



Christmas stockings - stuck for ideas?

Here's a Special Offer of fun stories for primary aged children, collections written by Tauranga Writers for Children.

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Please post cheque with order to Tauranga Writers for Children, c/o Alison Murray, 15 Cathray Place, Tauranga 3110; telephone 07 576 5721.

#### **Jangles © Karen Cossey**

Jangles the hippopotamus loved rainy days. Not only did she not have to sit in the mud pool to keep cool, but best of all she didn't have to feel shy and embarrassed, because on rainy days not many people came to the zoo. No one to point their finger at her or laugh at her or ask her to 'show 'em 'er teeth.' . . . Suddenly, Jangles felt really embarrassed. Maybe he'd seen her bottom! She wanted to sit in the mud hole and cover up again. Instead, she made herself walk closer to the fence and said *Hello* in hippo-speak to the boy.

*Where's your Dad?* she asked.

"I left him by the lions," he replied.

Jangle's huge mouth opened wide in amazement. The clever boy could understand her! Everyone knows hippos can understand people, being particularly clever animals, but she'd never heard of any person being able to understand a hippopotamus.

*How do you know what I said?* she asked.

"I just do," he said.

#### **Ben's Jumper © Alison Murray**

"What did you get for your birthday?" called Simon as he joined Ben at the school bus stop.

"Mostly stuff for camp," replied Ben. "A sleeping bag and a mean pack from Mum and Dad. My Gran sent me \$20. In her card she said she's got me a jumper. She'll bring it in the car when she comes to stay on Saturday." . . .

It was red and blue with lines and squares and two large green stars on the front. There was a moment of complete silence while Ben examined his feet. . . .

"I made it," replied Gran proudly. "I knitted it, every stitch." . . .

"Hi guys! What's up?" called Brad from next door. Brad was in the trials for the All Blacks and the hero of every boy in the town. "Hey, I've got to see that!" He jumped the fence and joined them.

Gran proudly passed the sweater to him. He held it up saying, "Brilliant, just brilliant." . . . "Couldn't knit me one, could you?"

#### **Mrs Patchett's Parties © Etheljoy Smith**

Mrs Patchett lives on a housing estate with her cat, Pinchit. She earns money altering clothes for people who have become too fat or too thin; taking a tuck in here and letting a seam out there until their clothes fit again. As a kitten, Pinchit played with scraps of material lying around the sewing machine, then hid them in his basket. That's how Pinchit got his name!

Pinchit loved Mrs Patchett. She never forgot to feed him and always stroked the itchy bit under his chin. So, every night, Pinchit went looking for a nice surprise for her.

"Oh! No! Not *another* mouse!" exclaimed Mrs Patchett. . . .

Next morning, Mrs Patchett found a baby's shoe on her doorstep. By the end of the week she had the shoe, a towel, a bald-headed Barbie doll, a velvet monkey with a long, curling tail, a rugby sock and a still-warm sausage.

#### **Flying Feet © Eileen O'Brien**

"Cool," said Ben when he opened his Christmas present from Craig. Two tall coiled springs with straps to fasten them to your feet! Ben grinned. This did look like fun. He ran outside, sat on the lawn and strapped the springs to his trainers. . . .

"BOING," said the springs. He landed a few feet away. "BOING-BOING," said the springs. Up he flew and over the hedge. "BOING-BOING-BOING," the springs shouted, and away Ben went again, over two hedges this time and landing in Mr Brown's precious strawberry patch.

#### **Rubbish © Jean Anderson**

"Dad, what does *inorganic* mean?" asked Jazz.

Dad looked up from his book. "Inorganic? Where did that come from?"

“The *Weekend Herald*,” said Jazz, rattling the newspaper. “It says the inorganic rubbish collection starts Monday...” . . .

All week, Jazz watched the comings and goings: stuff taken, returned, taken again. On Thursday morning, a truck woke her. “The collection doesn’t start until Monday!” she cried, and scurried over to her bedroom window. The truck was collecting rubbish, but only some stuff. Their old washing machine was being tied down on its flat deck, with three vacuums, two fridges, four TVs and uncountable computer stuff for company. . . .

A pink flamingo, at least as tall as Jazz, had moved home to her neighbour’s fishpond. “That’s not from our street!” she exclaimed. . . .