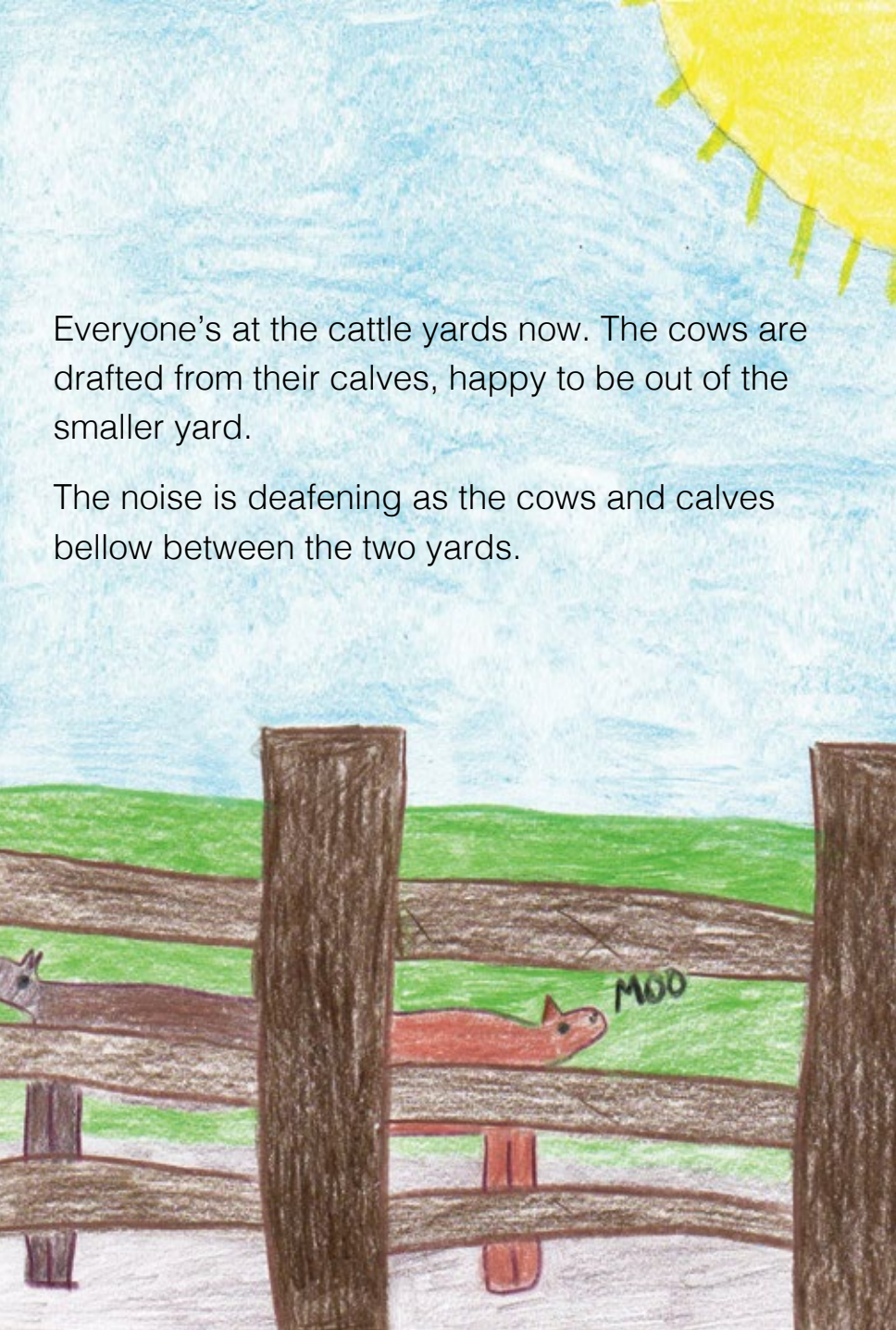
“Come on kids! All on board, there’s lots of work ahead of us,” Tracey calls as she gets off her bike and gives it to her daughter Breanna. She also gives Breanna her helmet, swapping it for an akubra. This is more her style!



Tracey loads up the Toyota tray-back with the brand, ear tags, earmark and drench. The two younger kids, Chloe and Sophie, get in the Ute and they all drive out to the yards. Beanna helps her dad keep mustering.



They're almost to the yards when a calf decides to leave the herd. Off goes Breanna chasing the stray calf; rounding it up and bringing it back to the herd. Breanna spots Missy, Poppy and Lucy, the calves they reared that year and leads them through the gate.

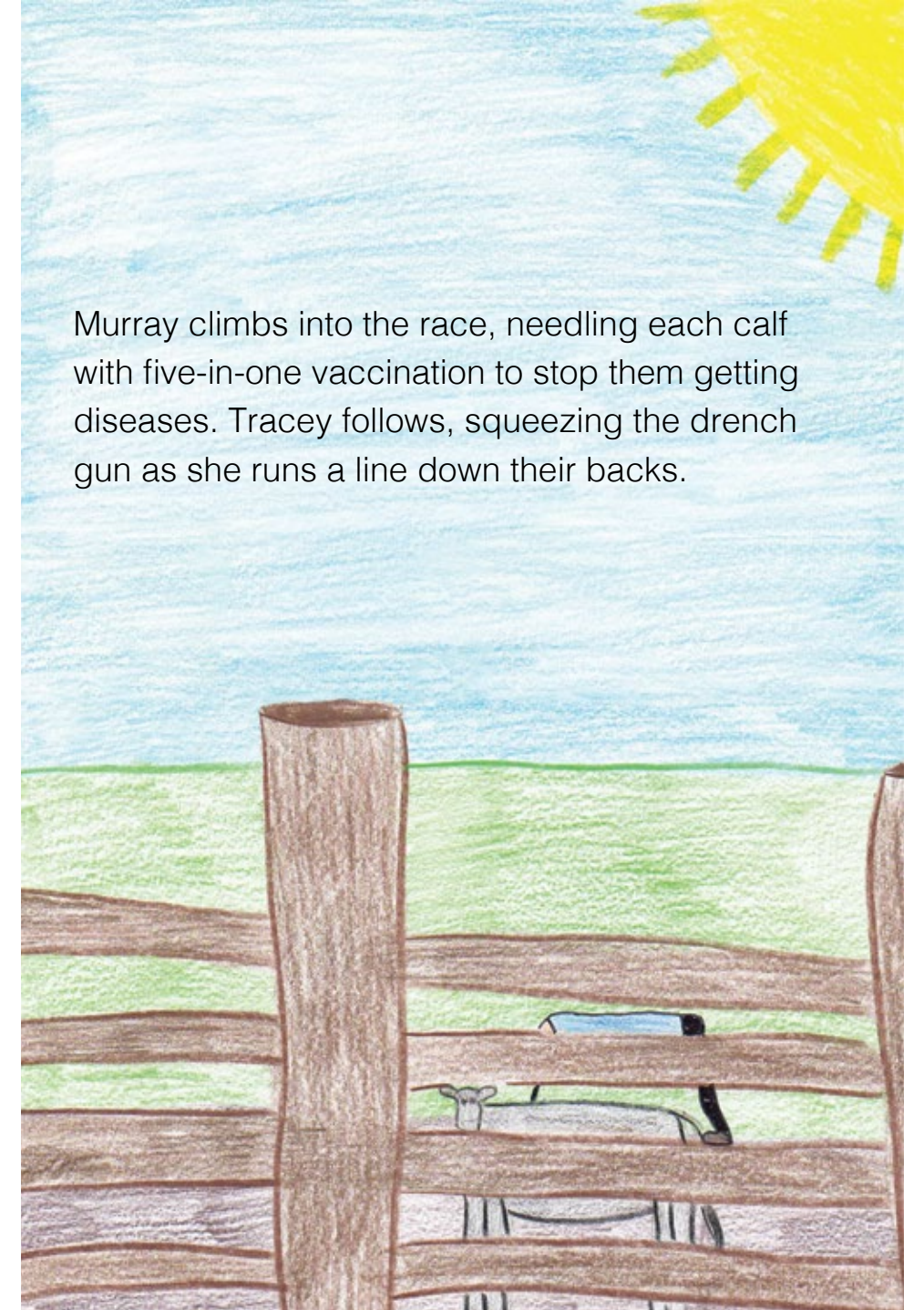


Everyone's at the cattle yards now. The cows are drafted from their calves, happy to be out of the smaller yard.

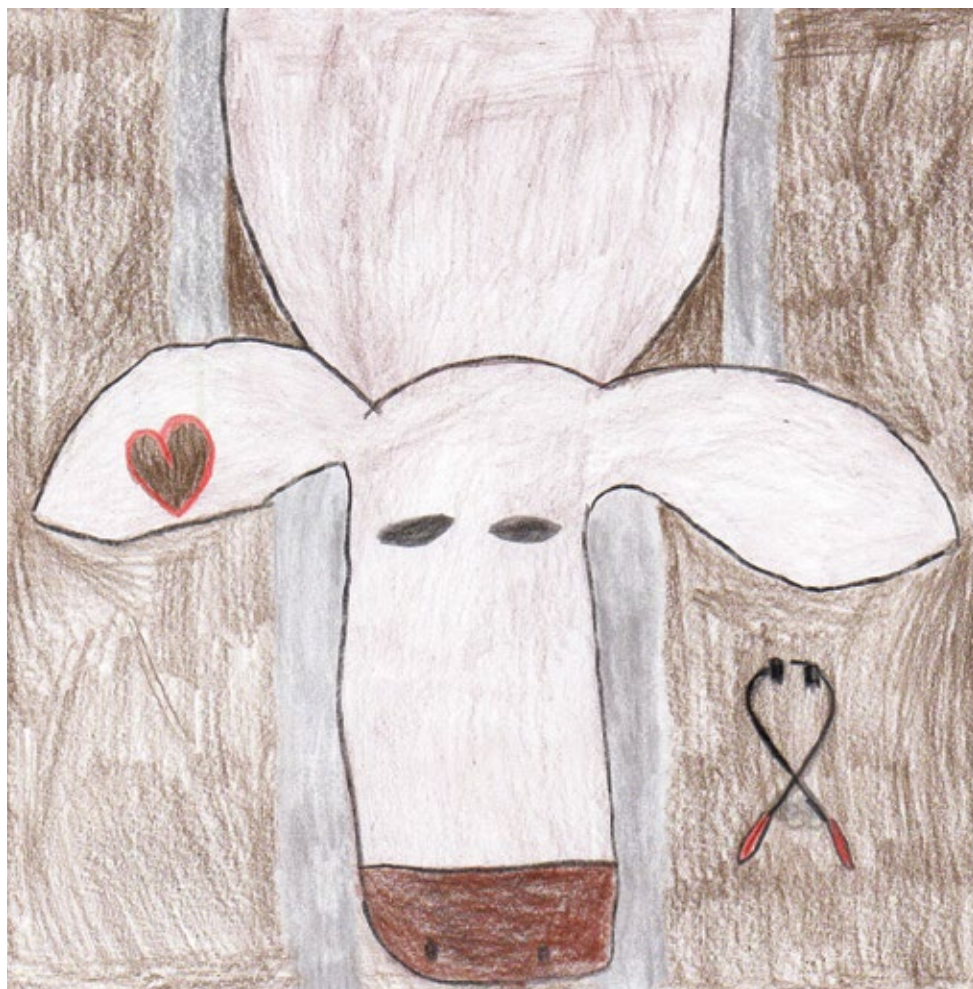
The noise is deafening as the cows and calves bellow between the two yards.



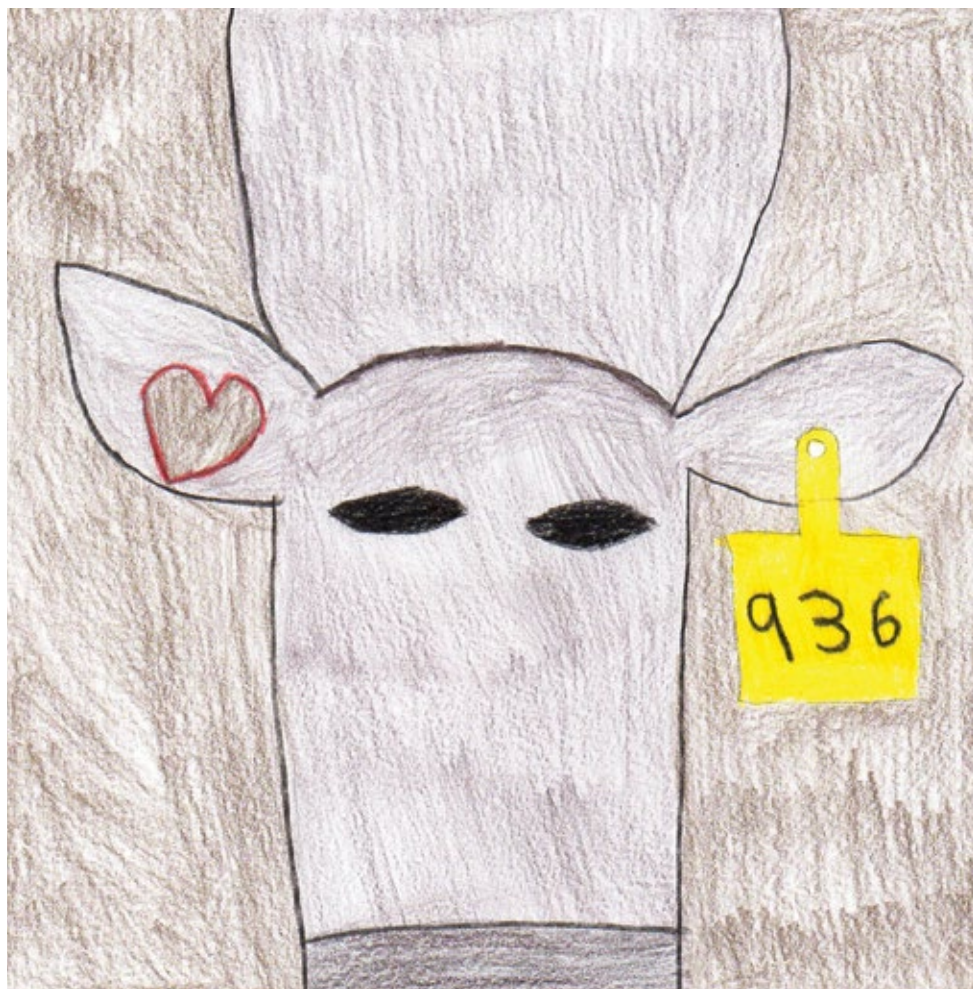
The Worth's put the calves in the forcing yard. The race is a narrow pen; it is loaded up with nervous calves unsure of what will happen next.



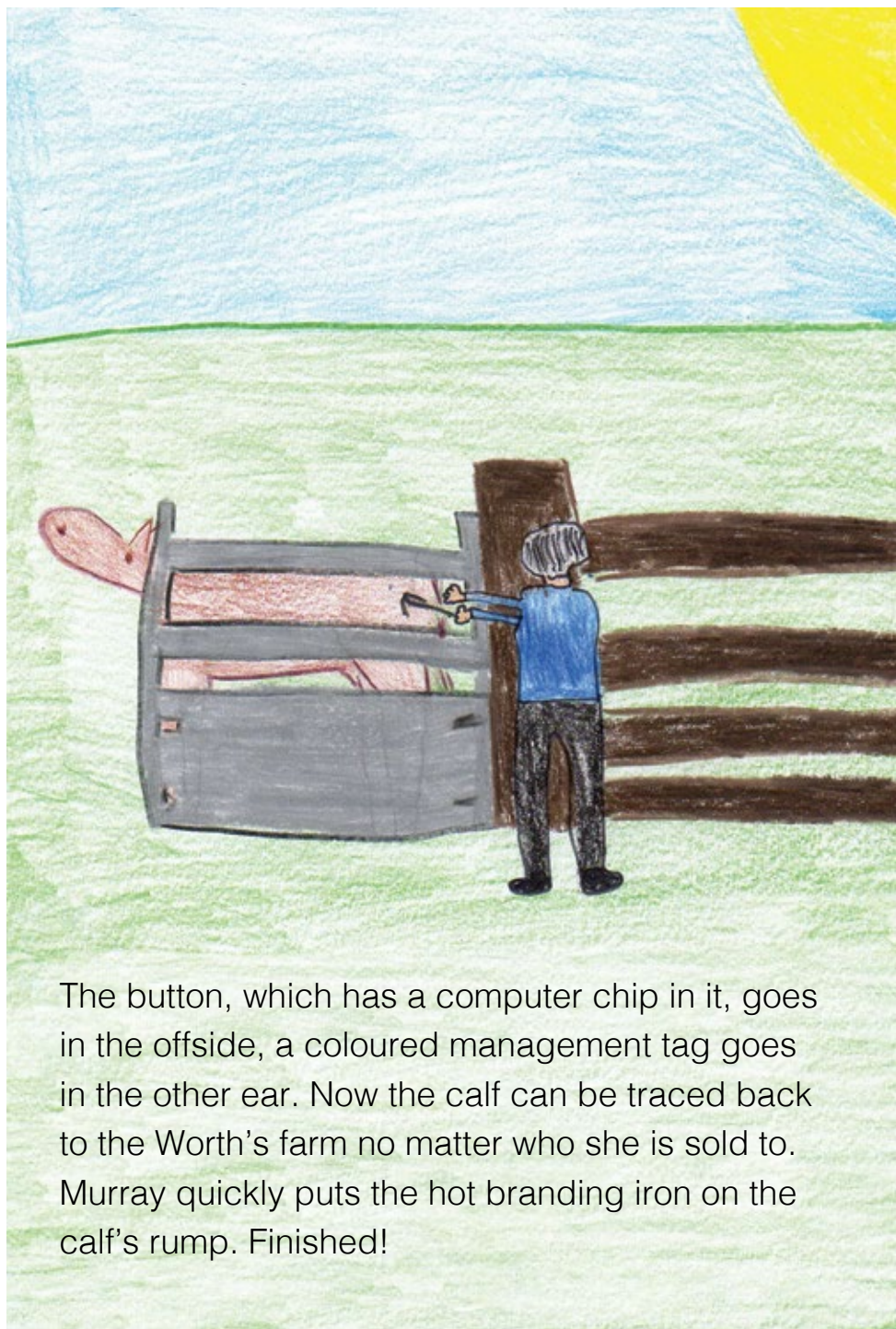
Murray climbs into the race, needling each calf with five-in-one vaccination to stop them getting diseases. Tracey follows, squeezing the drench gun as she runs a line down their backs.



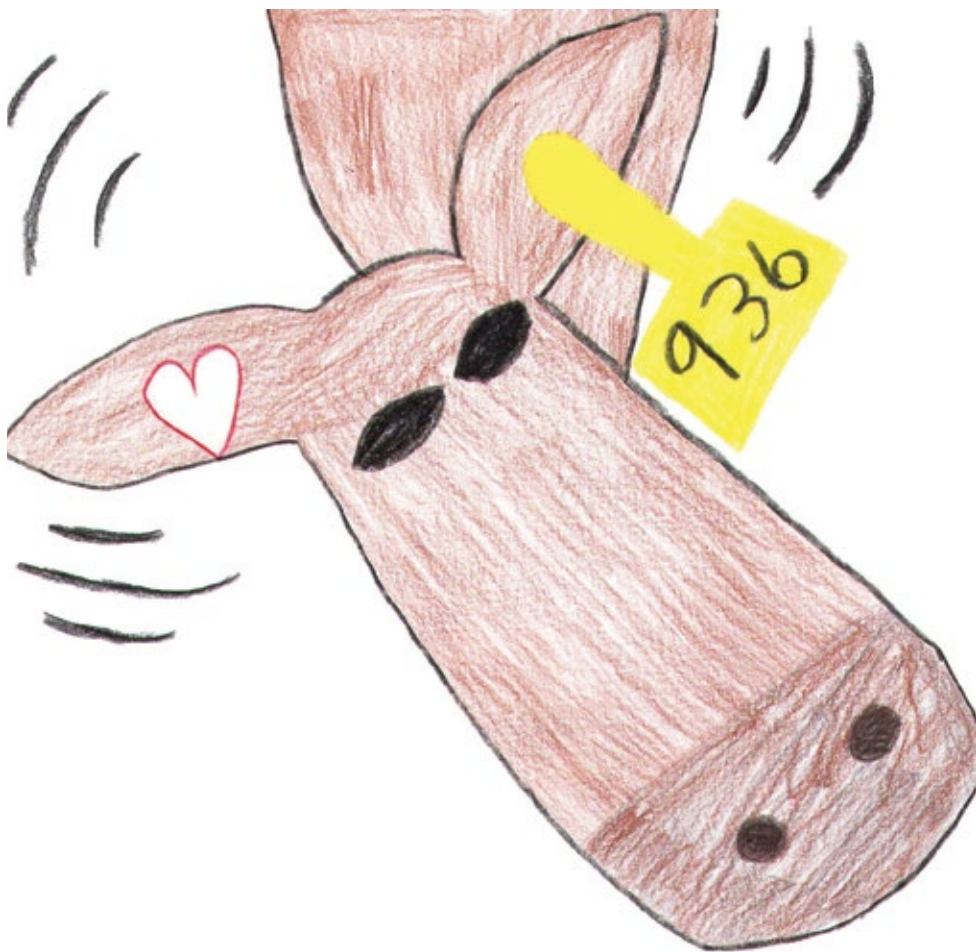
The first calf is run up into the crush; Murray pulls down the handle on the headlock. Caught! He takes a heart out of the heifer's ear with the earmarking pliers. Because the earmark isn't registered it goes in the offside, otherwise known as the right ear.



Next comes the ear tag. These are called NLIS tags as they are part of the National Livestock Identification System. Tracey loads the tagging guns. They look like bigger versions of the ones that they used to pierce Sophie's ears, only the needle is longer!

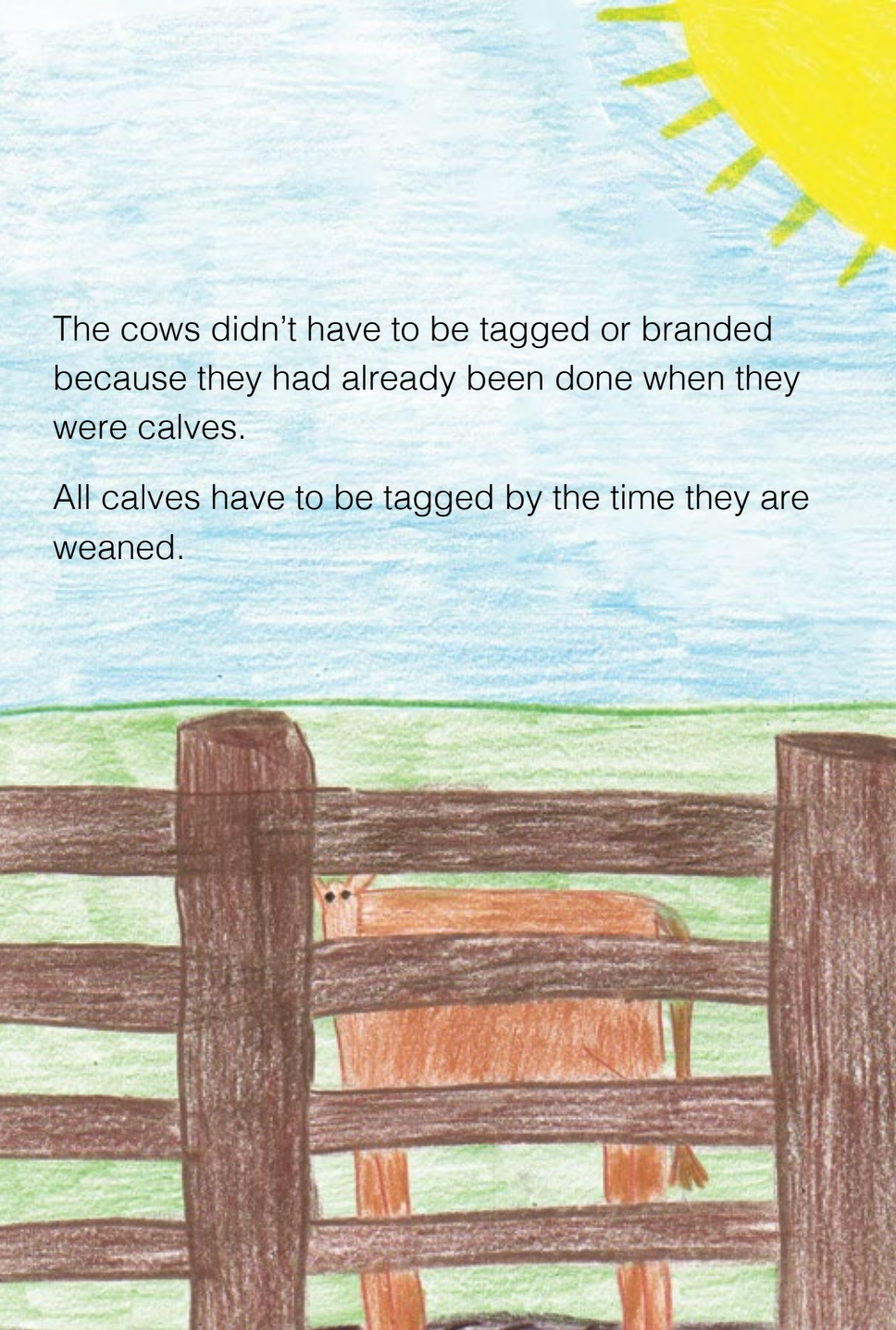


The button, which has a computer chip in it, goes in the offside, a coloured management tag goes in the other ear. Now the calf can be traced back to the Worth's farm no matter who she is sold to. Murray quickly puts the hot branding iron on the calf's rump. Finished!



Murray opens the headlock to let the calf go. It shakes its head, trying to shake the tags from her ears. This routine goes on for the rest of the day until all the calves are finished.

Next, they drench and needle the cows.



The cows didn't have to be tagged or branded because they had already been done when they were calves.

All calves have to be tagged by the time they are weaned.



Tracey opens the gate. Chloe and Sophie chase the cows through while Murray and Breanna chase them into the paddock. When they get there, the cows and calves relax and eat some grass. It's late when everybody gets home; it's been a long day at the yards.



Sophie Worth
Niangala Public School, Year 5 2014



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