

THE FIVE HUNDRED

by Eilís Dillon

ISBN: 0-86278-262-7 • €6.34 pb • 96 pages



When Luca finally bought a Five Hundred car, Pierino was extremely proud and happy for his father, who could now easily transport goods to and from his market stall. But Fiat Five Hundreds were stolen in Rome every day of the week and, before long, the car had vanished. Pierino, however, refuses to accept that the car will not be recovered and, with the help of the neighbours and an observant Aunt Maria, follows the trail of the robbers along the whirling, downhill roads that lead to the strange cave in the valley.

LANGUAGE – ENGLISH

- ◆ Vocabulary extension: Indignantly, dejected, consoling, enticing, scuttled, chrome.
- ◆ Descriptive language: ‘... would take the milk out of a poor man’s coffee and come back for the sugar ...’ (p.41); ‘past the lake that lay as still as a bowl of cream ...’ (pp.74, 75); ‘... lazy, idle son of an idle father ...’ (p.39); ‘pale-green eyes like a goat ...’ (p.35).
- ◆ Discussion: Listing Italian words commonly used in English, e.g., pizza, spaghetti, lasagne, bolognese.
- ◆ Discussion: ‘In a free country, the police are at the service of the people’ (p.71). Children analyse the role of An Garda Síochána, listing ways in which the members of the force serve the people.

SPHE

- ◆ Myself and others: Respecting and showing consideration for the values of others. Being just and fair when dealing with others, exploring the role of rumour, fact and opinion when deciding about others. Children might discuss the envy expressed by Carmine and Alfredo (p.18), the respect given to Luca when he

- acquired the car (p.15) and the description of the party (pp.21, 22). They might also discuss Pierino’s feeling that ‘it seemed so unjust and unfair that such a good, honest man should have his hard work gone for nothing’ (p.47).
- ◆ Developing citizenship: Exploring the concepts of sharing and co-operating. The class might discuss the generosity of Amleto, who sent Luca customers (p.8) and who paid the tax on the car (p.11), and the willingness of the neighbours to help (p.68).

SESE – GEOGRAPHY

- ◆ People and other lands: Studying some aspects of the environments and lives of people in Italy, using the descriptions of towns (pp.30, 74–75, 86), landscape (p.30), eating habits (pp.21, 75), weather (p.25) and the market (pp.14–15, 17). By listing and talking about Italian students who study English in Ireland, Italian football clubs and Italian foods, children begin to develop a sense of belonging to the same European community.

VISUAL ARTS

- ◆ Fruit collage/Fruit faces/Fruit bowl: See *Discovering Art*, Book 1.
- ◆ Italian fruit kebabs: Use kiwi fruits, melon chunks and strawberries (or any fruits which together resemble the colours of the Italian flag) and assemble on cocktail sticks.