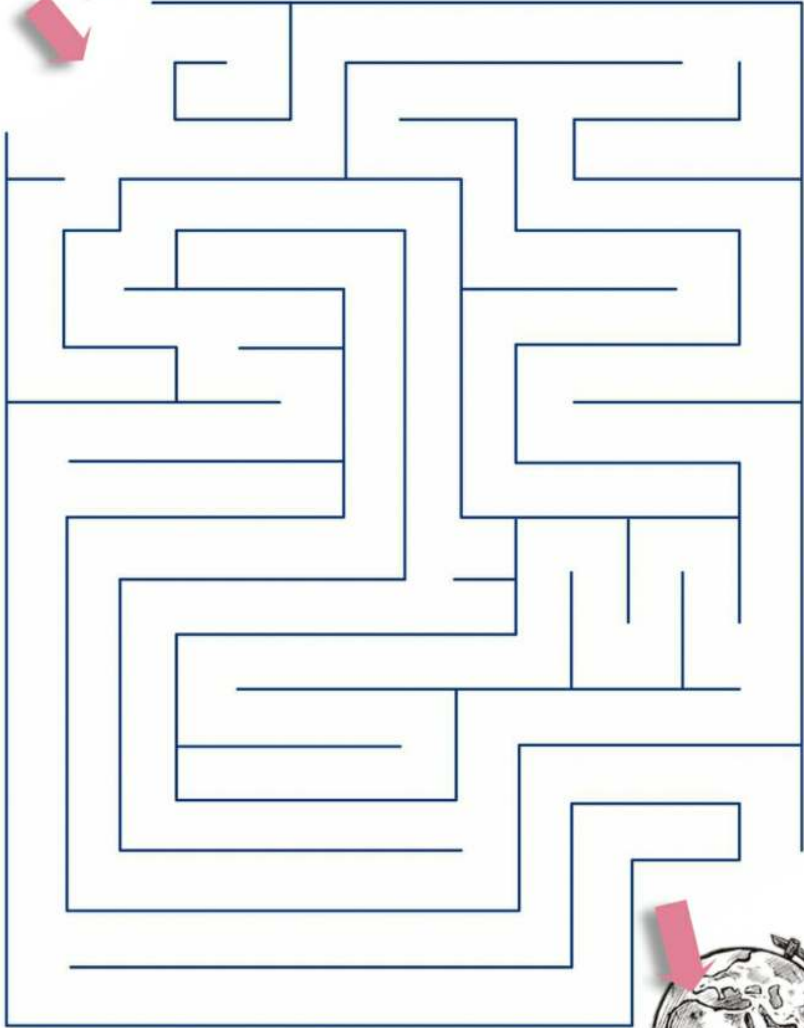
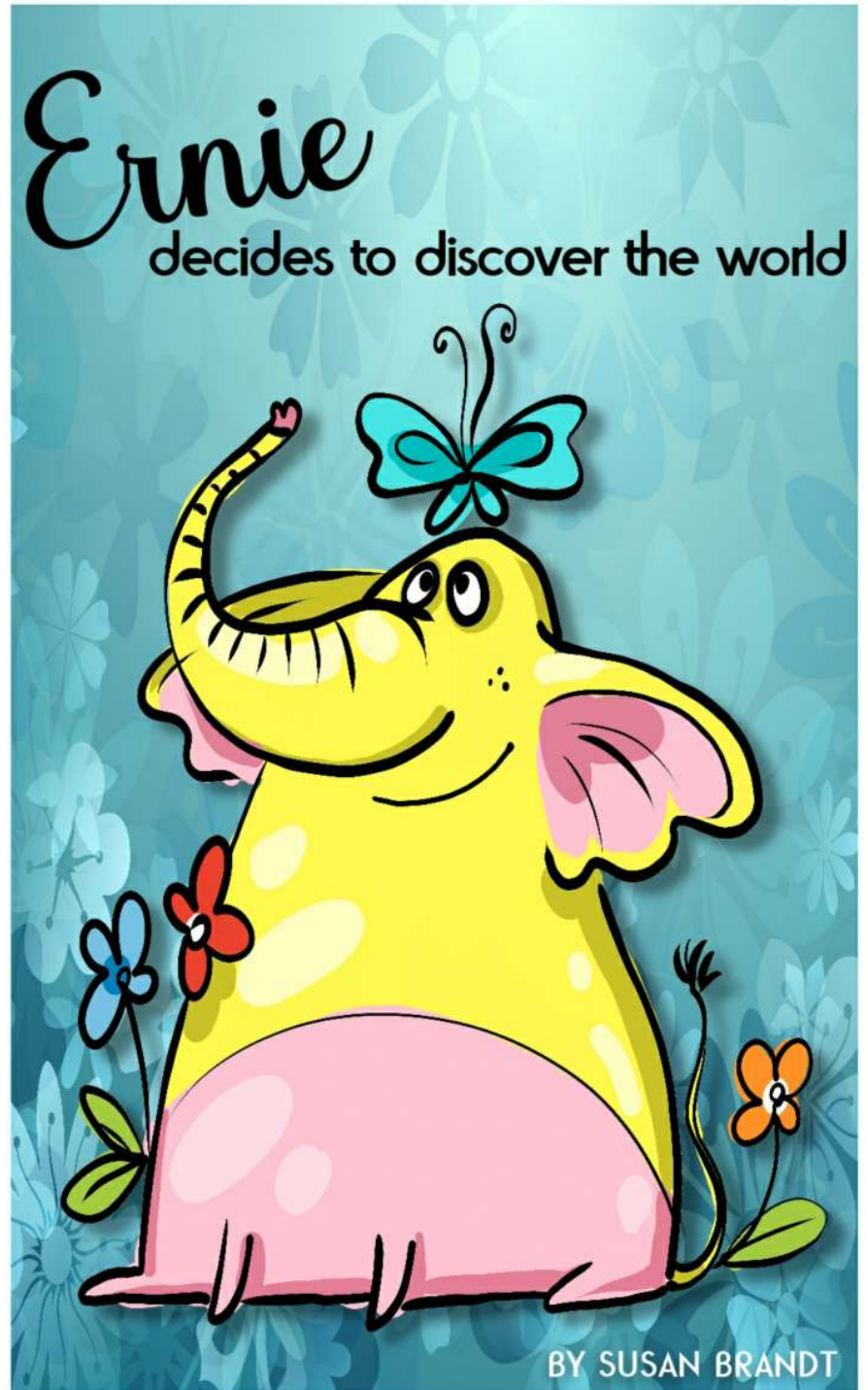




Where will Ernie go?



Follow her in the upcoming books?





Ernie at the watering hole

"That's not what I was looking for," Ernie thought, but Stretch cleared his throat. That sound. It was like nothing she had never heard before. Then the giraffe spoke again.

"My small friend, I must also tell you, some of your best adventures are going to start right where you stand."

The giraffe tapped his hoof on the edge of Ernie's foot.

Ernie thought for a minute after the giraffe stood up: "Some of your best adventures are going to start right where you are."

It would take a very long time before the little elephant realized what that statement meant. For now she knew Stretch had given her the okay to go anywhere she wanted to go.



These people and their wiliness to believe in magic still exists in the world have contributed in someway in making these books and other books on our website possible.

Elroy Germishuys
SOUTH AFRICA

Susan Brandt
UNITED STATES

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be looking at everything from very far away in one direction to far away in the opposite direction. Ratty said they could see the whole world at one good twist of their necks.

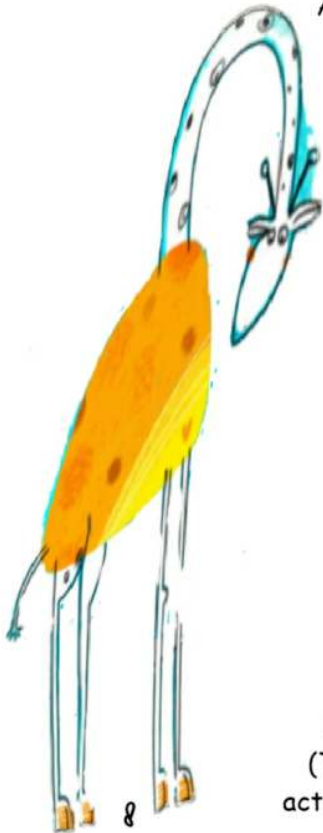
Sometimes Ernie had a very hard time getting his attention. Ernie thought Stretch might be hard of hearing. "He was old. You couldn't expect him to hear everything anymore," she thought. Finally, Ernie caught Stretch's attention. She explained everything all over again to him, to make sure he had all the facts. She also told him what the grass said about believing in yourself. She ended with, "Will you help me decide where to go?"



After he heard, Ernie's request, the giraffe stretched his neck really high. He waited a long time. He had stretched the long neck very straight. Then he did not moving a single muscle. He looked to the right. Then to the left. He twisted his neck around and around. Ernie thought he was going to tie it in a knot.

Very intently Ernie watched Stretch. While waiting for him to speak she saw his Adam's apple slide to the very bottom of his neck and then back up. Stretch lowered his head so his eyes where looking straight into Ernie's eyes.

"I have looked in all directions. I sense the world is fairly safe for you to travel. If you are not careless about what you do. (There was a long pause.) Think about your actions and you'll go far."



WHILE ERNIE IS STARTING TO DISCOVER THESE WORLD YOU CAN DISCOVER THESE WORDS

L L C E T W I N G S H Z Y H F N I B
 E R N I E U M B R E L L A E R A U M
 J N B S A D V E N T U R E S I U D S
 O U S H O E B I L L K L J J E N I T
 F Y O U R S E L F G R A S S N T R R
 R E R N E S T I N E W O R L D I E E
 D R E N C H E R D H U V H C S E C T
 R W I S D O M Z B E L I E V E B T C
 Y K W A T E R I N G H O L E C X I H
 P D O N U T S V G V R A T S Z A O D
 K Z G I R A F F E M B T N W Q V N L
 B E M O T H E R Y E A H E G E R T X

- ADVENTURES
- AUNTIE
- BELIEVE
- DIRECTION
- DONUTS
- DRENCHER
- ERNIE
- ERNESTINE
- EGERT
- FRIENDS
- GIRAFFE
- GRASS
- MOTHER
- RATS
- SHOEBILL
- STRETCH
- UMBRELLA
- WATERING HOLE
- WINGS
- WISDOM
- WORLD
- YOURSELF

Find the following words in the puzzle.
 Words are hidden → and ↘.

"I can only imagine all the adventures I am going to have," Ernie said, very softly so only the grass could hear.

Ernie raced to her Auntie's place. (She had a building out back of her place full of all kinds of treasures. She called it a "girl shack".) Ernie dug through box, after box, after box, after box. All of the sudden she spotted a long skinny box. It was stashed away far to the back.

"YES!" Ernie screamed. "Umbrellas, umbrellas and more umbrellas!" Ernie pulled each out. The umbrellas were all basically the same, just different colors. Then she spotted an umbrella as unique as she. It was sky blue with white polka dots and fringe. Ernie smiled, as she opened it full spread. Dust flew everywhere. She giggled to see the dust particles dance about in the air, like a ballet.

She set the umbrella aside. She quickly put all the others back into the box and put it away. She respected her Auntie. It wasn't right for her to leave a mess. Now she was off.

"Could I store donuts in the umbrella somewhere?" she wondered. "Oh! Yes, on the shaft of the umbrella.

Next on her list, visit Stretch at the watering hole.

"I'm going to see the world! To have adventures, upon adventures," Ernie said loud enough for everyone to hear, adding softly so only herself could hear, "even if they say girls don't have adventures." It was always easy to find Stretch and the other giraffes at the watering hole. Just had to look up. They would

Ernestine was the name her parents gave her.

"Uck," she thought every time she heard it.

She was an "Ernie" in her heart. She loved adventures and doing the same things the boys did.

She thought and thought. She even thought longer. Yep! She would do it!

"I'm going to discover the world!"

"There are things in this world that girls just don't do," said mother elephant. "You need to stop this is nonsense!"

The little elephant grew pink on the outside of her big floppy ears and her trunk would pucker up every time she heard her mother say this.

Once Ernie, at the watering hole, heard "Anything is possible if you only believe in yourself." She did not see who it was, she was playing. The voice seemed wise - almost sounding old. She had so many questions to ask the whomever the voice belonged to.

"Maybe," Ernie said. "It was the breeze blowing the wisdom in my ears from the grass." She shook it off. "I'll think about it another day."

Weeks had passed. While everybody was busy working, Ernie would worked on her



list upon list. First, there was the list of lists that she needed. At first there were 15 of these lists, but she narrowed it down to:

Where to go? She would find Stretch, her giraffe friend who could see everywhere, for ideas.

Who to tell? Her friends Ratty and Roudy (rats). (Couldn't tell mother. She would start with your uck! Ugh!) Her friends, if any, from the watering hole could she tell them. She decided to think on it.

Things to eat. She had donuts, donuts and more donuts, apples? No vegetables!

Other things to take. Water shoes (A line through that. Elephants love water.) She put many items down on this list. Each time scratching a line through it. She ended up throwing the list away.

Anyone to go along? All of a sudden, "Take us! Take us!" It was Ratty and Roudy. (She put their names done. She didn't want to hurt their feelings. They were good friends. Often, they brought her donuts and peanuts. (She shared the peanuts with younger elephants. She knew they change their mind. They always did.)



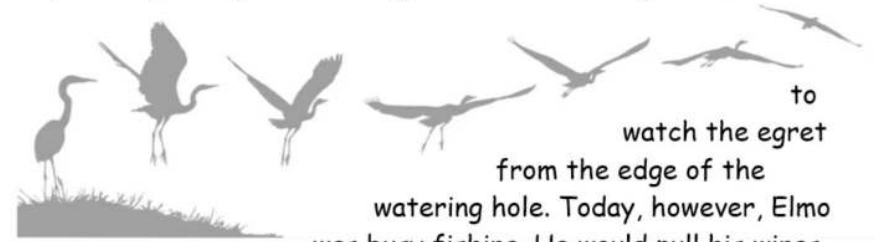
Ernie decided she would start with the list of how to get from here-to-there. Feet? (She wrinkled her nose and shook her head). Some places might find her feet funny and fluffy. She was a slow mover. No, didn't work. "HMMM" she thought as she scratched her head. Her eyes got real big. I'll go to the watering hole and see what the other animals can suggest.

She first saw Big Bill. Being a "shoebill", he was a very big bird. He had an enormous shoe-shaped bill. He claimed to be cousins to storks. However, his sister said they were direct relatives of pelicans and herons.

As Ernie approached the watering hole, she watched with interest as Big Bill went to land. His neck was pulled in. He moved so slow as he flapped his wings. He was one of the slowest birds there.

"NOPE! Ernie thought. I can move my ears faster. They'd get tired and I'd go crashing to the ground. She shook her head. Move on.

She had seen Elmo, an egret, fly on days gone by. The egret would flap his large wings with such grace. Often Ernie just like



was busy fishing. He would pull his wings way up - over his head - like a giant umbrella. Then quickly stick his head down into the water. Up he would come. Moving the wings to show he had successfully catch another fish. He was successful every time.

No one really knows how Ernie went from what Elmo was doing to blurting out, "I bet an umbrella can catch the wind!"

Thinking, "If I tuck myself into one ... then I would be successful at going wherever I wanted to! Go! I can try it out, before I leave, to see if it works. Then here I come world!" The she stuck her trunk into the pool at her feet and gather a huge drencher of water and she sprayed herself in excitement. Laughing. Wiggling. Dancing about.

