



What Happened First?

Picture story • Ages 3-5 • B21



The teacher placed three cards on the rug: a puddle, a muddy boot, and a towel drying the floor. “It is a story!” Layan said. Then she lifted the towel card. “First, we dried the floor.”



Salma shook her head. “But why was the floor wet?” They arranged the towel, then the boot, then the puddle. Everyone laughed. “The puddle cannot wait until the end!” Layan said.



The teacher mixed the cards again. Salma chose the puddle first. Layan added the muddy boot. Mawaddah finished with the towel. Now each picture opened the door to the next one.



The teacher added a fourth card: a clean boot on a shelf. Salma thought it belonged at the beginning. Mawaddah thought it belonged at the end. The picture alone did not tell them who was right.



“We should not guess by ourselves,” the teacher said. “We need another picture or a sentence from the storyteller.” She showed: dry the floor, wash the boot, place it on the shelf. The clean boot belonged last.



During playtime, Salma built a tower and it fell. Layan and Mawaddah arranged three pictures: blocks in a pile, a standing tower, and scattered blocks. They did not choose the prettiest card. They chose the order that made the story clear.

Each picture opens the door to the next

Question: Why was the clean-boot picture not enough by itself?

Activity: Take three pictures of a simple action: beginning, middle and ending. Mix them, arrange them, and explain your clue.

For the grown-up: Ask, "What is the clue in the picture?" Accept more than one order when evidence is incomplete, then seek another clue instead of guessing.

Original fiction inspired by comprehension skills in "Read to Understand," pages 7, 9 and 17. It contains no direct Qur'an or hadith quotation.