



WAY OF ESCAPE

Please note that this teaching text has not been proofed.

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NOTE TO THE TEACHER

Display each illustration where indicated in text, laying volume aside when the story line continues beyond the picture.

Pronunciation of Names: Yō-aà-noō Esh-i-lōn-yi



Show Illustration #1

Yoano was climbing the old mangotree when he heard someone calling, "Yoano, Yoano." Peeking out through the branches, Yoano saw his friend, Eshilonyi, carrying a hoe.

"Here I am, Eshilonyi!" he shouted. "In the mango tree. What do you want?"

"Get your hoe and come to the plain with me," Eshilonyi called back. "It's a fine day for digging mice."

It was a fine day, too. The sun was high, and a brisk breeze was blowing. *It is a good day to dig mice*, thought Yoano as he scrambled quickly down from the tree and ran for his hoe. He also picked up his slingshot for he had noticed Eshilonyi had one hung around his neck.



Show Illustration #2

The boys were happy and carefree as they started for the plains. They had completed four years of school, which was all that was expected of them. So they were free to spend their days roaming through the fields hunting little wild animals. How they longed for the day when they would be old enough to go hunting with the men of the village!

Yoano and Eshilonyi both knew the plains well. The elephant grass grew so high it towered above them. The strong wind bent the grass over them, hiding them from view. They were used to this and they felt quite safe as they walked along. But there was something they did not know.



Show Illustration #3

Before Eshilonyi had gone to call his friend, some of the men in the village had started out to hunt. They did not take hoes and slingshots. No! They took spears and bows and arrows. Two of them went to the north end of the great plains, for the wind was coming out of the north, and there set fire to the dry grass. The wind fanned the flames swiftly into a roaring blaze. The rest of the men went to the south end

of the field. They knew that the hot fire would drive out the

animals that lived in the field and they thought it great sport to catch them as they tried to escape.



Show Illustration #4

The boys had gone a long way into the plains when Eshilonyi, looking up, noticed the sky was filled with birds. He stood still, listening.

"What is it?" asked Yoano. "What do you hear?"

"Fire!" gasped Eshilonyi. "Listen to it crackle! Yoano, the plains are on fire!"

Yoano stopped to listen.

"Look up, Yoano!" Eshilonyi commanded, "See! The birds have risen before it."

Both boys stared at the birds. Their hearts pounded. They knew only too well the danger they were in. The strong wind would carry the blaze swiftly towards them. There was no time to waste. Where could they go?



Show Illustration #5

"Let's run back to the village!" Yoano shouted. He would have run off at once. But Eshilonyi stopped him.

"There isn't time!" Eshilonyi warned. "We'll never make it."

"Then let's run to the waterhole!" Yoano pleaded, pointing southward where he knew the animals went for water.

But Eshilonyi only stood still and pointed to the sky. Billowing black clouds of smoke told them that the fire was very near.



Show Illustration #6

"No, no! The waterhole is too far away," Eshilonyi explained. "But I have an idea." Trembling, he drew a little box of matches from his pocket. "We'll start our own fire. The dry grass will burn quickly and the wind will carry the blaze in front of us. When a wide patch is burned over we can stand on it. The flames coming from the north will not burn over the ground again. Cornel Help me start the fire!"