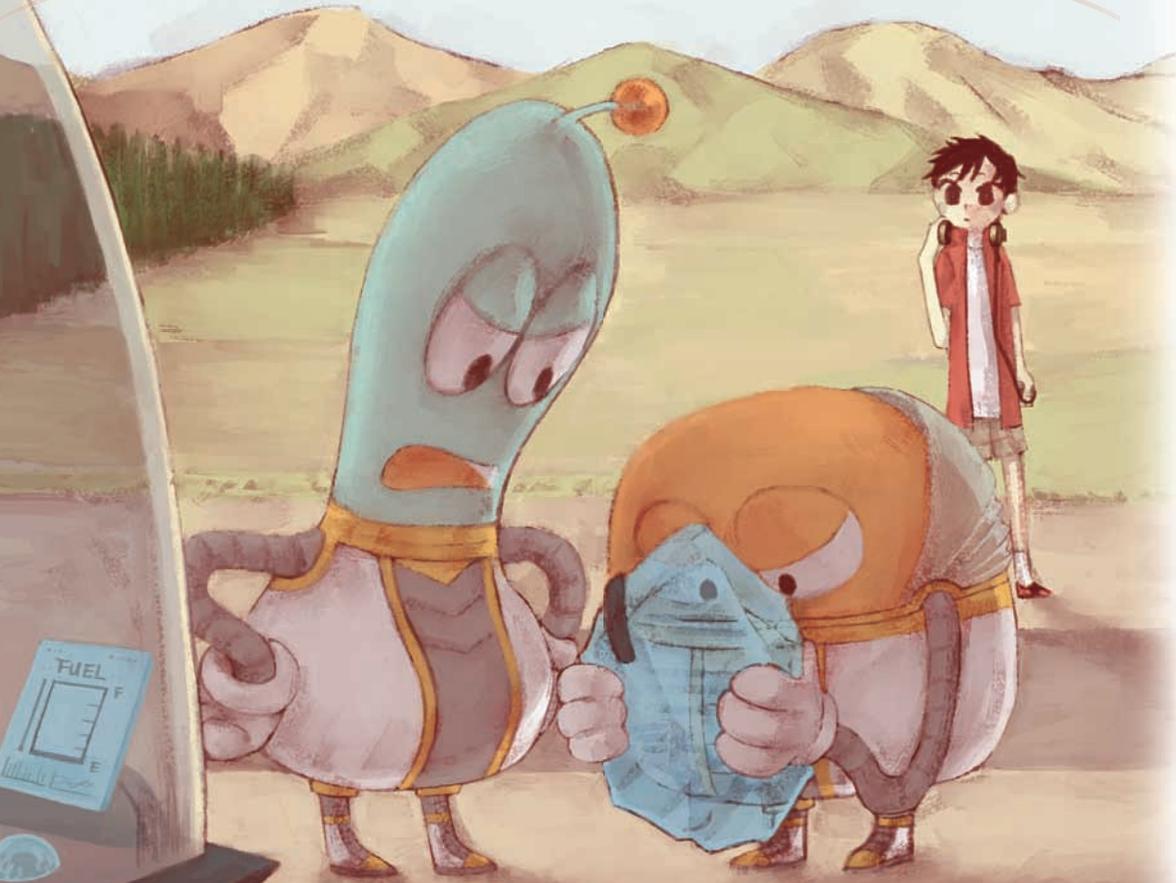


# GOOD AS GOLD

by James O'Sullivan



## CHARACTERS



SALA



ZERG



JOSH



ANITA  
HERD



SAMMY  
SHARK



OWEN  
LEND

**SCENE ONE:** *An open field on Earth. SALA and ZERG enter.*

**SALA** (*sarcastically*). Well, this is just great, Zerg. Now we're stuck here on this strange planet. Why didn't you stop at that last fuelling station?

**ZERG.** I thought we could make it to the next one.

**SALA.** "E" means "empty". It doesn't mean "enough".

**ZERG.** Point taken, Sala. Luckily I've brought my *Lonely Galaxy Travel Guide*. It will tell us all we need to know about this place. (**ZERG reads from the guide.**) "Planet Xylan, local name Earth. The locals are mostly friendly but have a strange liking for personal media devices."

**SALA.** Here comes one of them now!

**JOSH enters, listening to an MP3 player.**

**JOSH.** Oh, hello. I'm Josh. You're aliens, aren't you?

**SALA.** We're holidaymakers. Well, we were until our spaceship ran out of fuel.

**JOSH.** What does it run on?

**ZERG.** Gold.

**JOSH.** Gold is very expensive around here. It will cost you lots of money.

**SALA.** What's money?

**JOSH.** If you want something from someone, usually you have to give them money to buy it.

**ZERG.** And how do we get money?

**JOSH.** You work for it.

**SALA.** I don't like the sound of that.

**ANITA HERD** enters.

**JOSH.** Ah, here's my friend Anita Herd. She's a farmer. She might be able to help you. Hello, Anita. These two aliens need some money. Do you have any jobs for them on your farm?

**ANITA HERD** (to aliens). How good are you at rounding up sheep?



**ZERG.** What's a sheep?

**SALA.** What do you mean by "rounding up"?

**ZERG.** And what's a farm?

**ANITA HERD.** You'll do just fine. Come with me.

**ANITA HERD, SALA, and ZERG** exit.

**JOSH.** I can't wait to tell my friends about these aliens.

**JOSH** exits.



**SCENE TWO:** The same field, late afternoon. **SALA and ZERG** enter, looking weary.

**SALA.** I'm exhausted. Why couldn't you have stopped at that fuelling station?

**ZERG.** You've already asked me that. It's the past, Sala. I can't do anything about the past.

**ANITA HERD** (enters). That was a good day's work, guys. It saved me doing all those jobs myself. (She hands over some money.) Here's your pay.

**JOSH** (enters). How did it go?

**ANITA HERD.** I had a very relaxing day.

**SALA.** I had a lousy day. I'm tired, I smell of sheep, and I'm all greasy.

**ANITA HERD.** And I'm happy because I'm none of those things. You aliens should visit more often. I think I'll go and have a spa.

**ANITA HERD** exits.

**ZERG.** Anita gave us this papery stuff.

**JOSH.** That's money. But it's not enough to buy gold. You'll have to work some more.

**SALA.** I'm not working for an Earth minute longer.

**ZERG.** How can we make money without working for it?



**SAMMY SHARK** enters.

**SAMMY SHARK.** I heard that. Well, it's your lucky day! I can lend you all the money you need. Just fill in this form and sign it here.

**SALA.** That's very kind of you.

**JOSH.** Hold on. Let me see that. (*He grabs the form and reads it.*) What's this written in small print? "The borrower must pay back double the money they borrow – by the end of the month."

**SAMMY SHARK.** Well, that's fair. You don't get something for nothing in this world.

**ZERG.** What if we can't pay it back?

**JOSH.** It says here that Sammy Shark will own your spaceship.

**ZERG and SALA** (*together*). Thanks, but no thanks!

**SAMMY SHARK.** All right, I guess I'll have to take my business elsewhere.

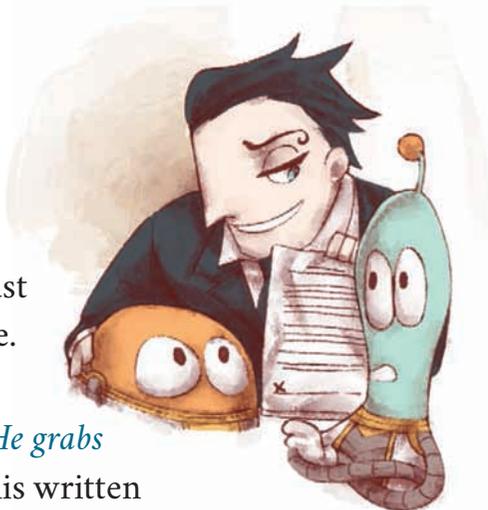
**SAMMY SHARK** exits.

**JOSH.** You could put your money in a bank. Here comes my friend Owen Lend. He owns a bank.

**OWEN LEND** enters.

**OWEN LEND.** Hello, Josh.

**JOSH.** Hello, Owen. My alien friends have some spare money. Can you tell them what will happen if they put it in your bank?



**OWEN LEND.** It's very easy. You put your money in my bank, and some time later, when you ask, I'll give you back your money plus a bit more, which is called interest.

**ZERG.** And what's in it for you?

**OWEN LEND.** Well, I take the money you give me, and I lend it to somebody else. That way, I can make a bit of money for myself.

**SALA.** How much will you give us?

**OWEN LEND.** The rate of interest is about 5 percent, which means that for every one hundred dollars you give me, I'll give you back your hundred plus another five dollars.

**ZERG.** How long will it take for this interest to build up so we can buy some gold?

**OWEN LEND.** About ten years.

**SALA.** We haven't got time to wait ten years. We have a wedding to go to next week!

**ZERG.** Can you give us more interest?

**OWEN LEND.** Sorry, times are tough. I've had to make cutbacks.

**JOSH.** You could try bartering.

**SALA.** What's that?

**JOSH.** That's when you exchange goods.

**OWEN LEND.** If you want gold, I have a gold watch. I could exchange that.



**JOSH.** I thought you said times were tough.

**OWEN LEND.** They are. I can only afford to have a gold watch on one wrist. It's very inconvenient.

**ZERG.** I haven't got much to exchange, just this *Lonely Galaxy Travel Guide*. It's only made out of diamond.

**OWEN LEND.** Did you say diamond?

**SALA.** Yes. I guess it's not worth much.  
There's lots of diamond on our planet.  
But it's hard wearing. It won't break easily.

**OWEN LEND.** Well, I'd like to help you out.  
Here, take my watch. (*He exchanges his watch for the guide.*) I'm rich ... I mean, I'm richer ... I mean, thank you for this very hard-wearing but not very valuable guide.

**OWEN LEND** *exits, chuckling happily.*

**ZERG.** There should be enough gold here to get us to the next fuelling station.

**SALA.** Good, let's go. Thank you for your help, Josh. Here, have this money for your troubles. We can't use it. Sorry it's got sheep grease on it.

**JOSH.** Thanks.

**SALA and ZERG** *exit.*

**JOSH.** Well, I'm going to put this money in a bank. I've got plenty of time to wait.

**JOSH** *exits.*



illustrations by  
Yunie Lee

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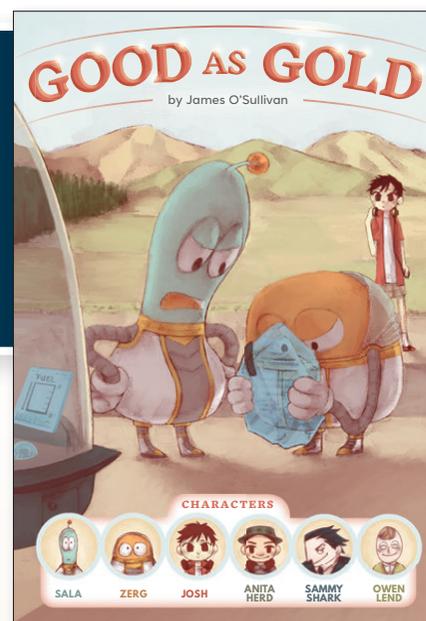
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Published 2016 by the Ministry of Education  
PO Box 1666, Wellington 6140, New Zealand.  
[www.education.govt.nz](http://www.education.govt.nz)

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ISBN 978 0 478 16649 1 (online)

Publishing Services: Lift Education E Tū  
Editor: David Chadwick  
Designer: Simon Waterfield  
Literacy Consultant: Melanie Winthrop  
Consulting Editors: Hōne Apanui and Emeli Sione



## SCHOOL JOURNAL LEVEL 2 AUGUST 2016

<b>Curriculum learning areas</b>	English The Arts: Drama Social Sciences
<b>Reading year level</b>	Year 4
<b>Keywords</b>	banking, bartering, borrowing, financial capability, humour, interest rates, lending, percentages, science fiction