

Why Is This Rock Special?



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Early Childhood
Hands-On Science



One morning, Clara reached up to a high shelf.

She carefully took down an old shoebox with her sister's rock collection.

There were red rocks, green rocks,
bumpy rocks, smooth rocks, and
even pointy zig-zag rocks.

So many special rocks!



Clara's sister wouldn't mind if she borrowed one rock that wasn't so special.

She picked up the darkest, roughest rock and took it out to play.





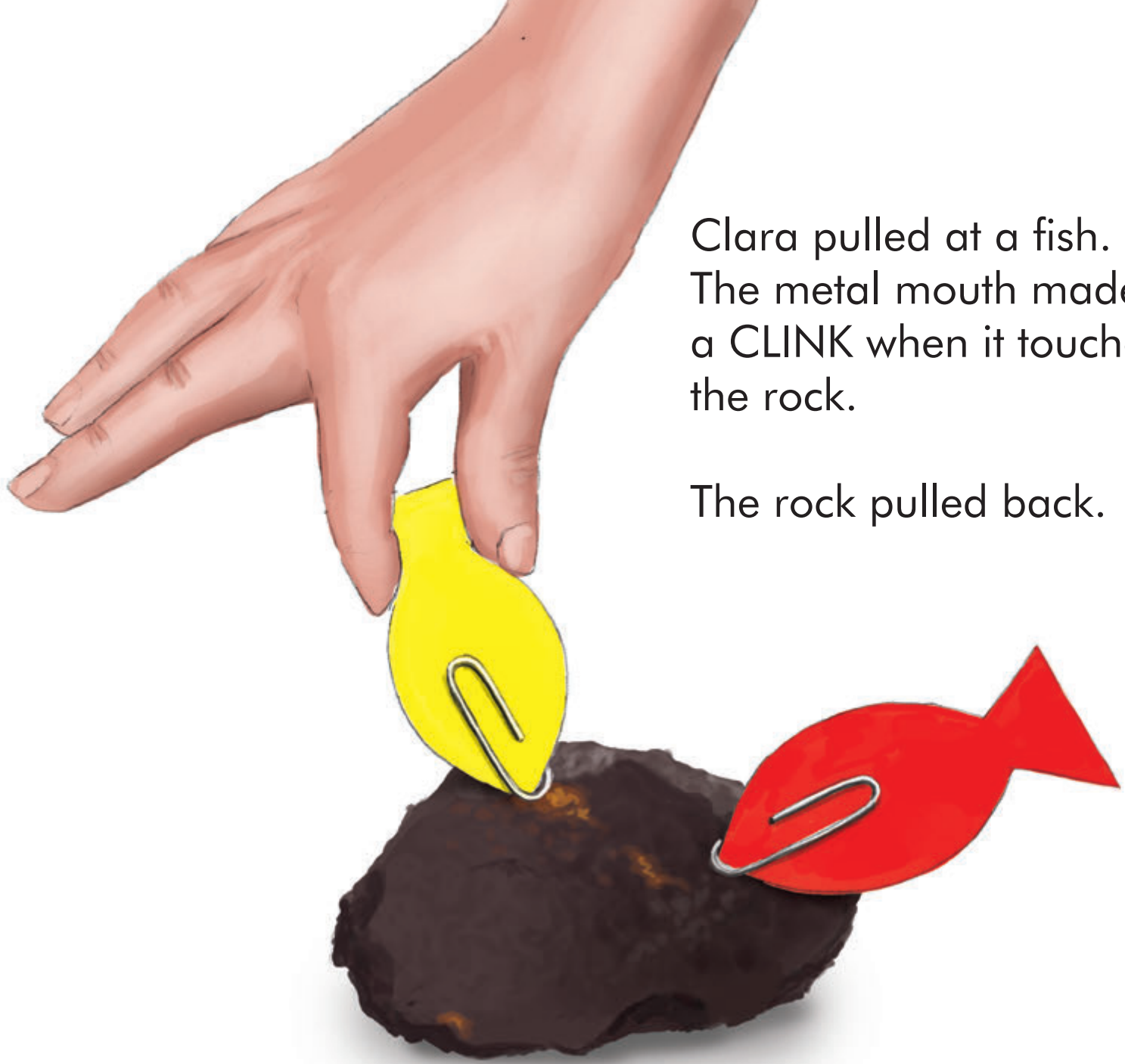
Clara imagined the rock was a mountain. She lined up her toys to climb it.

Horses, bears, and even fish marched to the rock and climbed to the top.

Then Clara bumped the rock. The wooden horses fell down. The plastic bears fell down. The fish toys stayed on top!

This was no ordinary rock.





Clara pulled at a fish.
The metal mouth made
a CLINK when it touched
the rock.

The rock pulled back.

This was a special rock.
What else could it pull?

She tried it with more paper clips—CLINK!
She tried it with some metal chips—CLINK, CLINK!



Clara got her toy fishing pole. The rock pulled the pole, and CLINK! It worked!

This not-so-special rock was a very special rock after all. Clara put the rock in her pocket and went to tell her mother.



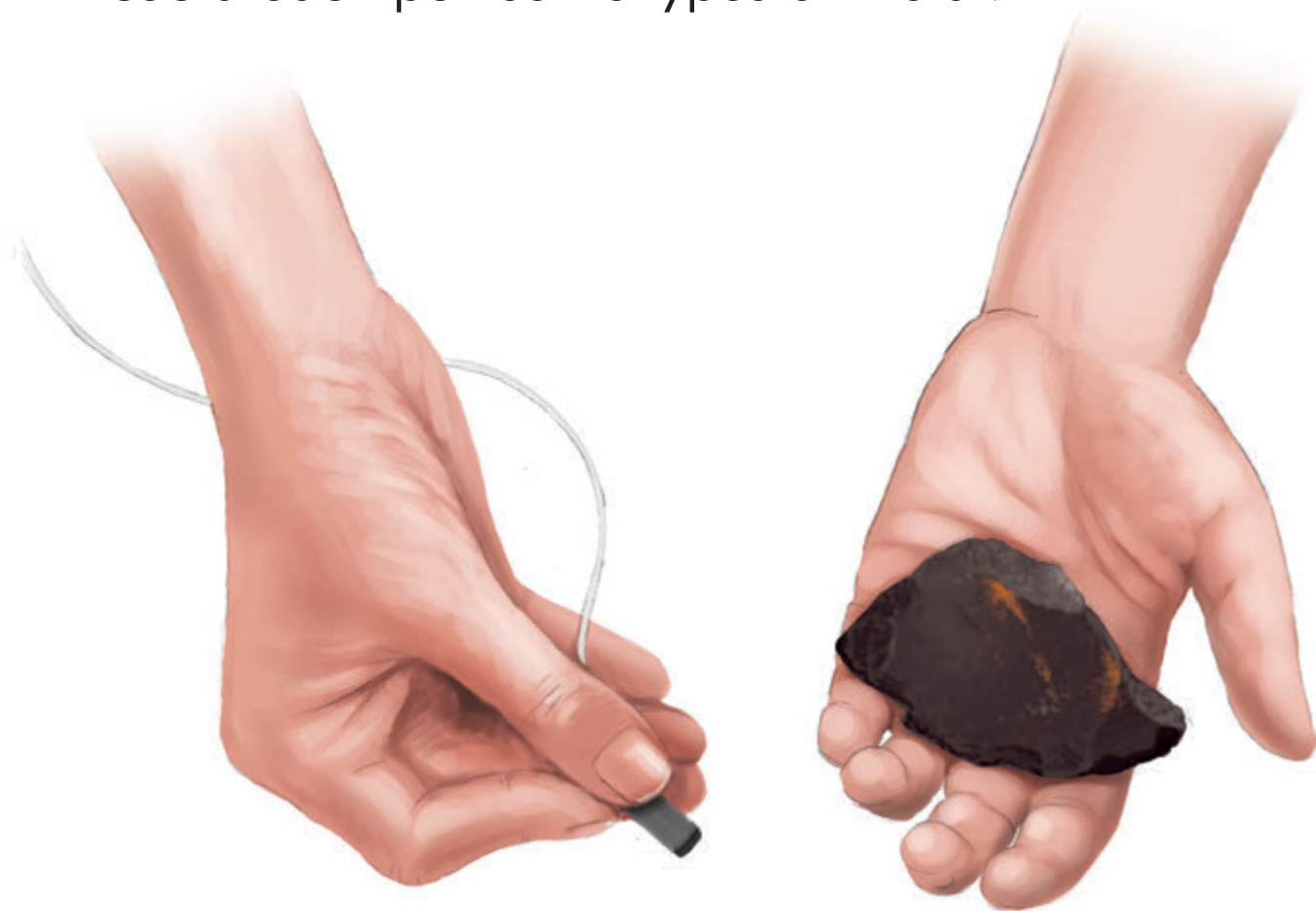


Clara gave her mother
a big hug.

Mom felt something in
Clara's pocket. What
could it be?

Clara told Mom about
the special rock.

Mom explained that the rock was a magnet found in nature, called a lodestone. The fishing pole magnet was made in a factory. Both were magnets: they could each pull some types of metal.





Mom was getting ready to take Clara to school. She accidentally knocked her keys behind the cabinet.

How would she get her keys?
Mom needed help!



Clara grabbed a wooden spoon and tried to reach the keys.

The handle was too short. She needed something longer.

How about a broom? It was longer, but couldn't grab the keys.

Could a magnet help get Mom's keys back?

Clara got her fishing pole. She let it down into the space behind the cabinet and...



CLINK! Hooray! A magnet saved the day!
Mom was so happy.



It was time for school.
Clara couldn't wait to
tell her friends what she
learned about the very
special rock.