

Iraklis Lampadariou was born in Katerini in 1988, but grew up in Kavala. He has been dealing faithfully with volunteering, both organising and participating in various collective actions, since the age of 10. He has studied classic literature in the Democritus University of Thrace (2005-2009). He loves learning foreign languages; he already speaks English, French, Spanish and he has started learning Slovak and Chinese. He has travelled in many places in Europe, involving himself in a multicultural dialogue that has certainly affected his way of thinking. He writes stories for the child each one of us hides inside them and constantly tries to figure out ways in which schools could cultivate students' creativity and imagination.

In August 2012 he created Saita publications, a digital, non-commercial space from which books are distributed for free. He's the author of "Creative class with enough imagination", "The magic bookmark" and "Greetings and wishes".

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IRAKLIS LAMPADARIOU

THE MAGIC BOOKMARK



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"Not again! Let me sleep a little more... Why do you want me to say this every day, over and over again? Nothing has changed. I don't want to go to school today, either. And why does it always have to be your way?"



"Not another day with books, notebooks, lessons, problems, pencils, pencil cases, bells and reading!" said Jason to his mother. It was yet another morning call. Every school day started like that for Jason or God forbid the planet would go wrong.



For Jason school was his worst nightmare ever. There were times you would think he could get a rush all over his face only with the sound of the word "school".



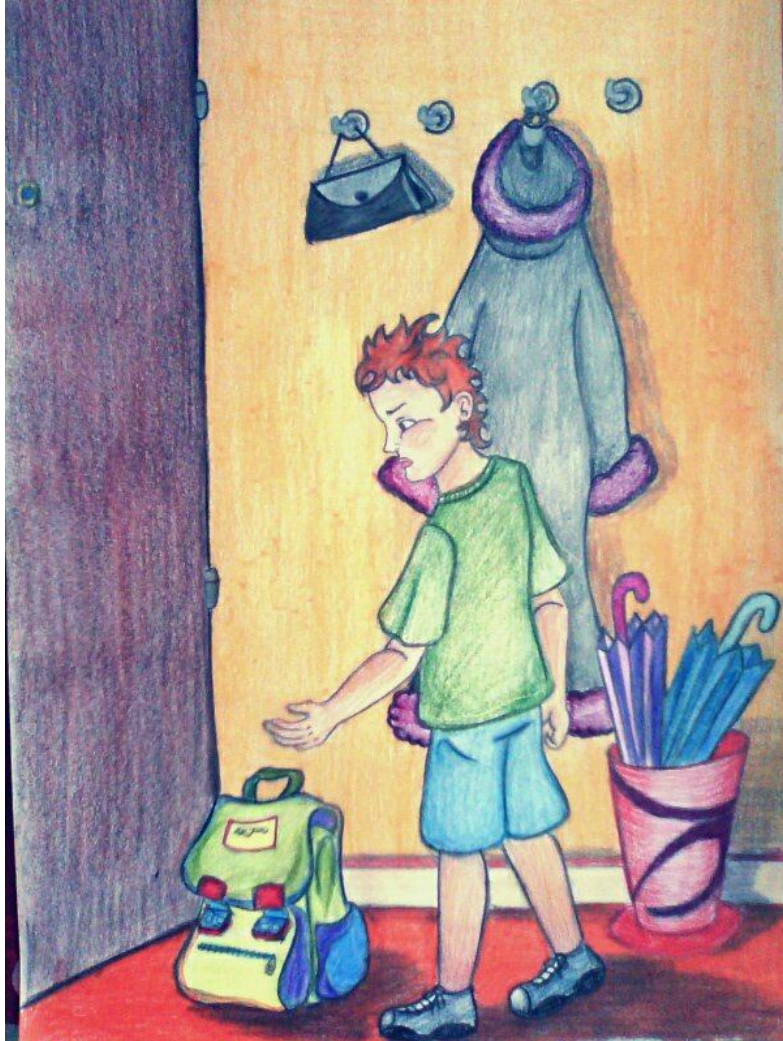
As much as he liked chocolate, candy, ice-cream and french fries, at the same degree he disliked school. He would rather not see his favourite friends for a whole year than go to school for a day. And if his attendance was not compulsory, he would not set foot in there.



He would rather play games on his computer, watch TV, listen to music, draw pictures and paint clay models of his favourite heroes.



Being in such a bad mood and unable to avoid going to school with his usual excuses, he got up, had breakfast and...



... picked up his backpack, in really slow motion like taking screen shots of a movie. Of course, he didn't know and he didn't care if he had all that he needed for his classes.



He stayed in class counting the hours patiently, until the sound of the last bell rang. That would make him jump from his desk and be the first to run out the door and back home.



The seconds, the minutes and the hours felt like ages in Jason's mind. There were different teachers but they all sounded exactly the same in his mind; tedious and boring. Despite the diversity of the subjects, nothing seemed to trigger the interest of our young pupil.



Not even the intermissions had any meaning, since they would also come to an end.



It was only until the last hour and while waiting for the last “bell” of the day to ring- the one that would liberate him from school- when the words of the teacher magnetised his senses: “For your next assignment, let go of your imagination and create something for a book. Remember that imagination has no limits and you can design anything you like.” That was the first time that a school project excited Jason so much that he could not wait to go home and start his own, unique craft.



The project was exciting, but his limited relationship with books and reading did not help him a lot in providing him with ideas on what to create. So he understood that he had to ask for help in order to complete the task. And it did not take him long to find that person, who loved books and reading; his mother!



He ran home, opened the door with excitement and shouted "Mum, mum do you have any ideas about a book project?".



That was the first time his mother saw her son so excited coming back from school and asking for her help on a school project. All previous homework was done after discussions and negotiations that ended in some sort of an agreement. Like the most recent one: seven math exercises for an additional half an hour of TV. These kind of agreements were strange, but they were the only way to get Jason to do his homework.



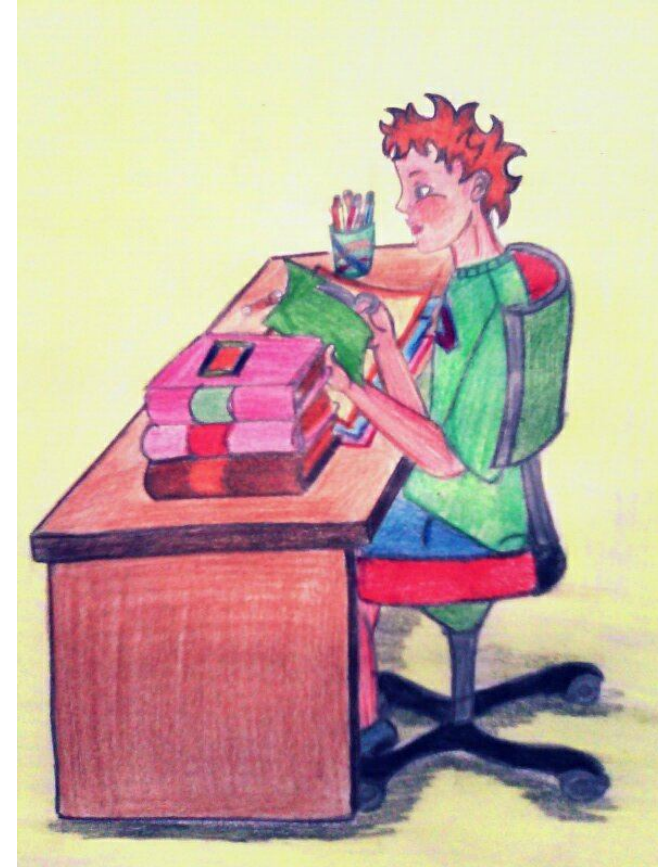
“So let’s see what kind of thing you could make regarding a book...” said Jason’s mother as she was trying to get Jason’s imagination to work. *“I think it has to be something with vivid and bright colours, closely related to the book and to be useful, so as to be used over and over again. It shouldn’t be something that you only made for your class and then threw in a drawer and forgot. The clock for example, is useful because it shows us with its index the time of the day and helps us organise our workload effectively”.*



Jason felt suddenly like he was very close to what he was looking for. The word "index" sounded strange in his ears. Like a lighthouse shined its light to the solution of his enigma. "That's it. Like the index shows the time, I will make a bookmark to show me the page I stop reading, every time," he shouted with joy, the young student.



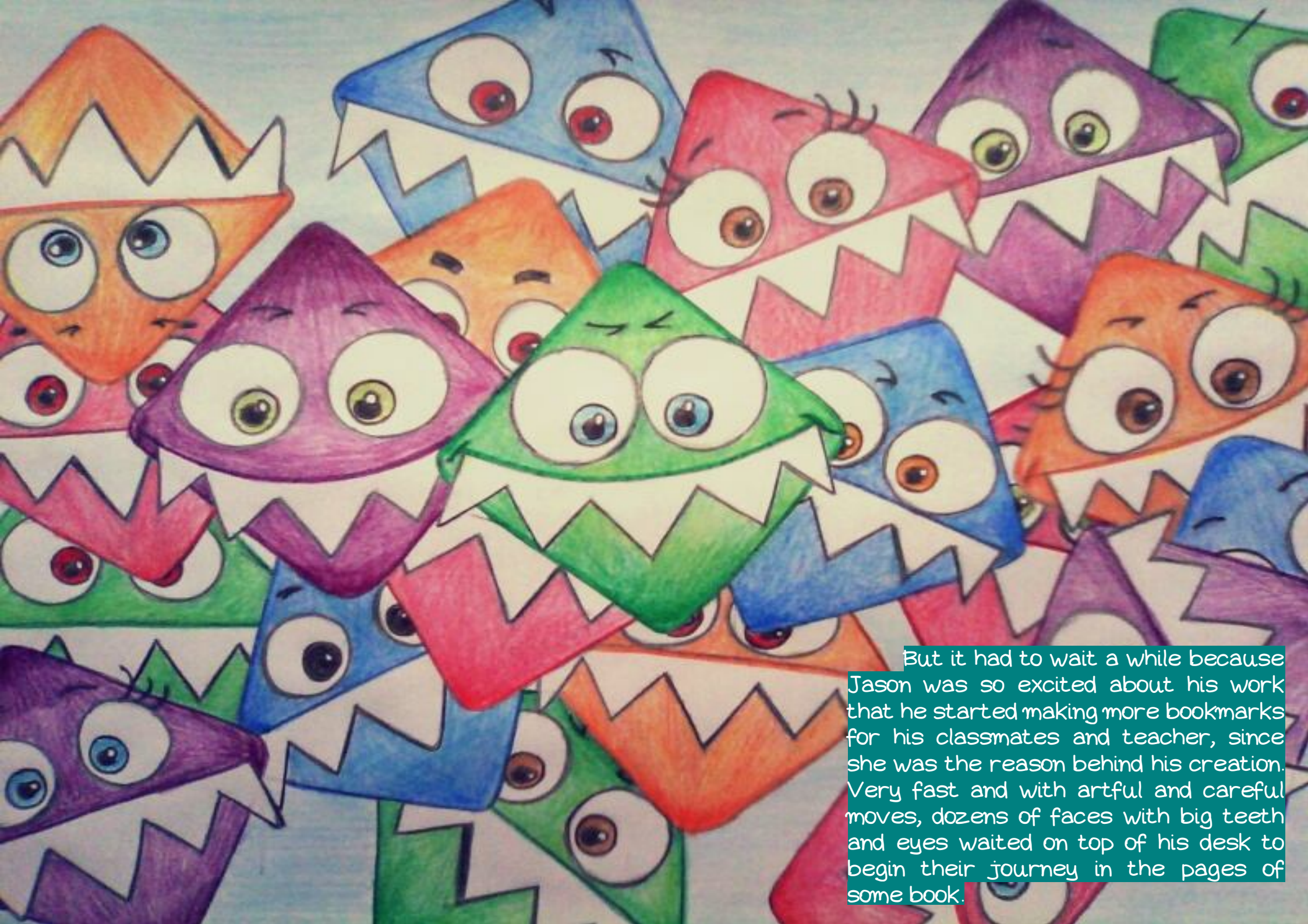
Without wasting any more time, he went to his room and started gathering the materials he would use to make his own unique bookmark. Shortly, on top of his desk there were coloured papers of different sizes, colouring pencils, markers, rulers, scissors, and other things that would probably be useful to draw simple geometrical shapes with.



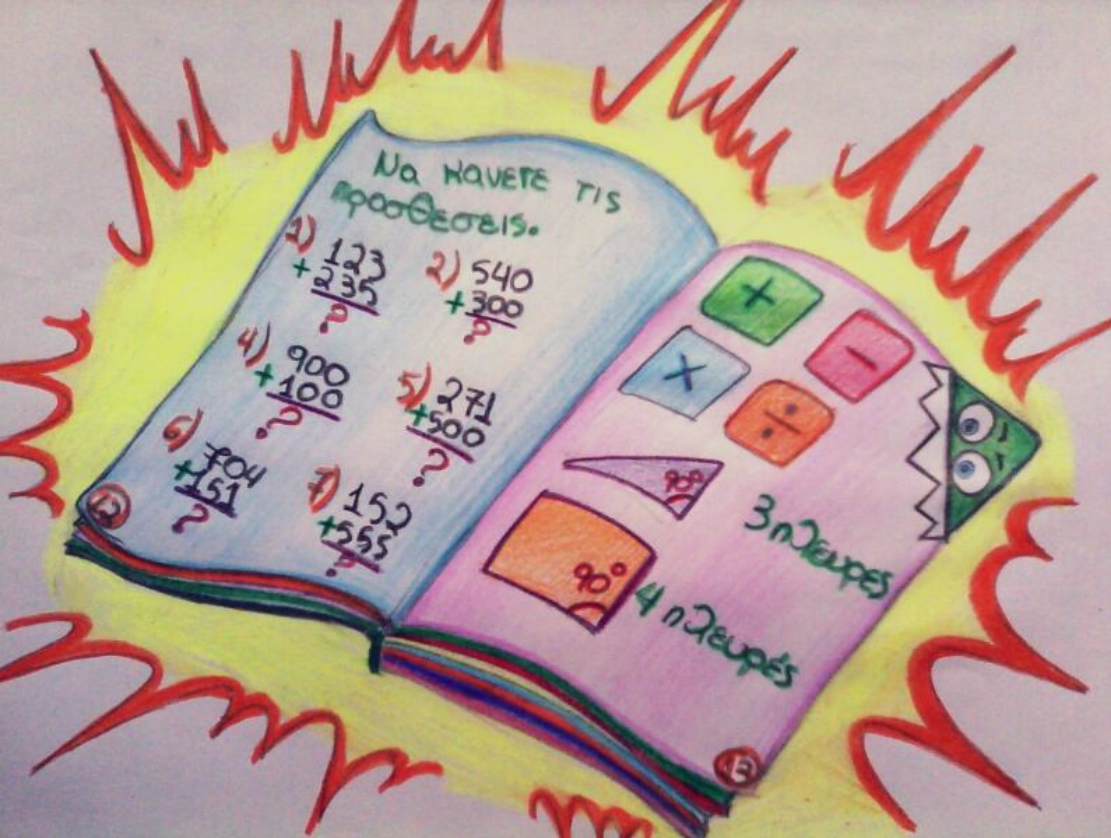
After making a couple of rough sketches and letting his imagination free to travel to a land of colours and shapes, he finally concluded to the look of his bookmark. He measured, he cut, he glued and he made everything with total commitment and attention. It was giving him so much satisfaction and joy that he put all his strength into making something so unique, so original and special such as his own creation.

And there it was. He was staring at the thing that a few minutes ago existed only in his imagination: a small square bookmark made out of recycled paper bag. It looked like a cute little monster ready to devour the pages of a book with desire and anticipation. With its mouth constantly open, its large teeth protruding from it and with big bulging eyes, it was giving the signal to start reading immediately, like it was trying to suck out all the knowledge and the feelings of each book that Jason was going to use it in.





But it had to wait a while because Jason was so excited about his work that he started making more bookmarks for his classmates and teacher, since she was the reason behind his creation. Very fast and with artful and careful moves, dozens of faces with big teeth and eyes waited on top of his desk to begin their journey in the pages of some book.

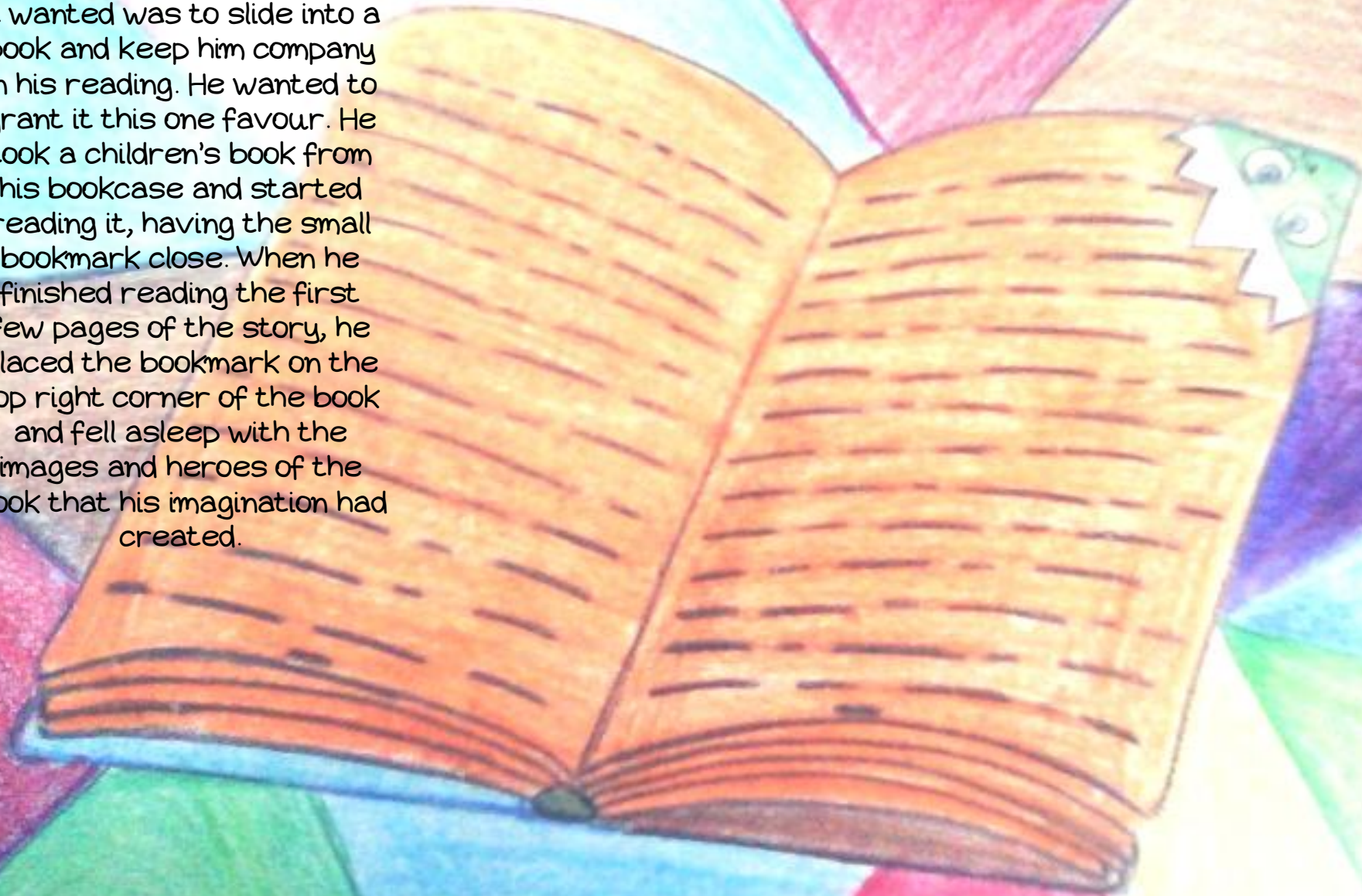


Without wasting any more time, he took the first bookmark he made out of recycled paper, he opened a school textbook and he put it in the page where he was supposed to stop reading.



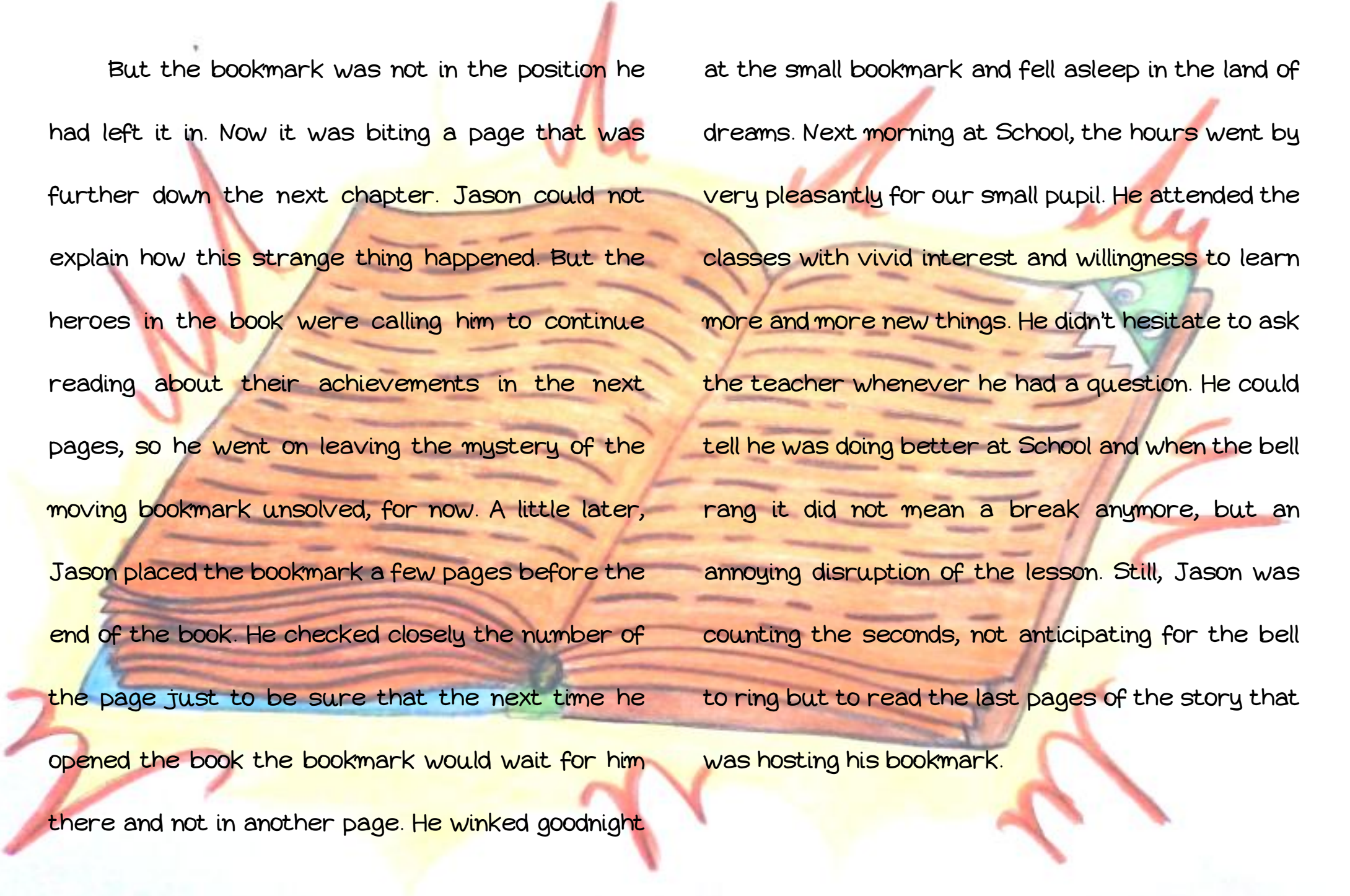
He prepared his backpack for school for the next day and he put inside the bag with all the other bookmarks he had made. This was the first time in a very long time that Jason prepared his backpack for school without any help from his mother.

Ok. Everything was ready for school. But he didn't want to leave the little bookmark hanging and waiting, when all it wanted was to slide into a book and keep him company in his reading. He wanted to grant it this one favour. He took a children's book from his bookcase and started reading it, having the small bookmark close. When he finished reading the first few pages of the story, he placed the bookmark on the top right corner of the book and fell asleep with the images and heroes of the book that his imagination had created.



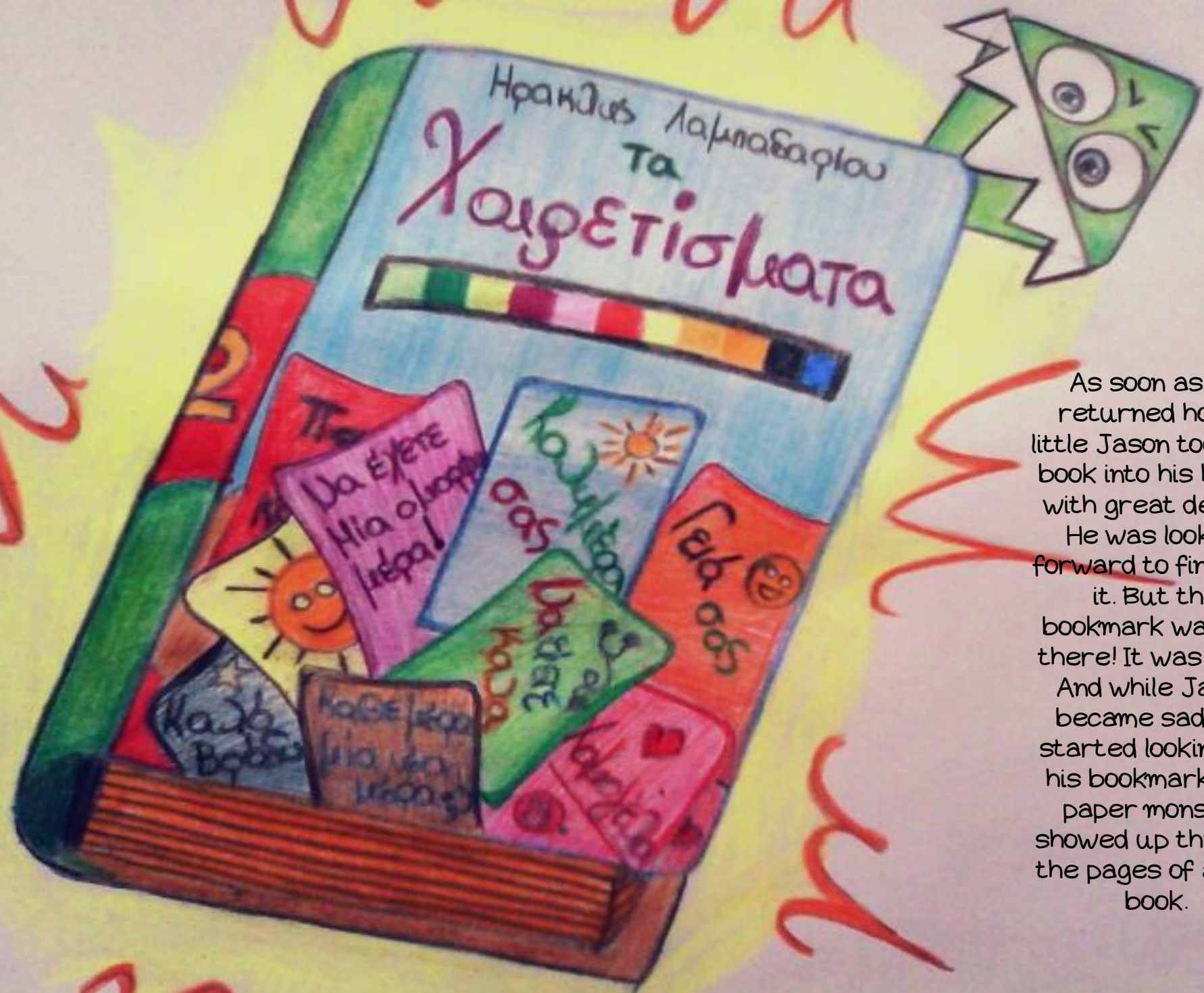


Next morning he almost got to school before anybody else, eager to share the bookmarks he had made with so much joy for his classmates and his teacher. Everybody was very excited for the useful gifts that he had made for them and they thanked him with warm hugs and big, beautiful, bright smiles. Jason felt such satisfaction and joy that he started to get interested in school and all the beautiful things which he discovered in books, along with his bookmark. He went home anxious to finish his homework and prepare his backpack for the next school day so he could continue his book reading.



But the bookmark was not in the position he had left it in. Now it was biting a page that was further down the next chapter. Jason could not explain how this strange thing happened. But the heroes in the book were calling him to continue reading about their achievements in the next pages, so he went on leaving the mystery of the moving bookmark unsolved, for now. A little later, Jason placed the bookmark a few pages before the end of the book. He checked closely the number of the page just to be sure that the next time he opened the book the bookmark would wait for him there and not in another page. He winked goodnight

at the small bookmark and fell asleep in the land of dreams. Next morning at School, the hours went by very pleasantly for our small pupil. He attended the classes with vivid interest and willingness to learn more and more new things. He didn't hesitate to ask the teacher whenever he had a question. He could tell he was doing better at School and when the bell rang it did not mean a break anymore, but an annoying disruption of the lesson. Still, Jason was counting the seconds, not anticipating for the bell to ring but to read the last pages of the story that was hosting his bookmark.



As soon as he returned home, little Jason took the book into his hands with great desire. He was looking forward to finishing it. But the bookmark was not there! It was gone! And while Jason became sad and started looking for his bookmark, the paper monster showed up through the pages of a new book.



It was then that Jason realised, he had a magic bookmark which travelled without stopping through the books. And he decided to follow it in every new journey, every new book that he would find in his room.



It was another mystery, of course, where all those books kept coming from. If you know the answer, don't read anymore. But if you have any doubts, then:

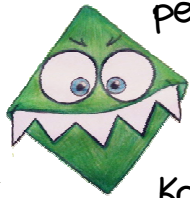
Jason's mother watched him as his interest in books grew, so she kept buying him new ones. As soon as he would come close to finishing a book, she would place the bookmark on the first pages of the next one, which she would then hide under the previous book.

Playtime!

or otherwise creative activities

Bookwriting

Did the story end or not? Can you imagine of a different ending? What are you waiting for? Get your paper, pencil, pencil sharpener, eraser, a big smile and lots of creativity and write your own ending, exactly as you would like to read it. Apollonia who's made the drawings for this story, and Konstantina who's done the editing in the original greek version, are sharing their own version of the story's ending.



For Apollonia the tale ends like this:

Jason was convinced that his mother was the one who kept changing the magic bookmark's position, so he stopped caring. He laid sad in his bed and fell asleep. During the night, a very strange light woke him up. And then he saw something that surprised and rejoiced him. It was the magic bookmark. This time the bookmark was not inside another book or notebook but it was flying and shining like millions of fireflies. While it was flying over his head, it winked at him and transformed into a silver-golden key and landed in his hands. Jason was now the voyager on

fairyland and the prince of myths. With his magic key he could travel in any book he wished and help princesses to find their lost shoe or princes to fight the dragon that was keeping their loved ones.

He could even find out the name of the most cunning elf... But all this is another story, a story that you need to write yourself; an achievement of your own.



And a little advice that I would like to share with the readers: since each and every one of you has their own personality and emotions, you can draw with a marker on your own magic bookmark, i.e. two eyebrows over the bulging eyes could show your emotions..

For Konstantina, the tale ends like this:

Jason finished reading this book and felt very good. He anticipated the next challenge from his favourite bookmark. But next morning something strange happened. Instead of the bookmark showing up in the same place, it was missing and there was no new book waiting for Jason to read. He was disappointed. On that moment, Jason's mother who happened to see him, asked him:

- What is the matter Jason?
- My bookmark. Remember I told you it is magic? Today it is gone completely.
- Have you looked thoroughly? It might be hidden somewhere.
- But usually there is a new book waiting for me and now I can't find any... But... Mum, look! There is a folded paper, saying:

"You will find me in the public library, shelf 103, book 2053, in the children's literature department."



Jason's eyes opened wide, as if he was already taking part in adventures with fairytale heroes, princes with giant swords, pirates with parrots on their shoulders and dragons spitting flames. He turned to his mother and asked with hesitation:

- Where is the library? And how will I find my bookmark amongst all these books?

- It is the big building on the way to school. Come on, I can help you.

That was a magical day. Jason got excited by holding so many books in his own two hands, for the first time in his life. Suddenly, the library transformed into a treasure hunt game, where each book that the small paper mentioned, led to a new book revealing a new small note.

In the end, he reached the magic bookmark inside a wonderful novel full of adventures and pictures. Jason was thrilled and borrowed the book along with two more that he browsed through earlier. The same night, Jason, after finishing his homework, said goodnight to his mother and went to bed early, pretending to feel sleepy. His plans were different, though. He was going to pretend that he was asleep, so he could actually see how the magic bookmark hid from one book to the next. So, he left the fairytale with the bookmark on his desk and laid in his bed, peeking with one eye open, eager to find out what will happen. After half an hour he was feeling really sleepy. Sometime later, he heard steps approaching his bedroom.

Jason peeked from under the covers, in suspense to see anything extraordinary happening. Instead he saw his

mother enter the room and slowly walking towards his bed. Now his was disappointed. He continued pretending to be asleep and his mother smiled and kissed him, tucked him in and left the room. Time was passing and nothing significant was going on, with his favourite magic friend... His eyes were shutting down. But just in time, a small noise coming from his desk caught his attention.

"Hey! Here, give me a hand. These books on top of me are way too heavy!" said the cunning monster, pushing up with all its strength. Jason jumped out of his bed and walked to the bookmark. Now, he was thrilled!

"What do you stand there for and just look at me? Help me and I promise to show you anything you want to know."

Jason took it out of the book and stood there, stunned.

"Thanks buddy. I almost suffocated in there! So follow me to see something amazing." Jason, in his pyjamas, followed his bookmark, which took him to his back yard. There, Jason saw something really magical.

All the bookmarks that he had ever made and gave to his friends, were standing there, in front of him. They were lined up like soldiers, listening carefully to an old simple bookmark that was telling them how he was put inside an amazing book years ago, but was forgotten there. And he was so proud when he was placed in there!

- "Bookmarks exist to show the page of the book, but people don't appreciate us anymore because they do not read as many books as before. That is why we decided to act. Every night we get together and we get organised for the next day. We hide in different books, we switch places

and try to make reading a pleasure. And you know what, Jason? Kids have started to react on that; they read and they visit the library and they began to love and respect books!"

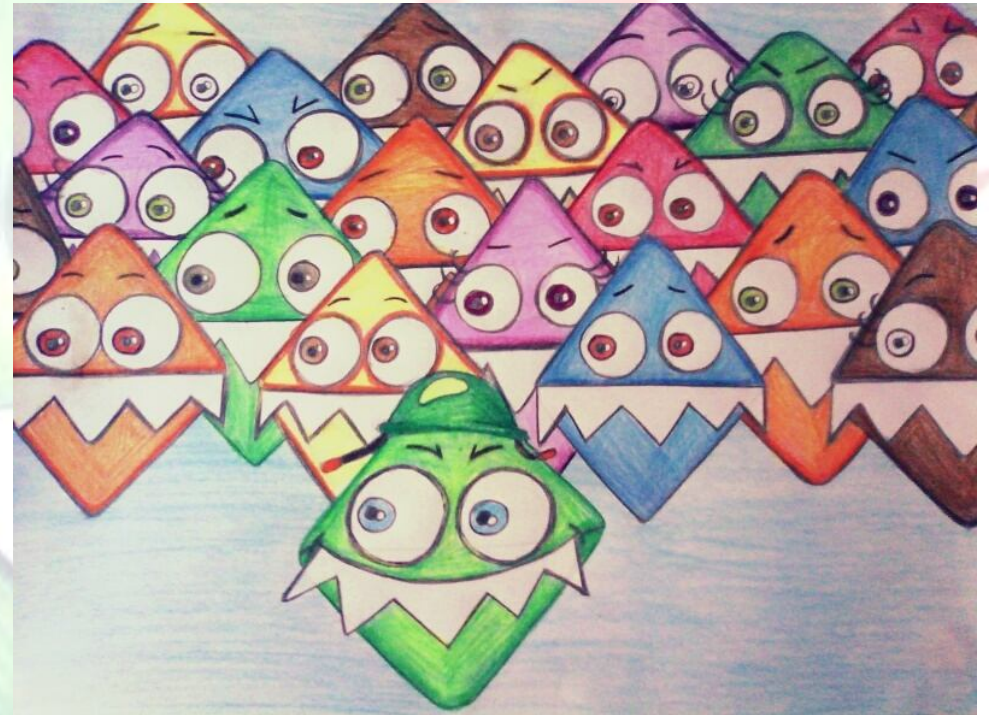
- "So kids love books thanks to you?" Jason asked.
- "Thanks to you, my friend! You created us, the cute little monsters, that have made kids see reading in a fun way!"

That brought a smile to Jason's face and the daylight found him in a very happy mood!

"My bookmark is magic!" he shouted to his mother. "I saw it last night together with all the other bookmarks I've made! They have decided to make us love reading and I think they have succeeded, mum! I boooove it!"

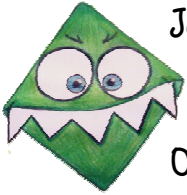
Jason left for school in excitement. His mother thought of him all day long. She was so happy that she managed to make him believe in something magic just through a simple toy and most importantly, managed to make him love books! After finishing her chores, she sat down to take a break and took in her hands the book she'd been reading lately. She went through the pages to find out where she'd stopped reading. And then:

- "But what happened?" she said surprised. "Where is my bookmark?"



Bookmark-sketching

If you've decided to make a bookmark like little Jason did, how would you design it?



One of Jason's classmates designed one like this:

It had the shape of a ladder, with rounded edges and five steps. On each step there was an animal. On the first step, inside a big bowl, a goldfish was enjoying swimming. Exactly over it, a turtle was lounging next to four long, thin, orange-yellow legs. On the third step, a lion with a rich mane was looking upwards ready to chat with the cute giraffe. The latter had its head on the fourth step while its body lay on the second, where the turtle was hanging out, and went up to the third, where its neck was next to the lion. On the fifth and last step, there was an imperial eagle in dark brown colour, sporting a big white dot close to the tail and two more close to the chest where the wings started. The eagle was standing there with pride like it was protecting the whole happy animal bunch of the staircase.

Book-craft



If you were Jason's classmate and you had to make something for a book, what would you make?

Favourite book



Can you remember all the books you have read and draw your favourite hero or the most beautiful scenery that's impressed you?

Book-craft



Jason's class thought of making a newspaper to share the crafts they have made with the rest of the school. How do you think the cover page should look like? I have heard they need your help to design it.

How to make your own bookmark...

Step by step instructions

What kind of materials do I need?

The materials that you will need are very simple and you probably have most of them already at home. Let's take a look at the list that Jason has made for you, just to be safe.

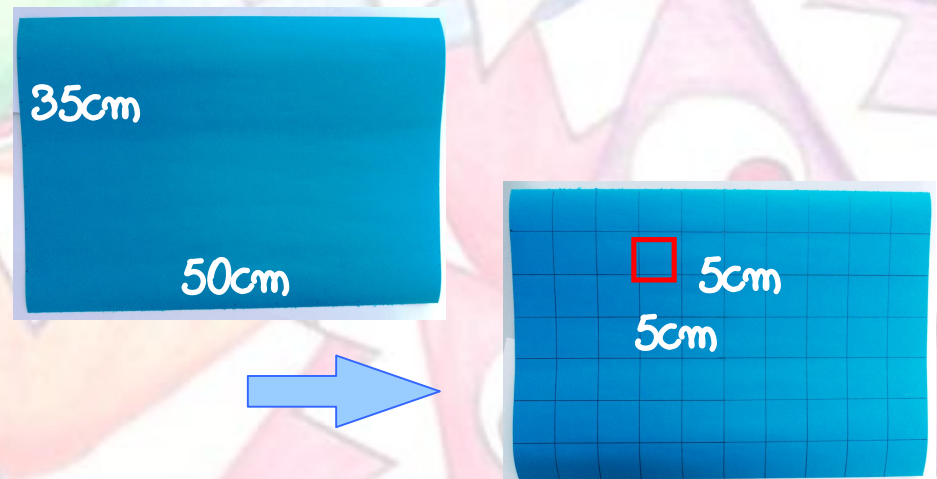
- paper or cardboard (at least 10x10 cm)
- white paper (1 paper size A4 is more than enough)
- 1 pencil (even if it is not sharp)
- 1 hole puncher (the thing we use to make holes in the left side of our papers)
- 1 pair of scissors
- 1 paper glue

Do not forget your fantasy and your smile ;)

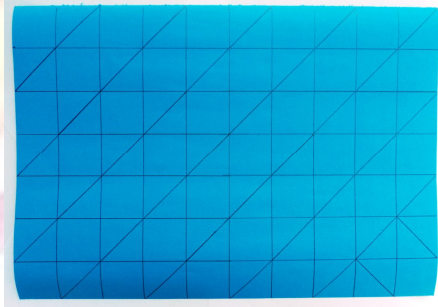
Great! What are the steps that I need to take?

Step 1: divide the paper that you choose into squares of 5x5cm (If you wish your bookmark to have the same size as Jason's or any other size you like).

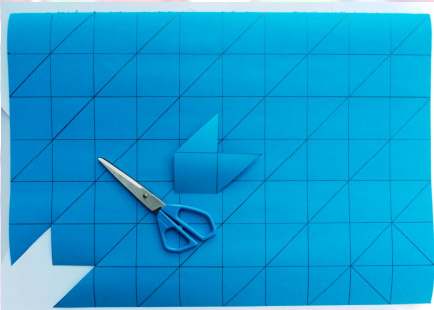
In order for the hero in our story to show you how to make your own bookmark, he used a piece of cardboard, size 35x50cm (you can find pieces of 70x50cm in the market and cut it in half) and it is enough to make 27 bookmarks 5x5cm.



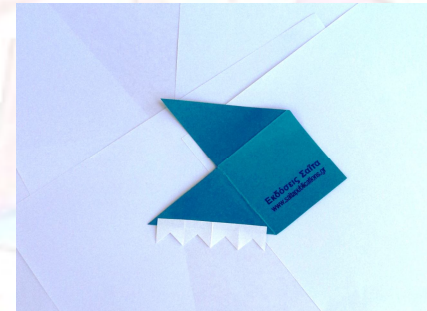
Step 2: Draw parallel lines in the squares left and right or the first square with an exception of one corner, as shown below.



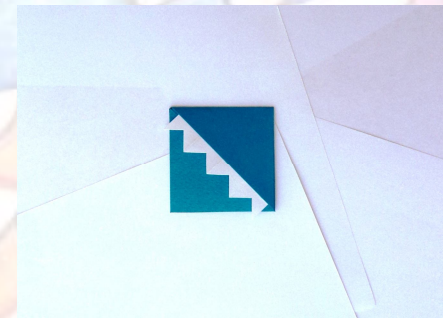
Step 3: Cut off the parallel lines and the two edges (like ears) of the square.



Step 4: You can write something on the back of this shape (e.g. your name) and apply glue in one of the edges (it is not important which one you choose) and glue the teeth (Jason made those in 6x1,5cm size).



Step 5: Glue the two edges together.





Let books fly
free!

The idea of **Saita publications** emerged in July 2012, having as a primary goal to create a web space where new authors can interact with the readers directly and free.

Saita publications' aim is to redefine the relationship between publisher-author-reader, by cultivating a true dialogue, and by establishing an effective communication channel for authors and readers alike. **Saita publications** stay far away from profit, exploitation and commercialisation of literary property.

The strong wind of **passion** for reading,
the sweet breeze of **creativity**,
the zephyr of **innovation**,
the sirocco of **imagination**,
the levanter of **persistence**,
the deep power of **vision**,
guide the **saita** of our publications.

We invite you to let books fly free!



Apollonia Paramythioti was born in 1994, in Corfu. Her passion for painting started in a very early age; she was only four years old when she first demonstrated her talent. She is a self-taught painter, whose aim is to further develop her skills. In 2009, she won the European contest "Research and innovation". She graduated from high school in 2012 and she would like to enter the School of Fine Arts. Her dream is to be taught by a great painter.

A student dislikes school and reading. He dislikes them so much he gets a rush just by hearing those two words.

But one day he has to produce something handmade for a school assignment.

So he asks his mother for her help and she advises him to make a bookmark.

The student makes that bookmark and at

the same time he develops an interest for books. His reading is slow and timid but

he uses the bookmark he has made.

The bookmark (magically)

moves on to the next pages and before he knows it on to the next book and the next book and the next book...

The student tries to find out what is happening with the bookmark and he follows it by reading more and more books with greater love and anticipation.

