

# THE SKI TRIP

BY DAVE ARMSTRONG

\$2000

28 people

= \$71.43 each



Anthony really liked his new teacher, Ms Hill, and Ms Hill really liked skiing, which is why she'd planned a ski trip for the whole class. Anthony imagined touching snow for the first time. It was going to be great.

Ms Hill explained that the ski trip wouldn't be cheap. The class would need to fundraise, and the students would need to earn additional money themselves. And it wasn't just the money for Ms Hill that Anthony had to think about. He would need a warmer jacket and waterproof trousers. Maybe some new gloves.

It was no use asking Mum for money. Anyway, she'd warned him off before he got the chance. "They've cut my hours at the cafe," she said. "You'll have to earn the extra money yourself. But you'll be OK. You're good at lots of things."

So Anthony wrote a list of all the things he was good at: throwing tennis balls long distances, naming dinosaur species, playing the guitar that Mum's old boyfriend had left behind. But Anthony couldn't see how these skills could earn him cash – not without a very good idea.

He thought some more, this time about things that might actually earn some money. Walking dogs and mowing lawns – that's what other kids did. So that's what he'd do.

Anthony decided it would be much more fun earning the money with a friend.

"But it's still summer," Jevan said, appalled.

"That's the best time to walk dogs and mow lawns," said Anthony.

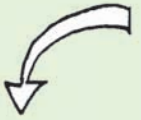
"But what about going to the beach and riding our bikes?" Jevan had just been given a new one.

"I really want to go on this ski trip," Anthony said.

Jevan frowned and looked away. "Then you go for it. I can always do gardening for my grandmother if I get desperate. Besides, last year when I didn't earn enough for our class trip, Dad just paid for it anyway."

Anthony didn't have a dad to just pay for it anyway. He'd have to sort it himself. First, he needed to let people know that he was available for work. He designed a notice and took it to Mr Lee's dairy. Anthony was always polite to Mr Lee, so Mr Lee was happy to stick the notice in his window.





Anthony's first customer, Mrs Whyte, lived by herself and needed all the plums picked off the ground in her orchard.

"How much do you charge?" she asked as Anthony took buckets from her shed.

Anthony thought about it. He could probably get away with asking for ten dollars, but she was his first customer. Besides, she'd already said he could take a big bag of plums home. "Five dollars will be fine," Anthony said.

Mrs Whyte loved the thorough job Anthony did with the plums, so she got him to mow her lawns as well. He'd made his first ten dollars! Then she told Mrs Reihana, who needed her shed cleaned out, that Anthony was a great worker. And Mrs Reihana was so impressed she told her neighbour, who needed some weeding done. Other people called – after reading the notice in Mr Lee's dairy.

A few weeks later, Anthony checked his chart. He'd already made enough money for February. He could go to the beach with Jevan and still reach his monthly target. But Anthony knew that lawns grew faster in autumn than in winter. "Make hay while the sun shines," his mother warned him.

So Anthony kept mowing lawns and picking fruit and weeding gardens. He had so many people wanting him to work that he was able to charge five dollars an hour. As long as he did a good job, they were happy. And he even had enough money to pay for his notice to be photocopied so he

could deliver it to letterboxes around the neighbourhood.

In the third week of the second term, Ms Hill said it was almost time to pay for the ski trip. Anthony proudly handed his money over early. He expected Jevan to have money from his dad, but his friend looked moody – and worried.

"I haven't got the money yet, Ms Hill," Jevan reported glumly. "I should have it soon."

"How come you don't have the money?" Anthony asked later. "Your parents can afford it."

Jevan sighed. "I know, but Dad said I have to earn it myself."

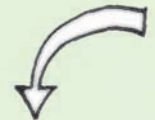
"Then work for your grandmother like last time."

"Already tried that," said Jevan. "She said I was a lazy worker because I knew she'd pay me no matter what. So she found someone else to do it."

Anthony didn't say that Jevan's grandmother had paid five dollars an hour and given him ginger crunch to take home.

"I was thinking," said Jevan, "do you need any help with all your lawns and stuff?" It was the first time Jevan had shown any interest in Anthony's business.

Anthony thought about the very big lawn he had to mow for Mrs Lockett. She'd agreed to pay him fifteen dollars. And this time, it would be extra-hard because she'd been away and the grass was long.



“Well, there’s a lady in my street with a lawn that needs mowing,” Anthony said. “Let’s see. I could pay you five bucks.”

Jevan was relieved. “Sure. Whatever you say, Ants.”

“But you have to do a good job – and I’ll need to come and check it when you’re finished.”

“No problem,” said Jevan. “Thanks heaps, Ants. You’re awesome.”

Anthony smiled. He said nothing.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KAT CHADWICK

# The Ski Trip

by Dave Armstrong

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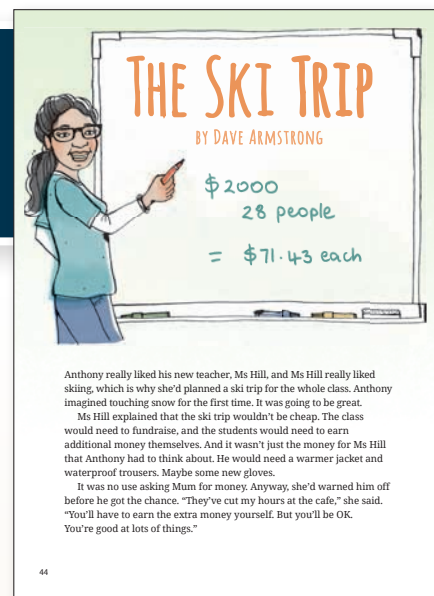
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