

Phonics Tales!™

short e

# The Best Nest

by Liza Charlesworth  
illustrated by Kelly Kennedy



 SCHOLASTIC

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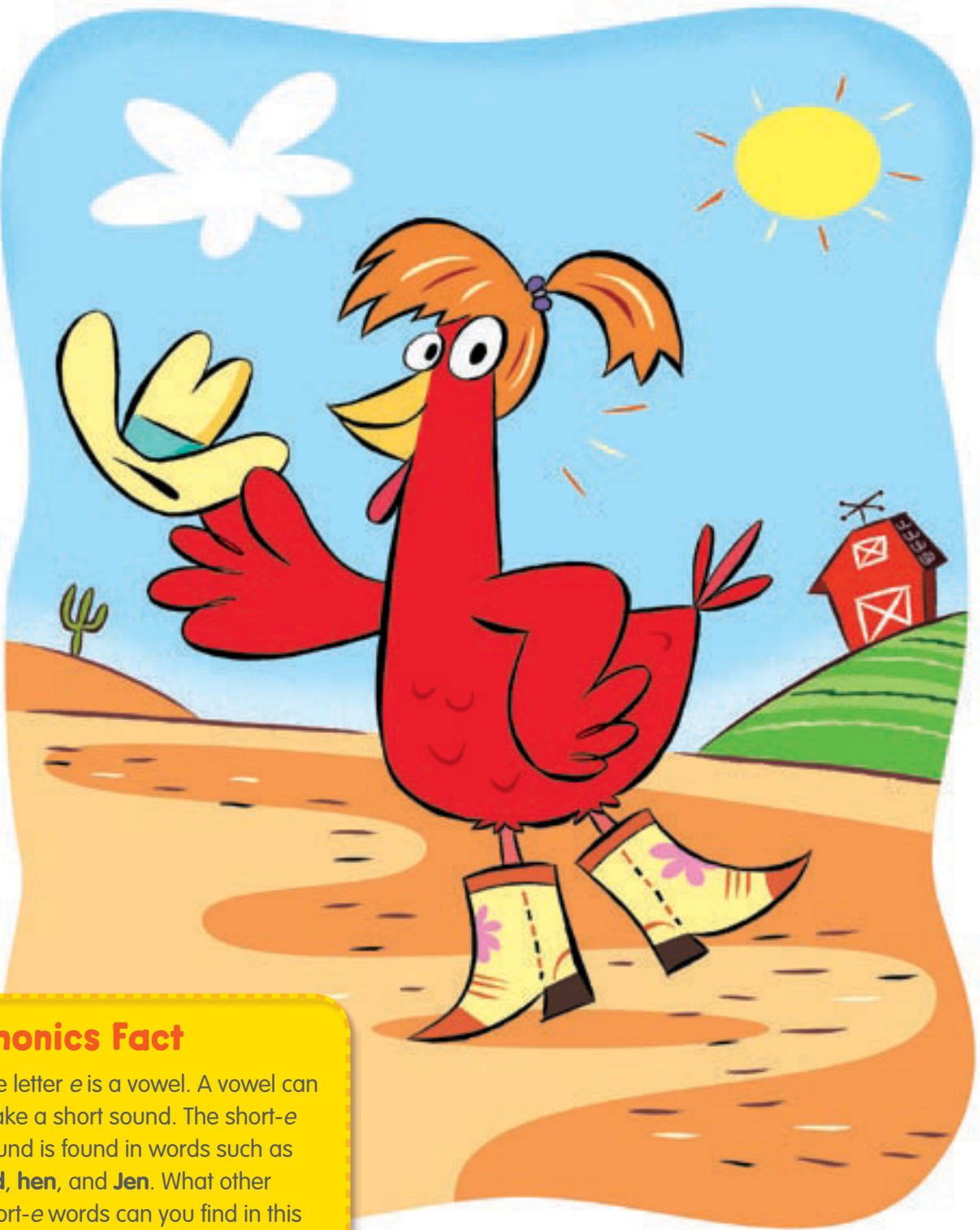
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### Phonics Fact

The letter **e** is a vowel. A vowel can make a short sound. The short-e sound is found in words such as **red, hen, and Jen**. What other short-e words can you find in this story? Look at the pictures, too!

This **red hen** is named **Jen**.

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### Phonics Fact

Sometimes the short-e sound comes in the second syllable of a word, such as in **parents**.

One day, **Jen** decided to **get** her own **nest**.  
She packed a **chest** with the **help** of her **parents**,  
**Ben** and **Bess**.

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Jen pecked them good-bye. Then she **set** out **west** to find the **best nest**.

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**Jen** saw a pig **pen** and **went** inside. But that **pen** was a **mess**! It was not the **best nest**.

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**Jen** saw a **tent** and **went** inside. But the **tent** belonged to **ten elves**! It was not the **best nest**.

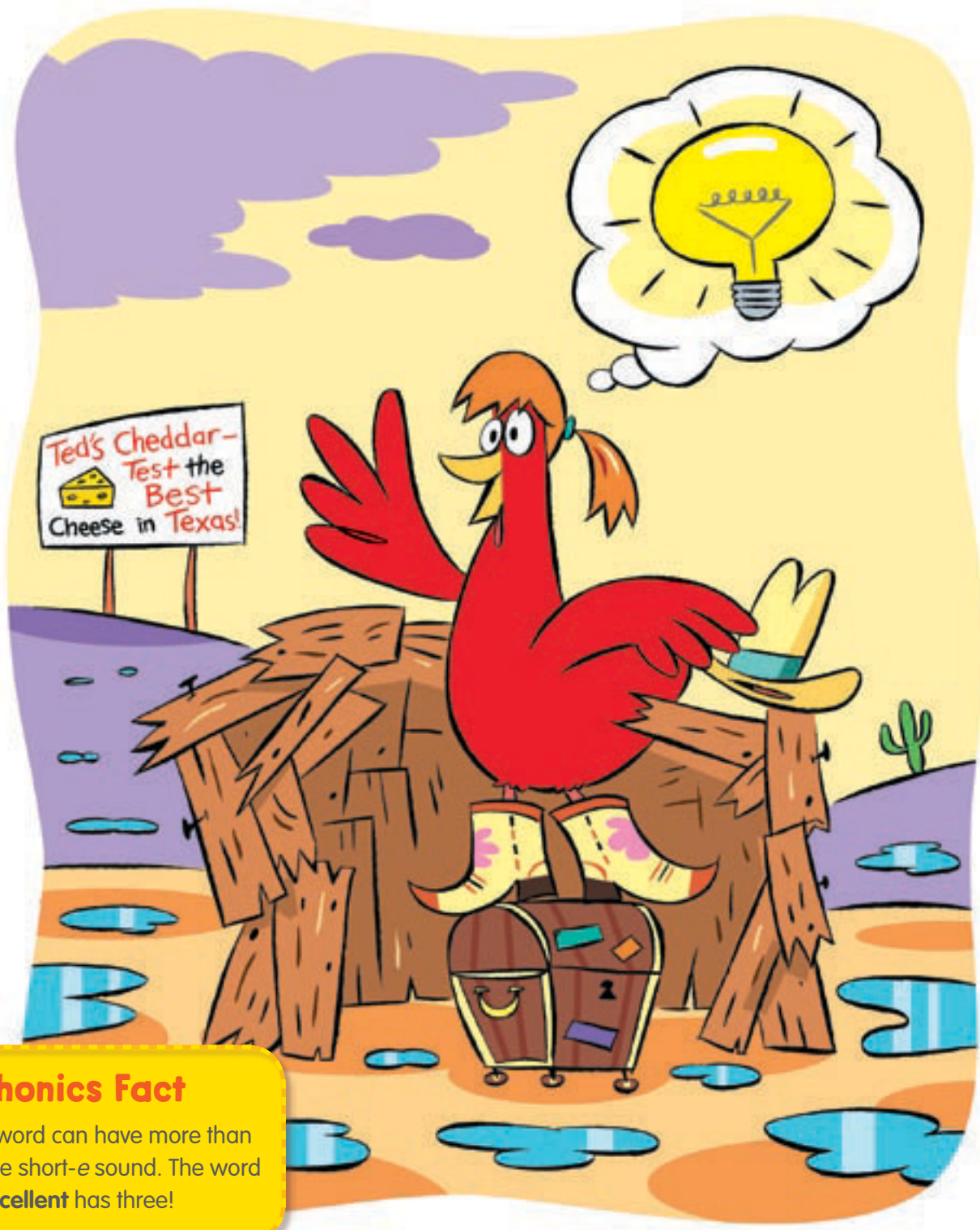
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**Jen** saw a **shed** and **went** inside. But the **shed** was **bent** and **let** all the rain in! **Jen** got very, very **wet**.

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### Phonics Fact

A word can have more than one short-e sound. The word **excellent** has three!

It was **definitely** not the **best nest**. Then, **Jen** got an **excellent** idea.

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### Phonics Fact

Sometimes the short-e sound is made by the letters **ea** as in **thread**. Can you find another **ea** word on this page that makes the short-e sound?

(Answer: **feathers**)

**Jen** found sticks and **stems** and **shells** and **thread** and **feathers** and even some **french** fries.

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**Jen** made **them** into a **nest**.  
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Next, **Jen** built a **desk** and a **bench** and a cozy **bed** for taking a **rest**.

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Then, Jen invited her **very** first **guests**.  
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**Jen** served an **elegant** meal of **fresh** worms and **ketchup**.

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"I **bet** my **nest** is the **best** in the **West**," said **Jen**.  
"Yes! Yes!" agreed **Ben** and **Bess**.  
They were so **impressed**!

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# Short-e Riddles

Listen to the riddles. Then match each riddle with the right short-e word from the box.

## Word Box

yes	pen	bench	wet	red
shell	hen	bed	nest	ketchup

- 1 This is the word for a *girl chicken*.
- 2 A strawberry is this color.
- 3 You might search for one at the beach.
- 4 It means the opposite of *no*.
- 5 You put this on french fries.
- 6 A bird builds one in a tree.
- 7 Pigs live in this place.
- 8 You sleep on one at night.
- 9 It means the opposite of *dry*.
- 10 You can sit on this at the park.





# Short-e Cheer

Hooray for short e, the best sound around!

Let's holler short-e words all over town!

There's **west** and **next** and **red** and **hen**.

There's **net** and **fresh** and **nest** and **men**.

There's **best** and **bench** and **shelf** and **send**.

There's **mess** and **spell** and **yes** and **end**.

Short e, short e, give a great cheer,

For the most **elegant** sound you ever will hear!



Make a list of other short-e words. Then use them in your cheer.