Stories
The football family
You could use this story in a **Starters** class.

Mr and Mrs Ship have four children. Ben is ten, Sue is eight, Jill is six and little Mark is two years old. The Ship family have a brown and white dog, too. His name is Tick!

The Ship family LOVE playing football. They play football in their garden, on the beach, in the playground and in their street. But…
Mr Ship isn't very good. He can't kick the ball.
Mrs Ship can't throw the ball.
Ben can't bounce the ball.
Sue can't catch the ball.
Jill can't run and little Mark can't pick up the ball.
Oh dear!
But the family LOVE playing football.

Today, the Ship family are in the park. They like going to the park. They take bread there for the ducks!
The Ship family are playing football now. But they aren't playing with a football. They are playing with Tick's favourite ball.
Sue catches the ball and then she throws it!
Mrs Ship runs and kicks it.
Then Mr Ship runs but he doesn't kick the ball.
Then Jill catches it and then she bounces it.
Then Ben kicks the ball very well and it goes into the water…
Oh dear!

But Tick jumps into the water and swims and swims.
He picks up the ball with his mouth and swims and swims again.
Now Tick is giving the ball to little Mark. Mark can't pick it up.
But little Mark is kicking the ball very well!

'Horray!' the family say and clap and clap. 'Well done, Tick and well done Mark!' Tick wags his tail and Mark has a big smile on his face.

'What a good game!' say Mr and Mrs Ship.
'It's a fantastic game,' says Ben.
'It's a fun game,' says Sue.
'It's a really cool game,' says Jill.
'I LOVE football,' says little Mark.

'Woof, woof!' says Tick and runs and jumps into the water again!

Teaching notes

Read the story out aloud for children to hear (before they read it).
Note that 'then' (adv), 'well', 'into' and 'little' are Movers words (but 'Well done!' is Starters). The verb 'to wag' is sadly not on the YLE wordlist!

You might like to:

- *review/teach all the action verbs here: bounce, catch, kick, run, swim, throw. You could also teach 'to be good at' (Movers) and ask learners which of these they are good at, e.g. 'Are you good at running/swimming?' Take a moment to assure children (as the story does) that you don't have to be good at something to enjoy it).*
- *review/teach 'Well done! ' and 'Hooray!' Devise classroom activities to use those expressions. Say 'Well done!' too, to congratulate learners for completed tasks at any time.*
- *review/teach 'little' to mean 'younger' (and 'big' to mean 'older') in this context. Compare 'little' with learners understanding of 'small' at Starters level in L1 if necessary.*
- *ask groups to draw different scenes from the story and then paste the pictures together to form a cartoon.*
- *ask seven learners to role play the story.*
- *review/teach other Starters ball games: badminton, baseball, basketball, hockey, soccer (USA word for UK football) tennis.*
- *ask 'Do you like playing these games?' Class does a survey to find the most popular board game.*
- *ask questions – you could write perhaps six (depending on level) on the board. Pairs could prepare the answers before answering in open class. Help with vocabulary but accept L1 answers if necessary.*

Suggestions

Where do you / your family like going?
What games does your family like playing? (at home/in the park)
Has your family got a pet?
      What's its name? What colour is it? What does it like doing?
Do you have a little / big brother? A little / big sister?
      How old is s/he? What does s/he like doing?

Imagination work

Take a ball and a picture of a dog into the classroom. Hold them up and encourage children to tell you something about these things that you don't know, e.g.
That ball is very old. It's your pet's ball. It's in your garden.
That dog is seven years old. It likes running. Its name is Sausage.
Encourage different answers from different children to show that 'having different ideas' is ok and that there isn't only one correct answer!