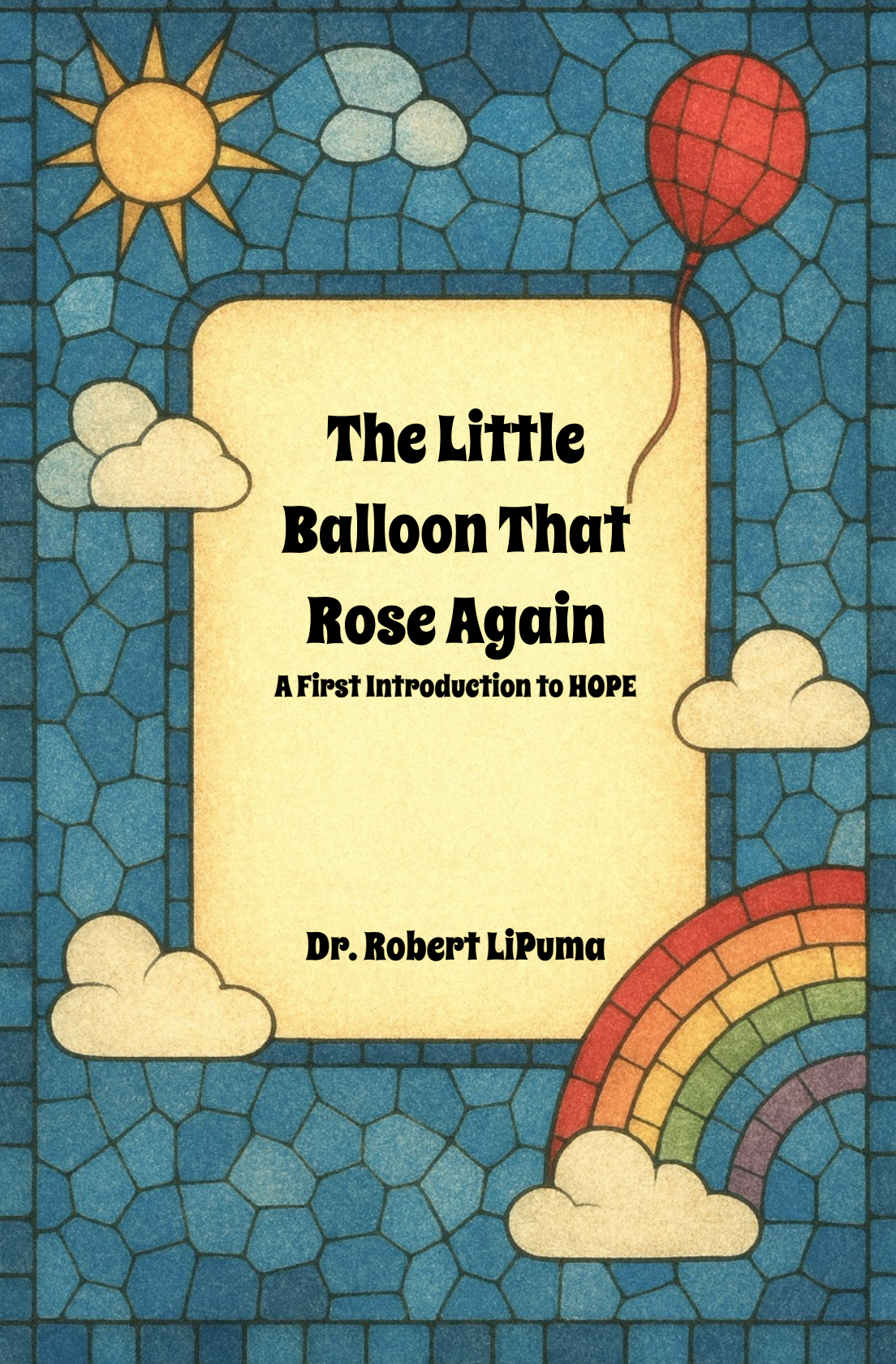


The background is a blue stained glass pattern. In the top left is a yellow sun with rays. In the top right is a red balloon with a string. In the bottom right is a rainbow. There are several white clouds scattered around the central text area.

The Little Balloon That Rose Again

A First Introduction to HOPE

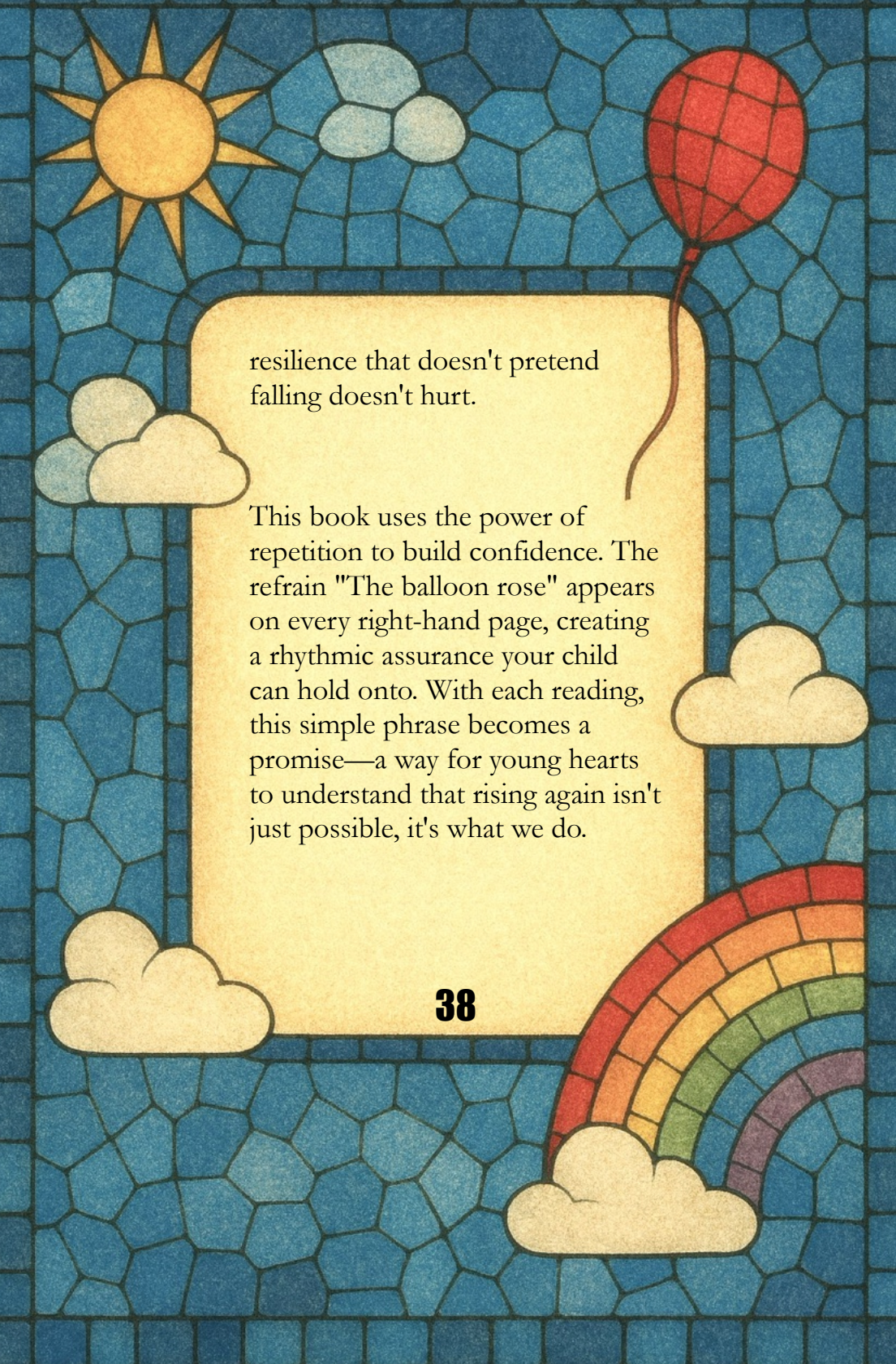
Dr. Robert LiPuma

**Dear Grown-Ups:
A Guide to Reading
The Little Balloon
That Rose Again**

**Welcome to
a Story About
Rising After the Fall**

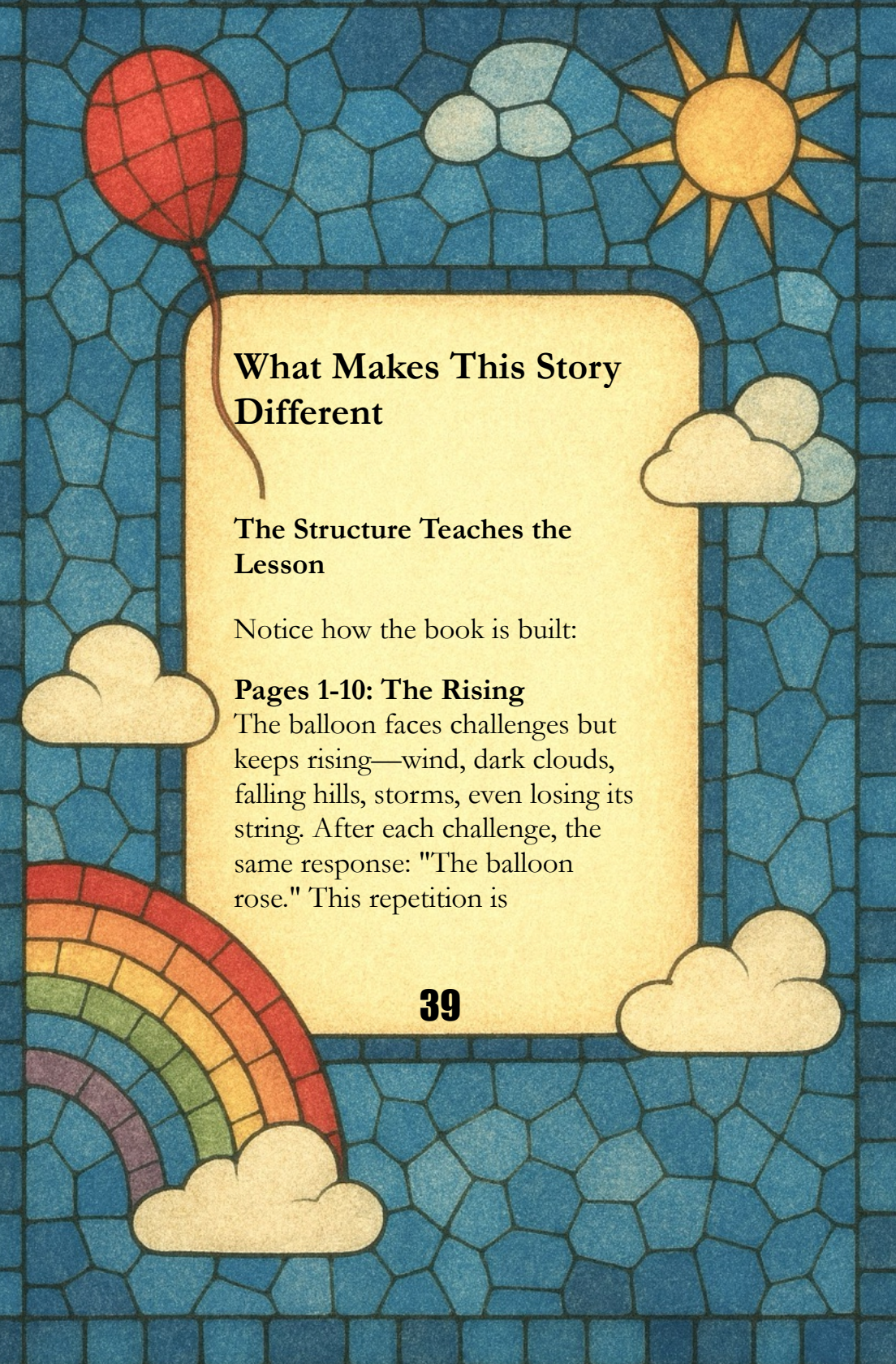


"The Little Balloon That Rose Again" is designed for the moments when your child faces setbacks, disappointments, or falls —when something goes wrong and they wonder if they can recover. This is a story about

The background of the page is a blue mosaic of irregular hexagonal and pentagonal tiles. In the top left corner is a yellow sun with eight triangular rays. In the top right corner is a red balloon with a black grid pattern and a thin brown string. There are four white, fluffy clouds: one in the top left, one in the middle left, one in the middle right, and one at the bottom right. In the bottom right corner, a rainbow with seven distinct bands of color (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet) arches over a white cloud.

resilience that doesn't pretend
falling doesn't hurt.

This book uses the power of repetition to build confidence. The refrain "The balloon rose" appears on every right-hand page, creating a rhythmic assurance your child can hold onto. With each reading, this simple phrase becomes a promise—a way for young hearts to understand that rising again isn't just possible, it's what we do.



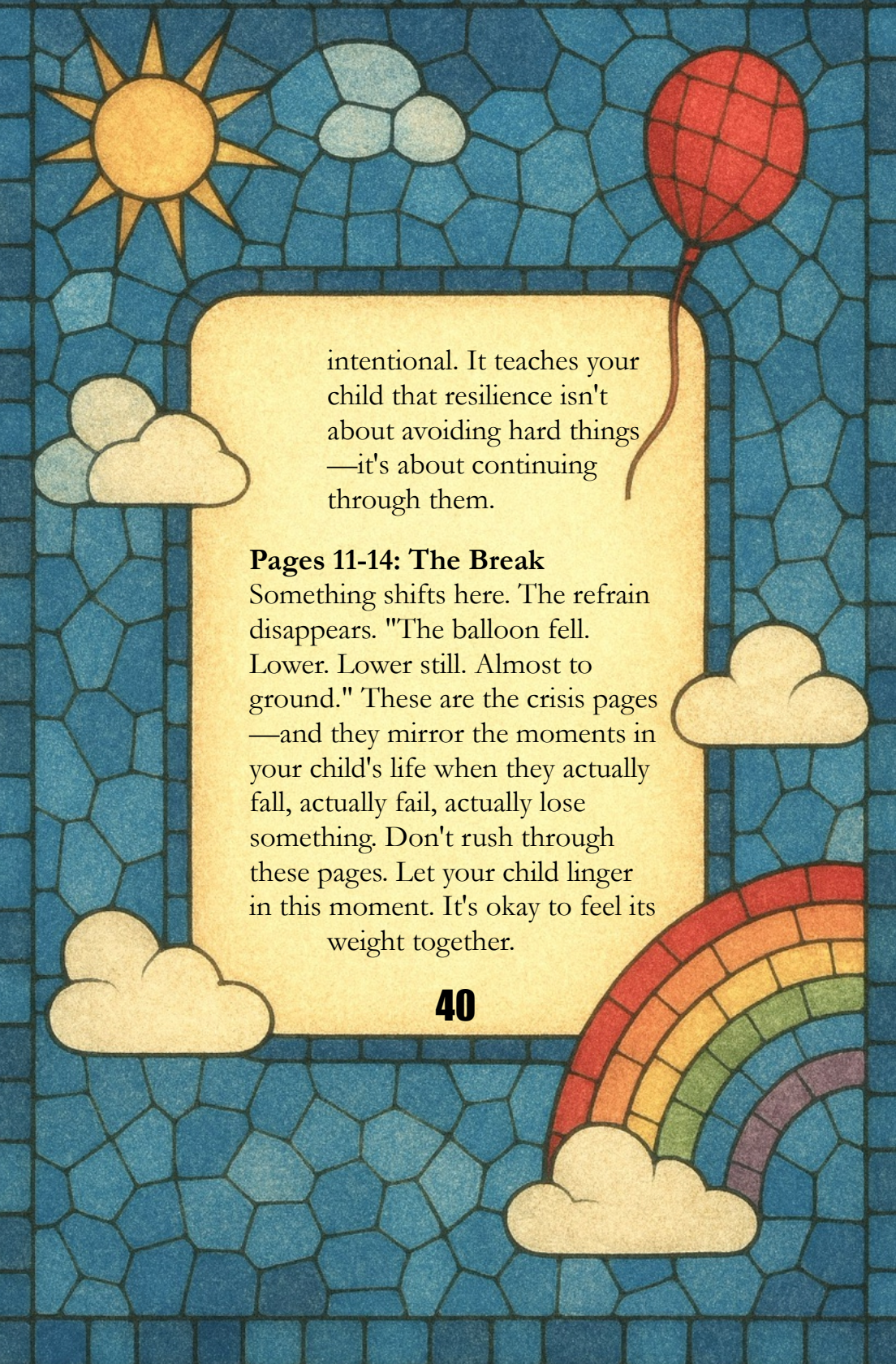
What Makes This Story Different

The Structure Teaches the Lesson

Notice how the book is built:

Pages 1-10: The Rising

The balloon faces challenges but keeps rising—wind, dark clouds, falling hills, storms, even losing its string. After each challenge, the same response: "The balloon rose." This repetition is



intentional. It teaches your child that resilience isn't about avoiding hard things—it's about continuing through them.

Pages 11-14: The Break

Something shifts here. The refrain disappears. "The balloon fell. Lower. Lower still. Almost to ground." These are the crisis pages—and they mirror the moments in your child's life when they actually fall, actually fail, actually lose something. Don't rush through these pages. Let your child linger in this moment. It's okay to feel its weight together.

Pages 15-16: The Turn

"But even falling—it found the wind." This is the pivotal revelation. The balloon doesn't rise because it never fell. It rises *again* because even in falling, it discovered what it needed. Your child learns that sometimes we find our strength in the descent, not despite it.

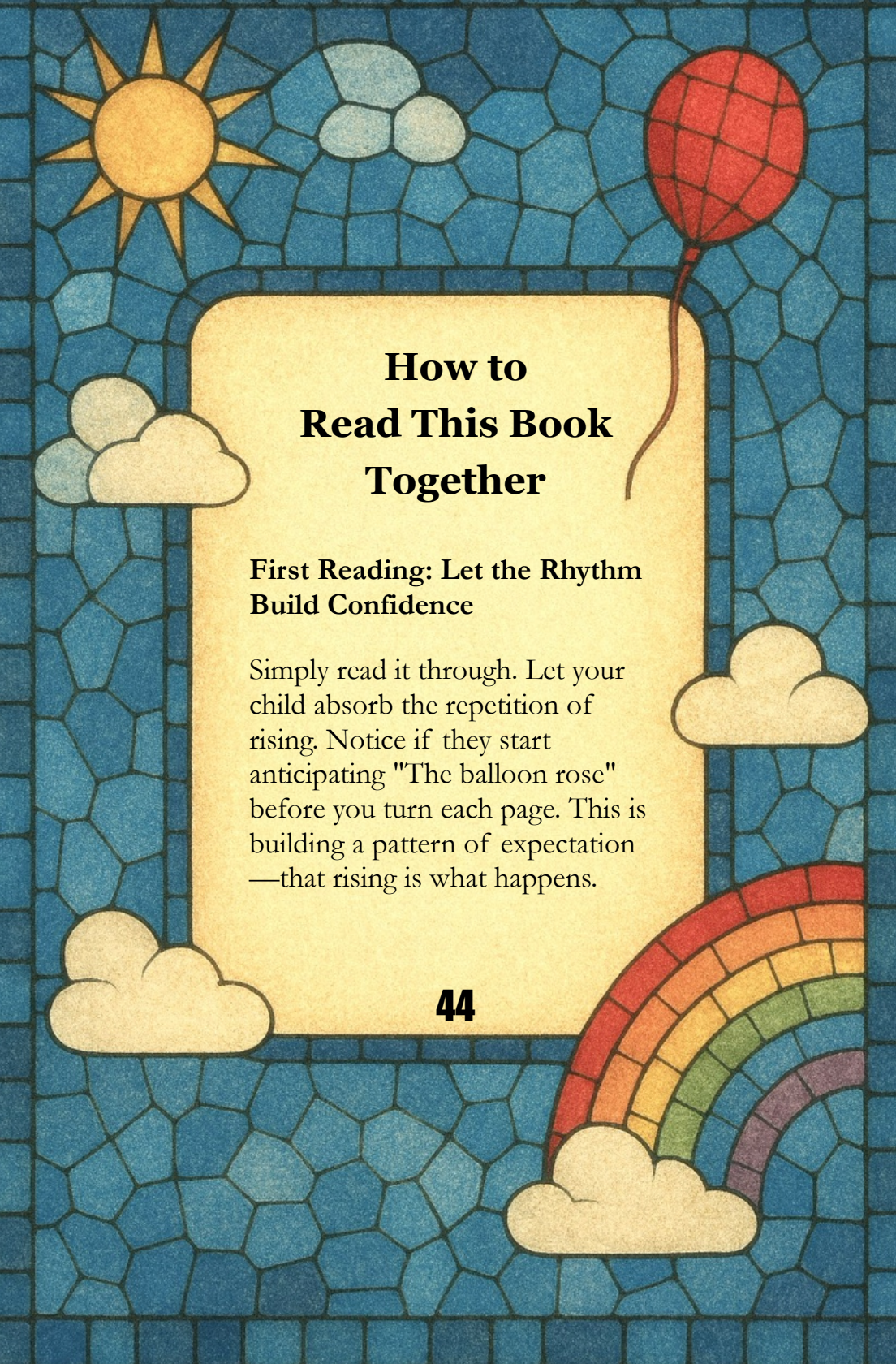
The background of the page is a blue stained glass pattern. In the top left is a yellow sun with rays. In the top right is a red balloon with a string. In the bottom right is a rainbow with multiple bands of color. There are several white clouds scattered around the page. A large yellow rectangle is in the center, containing text.

Pages 17-26: The Rising Again

The balloon doesn't just recover—it goes higher. Past roofs, past trees, past a waiting hand. It carries wishes and light. This shows your child that coming back from a fall doesn't mean returning to where you were. It means discovering you can go further than you imagined.

Pages 27-30: The Promise

"Even when it sank... hope rose again. And so will you." The story makes it personal. This isn't just about a balloon anymore—it's about your child, about you, about the universal truth that we all fall and we all rise again.

The background of the page is a blue stained glass pattern. In the top left corner is a yellow sun with rays. In the top right corner is a red balloon with a string. In the bottom right corner is a rainbow with colors red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. There are several white clouds scattered around the page.

How to Read This Book Together

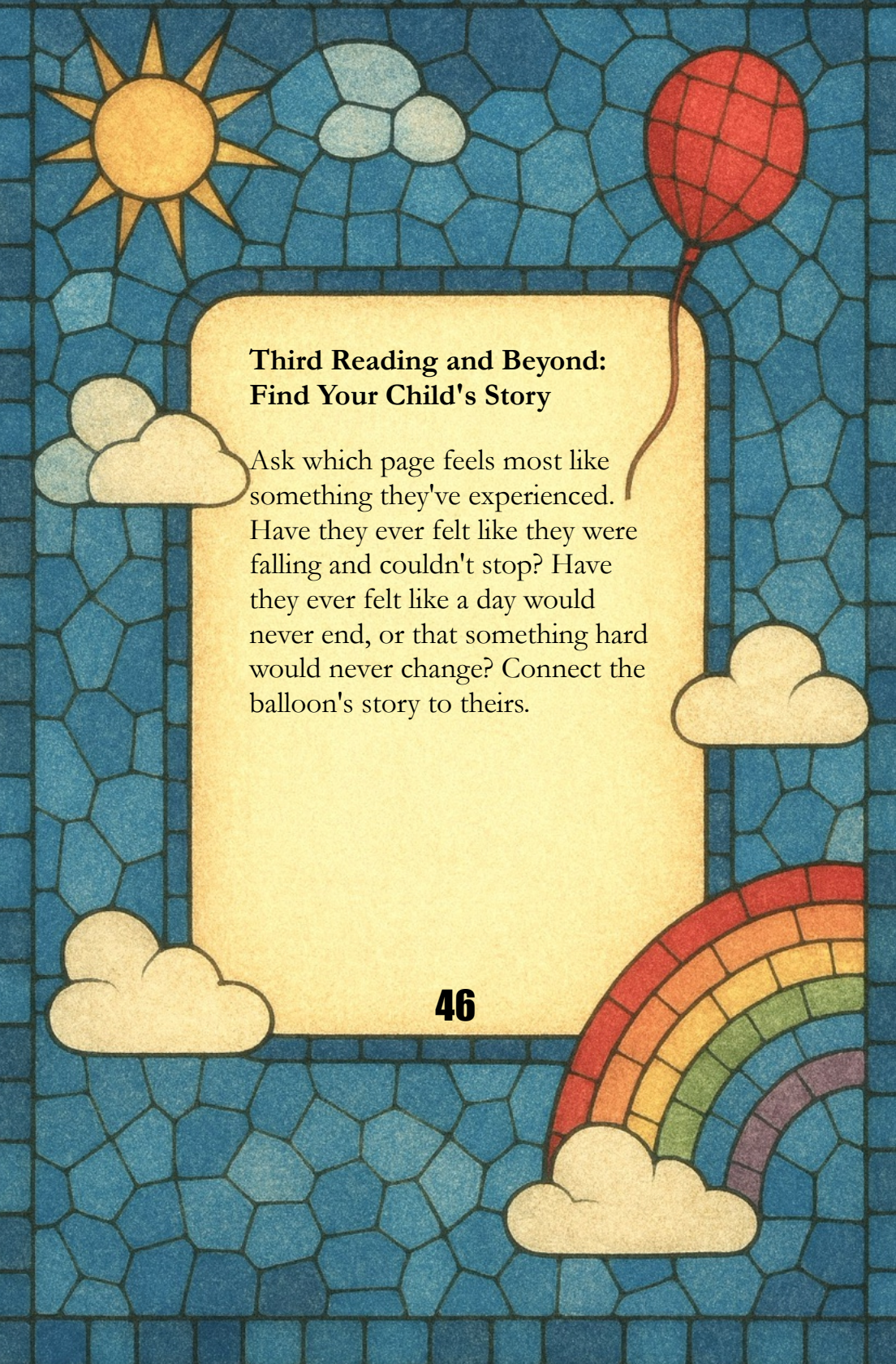
First Reading: Let the Rhythm Build Confidence

Simply read it through. Let your child absorb the repetition of rising. Notice if they start anticipating "The balloon rose" before you turn each page. This is building a pattern of expectation—that rising is what happens.



Second Reading: Pause at the Fall

When you reach pages 11-14, slow down. Ask: "What do you think the balloon feels right now?" Sit with their answer, even if it's just a feeling they show on their face. This is where the real work happens—acknowledging that falls are real and scary.

The background of the page is a blue stained glass pattern. In the top left is a yellow sun with rays. In the top right is a red balloon with a string. In the bottom right is a rainbow with multiple bands of color. There are several white clouds scattered around the central text area.

Third Reading and Beyond: Find Your Child's Story

Ask which page feels most like something they've experienced. Have they ever felt like they were falling and couldn't stop? Have they ever felt like a day would never end, or that something hard would never change? Connect the balloon's story to theirs.

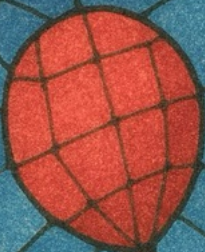


Age-Specific Guidance

Ages 2-4: Sensory Connection

- Point to the balloon on each page and let them touch it
- Make the sounds: wind whooshing, storm rumbling
- Act out the rising and falling with your hands or a real balloon if you have one
- Focus on the feeling words: up, down, higher, lower, rising, falling

- 
- The background of the page is a blue mosaic of irregular hexagonal and pentagonal shapes. In the top left corner is a yellow sun with eight triangular rays. In the top right corner is a red balloon with a black grid pattern and a brown string. There are four white, fluffy clouds: one in the top center, one on the left side, one on the right side, and one at the bottom right. A rainbow with seven distinct bands of color (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet) is positioned in the bottom right corner, partially overlapping a cloud. A large, light-yellow rectangular box with rounded corners is centered on the page, containing a single bullet point.
- Use your voice: go higher when it rises, lower and slower when it falls



Ages 5-7: Emotional Bridge

- Ask: "Have you ever tried something and it didn't work the first time?"
- Help them name times they fell (literally or figuratively) and got back up
- Talk about the "found the wind" page: "What helps you when you're feeling down?"
- Discuss what the balloon was carrying: "What wishes or light do you carry?"
- Connect to real experiences: dropping something, losing at a game, a friendship struggle

Ages 8+: Life Application

- Explore what "rising again" means when you've actually failed
- Discuss the difference between the first rising (pages 1-10) and rising again (pages 17-26)
- Talk about how falling can teach us something: "What did the balloon learn by falling?"
- Ask: "Who helps you rise when you've fallen? How do they help?"
- Discuss the line "And so will you"—make it personal and specific to their current challenges



Conversation Starters Matched to the Book

After the rising pages (wind, clouds, hill, storm):

- "Which of these challenges felt hardest for the balloon? Why?"
- "When have you kept going even when things got hard?"

After the falling pages (11-14):

- "What would you want to tell the balloon in this moment?"
- "Have you ever felt like you were falling and couldn't stop?"
- "What's the scariest part about falling?"

After the turning page (15-16):

- "How did the balloon find the wind while it was falling?"
 - "Have you ever discovered something helpful in a hard moment?"
 - "What helps lift you up when you're feeling down?"
- 

After the higher rising pages (17-26):

- "How is this rising different from the first time?"
- "What does the balloon carry? What do you carry?"

- 
- The background of the page is a blue mosaic of irregular hexagonal and pentagonal shapes. In the top left corner is a yellow sun with eight triangular rays. In the top right corner is a red balloon with a black grid pattern and a brown string. In the bottom right corner is a rainbow with seven distinct color bands (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet) arching over a white cloud. There are four other white clouds: one in the top center, one on the left side, one in the bottom left, and one in the bottom right.
- "Have you ever come back stronger after something went wrong?"

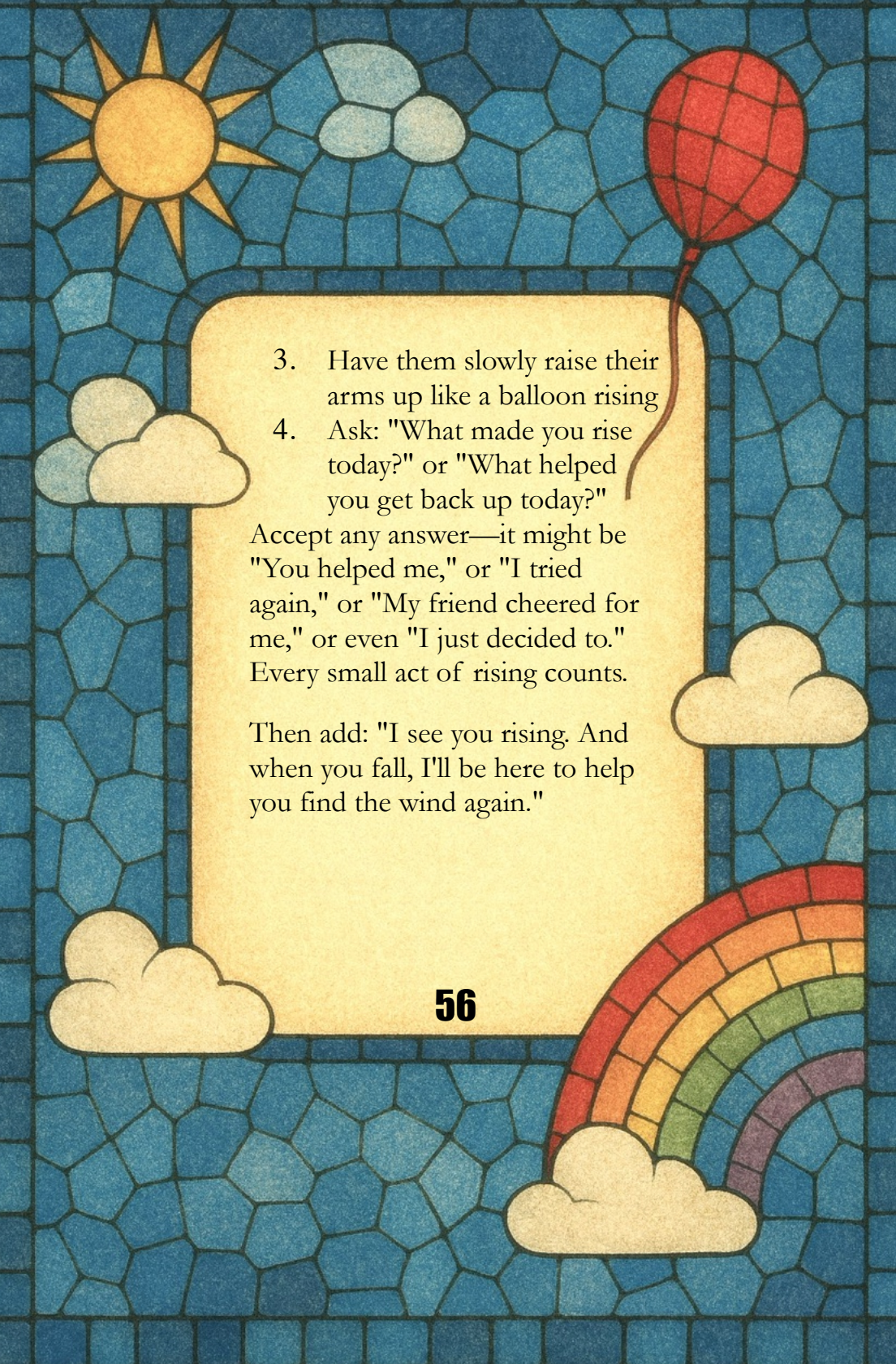
After the promise (27-30):

- "What does 'And so will you' mean to you?"
- "Who believes you can rise again? How do you know?"
- "What wish or light are you carrying right now?"

A Glimpse Practice: The Rising Ritual

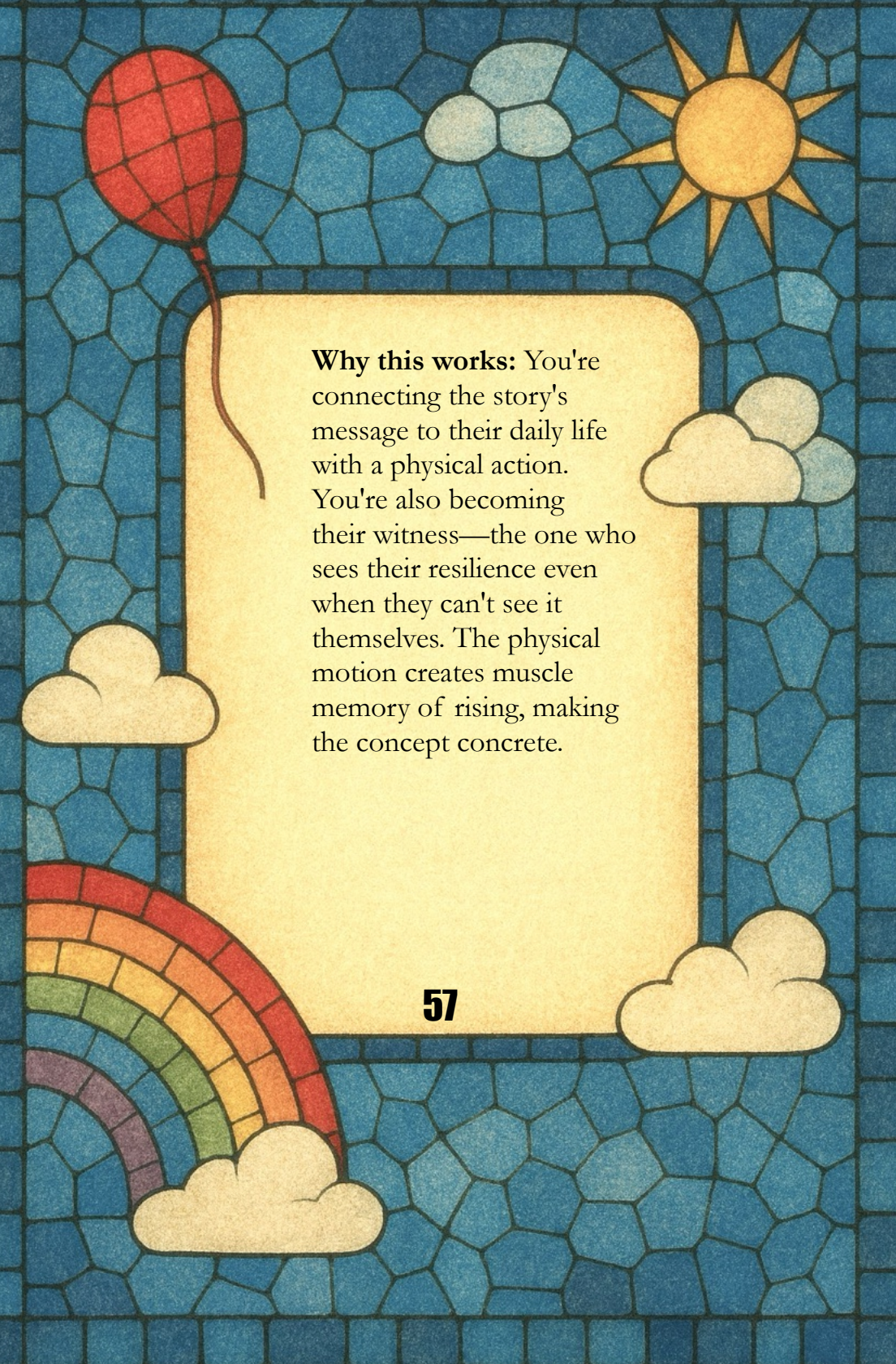
Each night this week, create a simple ritual:

1. Have your child stand with arms at their sides
2. Say: "Even when you fall, you can rise again"

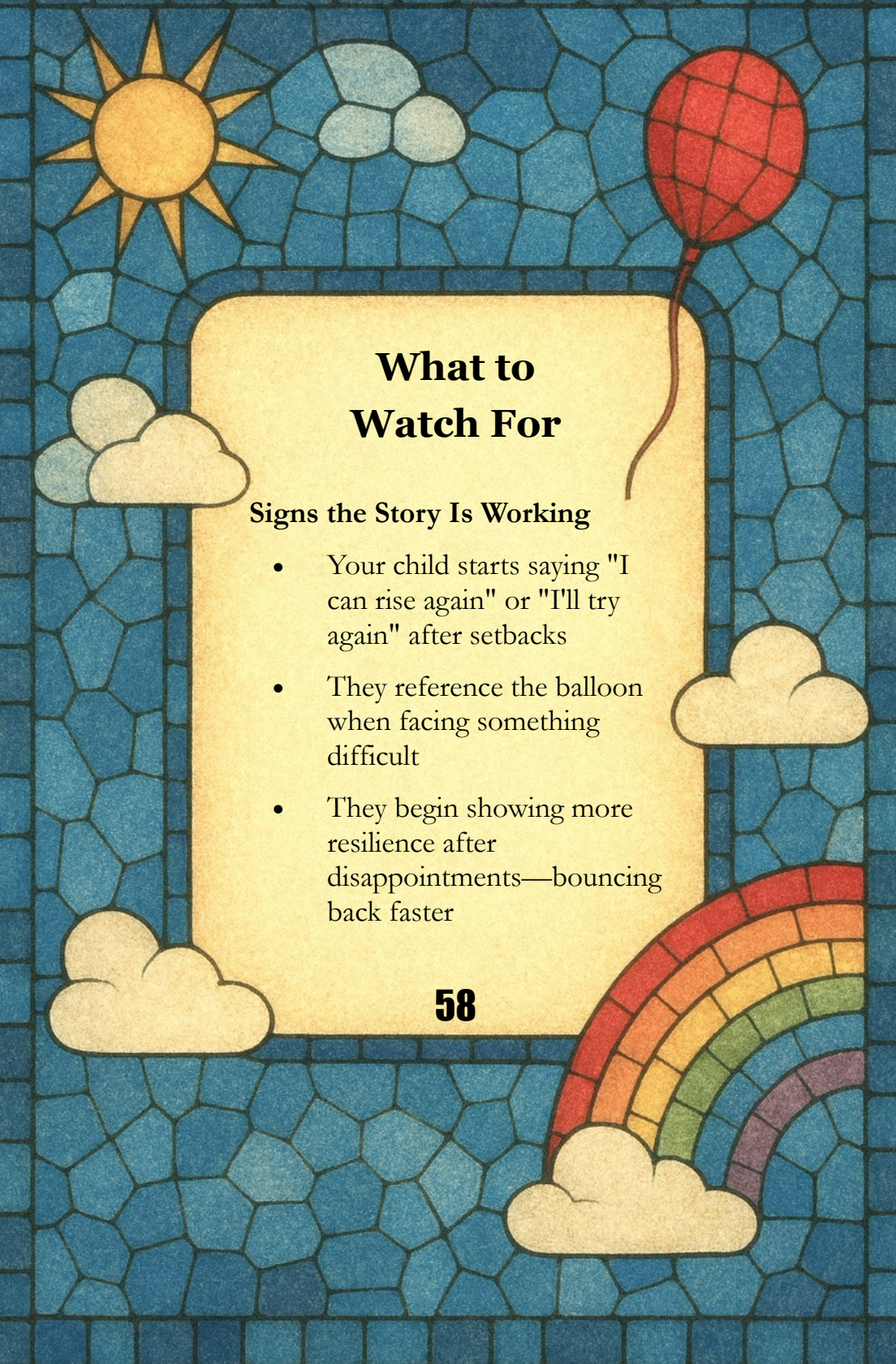
- 
3. Have them slowly raise their arms up like a balloon rising
4. Ask: "What made you rise today?" or "What helped you get back up today?"

Accept any answer—it might be "You helped me," or "I tried again," or "My friend cheered for me," or even "I just decided to." Every small act of rising counts.

Then add: "I see you rising. And when you fall, I'll be here to help you find the wind again."



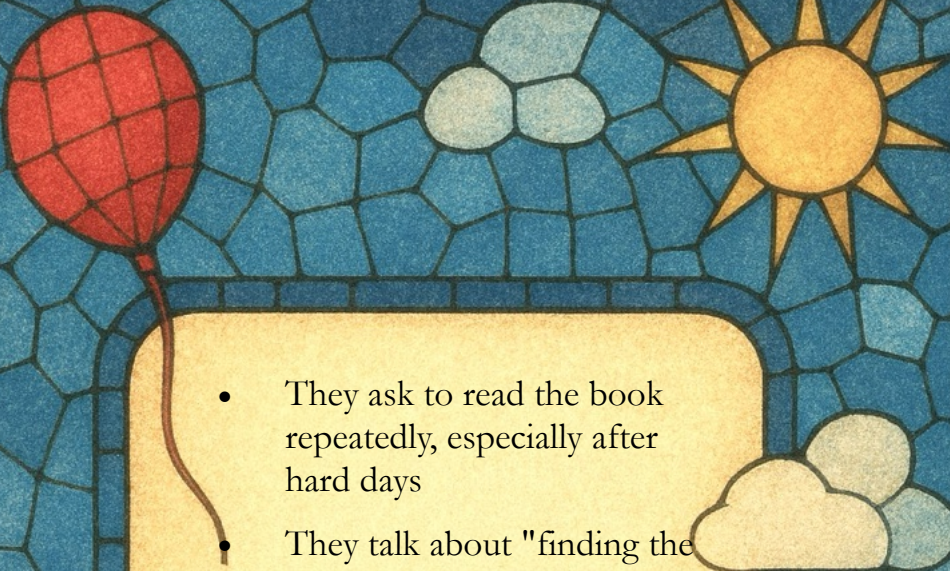
Why this works: You're connecting the story's message to their daily life with a physical action. You're also becoming their witness—the one who sees their resilience even when they can't see it themselves. The physical motion creates muscle memory of rising, making the concept concrete.

The background of the page is a blue stained glass pattern. In the top left is a yellow sun with rays. In the top right is a red balloon with a string. In the bottom right is a rainbow. There are several white clouds scattered around the central text area.

What to Watch For

Signs the Story Is Working

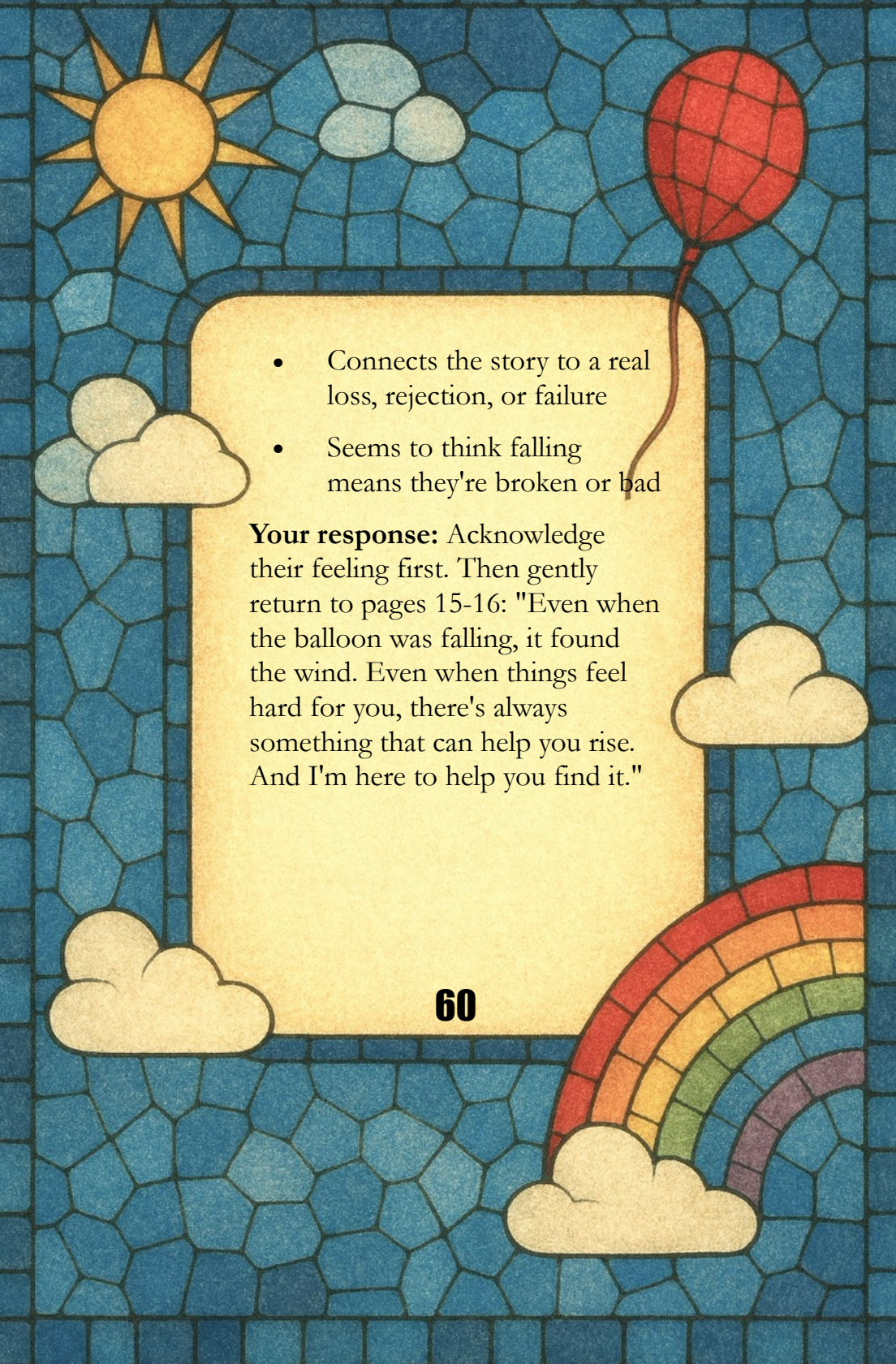
- Your child starts saying "I can rise again" or "I'll try again" after setbacks
- They reference the balloon when facing something difficult
- They begin showing more resilience after disappointments—bouncing back faster

- 
- They ask to read the book repeatedly, especially after hard days
 - They talk about "finding the wind" as a metaphor for finding help or hope

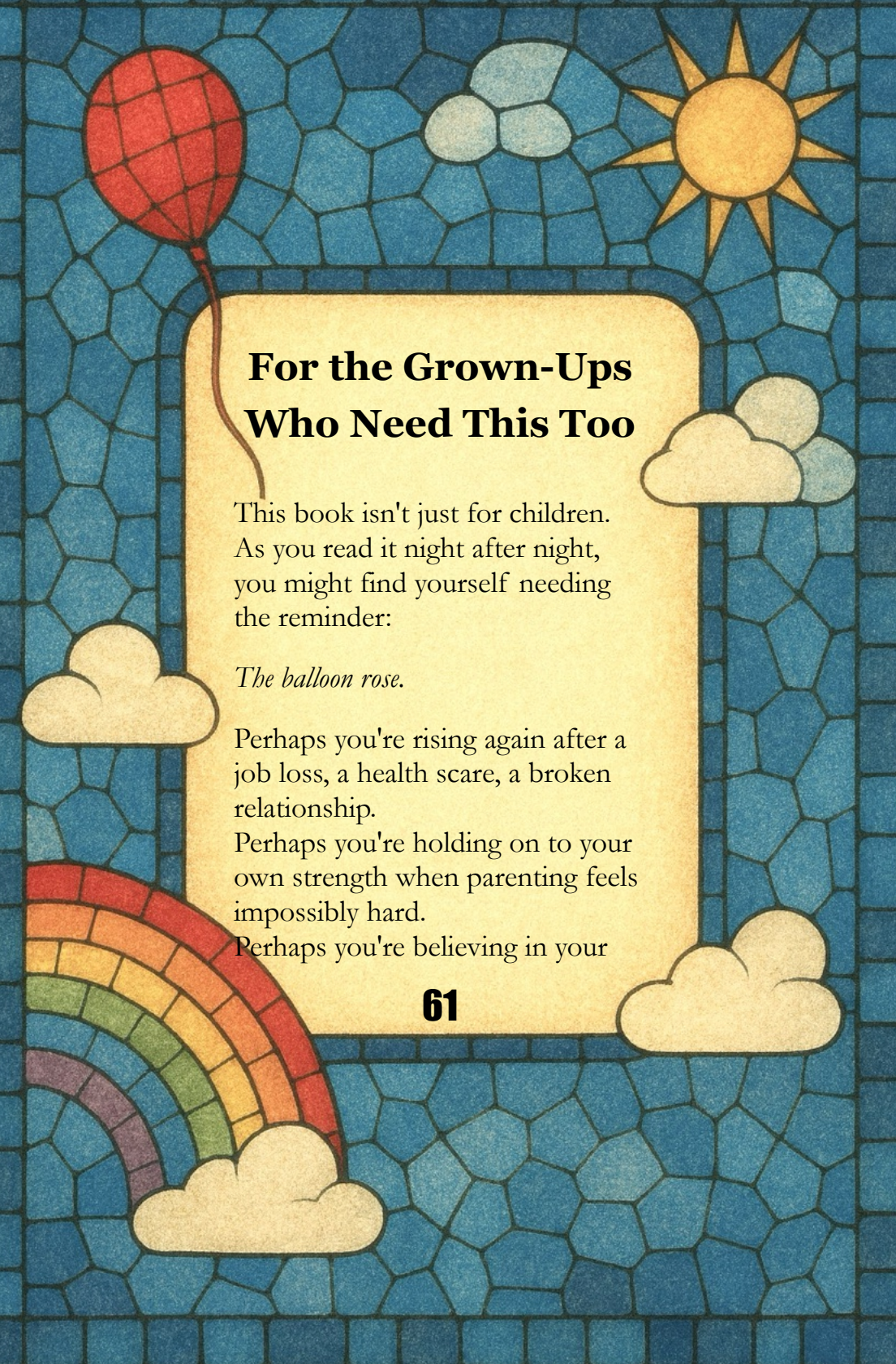
When to Lean In Deeper

If your child:

- Gets stuck on the falling pages or seems afraid of failure
- Asks questions about things that don't rise or can't be fixed

- 
- Connects the story to a real loss, rejection, or failure
 - Seems to think falling means they're broken or bad

Your response: Acknowledge their feeling first. Then gently return to pages 15-16: "Even when the balloon was falling, it found the wind. Even when things feel hard for you, there's always something that can help you rise. And I'm here to help you find it."



For the Grown-Ups Who Need This Too

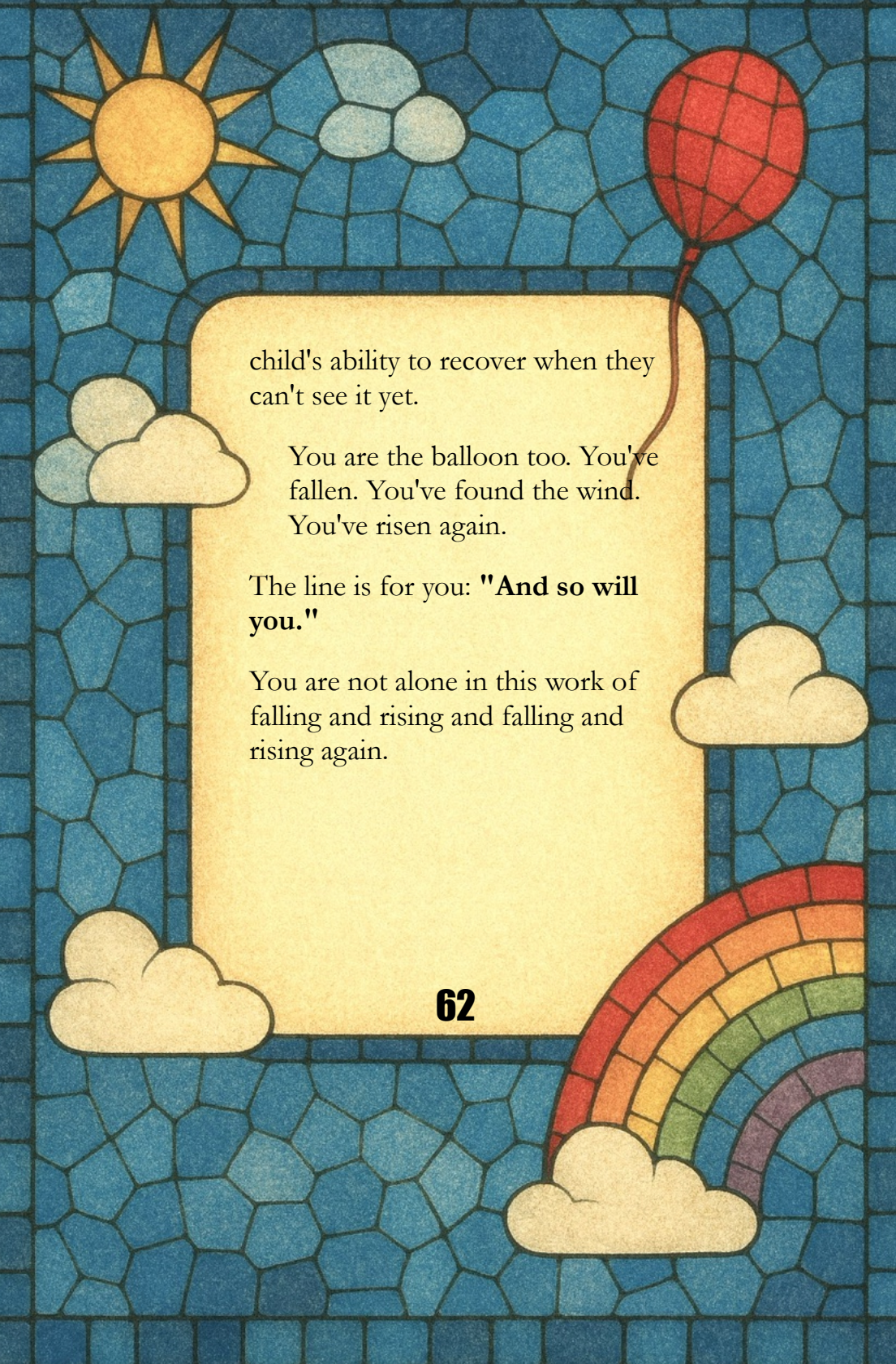
This book isn't just for children.
As you read it night after night,
you might find yourself needing
the reminder:

The balloon rose.

Perhaps you're rising again after a
job loss, a health scare, a broken
relationship.

Perhaps you're holding on to your
own strength when parenting feels
impossibly hard.

Perhaps you're believing in your



child's ability to recover when they
can't see it yet.

You are the balloon too. You've
fallen. You've found the wind.
You've risen again.

The line is for you: **"And so will
you."**

You are not alone in this work of
falling and rising and falling and
rising again.



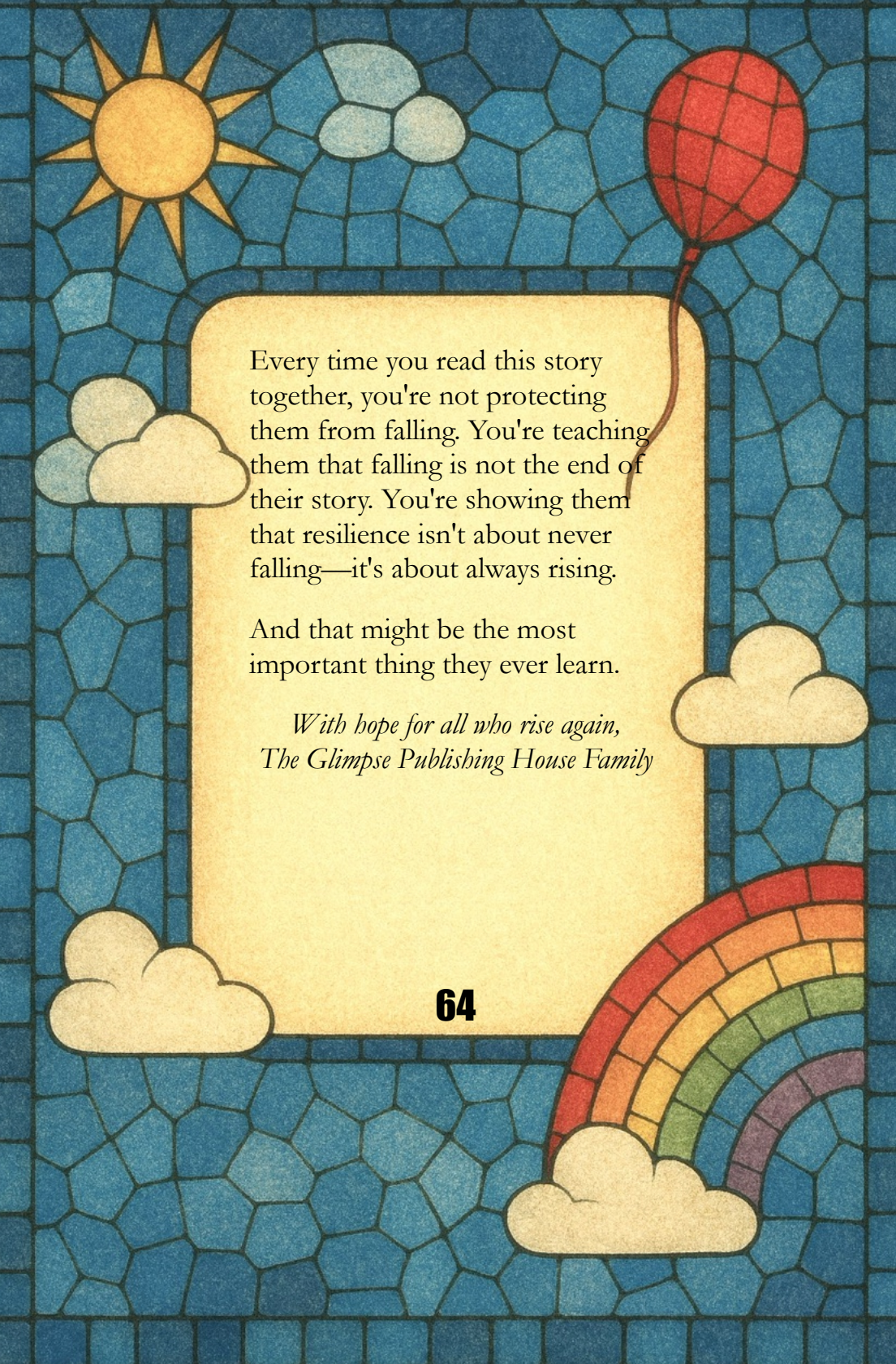
A Final Thought

Your child will fall. Many times. In small ways and big ways. They will lose games, lose friends, lose confidence. They will fail tests and auditions and tryouts. They will have their heart broken and their hopes dashed.

And this book won't prevent any of that.

But it will give them something more important: a pattern to follow. A promise to hold. A refrain that becomes their inner voice.

The balloon rose.

The background is a blue mosaic of irregular shapes. In the top left is a yellow sun with rays. In the top center are two light blue clouds. In the top right is a red balloon with a string. In the bottom right is a rainbow with colors red, orange, yellow, green, and purple. There are also several white clouds with black outlines scattered around the central text area.

Every time you read this story together, you're not protecting them from falling. You're teaching them that falling is not the end of their story. You're showing them that resilience isn't about never falling—it's about always rising.

And that might be the most important thing they ever learn.

*With hope for all who rise again,
The Glimpse Publishing House Family*

Teacher Guide: The Little Balloon That Rose Again A Classroom Resource for Educators

Welcome, Teachers

The Little Balloon That Rose Again isn't just a story—it's a doorway into conversations about hope, resilience, perseverance after failure, and the courage to try again. This guide provides practical tools for bringing this book into your classroom, homeschool, or faith formation setting.

Whether you teach preschool, elementary, or lead a children's ministry, you'll find age-appropriate activities, discussion frameworks, and cross-curricular connections that make the most of this uplifting, powerful story.

How to Use This Guide

This teacher section is organized into:

- Learning Objectives by Grade Level - What students can gain from this story
- Pre-Reading Activities - Preparing students to receive the story
- During Reading Strategies - Interactive reading techniques
- Post-Reading Discussions - Questions that deepen understanding
- Cross-Curricular Activities - Science, Art, Writing, SEL connections

- Extended Projects - Week-long or unit-long explorations
- Faith Formation Applications - For religious education settings
- Assessment & Observation Tools - How to measure growth

Learning Objectives by Grade Level

PreK-Kindergarten (Ages 3-5)

Core Objectives:

- Understand that it's okay to fall down or make mistakes
- Recognize that we can try again after something goes wrong
- Practice getting back up after disappointment
- Connect the story to their own experiences of falling and rising

SEL Competencies:

- Self-awareness: Identifying feelings of sadness or disappointment
- Self-management: Recovering from setbacks
- Social awareness: Recognizing that others also experience failure

Grades 1-2 (Ages 6-7)

Core Objectives:

- Define "hope" in age-appropriate terms (believing things can get better)
- Identify the setbacks the balloon faces and how it responds
- Compare the balloon's journey to personal experiences of trying again

- Understand that rising again is a choice we can make

SEL Competencies:

- Self-awareness: Naming times they've experienced failure or disappointment
- Self-management: Developing strategies for bouncing back
- Responsible decision-making: Choosing to try again after setbacks

Grades 3-4 (Ages 8-10)

Core Objectives:

- Analyze the relationship between failure and growth
- Explore hope as an active choice, not passive wishing
- Apply resilience principles to their own learning and challenges
- Create connections between the balloon's journey and perseverance

SEL Competencies:

- Self-awareness: Reflecting on personal patterns of response to failure
- Self-management: Building emotional resilience
- Relationship skills: Supporting others through disappointment
- Responsible decision-making: Persevering despite repeated setbacks

Pre-Reading Activities

Activity 1: The Balloon Experiment

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Balloon(s), string, open space

Process:

1. Blow up a balloon and tie a string to it
2. Hold it up and let students observe it rising
3. Let the string slip from your hand
4. Watch it float away or fall
5. Ask: "What happened? What made the balloon fall?"
6. Discuss: "What if the balloon found wind even while it was falling? Could it rise again?"
7. Introduce the concept: "Today we'll read about a balloon that rose and fell—and discovered something amazing while falling."

Teaching Point: This primes students to think about the possibility of finding hope even in the midst of falling, not just after hitting bottom.

Activity 2: Thinking About Falling Down

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: Chart paper, markers

Process:

1. Create a class chart with two columns: "Times We Fall Down" and "How It Feels"
2. Invite students to share experiences (physical falls, mistakes, disappointments)
3. Validate all feelings (embarrassment, sadness, frustration, anger)
4. Add a third column: "What Helps Us Get Back Up?"
5. Transition: "In our story, a balloon falls. Let's see what it does."

Teaching Point: Normalizes failure and creates empathy for the balloon's journey while beginning to identify resilience strategies.

Activity 3: The Rise and Fall Timeline

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Paper strips, markers, tape

Process:

1. Give each student a paper strip
2. Ask them to draw a line from left to right
3. Mark moments in their life when something was hard or they fell (physically or emotionally)
4. Mark moments when they got back up or tried again
5. Notice: "Everyone here has fallen. Everyone here has risen again."

Teaching Point: Helps students recognize their own resilience history before encountering it in the story.

During Reading Strategies

Strategy 1: Echo Reading (PreK-1)

Read each page, then have students echo the refrain: "The balloon rose"

- This builds rhythm, anticipation, and emotional investment
- Pages 3-12: Strong, confident echoing
- Page 13: The refrain breaks — "The balloon fell" — let the shock register
- Pages 14-16: No refrain, only descent — let the silence sit
- Pages 17-18: The turning point — read with wonder
- Pages 19-33: Resume the refrain, but notice page 29's beautiful shift to "hope rose again"
- This shift from "balloon" to "hope" is profound — pause here and let students feel it

Strategy 2: Predictive Pausing (Grades 1-3)

At key moments, pause and ask:

- After page 4 (gentle wind): "What do you think will happen next?"
- After page 6 (clouds grew dark): "Will the balloon keep rising?"
- After page 10 (storm began): "This is getting harder — what will happen?"
- After page 12 (string slipped): "Oh no! What do you think happens now?"
- After page 16 (almost to the ground): "Is this the end?"
- After page 17 (found the wind): "Wait — what just happened?"

This builds engagement and helps students experience the emotional arc of the story.

Strategy 3: Emotion Tracking (Grades 2-4)

Give students a simple feelings chart (hopeful, sad, worried, proud, determined). As you read, they hold up the feeling they think the balloon is experiencing. After reading, discuss: "When did your feelings change? Why?"

Strategy 4: Close Reading of Pages 13-18

These are the pivotal pages. Slow down here.

Page 13: "The balloon fell."

Ask:

- "What just happened? How does this feel?"
- "Is this the first time we've heard these words?"
- "What changed?"

Pages 14-16: The descent (Lower. Lower still. Almost to the ground.)

Ask:

- "What's happening? How do you think the balloon feels?"

- "Have you ever felt like you were falling and couldn't stop?"
- Let the weight of these pages sit—don't rush

Pages 17-18: The turning point

Read page 17 slowly: "But even falling—it found the wind."

Ask:

- "What just happened?"
- "The balloon was still falling—but what did it find?"
- "What does it mean to find hope even while you're still falling?"
- "Do you have to hit the bottom before you can find what lifts you?"

Then read page 18: "The wind lifted higher."

Ask:

- "What's different about this rising?"
- "The balloon didn't have to stop falling first to find the wind. What does that teach us?"

Teaching Point: This is the heart of the story—hope can be found in the falling, not just after we've landed. We don't have to wait until we hit bottom to begin rising again.

Strategy 5: The Beautiful Shift (Pages 29-30)

Page 29: "Even when it sank... ..hope rose again."

This is where the refrain transforms. We've been saying "The balloon rose" throughout—but now it's "hope rose again."

Ask:

- "What changed in these words?"
- "Why does the author say 'hope' instead of 'balloon' here?"
- "What's the difference?"

- "Can hope rise even when we sink?"

Page 30: "And so will you."

This is the personal message—the story becomes about the reader.

Ask:

- "Who is 'you'?"
- "What is this page promising you?"
- "Do you believe it?"

Teaching Point: This story isn't just about a balloon—it's about us. And the promise is clear: when we sink, hope will rise again. And so will we.

Post-Reading Discussions

Discussion Framework: Think-Pair-Share

Level 1 Questions (Comprehension):

- What happened to the balloon at the beginning?
- What challenges did the balloon face? (wind, dark clouds, hill falling away, storm, string slipping)
- What happened on page 13?
- What happened while the balloon was falling?
- How did the story end?

Level 2 Questions (Analysis):

- Why do you think the author chose to have the balloon face so many challenges before falling?
- What's significant about the balloon finding wind "even falling" (page 17)?
- On page 29, why does the story say "hope rose again" instead of "the balloon rose"?
- Why did the story end with "And so will you" (page 30)? Who is "you"?
- What's the difference between rising after you fall and finding wind while you're falling?

Level 3 Questions (Application):

- When have you found hope even while something hard was still happening?
- What gives you hope when you're in the middle of a difficult time?
- How can you help someone else who is falling right now—not after they land, but while they're still falling?
- What's your "wind"—the thing that lifts you even when you're sinking?

Discussion Prompts by Theme

If focusing on HOPE:

- "What is hope? How is it different from wishing?"
- "The balloon found wind even while falling. What does that teach us about when we can find hope?"
- "Do we have to wait until things get better to have hope? Or can we have hope even when things are still hard?"
- "On page 29, it says 'hope rose again.' What does that mean?"

If focusing on GROWTH MINDSET:

- "The balloon didn't stay down. What does that teach us about mistakes?"
- "What's something you've failed at and tried again? What happened?"
- "Is it okay to fall down? Why or why not?"

If focusing on RESILIENCE:

- "The balloon faced gentle wind, dark clouds, the hill falling away, a storm, and the string slipping. Which would have been hardest for you?"
- "What made the balloon able to find wind even while falling?"

- "What does 'resilience' mean? How did the balloon show it?"
- "Is resilience about never falling? Or about what you do while falling?"

If focusing on PERSEVERANCE:

- "The balloon kept rising through challenge after challenge. What kept it going?"
- "When is it time to give up? When is it time to keep trying?"
- "What's the difference between being stubborn and being hopeful?"

If focusing on PURPOSE (Pages 24-27):

- "The balloon 'carried the wish' and 'carried the light.' What do you think that means?"
- "When you rise again after falling, what are you carrying?"
- "How does having a purpose help us rise?"
- "What is your 'wish' or 'light' that you carry?"

Cross-Curricular Activities

SCIENCE: Balloon Physics Exploration

Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials: Balloons (multiple sizes), weights (pennies, paperclips), string, measuring tape

Process:

1. Read *The Little Balloon That Rose Again*
2. Explore balloon science:
 - What makes a balloon rise? (helium, lighter-than-air)
 - What makes it fall? (weight, loss of helium, gravity, wind resistance)
 - What affects how high it can go? (weather, wind currents, obstacles)

3. Experiment: Blow up a balloon with air (not helium)—it won't rise. Discuss why.
4. Show images or video of helium balloons rising past roofs, trees, and hands (like in the story)
5. Discussion: "The real balloon in our story is us. What makes us 'rise'? What pulls us down? What helps us rise again even when we're falling?"

Reflection Questions:

- "How is your hope like a balloon?"
- "What are the 'winds' that can lift you?"
- "On pages 20-22, the balloon passed roofs, trees, and a waiting hand. What do you think these represent?"
- "What does it mean that the balloon carried 'the wish' and 'the light'?"

ART: Rise Again Collage

Time: 45-60 minutes (can span 2 sessions)

Materials: Construction paper, tissue paper, magazines, scissors, glue, markers

Process:

1. Discuss the mosaic art style in the book
2. Divide paper into three sections (vertical or diagonal):
 - Bottom section: Create imagery of falling, descent, challenges
 - Middle section: Create swirling wind patterns—this represents finding hope WHILE falling
 - Top section: Create bright, lifting imagery representing rising again
3. In the middle: Draw or create a balloon that's still falling but caught in the wind

4. Add words from the story: "But even falling—it found the wind"

Extension: Write around the border: "Even when I'm falling, I can find..." and students complete the sentence.

Teaching Point: We don't have to wait until we land to find hope. Wind can catch us even while we're falling.

WRITING: Hope Stories

Grades 2-4

Time: 30-40 minutes

Prompt: "Think of a time when you were going through something hard—and you found hope even while it was still happening. Maybe someone helped you, or you remembered something important, or you discovered you were stronger than you thought. Tell that story."

Framework:

- What was happening? (The hard time)
- How did you feel while it was happening?
- What "wind" did you find? (What gave you hope in the middle of it?)
- Did you have to wait until it was over to feel hope? Or did hope come while it was still hard?
- What happened next?
- What did you learn?

Extension: Create a class book: "We Found Wind While Falling: Stories from Room ____"

WRITING: My Resilience Balloon

Grades K-2

Time: 20 minutes

Prompt: Draw a picture of yourself as a balloon. Inside the balloon, write or draw your "wish" and your "light" (what you hope for and what makes you shine). Around the

balloon, write or draw the "winds" that help you rise when you're falling.

Examples:

- "My family believes in me"
- "I remember I'm brave"
- "My friends help me"
- "I take deep breaths"
- "I remember hard things don't last forever"

Display Idea: Create a bulletin board titled "Even When We Fall, We Find Wind" with all student balloons floating upward, with swirling wind patterns drawn around them.

MATH: The Rise and Fall Graph

Grades 2-4

Time: 30 minutes

Activity:

1. Create a graph tracking the balloon's journey through the story:
 - X-axis: Pages/Events in story
 - Y-axis: How high the balloon is (0 = on ground, 10 = highest)
2. Plot key points:
 - Pages 3-12: Steady rising despite challenges (mark each: wind, clouds, hill, storm, string slipping)
 - Page 13: Sharp drop (fell)
 - Pages 14-16: Continuing down (lower, lower still, almost to ground)
 - Page 17: Turn around point (found wind while falling)
 - Pages 18-34: Rising trajectory
3. Notice: The balloon only fell once, but the fall was long and scary

4. Notice: The balloon didn't stop falling before it found wind—it found wind **WHILE** falling
5. Discuss: "What does the shape of this graph teach us about hope?"

Extension: Students create their own "hope graph" for a challenge they've faced, marking:

- When did the challenge start?
- When did things get harder?
- When did you find your "wind"?
- Were you still in a hard time when you found hope?

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING: Hope Practice

All Ages

Time: Ongoing practice

Activity: *The Hope Jar*

Setup:

- Get a clear jar
- Every time someone in the class finds hope in the middle of a challenge (not after it's over), add a balloon cutout to the jar
- Each balloon represents a moment of discovering "wind while falling"
- Reference the book: "Like the balloon, we found wind even while things were still hard"

Examples of when to add a balloon:

- A student is struggling with math but asks for help instead of giving up
- Someone makes a mistake but finds a way to fix it
- A student is sad but finds comfort from a friend
- The class faces a challenge but works together to solve it

Reflection (weekly): Look at the jar together and discuss:

- "What challenges are we still facing?"

- "Where did we find hope this week—even while things were still hard?"
- "What 'wind' caught us?"

Extended Projects

Project 1: Class Mural of Rising (1-2 weeks)

Materials: Butcher paper, paint, markers, collage materials

Process:

1. Create a large mural divided into three sections:
 - Left section: Students draw/write challenges and moments of falling
 - Middle section: Large swirling wind patterns with the words "But even falling—it found the wind" (page 17)
 - Right section: Students draw/write hopes, dreams, and moments of rising
2. Throughout all sections: Balloons at various heights—some rising, some falling, some caught in the wind
3. At the top: "And so will you" (page 30)
4. Students add their own balloon with their name and something like:
 - "My wind is..."
 - "My hope is..."
 - "My wish is..."
 - "My light is..."

Display with title: "We Find Wind While Falling"

Weekly Addition: Add new balloons as students experience moments of finding hope in the middle of challenges.

Project 2: Rise Again Video Project (2-3 weeks)

Materials: Tablets/cameras, stop-motion app, paper cutouts

Process:

1. Students work in groups to create stop-motion videos
2. Each video shows a balloon (or character) falling and rising again
3. Groups add narration explaining what helps their character rise
4. Class premiere: "Film Festival of Hope"

Presentation: Each group shares their video and explains the message.

Project 3: Interview Project - "People Who Found Wind" (Grades 3-4)

Time: 2-3 weeks

Process:

1. Students interview an adult about a time they found hope in the middle of a difficult situation
2. Questions provided:
 - Tell me about a time when you were going through something really hard.
 - How did you feel in the middle of it?
 - Did you find any hope before the situation was completely over? What gave you hope?
 - Was there a moment when you felt like you were still falling but found something to hold onto?
 - What was your "wind" —the thing that helped you rise even while things were still hard?
 - Looking back, when did hope actually begin —at the end, or somewhere in the middle?
3. Students create a presentation (poster, video, written story)

Class Celebration: "Gallery of Wind Catchers" where students share their interviews.

Teaching Point: Help students see that hope doesn't wait for resolution—it can appear in the middle of our hardest moments.

Faith Formation Applications
For Sunday School/CCD/Faith Formation Classes
Biblical Connections:

Proverbs 24:16

"For though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again"

- Read alongside the book
- Compare: Both acknowledge that falling happens, both emphasize rising again
- But notice the story's deeper message: "But even falling—it found the wind" (page 17)
- Discuss: "The balloon didn't wait until it stopped falling to find hope. It found wind while it was still falling. How is that like God's grace?"
- Activity: Create bookmarks with this verse and page 17's words

Psalms 37:23-24

"The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand"

- Connect to the story: Even when we're falling, God is the wind that catches us
- The balloon passed "a waiting hand" (page 22)—discuss what this might symbolize
- Activity: Create art showing hands, wind, and balloons with the words "But even falling—it found the wind"

- Discussion: "Do we have to wait until we hit bottom for God to help us? Or is God with us even in the falling?"

Romans 5:3-5

"We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame"

- Discuss: This verse says suffering produces hope—not that hope comes after suffering ends
- Connect to the balloon: It found wind "even falling" (page 17)—hope came during the fall, not after
- Activity: Create a visual showing the progression: Challenge → Finding Wind → Hope → Rising
- Discussion: "Can we have hope while we're still in the hard time? Or do we have to wait until it's over?"

1 Corinthians 13:13

"And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love"

- Introduce the full series: Faith (The Little Seed), Hope (The Little Balloon), Love (The Red Thread)
- Discuss how all three virtues work together

Prayer Practice: The Balloon Prayer

For closing circle:

"God, sometimes we are like the little balloon—
We rise with hope,
But then we fall.
Lower. Lower still.
Almost to the ground.
But even while we're falling,
You are the wind that catches us."

You lift us higher,
Not after we've landed,
But in the falling itself.
Help us remember:
We carry the wish.
We carry the light.
And even when we sink,
Hope will rise again.
And so will we.
Like the balloon,
We find wind while falling.
Amen."

Virtue Formation: Hope as a Practice

Weekly Practice:

- Monday: Name something challenging you're facing this week
- Wednesday: Check in - Are you in the middle of the challenge? Have you found any "wind" yet—any hope, help, or light in the darkness?
- Friday: Reflection - Did you find wind while you were still in the hard time? Or did you have to wait until it was over? What was your wind?

Monthly Celebration: Share stories of "finding wind while falling" from the month. Add them to a "Hope in the Falling" journal for the class.

Teaching Point: We're not just tracking whether hard things get better—we're learning to notice hope that appears in the middle of hard things.

Reconciliation Connection:

This book pairs beautifully with teaching about reconciliation and God's grace:

- We all fall (sin/make mistakes)
- But even falling, we can find God's wind (grace doesn't wait for us to land)
- God's grace catches us in the falling itself (we don't have to hit bottom first)
- When we rise again, we carry the light (reconciliation restores and transforms us)

Discussion Questions:

- "Does God wait until we've completely fallen before offering grace?"
- "What if God's grace is the wind that catches us even while we're falling?"
- "The balloon found wind 'even falling' — how is that like God's mercy?"

Assessment & Observation Tools

Observational Checklist

Use this during and after reading to note student understanding:

Comprehension: ☐ Can retell the basic story sequence

☐ Identifies the challenges the balloon faces (wind, clouds, hill, storm, string)

☐ Recognizes the fall on page 13 and the descent on pages 14-16

☐ Understands the turning point: finding wind "even falling" (page 17)

☐ Notices the shift from "The balloon rose" to "hope rose again" (page 29)

☐ Connects the ending "And so will you" to themselves

Thematic Understanding: ☐ Can define "hope" in their own words

☐ Connects the balloon's experience to personal life

- Recognizes that hope can be found during hard times, not just after
- Understands that falling is part of the journey, not the end
- Grasps the metaphor: balloon = us, wind = hope/grace/help

SEL Development: □ Shows empathy for the balloon's experience

- Reflects on their own experiences of failure/disappointment
- Demonstrates resilience strategies or willingness to try
- Supports peers who are struggling
- Shows growth in response to setbacks

Reflection Questions for Students

Written or Verbal Assessment:

1. What is this story really about?
2. On page 17, it says "But even falling—it found the wind." What does that mean?
3. When have you found hope in the middle of something hard (not after it was over)?
4. What is your "wind"—the thing that lifts you even when you're falling?
5. The balloon carried "the wish" and "the light." What do you carry?
6. On page 29, why does the story say "hope rose again" instead of "the balloon rose"?
7. Page 30 says "And so will you." What is that promising you?

Portfolio Piece

Have students create a "Before and After" comparison:

- *Before (before reading):* "When something hard happens, I have to wait until it's over to feel better."

- *After (after reading and activities):* "Even when something hard is still happening, I can find hope by..."

OR

Have students create a "Finding Wind" reflection:

- Draw yourself as a balloon
- On one side: Write/draw a challenge you're facing or have faced
- In the middle: Draw wind swirls
- Inside the wind: Write/draw the hope you found (or can find) even while the challenge was still happening

This documents growth in understanding that hope doesn't wait for resolution—it can appear in the midst of difficulty.

Connecting to Growth Mindset

This book naturally connects to growth mindset principles:

Fixed Mindset Says:

- "I'm falling and there's nothing I can do"
- "I have to wait until this is over to feel better"
- "If I'm failing, there's no hope"
- "I'm stuck until someone rescues me"

Growth Mindset Says:

- "Even while falling, I can look for wind"
- "Hope doesn't wait for the end—it can come now"
- "Falling doesn't mean I'm done—it's part of the journey"
- "I can find what lifts me even in the middle of hard times"

The Balloon Models Growth Mindset:

- Faces multiple challenges (challenges are normal)

- Falls but doesn't stay down (setbacks aren't permanent)
- Finds wind WHILE falling (solutions can appear before the problem is solved)
- Carries the wish and the light (purpose gives us direction even in difficulty)
- The refrain shifts to "hope rose again" (our perspective can transform our experience)

Activity: Create a class anchor chart comparing: "Waiting for the End" mindset vs. "Finding Wind While Falling" mindset

Page 17 becomes the class mantra: "But even falling—we can find the wind."

Students can add examples throughout the year of times they found "wind" in the middle of challenges.

Additional Resources

Recommended Read-Alouds to Pair With This Book:

- *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires
- *Beautiful Oops!* by Barney Saltzberg
- *Rosie Revere, Engineer* by Andrea Beaty
- *The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes* by Mark Pett and Gary Rubinstein
- *After the Fall* by Dan Santat

Videos:

- "Famous Failures" (compilation videos of successful people who failed first)
- "Growth Mindset for Kids" videos
- Hot air balloon launch videos

Songs:

- "Try Everything" from *Zootopia*
- "Get Back Up Again" from *Trolls*
- "I Won't Give Up" by Jason Mraz (clean version)

Books for Teachers:

- *The Power of Showing Up* by Daniel J. Siegel
- *Teaching with the HEART in Mind* by Lorea Martinez Perez
- *Mindset* by Carol Dweck

Thank You, Teachers

*Thank you for bringing The Little Balloon That Rose Again
into your classroom. You are planting seeds of hope,
resilience, and courage in your students.*

*You are teaching them something profound:
They don't have to wait until they've landed to find hope.
They don't have to wait until the problem is solved to feel
lifted.*

*They can find wind even while they're falling.
This is a lesson that will serve them for a lifetime.
When your students face hard times—and they will—they
will remember this little balloon. They will remember that
falling is not the end. They will remember that hope can
appear in the middle of darkness. They will remember that
they carry the wish and the light.*

*And they will remember you—the teacher who believed in
them and showed them that even in the falling, wind can be
found.*

*One day, when they're in the middle of something hard and
they choose to look for the wind instead of waiting for the
landing, they will think:*

*My teacher knew. My teacher showed me. My teacher
believed I could find wind while falling.*

And so I will.

With gratitude,
Dr. Robert LiPuma
Glimpse Publishing House