

Financial Fables Lesson Plan



OSCAR OSTRICH FACES THE FUTURE

TEACHER INTRODUCTION:

This lesson combines reading, economics and personal finance as students read a financial fable e-book. A variety of online activities accompany the fable to extend the learning of concepts in these subject areas. The Common Core State Standards for Reading, as well as national economic and personal finance standards, have been correlated to the objectives, lesson and activities.

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read the financial fable “*Oscar Ostrich Faces the Future*” online and answer questions on story content. They explain the “money moral” at the end of the fable and discuss how it could apply to their own lives. Students are introduced to character traits and suggest traits that would describe the birds in the fable. Additional enrichment activities are given for students to extend the lesson concepts.

GRADE LEVEL: P-5

CONTENT STANDARDS:

National Voluntary Economic Content Standard #2: Decision-Making

Students will understand that effective decision-making requires comparing the additional costs with the additional benefits. Many choices involve doing a little more or a little less of something: few choices are “all or nothing” decisions. Students will be able to use this knowledge to make effective decisions as consumers, producers, savers, investors, and citizens.

JUMPSTART PERSONAL FINANCE STANDARDS:

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND DECISION-MAKING

Standard #1: Take responsibility for personal finance decisions.

PLANNING AND MONEY MANAGEMENT

Standard #1: Develop a plan for spending and saving.

SAVING AND INVESTING

Standard #1: Discuss how saving contributes to financial well-being.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR READING: Literature K-5

(Applicable to Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Wyoming)

K-5: Key Ideas and Details

K-2: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

STAR STANDARDS FOR READING (Applicable to Nebraska)

K-4: Identify the main idea and supporting details

K-4: Identify and apply knowledge of the structure and elements to analyze fiction

FINANCIAL CONCEPTS: Need, saving, financial goal

READING CONCEPTS: Fable, character traits, moral

OBJECTIVES FOR P-2: Students will be able to:

1. Define need, saving, and financial goal.
 2. Describe the components of a fable.
 3. Identify the characters and story events of the financial fable.
 4. Explain the “money moral” and how the lesson might help them.
 5. Name character traits displayed by the birds in the fable.
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OBJECTIVES FOR 3-5: Students will be able to:

1. Define need, saving, and financial goal.
 2. Describe the components of a fable.
 3. Identify the characters and story events of the financial fable.
 4. Discuss the problem and solution within the fable.
 5. Explain the “money moral” and apply it to their everyday life.
 6. Define character traits and give examples of traits shown by the birds in the fable.
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TIME REQUIRED: 45-60 minutes

MATERIALS:

A COPY OF VISUAL 1: The Ant and the Grasshopper (optional)

A COPY OF VISUAL 2: *Tracking Traits*

COPIES OF HANDOUT 1: A Change of Character

COPIES OF HANDOUT 2: Assessment: Set Goals to Get Goals

ENRICHMENT MATERIALS:

COPIES OF HANDOUT 3: Character Cluster

PROCEDURE:

TEACHER NOTE: If students are unfamiliar with fables, use “Penny Pigeon and the Missing Nest Egg” lesson plan procedure steps 1-4 to introduce this literature form, along with Visual 1: “The Ant and the Grasshopper (A Fable by Aesop).”

1. Review the components of a fable from the “Penny Pigeon and the Missing Nest Egg” lesson plan on the fable website: <http://www.kansascityfed.org/education/fables/container.cfm>. (A fable is a fiction story with animal characters who talk and act like people. The story events lead up to a moral or lesson to be learned.)

2. Tell students they will now read a fable e-book titled “Oscar Ostrich Faces the Future.” (**TEACHER NOTE:** Use the “Read-to-me” function on the website with younger students.) This fable will have birds as characters and end with a moral or lesson related to money.

3. Explain the financial words they will read or hear in the story: need, which is something you must have to live; saving, which means to keep money to spend later; and financial goal, which is a plan to save money for a future need or want. Ask students to listen for these words and their use in the story.

4. Tell students Jay Eagle from the Fed is the narrator, or voice that introduces the story. Ask them to think about the following as they read (or listen to) the fable:
 - Who were the characters and what events happened in the story?
 - What was the problem and how was it solved?
 - What was the money moral or financial lesson to be learned from the fable?

5. Direct students to read the fable on their own (or use the Read-to-me function.) When finished, review the key ideas and details in the story by discussing the following questions:
 - Who were the characters in the fable? (*Oscar Ostrich, Judge Blue Jay*)
 - What was Oscar’s problem? (*He was afraid he wouldn’t have enough money to meet his needs in the future.*)
 - What were the main story events? (*Oscar met Judge Blue Jay and discussed his problem. Judge Blue Jay suggested picturing his future needs and setting financial goals to meet those needs. Oscar set his goals and the Judge wished him luck in reaching them.*)
 - What was the solution to the problem? (*Oscar planned his goals and became more confident that he would have enough money to meet future needs.*)
 - What was the money moral of the fable? (*“If you set and reach financial goals, your needs will be met in the future.”*)
 - How would you put the moral in your own words? (*You will have money for what you need later if you set and reach goals for saving money.*)

6. Ask students how this money moral could apply to their own lives. *(Answers will vary. Students may say that if they set savings goals now, they will have enough money for college, a car, a house, or other goods and services in the future.)*
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7. Introduce the concept of character traits as qualities that describe a character, such as the character's thoughts, actions and feelings. In Aesop's fable "The Grasshopper and the Ant," the grasshopper had the character traits of being carefree and lazy. The ant was characterized as planning ahead and being a hard worker. **(TEACHER NOTE:** *If students are unfamiliar with this fable, read and discuss the story using Visual 1, [The Ant and the Grasshopper –a Fable by Aesop.](#)***)**
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8. Tell students that we will brainstorm character traits that describe Oscar Ostrich at the beginning, middle and end of the fable. Use Visual 2, "Tracking Traits," to list all traits suggested. *(Answers will vary, but may include the following for the beginning and middle of the fable: shy; head in sand; sad; afraid, serious; timid; fearful; quiet; unhappy. Traits that describe Oscar at the end of the fable could include hopeful; thinking; head out of sand; confident; problem solver.)*
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9. Distribute and introduce Handout 1, "A Change of Character." Discuss the fact that Oscar's character traits changed as Judge Blue Jay helped him solve his problem. Tell students that the class will work through the character chart together to show these changes. **(TEACHER NOTE:** *Older students could do this individually, while younger students could give answers verbally as the teacher completes the chart.***)**
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10. When the chart is complete, discuss Oscar's changes using the following question:
- Do you think Oscar's changes made him feel better or worse? *(Answers will vary; most will agree that becoming hopeful and confident would make Oscar feel better.)*
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CLOSURE:

11. Review the key concepts of this lesson by asking the following questions:
- What is a need? *(Something you must have to live.)*
 - What does it mean to save money? *(To keep money to spend later.)*
 - What is a financial goal? *(A plan to save money for a future need or want.)*
 - What are the components of a fable? *(It is a fiction story that has animal characters that talk and act like people. The story events lead up to a moral or lesson.)*
 - Why are morals important for us to understand? *(Morals are lessons to be learned that we can use in our everyday lives.)*
 - What are character traits? *(Qualities that describe a character, such as the character's thoughts, actions and feelings.)*
 - Give some examples of character traits. *(Answers will vary, but should include descriptive words that show thoughts, actions or feelings, such as shy, afraid, thinking, confident, etc.)*

ASSESSMENT:

12. Distribute copies of Handout 2, “Assessment: Set Goals to Get Goals.” Remind students that Oscar planned ways to have enough money for future needs by setting financial goals. Discuss some of the ways Oscar planned to save. *(He planned to save half the money from selling his feathers for food and nest bedding; he planned to save money gifts for his chicks’ education; he planned to save winnings from ostrich races for his grandchicks.)* Tell students to complete the assessment, following the directions to choose their future needs and wants and match each with a financial goal to help them get there. *(Students may use original ideas in addition to those suggested. Younger students could draw a picture of each idea or give verbal answers for assessment purposes.)*

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES:

READING:

- **GR. K-2:** Use Handout #3, “Character Cluster” for further practice with character traits. Tell students to use Judge Blue Jay for this character description map. Ask them to choose traits that describe the Judge from the list given, putting each trait in a separate rectangle. In the ovals underneath, ask them to give an event from the fable that shows this trait in action. *(Examples may include: kind—he talked to Oscar about his problem; helpful—he gave Oscar advice on how to set financial goals; positive attitude—he wished Oscar luck in achieving his goals.)* This can be a teacher-directed activity for younger students.
- **GR. 3-5:** Use Handout #3, “Character Cluster” to describe the student’s own character traits. Each student’s name should be at the top of the map. They should choose two traits that fit their own character from the list, or use original ideas to fill in each rectangle. In the ovals underneath, they should give an example of why this trait fits them. *(For example, Leader—I try to show my little brother the right way to behave.)*
- **GR. K-5:** Use the Oscar Ostrich fable as a script and ask students to act out the roles of Oscar, Judge Blue Jay, and the narrator, changing actors several times so more students get a turn. Use props, movement and good expression to make the fable believable. Present to another class and discuss the meaning of the moral with them.

PERSONAL FINANCE:

- **GR. K-2:** Review the choices for “future needs and wants” from the assessment activity, “Set Goals to Get Goals.” Select one to develop a savings plan with students that tells how much they should save each month to be able to purchase the item in the future. For example, saving \$10 monthly for four years would equal \$480, enough to buy a laptop computer. Discuss the ways they could save using the “financial goals to get there” section of the assessment.
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- **GR. 3-5:** Ask students what choices they made in the “future needs and wants” section of the assessment. Discuss the approximate purchase price of each choice. Tell them to develop a monthly savings plan to reach their choice, figuring how much they could save each month for a number of years. Share completed savings plan with the class.

VISUAL 1: THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER (A FABLE BY AESOP)



THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER (A FABLE BY AESOP)

One summer's day, a merry Grasshopper was dancing, singing and playing his violin with all his heart. He saw an Ant passing by, bearing along with great toil a kernel of corn to store for the winter.

"Come and sing with me, instead of working so hard," said the Grasshopper. "Let's have fun together."

"I must store food for the winter," said the Ant, "and I advise you to do the same."

"Don't worry about winter, it's still very far away," said the Grasshopper, laughing at him. But the Ant wouldn't listen and continued his toil.

When the winter came, the starving Grasshopper went to the Ant's house and humbly begged for something to eat.

"If you had listened to my advice in the summer you would not now be in need," said the Ant. "I'm afraid you'll have to go supperless to bed," and he closed the door.

Then the Grasshopper knew: It is best to prepare for the days of necessity.

VISUAL 2: TRACKING TRAITS

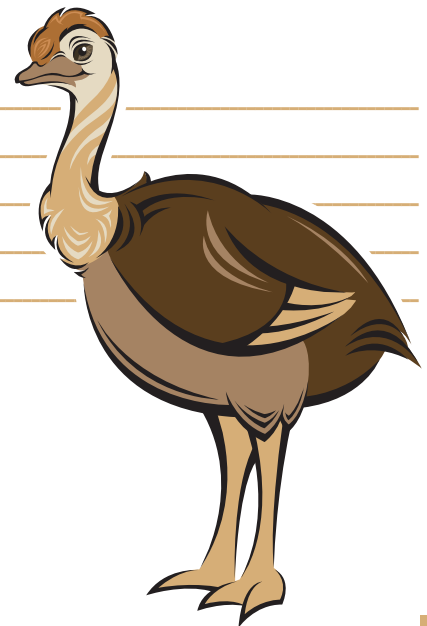
CHARACTER TRAITS are qualities that describe a character, such as the character's thoughts, actions or feelings. Here are some examples of traits: happy, brave, selfish, helpful, shy; leader, thinker.

BRAINSTORM A LIST OF CHARACTER TRAITS THAT DESCRIBE OSCAR OSTRICH IN THE FABLE.

IN THE BEGINNING, OSCAR WAS...

IN THE MIDDLE, OSCAR WAS...

AT THE END, OSCAR WAS...



HAND OUT 1: "A CHANGE OF CHARACTER"

Complete the character chart to show the changes in Oscar's character traits during the fable.

In the beginning, Oscar was _____ and feeling _____.



When Judge Blue Jay meets Oscar...



Oscar feels _____

When the Judge suggests setting goals...



Oscar feels _____

When Oscar thinks of his future needs...



Oscar feels _____

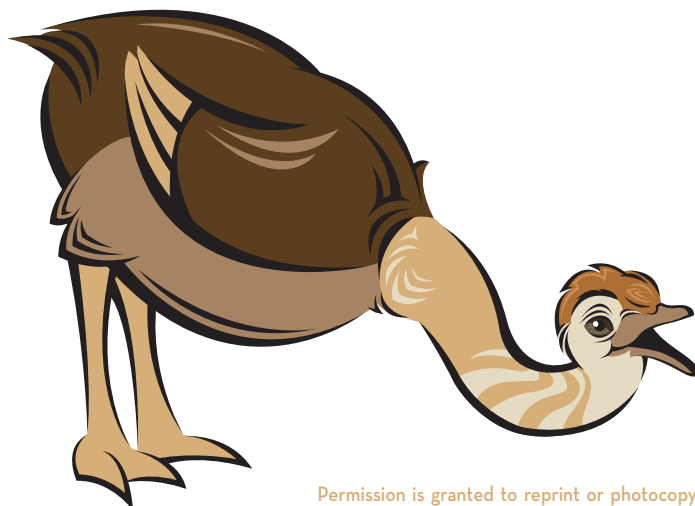
When Oscar figures his goals...



Oscar feels _____



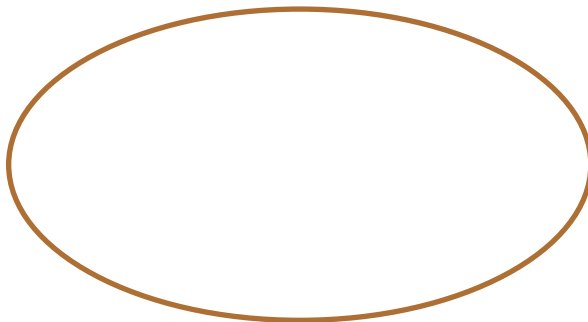

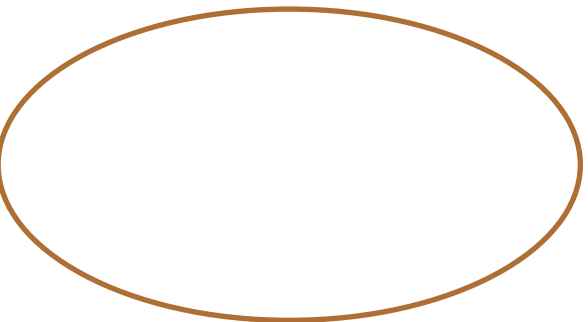
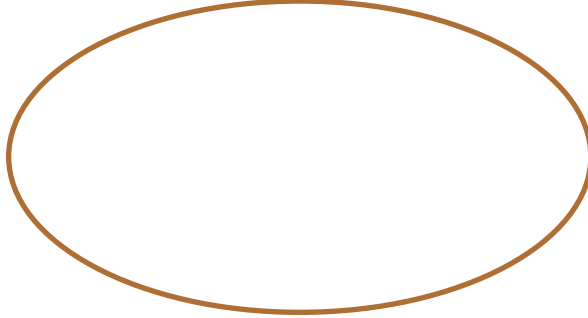

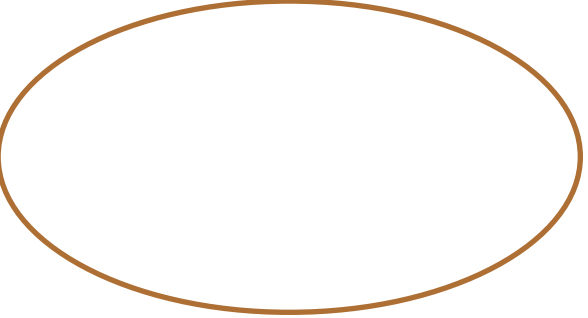
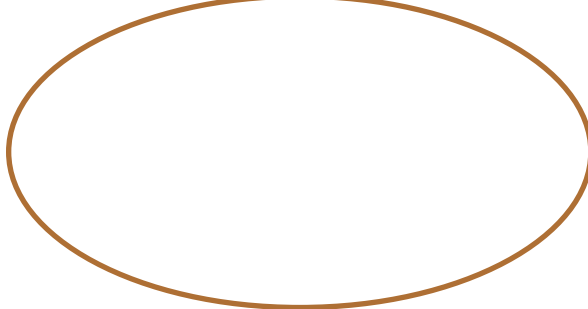

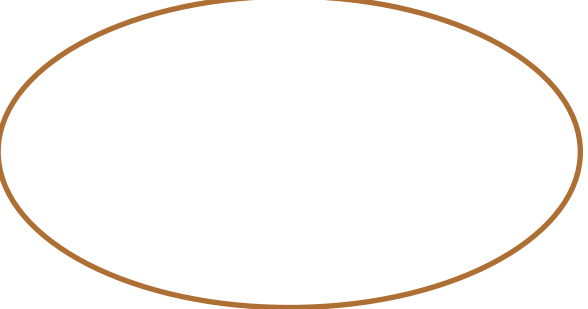
In the end, Oscar was _____ and feeling _____.



HANDOUT 2: ASSESSMENT: SET GOALS TO GET GOALS

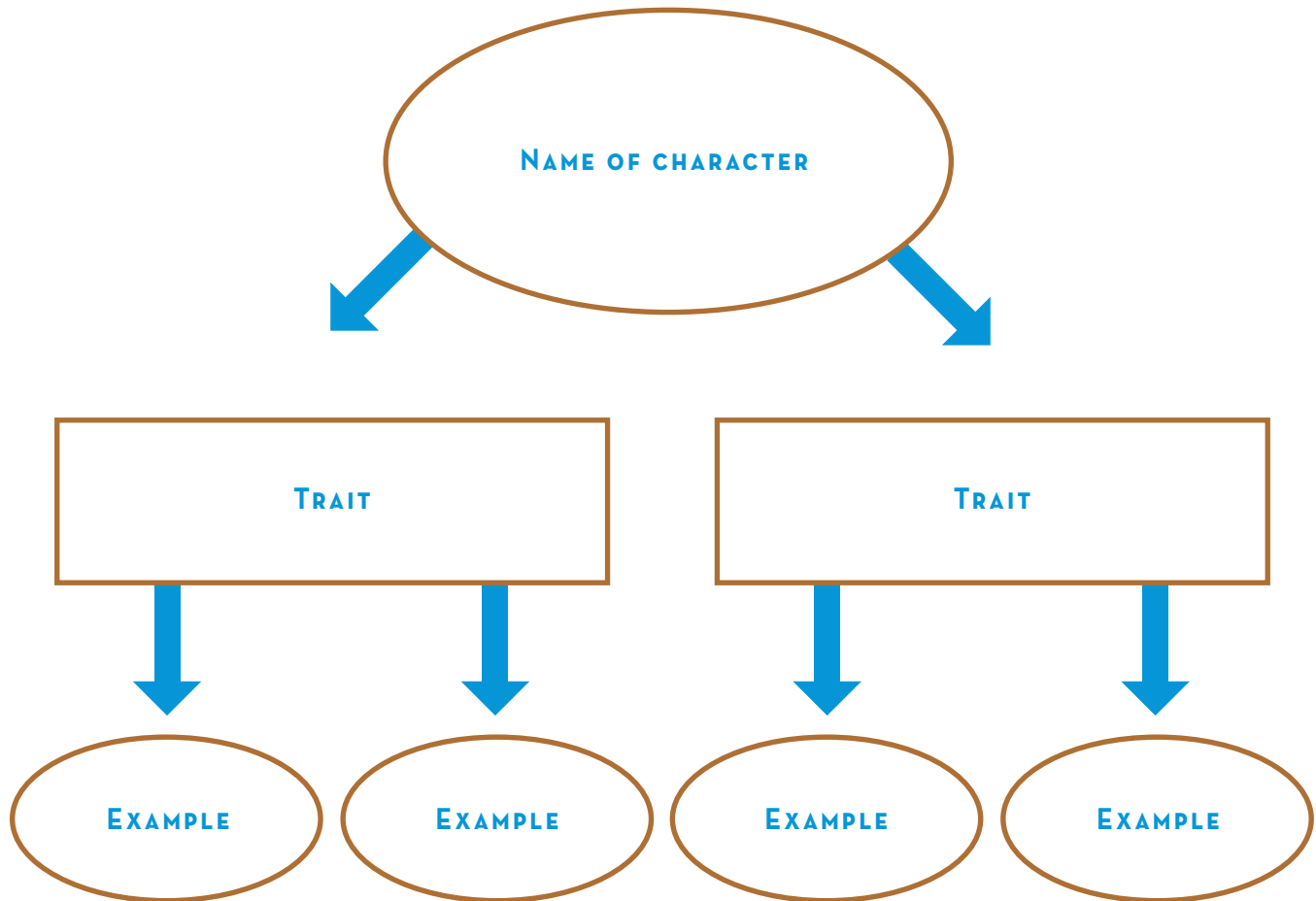
DIRECTIONS: Look at the “Future Needs and Wants” list below. Choose three needs or wants for your future (or think of new ideas.) Write these ideas in the circles under “My Future.” Now look at the “Financial Goals to Get There” list. Pick three ways to reach your future ideas (or create new ways) and write these goals in the circles next to each need or want.

FUTURE NEEDS AND WANTS Clothes • Bike • Computer • Video Games Cell Phone • Car • College • House	FINANCIAL GOALS TO GET THERE Save part of my allowance • Save gift money Have a garage sale • Baby-sit • Take care of pets Sell a product or start a business
MY FUTURE	MY FINANCIAL GOALS

HANDOUT 3: "CHARACTER CLUSTER"

DIRECTIONS: Use the character cluster map below to describe the traits of Judge Blue Jay or your own traits. Use the trait list to help you complete the map. Give examples of these traits in action using the ovals below the boxes.



CHARACTER TRAIT LIST

Leader

Neat

Helpful

Respectful

Honest

Happy

Funny

Friendly

Positive

Lovable

Creative

Brave

Smart

Serious

Kind

Shy

Curious

Thinker





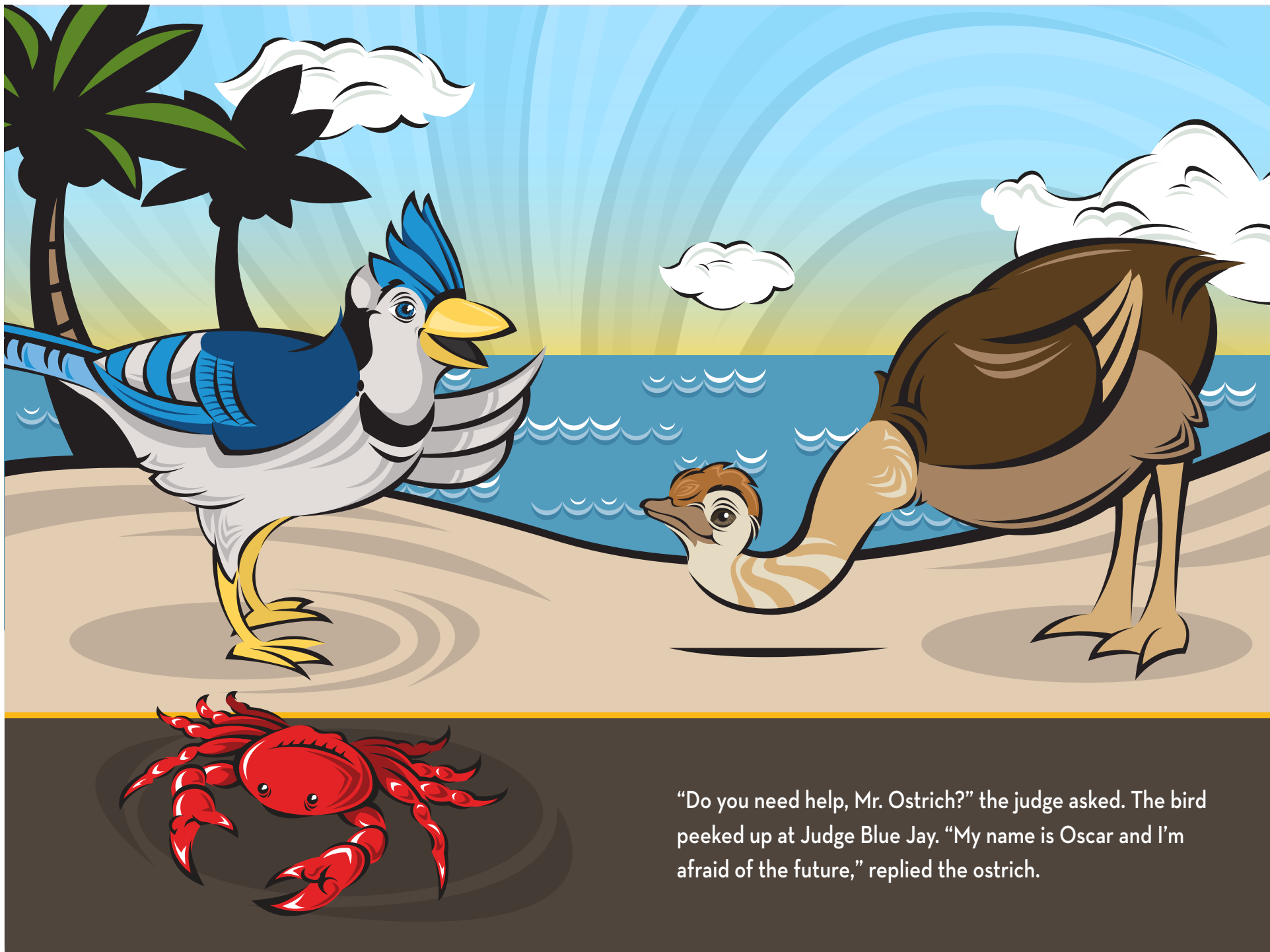
Judge Blue Jay flew south to relax on the sandy beach for his winter vacation.



He was soaking in the sun and enjoying the warm breeze when he noticed a strange sight. A tall, feathery ostrich was standing nearby with its pointy head burrowed into the sand.



The judge swooped over to investigate.



“Do you need help, Mr. Ostrich?” the judge asked. The bird peeked up at Judge Blue Jay. “My name is Oscar and I’m afraid of the future,” replied the ostrich.



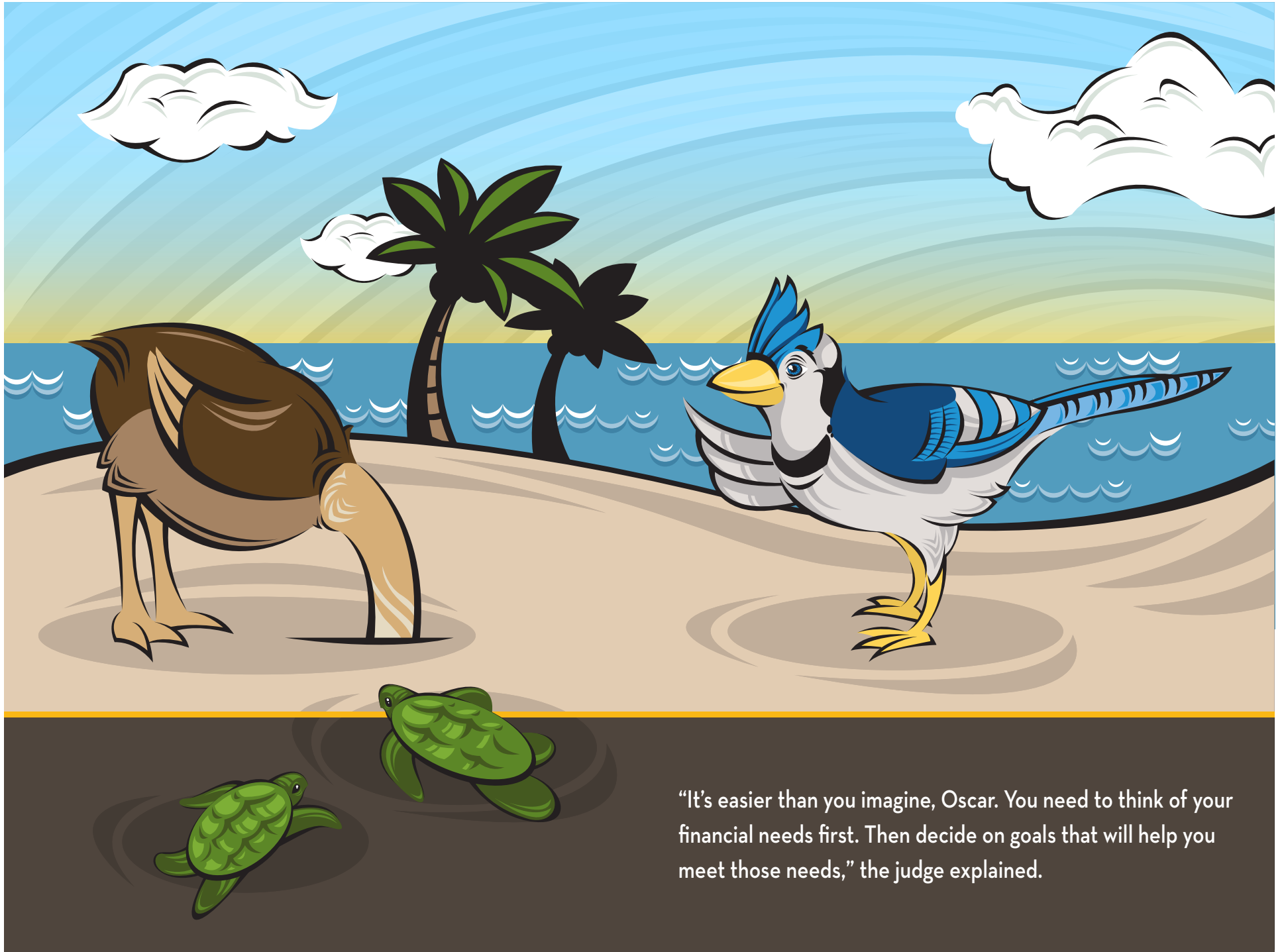
"I see," said the judge. "Why does the future frighten you, Oscar?" The ostrich lowered his head sadly. "Because I don't know what will happen in years to come. I'm afraid I won't have enough money for all that I need."



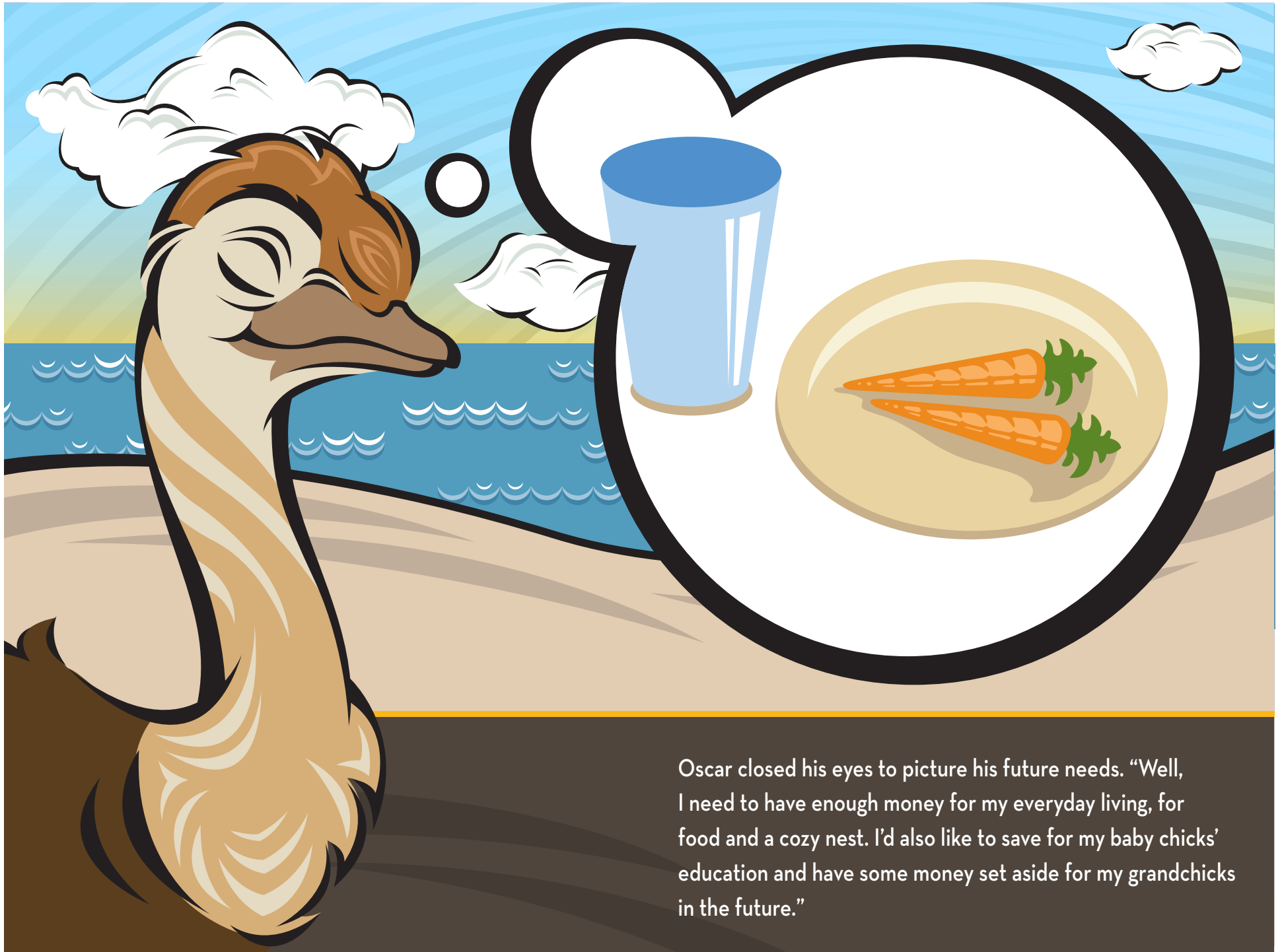
The judge nodded his head slowly. He could tell that Oscar needed some advice about saving money for his future. "Oscar, have you thought about setting some financial goals? If you plan ways to help you save and reach these goals, you will feel better about the future," the judge said.



“Set goals for the future? That sounds hard to do,” Oscar replied, burrowing his head back into the sand.



"It's easier than you imagine, Oscar. You need to think of your financial needs first. Then decide on goals that will help you meet those needs," the judge explained.



Oscar closed his eyes to picture his future needs. “Well, I need to have enough money for my everyday living, for food and a cozy nest. I’d also like to save for my baby chicks’ education and have some money set aside for my grandchicks in the future.”



“Excellent ideas, Oscar. Now what financial goals can you set to meet your future needs?” asked the judge. Oscar used his beak to do math in the sand and figure his goals.



"If I plan to save half of the money from selling my feathers each week, I'll have enough for food and nest bedding in the future. And when I get gifts of money from my bird friends, I could add to my chicks' educational fund. Any money I win in the ostrich races could be saved for my grandchicks."



The judge smiled and said, "Now you've become a goal setter, Oscar. The next step is to become a goal getter. I wish you luck in reaching your financial goals!"



The money moral is: If you set and reach financial goals,
your needs will be met in the future.

