

Shared reading on *My Hero is You - how kids can fight COVID-19!*

Learning and Teaching Resources for English Language (P4 - 6)

Developed by English Language Education Section
Curriculum Development Institute
Education Bureau



Learning Objectives:

- To develop students' understanding of how to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic
- To nurture students' positive values and attitudes in the face of adversities and to show their love and care to their friends, families and community
- To develop students' reading skills and story writing skills

Work in pairs. Share with your partner about the following:

Refer to
Worksheet
p.1

Pre-reading activities

Do you have a hero/super hero in mind? Who is he/she?

What are their super powers?

The book is called "*My Hero is You*". Who do you think is the hero in the book?

My Hero is You

how kids can
fight COVID-19!



IASC
Inter-Agency Standing Committee

Listen to your teacher's reading of the story. You may also click the link to listen to the story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V29jbjPIEUA>

Background information:

(Play the YouTube video 00:00-00:53)

This is a story about a girl **Sara's** adventure with **Ario**.

Ario is a fantasy creature which can fly.

Sara and Ario met some new friends in their adventure. One of them is **Salem**, who is sitting on Ario's wing.

This book was a project developed by IASC.

This book was a project developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC MHPSS RG). The project was supported by global, regional and country based experts from Member Agencies of the IASC MHPSS RG, in addition to parents, caregivers, teachers and children in 104 countries. A global survey was distributed in Arabic, English, Italian, French and Spanish to assess children's mental health and psychosocial needs during the COVID-19 outbreak. A framework of topics to be addressed through the story was developed using the survey results. The book was shared through storytelling to children in several countries affected by COVID-19. Feedback from children, parents and caregivers was then used to review and update the story.

Over 1,700 children, parents, caregivers and teachers from around the world took the time to share with us how they were coping with the COVID-19 pandemic. A big thank you to these children, their parents, caregivers and teachers for completing our surveys and influencing this story. This is a story developed for and by children around the world.

This IASC MHPSS RG acknowledge Helen Patuck for writing the story script and illustrating this book.

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While-reading activities:

First reading

Refer to
Worksheet
p.2

1. Background of the story: (Play the YouTube video 00:54-02:13)

- 1) Sara's mum is a scientist, but she cannot find a cure for the coronavirus.
 - 2) Sara was upset because the virus was affecting her life.
- She asked Sara to take good care of herself and stay safe, so that she could focus on her work.
 - Sara decided to tell all the children in the world how to protect themselves so that they could protect everyone else.

Let's read on to find out the following:

- a) Who are in the story?
- b) What **problems** did they face because of COVID-19 and how did they **cope with the problems**?



Sara and her mum

2. Sara met Ario.

(Play the YouTube video 02:14-4:56)

Sara laid in bed that night and did not feel like a hero at all. She felt upset. She wanted to go to school but her school was closed. She wanted to see her friends but it was not safe. Sara wanted the coronavirus to stop scaring her world.

"Heroes have super powers" she said to herself, closing her eyes to sleep. "What do I have?"

Suddenly a gentle voice whispered her name in the darkness.

"Who's there?" Sara whispered back.

"What do you need to be a hero, Sara?" the voice asked her.

"I need a way to tell all the children in the world how to protect themselves so they can protect everyone else..." said Sara.

"So what do you need me to be?" the voice asked.

"I need something that can fly... something with a big voice... and something that can help!"

With a whoosh, something amazing stepped into the moonlight...



"What are you?" gasped Sara.

"I'm Ario," he said.

"I've never seen an Ario before," said Sara.

"Well, I've been here all along," said Ario. "I come from your heart."

"If I have you... then I can tell all the children in the world about the coronavirus!" said Sara. "I can be a hero! But wait, Ario, is it safe to travel with the coronavirus around?"

"Only with me, Sara," said Ario. "Nothing can harm you when we are together."



Sara met **Ario**. Ario is a creature that comes from Sara's heart and has always been with Sara. He can fly and has a big voice. **He brought Sara to different places in the world and told children in the world how to protect themselves.** Sara jumped on Ario's back and they travelled together.

So Sara jumped on Ario's back and together they soared out through her bedroom window, into the night sky. They flew towards the stars and said hello to the moon.

3. Sara and Ario met Salem. (Play the YouTube video 4:57.-7:13)

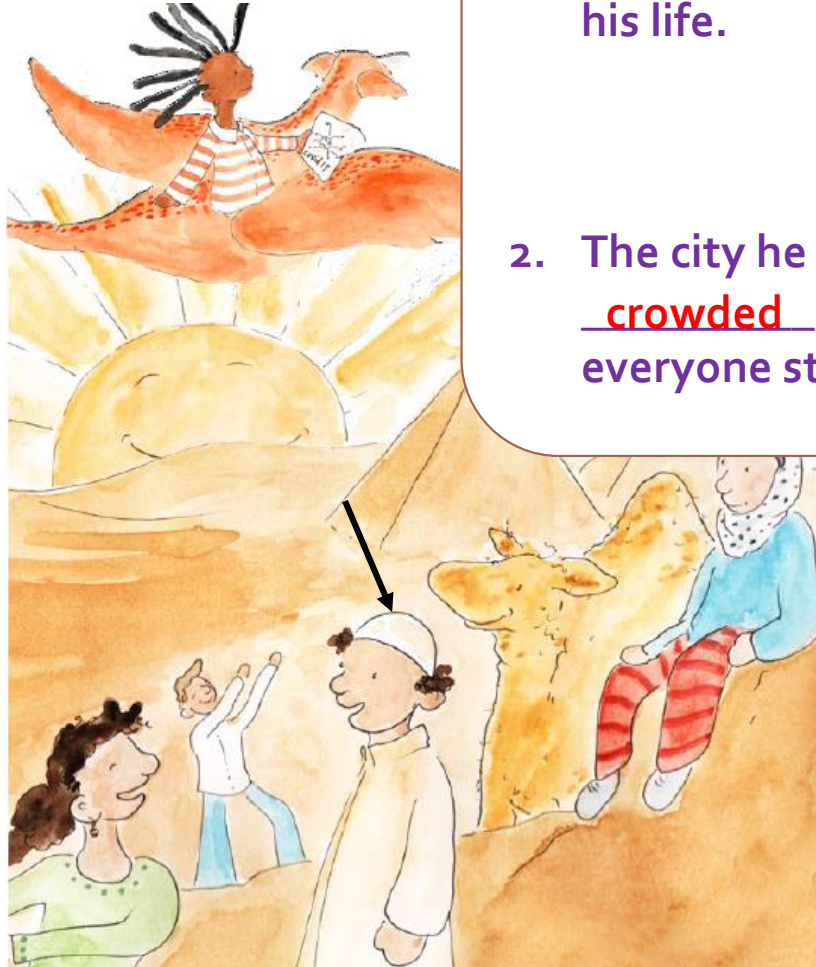
As the sun rose, they landed in a lovely desert by pyramids, where a small group of children were playing. The children cried out in joy and waved at Sara and her Ario.

"Welcome, I am Salem!" cried one of the boys. "What are you doing here? Sorry, we can't come closer, we have to stay at least one metre away!"

"That's why we're here!" Sara called back. "I'm Sara and this is Ario. Did you know that children can keep their neighbours, friends, parents and grandparents safe from the coronavirus? We all need to..."

"Wash our hands with soap and water!" said Salem with a smile. "We know, Sara. We also cough into our elbows if we're sick - and we wave to people instead of shaking hands. We try to stay inside, but we live in a very crowded city... not everybody is staying home."

"Hmm, maybe I can help with that," said Ario. "They can't see the coronavirus, but... they can see me! Jump on, but please sit on both sides of my wings - they are at least one metre apart!"



Salem is a boy who lives in a city near a desert.

Problems

1. COVID-19 was affecting his life.
2. The city he lived in was crowded but not everyone stayed at home.

Ways to cope with the problems

- In order to protect himself, he stayed at least one metre away from people, washed his hands with soap and water. He also coughed into his elbows if needed and waved to people instead of shaking hands.
- He flew across the city with Ario and Sara to tell everyone to stay home/inside.

Ario flew into the sky with Salem and Sara on both of his wings. He flew across the city and began to roar and sing! Salem cried out to the children in the streets:

"Go, tell your families, we are safer inside! We can take care of each other best by staying home!"

People were amazed by what they saw. They waved and agreed to go into their houses.



4. What can I do when I feel scared? (Play the YouTube video 7:14-9:43)



"People will have to stop travelling soon. They are closing the borders across the world," said Salem.

Ario soared high into the sky. Salem cried out in joy. Up there in the clouds a plane flew by, and the passengers looked out at them in awe.

"People will have to stop travelling soon, at least for now," said Salem. "They are closing the borders across the world, and we should all stay where we are and with people we love."

"So many things feel like they have changed," said Sara. "I get scared about it sometimes."

"It can feel scary and confusing when things are changing, Sara," said Ario. "When I feel scared, I breathe very slowly - and breathe out fire!"

Ario blew out a huge fireball!

"How do you relax when you feel scared?" Ario asked them.



Problem

Ario felt scared sometimes.

Way to cope with the problem

- When he felt scared, he breathed very slowly to calm down.

Problem

3. Salem missed the people he loved a lot, including his grandparents

Way to cope with the problem

- He chatted with grandparents on the phone and shared what he did every day.

"I like to think about someone who makes me feel safe," said Sara.

"Me too, I think of all the people who help me feel safe, like my grandparents," said Salem. "I miss them. I can't give them a hug because I could give them the coronavirus. We usually see them every weekend, but not now because we have to keep them safe."

"Can you call them?" Sara asked her friend.

"Oh yes!" said Salem. "They call me everyday and I tell them about all the things we are doing at home. It makes me feel better, and it makes them feel better too."

"It is normal to miss people we love that we can't see right now," said Ario. "It shows how much we care. Would it make you feel better to meet other heroes?"

"Yes please!" Sara and Salem cried back.

"Great, my friend Sasha has a very special superpower," said Ario. "Let's go!"



Salem's grandfather

5. What would happen if your family member had the coronavirus?

(Play the YouTube video 9:44-12:35)



Ario introduced **Sasha** to the children. Sasha's dad had the coronavirus. Ario said Sasha had superpowers.

Problems

1. Sasha's dad/father was sick and she was worried that she might spread the virus.
2. She sometimes argued with her family because they stayed together all the time at home.

And so they soared over a small village. A girl was picking flowers. When she saw the children sitting on the hill, she said, "Ario!" she cried. "I'm one metre apart, so I won't catch you all doing here?"

"Ario!" she cried. "I'm one metre apart, so I won't catch you all doing here?"

"I felt your hug when you said Ario. 'I love how we care, and action is to learn about your superpowers.'"

"What is my superpower?"

"Since someone in your family is staying at home to make sure you don't share the coronavirus with anyone else," said Ario.

"Yes, it's my Dad, and he's staying in his bedroom until he gets completely better," said Sasha.

games, and have me together. My brothers and I touch our toes and dance. We read books and I can keep learning because sometimes I miss school. Staying home felt weird at first, but now it feels normal."

"That's not always easy, Sasha," said Ario. "You are finding ways to have fun and get along with your loved ones at home. That makes you my hero!"

"Do you ever fight with your family?" asked Salem.

"We fight sometimes," said Sasha. "We have to be extra patient, and extra understanding, and even quicker to say I'm sorry. That is a real superpower, because it can make ourselves and others feel better. I also need a little time alone. I love dancing and singing on my own! And I can call my friends sometimes..."

"But, Ario, what about people who are far from home or don't have a house?" asked Sara.

"That's a great question, Sara," said Ario. "Let's go and find out."

Ways to cope with the problems

1. She did the following in order not to spread the virus:
 - keeping a distance from people
 - using words to show her care instead of hugging people
 - staying home
2. She had to be extra patient and extra understanding, and quick to say "sorry".



Sasha played games, cooked, spent time in the garden with her brother and had meals together.



6. Is it true that people can die from coronavirus? (Play the YouTube video 12:36-16:30)

Problem

Leila was afraid of the virus because people might die from it.

Way to cope with the problem

She followed Ario's advice by imagining a **safe** place in her mind. This helped her relax and keep her calm.

And so they said goodbye to Sasha and set off once more. The air grew warmer as they landed on an island surrounded by the sea.



They landed on an island and saw a camp full of people. They met **Leila**.

There they saw a camp full of people.

One girl saw them and waved from a distance.

"Hi Ario, I'm so happy to see you again!" she called out. "We are trying to stay at least one metre away, so I'll talk to you from here. But I'd love to meet your friends! My name is Leila."

"Hi Leila! I'm Sara, and this is Salem," Sara called back. "It sounds like you're trying to protect yourself from the coronavirus. What else are you doing?"

"We're washing our hands with soap and water!" Leila called back.

"Do you also cough into your elbow?" asked Salem.

"Can you show us how?" Leila called back. So Salem showed them.

"We are all trying to be brave, but I am worried about something," said Leila. "Can I talk about it with you? I heard someone got sick and died and it made me very afraid. Is it true people can die from coronavirus?"



Leila was worried and asked Ario. "Is it true people can die from coronavirus?"

Ario breathed a big sigh and sat down on his enormous bottom.

"Yes, little heroes, it's strange," said Ario. "Some people don't feel sick at all, but some people can be very sick and some might die. That's why we all have to be especially careful with older people, and those with other illnesses, because they tend to get more sick. Sometimes when we are feeling very afraid, or unsafe, it can help to imagine a safe place in our minds. Would you like to try this with me?"

They all said yes, and so Ario asked the children to close their eyes and imagine a place where they feel safe.

"Focus on a memory or a time when you felt safe," said Ario.

He then asked them what they could see, what they could feel, and what they could smell in their safe place. He asked if there was anyone special they would like to invite into their safe place and what they might talk about together.

"You can go to your safe place whenever you feel sad or afraid," said Ario. "This is your super power, and you can share it with your friends and family. And remember that I care about you, and many people do. That will help too."

7. Last journey: What does it feel like to have the coronavirus? (Play the YouTube video 16:31-19:02)



Leila travelled with Ario and her new friends.

Leila said, "We can all care for each other."
"That's right, Leila," said Ario. "We can care for each other, wherever we are. Would you like to come with us on our last journey?"
Leila decided to travel with Ario and her new friends. Sara was glad Leila joined them because she knew that sometimes we need to support each other. They flew quietly, without words, but Leila knew her new friends cared a lot about her.

A few children were playing by a stream. They met **Kim**, a boy who once had the coronavirus, and got better.



Problem

Kim had the virus himself and had recovered from it.

Way to cope with the problem

He kept a distance from his friends who cared about him. He believed that the most important thing friends could do was to **protect** each other. .

Snowy mountains slowly came into view, and Ario landed in a small town. A few children were playing by a stream.

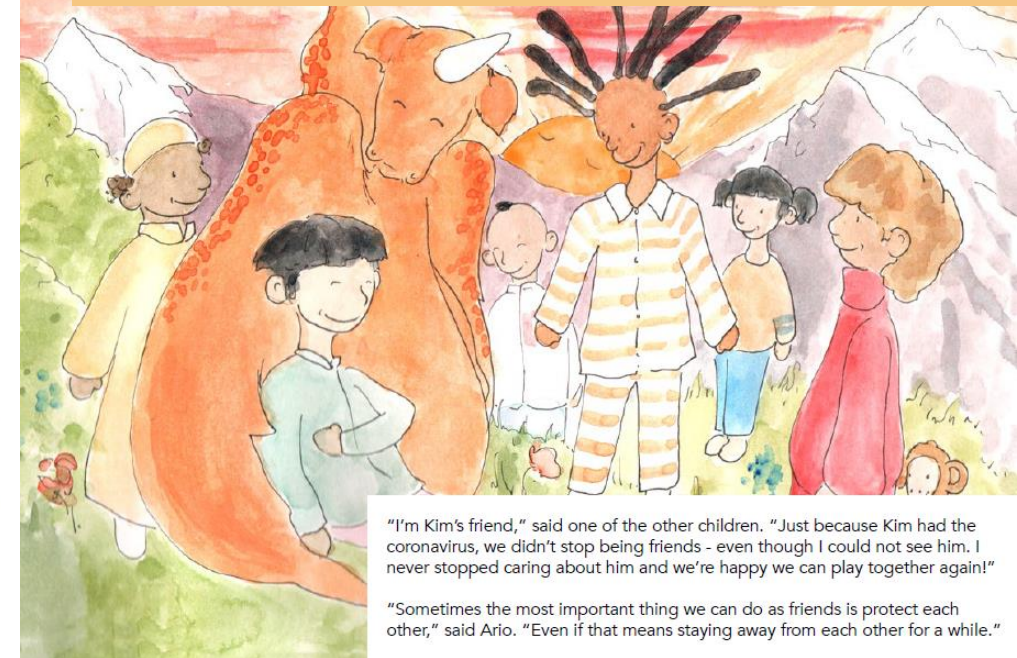
"Ario!" one of them cried, waving to him.

"Hello, Kim," said Ario. "Everyone, I wanted you to meet some friends of mine who have had the coronavirus, and got better."

"What was it like?" Salem asked.

"I was coughing and felt too hot sometimes. I was also really tired and didn't want to play for a few days," said Kim. "But I slept a lot and my family took care of me. Some of our parents and grandparents had to go to hospital. The nurses and doctors were very kind to them, and people in our community helped us at home. After a few weeks, we were okay again."

"Just because Kim had the coronavirus, we didn't stop being friends," said one of Kim's friends. "Even though I could not see him."



"I'm Kim's friend," said one of the other children. "Just because Kim had the coronavirus, we didn't stop being friends - even though I could not see him. I never stopped caring about him and we're happy we can play together again!"

"Sometimes the most important thing we can do as friends is protect each other," said Ario. "Even if that means staying away from each other for a while."

8. Sara said goodbye to her friends (Play the YouTube video 19:03-21:57)



"We can do these things for each other," said Leila.
"And one day, we will all be able to play again and go back to school like we used to," said Salem.

It was time to go home, and time for Sara to say goodbye to her new friends. They promised each other that they would never forget their adventure together.

Sara felt sad that they might not see each other for a while. But she felt better when she remembered what Kim's friend had said. Just because you can't see people, it doesn't mean you stop loving them.



Ario dropped all the children back to their homes, and waited for Sara to fall asleep before he left.

Ario dropped them all back to their homes, and waited for Sara to fall asleep before he left.

"Can we do the same tomorrow?" Sara asked him.

"No Sara, it's time for you to be with your family now," said Ario. "Remember our story. You can keep those you love safe by washing your hands and staying home. I am never far away. You can always be with me when you go to your safe place."

"You are my hero," she whispered.

"You are my hero too, Sara. You are a hero to all those who love you," he said.

Sara fell asleep and when she woke the next day, Ario was gone. So she went to her safe place to talk to him, then drew everything they had seen and learnt on their adventure. She ran to her mum with her drawing to tell her the news.

"We can all help people be safe, Mum," she said. "I met so many heroes on my adventure!"

"Oh Sara, you are right!" said her mum. "There are many heroes keeping people safe from the coronavirus, like wonderful doctors and nurses. But you remind me that we can all be heroes, every day, and my biggest hero is you."

Sara felt sad that they might not see each other for a while. But she felt better when she remembered what Kim's friend had said. **Just because you can't see people, it doesn't mean you stop loving them.**

"You are my hero," Sara told Ario.

"You are my hero too, Sara. You are a hero to all those who love you," he said.



Second reading

1. Read the story again and understand more about the characters

Read the story again and understand more about the four characters, Salem, Sasha, Leila and Kim by thinking about the following questions:

- a. Where did they live?
- b. What were their super powers?

Characters



Salem



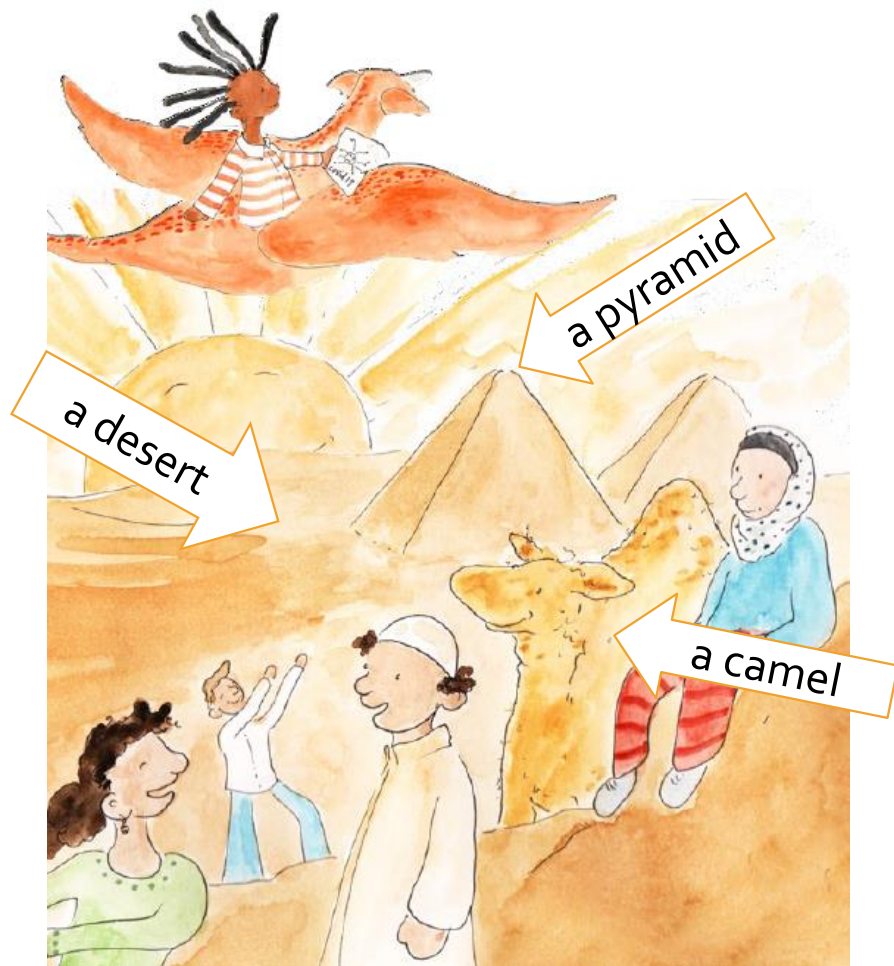
Sasha



Leila



Kim



As the sun rose, they landed in **a lovely desert by pyramids**, where a small group of children were playing. The children cried out in joy and waved at Sara and her Ario.

Questions	Character: Salem
Where did Salem live?	He lived near a <u>desert</u> next to pyramids. He probably lived in a Middle East country called Egypt.
What were his super powers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ He knew how to protect himself and others from catching the virus. ◆ He was eager to remind the people in the city to take care of each other best by staying <u>home/inside</u>. He cared about his <u>grandparents</u> by talking with them on the phone every day.
	<p>Use two adjectives to describe Salem.</p> <p>e.g. smart, positive, caring</p>





And so they soared down to earth and landed by **a small village**. A girl was outside her house picking flowers. When she saw Ario and the children sitting on his wings, she laughed.

Questions	Character: Sasha
Where did Sasha live?	She lived in a small <u>village</u> . It was a place in the countryside, where there were green trees, beautiful flowers, and birds flying in the sky.
What were her super powers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ She knew a lot about social distancing. ◆ Her father was sick and she had to stay home to <u>avoid</u> sharing the virus with others. ◆ Although she was on wheelchair and unable to <u>walk</u>, she stayed positive and enjoyed her life with her family even though they had to keep a distance from others. ◆ She had great patience and was willing to apologise when she made a mistake. <p>Use two adjectives to describe Sasha. e.g. optimistic, patient, considerate</p>



They said goodbye to Sasha and set off once more. The air grew warmer as they landed on an island surrounded by the sea. There they saw a camp full of people. One girl saw them and waved from a distance.

Questions	Character: Leila
Where did Leila live?	She lived in a camp which provided a temporary shelter for the homeless people.
What were her super powers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ She knew how to keep herself safe from the virus. ◆ She could cope with her <u>fears/worries</u> by imagining a safe place in her <u>mind</u>. ◆ She gave support to her friends and joined Sara and Ario in the journey to make people know more about COVID-19. <p>Use two adjectives to describe Leila. e.g. brave, helpful, hopeful, positive</p>





Questions	Character: Kim
Where did Kim live?	He lived in a small town, which was near a snowy <u>mountain</u> and a <u>stream</u> .
What were his super powers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ He could stay positive although he once had the coronavirus. ◆ He had some good friends. They cared about each other. They understood that staying away from each other for a while could <u>protect</u> each other. <p>Use two adjectives to describe Kim. e.g. <u>positive</u>, <u>sociable</u>, <u>friendly</u>, <u>caring</u></p>

Snowy mountains slowly came into view, and Ario landed in a small town. A few children were playing by a stream.

"Ario!" one of them cried, waving to him.

"Hello, Kim," said Ario. "Everyone, I wanted you to meet some friends of mine who have had the coronavirus, and got better."

4. The key message of this story is "heroes come in all shapes and sizes". In short, anyone can be a hero, including ourselves. The super powers of the characters are in the boxes below. Explain the super powers by giving more details.

1) Know how to protect ourselves from COVID-19:

- stay at least one metre away
- wash our hands with soap and water
- cough into our elbows if we're sick.
- wave to people instead of shaking hands



2) Show our love and care to our friends and relatives by:

calling them or sending them messages every day to show our love and care to them.

3) Sometimes, to protect our friends and family members, we have to

stay away from each other for a while

4) Be extra patient and understanding by:
getting along well with our family members at home, e.g. Do not quarrel with them and learn to say "I'm sorry."

5) Be brave to share our worries and stay calm:

- imagine a safe place in her mind when we feel sad or afraid.
- remember that many people cared about us and stay strong.

Re-read Part 3 of the story "Sara and Ario met Salem" and **underline** the features of a story.

Refer to
Worksheet p.8

Features of a
story

Setting: Where did the
story take place?

Characters: Who did
they meet?

Plot: What did they
say?/What happened?

Problem:
What problem did the
character face?

As the sun rose, they landed in a lovely desert by pyramids, where a small group of children were playing. The children cried out in joy and waved at Sara and her Ario.

"Welcome, I am Salem!" cried one of the boys. "What are you doing here? Sorry, we can't come closer, we have to stay at least one metre away!"

"That's why we're here!" Sara called back. "I'm Sara and this is Ario. Did you know that children can keep their neighbours, friends, parents and grandparents safe from the coronavirus? We all need to..."

"Wash our hands with soap and water!" said Salem with a smile. "We know, Sara. We also cough into our elbows if we're sick - and we wave to people instead of shaking hands. We try to stay inside, but we live in a very crowded city... not everybody is staying home."

"Hmm, maybe I can help with that," said Ario. "They can't see the coronavirus, but... they can see me! Jump on, but please sit on both sides of my wings - they are at least one metre apart!"



Grammar and Language
used in a story

The **simple past tense** to write about things that happened:
e.g. The children **cried** out in joy and **waved** at Sara and Ario.

The **past continuous tense** to show an ongoing past action which was happening at a specific moment:
e.g. As the sun rose, they landed in a lovely desert by pyramids, where a small group of children **were playing**.

Use **dialogues** in stories and make use of the present tenses wherever appropriate:

e.g. "Welcome, I **am** Salem!" cried one of the boys. "**What are you** doing here?"

Solution: How did they solve the problem?

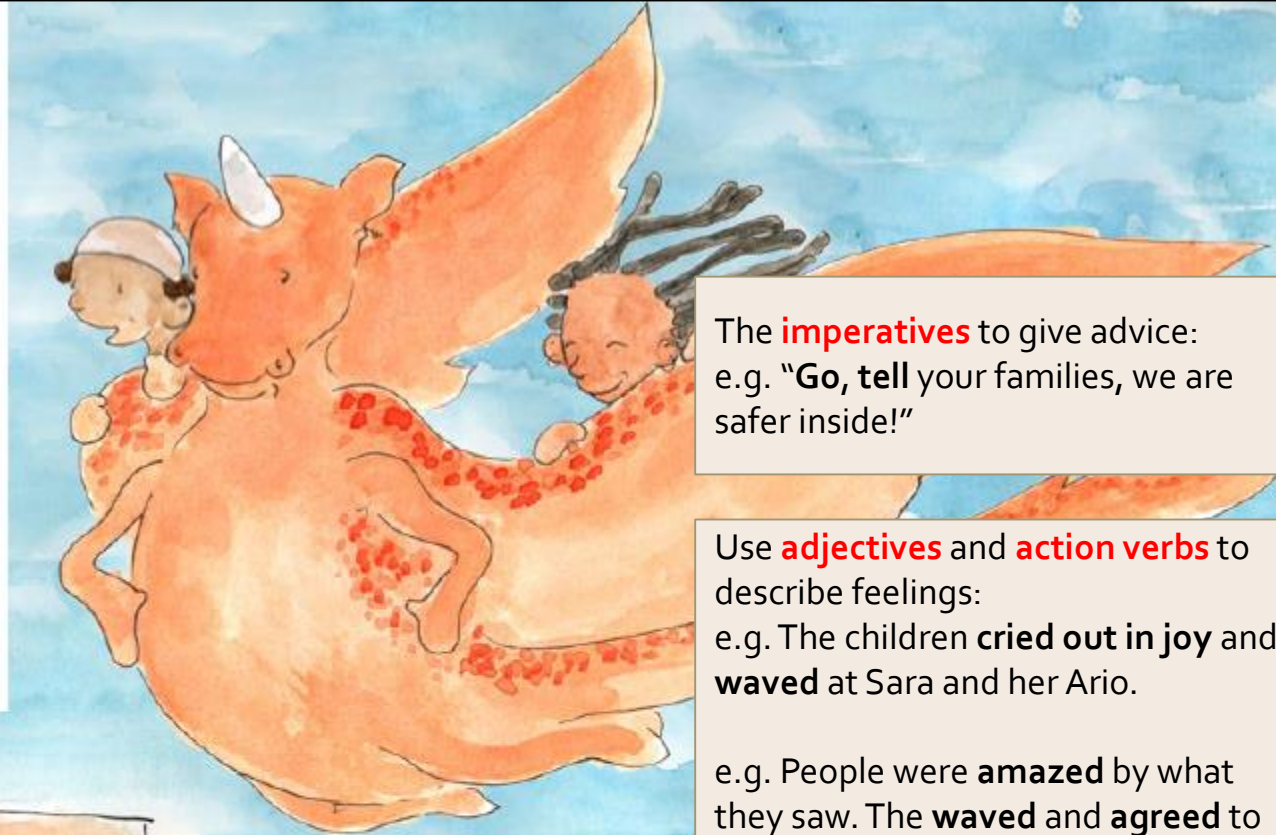
Ways to keep ourselves safe from the coronavirus:

1. Wash our hands with soap and water
2. Cough into our elbow
3. Wave to people instead of shaking hands
4. Take care of each other by staying home

Ario flew into the sky with Salem and Sara on both of his wings. He flew across the city and began to roar and sing! Salem cried out to the children in the streets:

"Go, tell your families, we are safer inside! We can take care of each other best by staying home!"

People were amazed by what they saw. They waved and agreed to go into their houses.



The **imperatives** to give advice:
e.g. "**Go, tell** your families, we are safer inside!"

Use **adjectives** and **action verbs** to describe feelings:
e.g. The children **cried out in joy** and **waved** at Sara and her Ario.

e.g. People were **amazed** by what they saw. The **waved** and **agreed** to go into their houses.

Write about one of the following scenes and include the following:

- ◆ problems people faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and
- ◆ share your advice / positive message with the people you met and help them fight COVID-19.

Writing task:

Sara and Ario visited Hong Kong one night. You met them and visited a place together. Write what you saw and did with them.

at your school



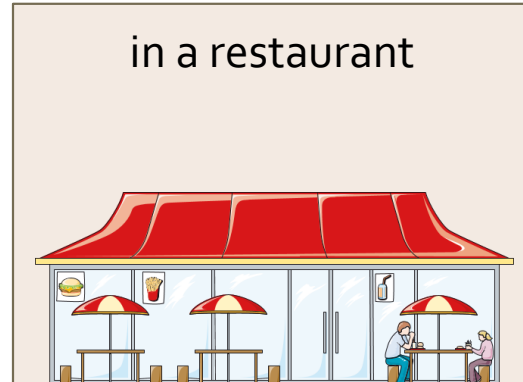
at a park



in a hospital



in a restaurant



Acknowledgements

1. Information and images/pictures in this set of slides are taken from the following book published by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC):

My Hero is You - how kids can fight COVID-19!

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-reference-group-mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-emergency-settings/my-hero-you>

2. The video is presented by Dr. Linda Thomson to help students understand the book and can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V29jbjPIEUA>