Visitors from PLANET SENTENCE

Amy sat on the porch watching the sky for shooting stars. Suddenly, she saw something too big to be a star streak through the sky—and then land in her yard!

She watched as four small green figures climbed out of what looked like a shiny silver cube.

"Whoa! Aliens!" Amy cried.

"Hello, Earth person," said the alien in the polka-dot bowtie. "We come from the planet Sentence. I'm the Commander, and these are Telly, Quizzle, and Shout."

"What's your planet like?" asked Amy.

"Well, on our planet, we love groups of words that tell something or ask a question. A group of words like that is called a **sentence**," said the Commander.

"We have sentences on our planet, too," Amy said.

"We have all *kinds* of sentences on our planet," the Commander continued. "Sentences that tell someone what to do are called **commanding sentences**."

"We have those, too!" Amy said excitedly. "By the way, I like your polka-dot tie."

"Those aren't polka dots," said the Commander. "All sentences have symbols at the end called **punctuation marks**. Commanding sentences end with a punctuation mark called a **period**. Those aren't polka dots on my tie— they're periods!"

"So are these," said Telly, holding out her dress. "Sentences that tell about something are called **telling sentences**. Telling sentences end in periods, too."

Amy pointed to Quizzle's hat, which had squiggles with dots underneath. "And what are those?" she asked.

"To find something out, you use an **asking sentence**," answered Quizzle. "Asking sentences end with **question marks**."

"Cool," Amy said. Then she pointed to Shout's scarf. "Are those punctuation marks, too?"

"Yes—to express strong feelings, you use an **exclaiming sentence**. Exclaiming sentences end in **exclamation points!**" shouted Shout.

Just then, an exclamation point flew out of Shout's mouth! He snatched it from the air and stuffed it into the spaceship's fuel tank.

The Commander explained. "Exclamation points are special. We use them as fuel. We shout to create them. You're bigger than us— if you said a sentence with an exclamation point at the end, we could get our ship running again."

"What should I say?" Amy asked.

"That sentence won't work. That's an asking sentence," said Quizzle.

"But I really don't know what to say," said Amy.

"That was a telling sentence. Try again," said Telly.

Amy wasn't sure what to do. "Help me figure out what to say," she said.

"That was a commanding sentence," the Commander said.

Shout said, "Try this. Think of a telling sentence or a commanding sentence that shows you're really excited about something."
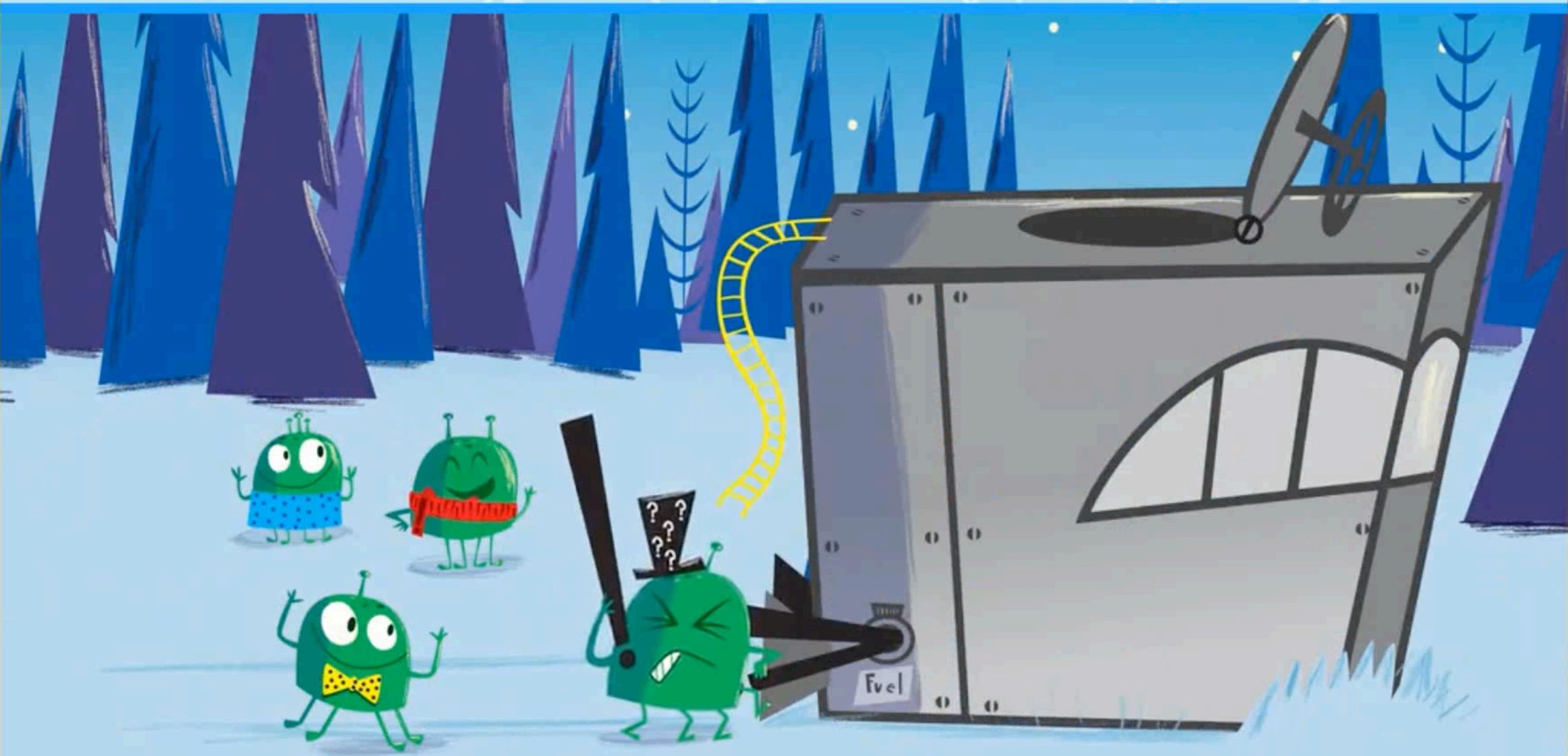
"Oh—now I understand!" Amy shouted. A giant exclamation point flew out of her mouth!

"That's never happened to me before!" said Amy. "Quick—catch them!"

Quizzle caught all three exclamation points and stuffed them into the fuel tank.

"Now we have enough fuel to get us back home!" cried Shout.

The aliens climbed into the spaceship.

The Commander thanked Amy and said, "If you're ever on planet Sentence, look us up."

He pressed the starter button, and the silver cube
shot out of the yard. As Amy waved good-bye,
a shower of shooting stars fell from the sky,