

Haiti Is My Home

A Reading A-Z Shared Reading Book

Word Count: 833



Haiti Is My Home



Home Connection: Inflectional ending *-ing*

Your reader is learning about the inflectional verb ending *-ing*, in words such as *playing*, *singing*, and *helping*. As you read the book together, look for examples of the inflectional ending *-ing*. Have your reader record the words and the page numbers in a list.


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Shared Reading Book
Level 3
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Chapter 1: I Hate This Place!

Marie stepped off the school bus right into a pile of dirty, melting snow. Brown slush poured over the top of her boot, filling her sock.

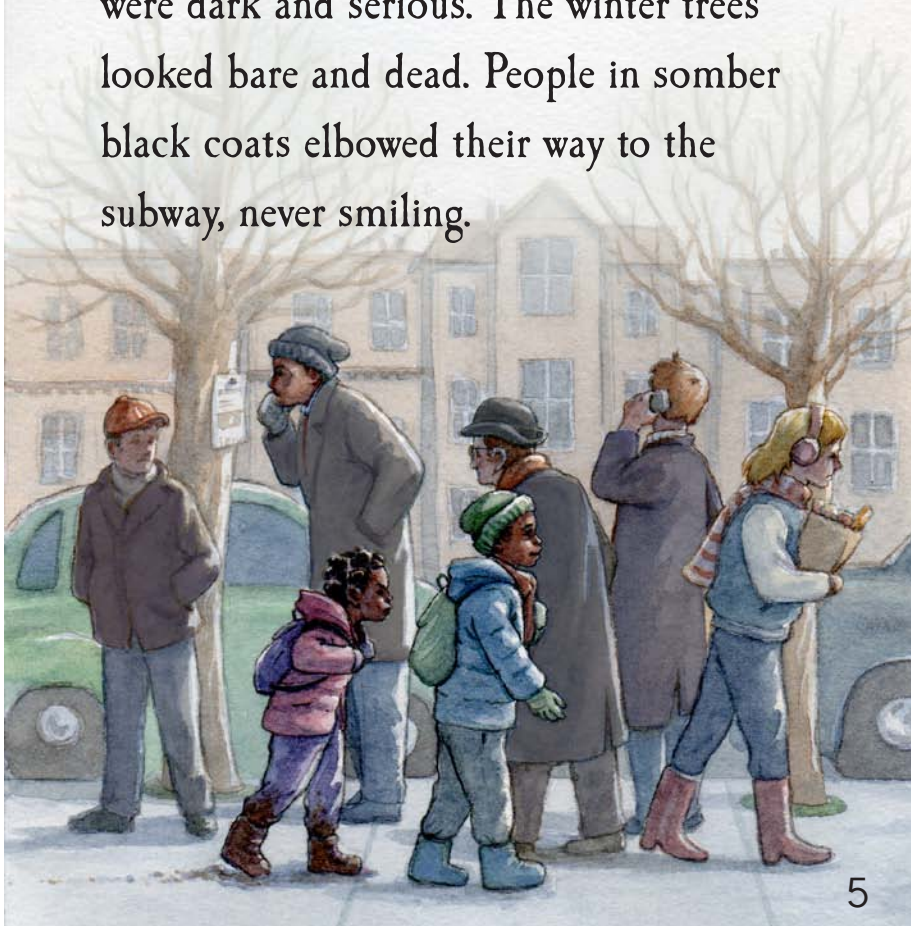
Her brother Pierre laughed, but he stopped when he saw Marie's furious face.

"We'll dry your boots on the heater when we get home," he said. Marie frowned. Her boot squished with each step.



Marie's family left their home in Haiti, a country on an island in the Caribbean Sea, to come to Boston and stay with Papa's uncle. They came because a terrible earthquake destroyed their entire neighborhood in Haiti.

Marie hated Boston. The brick buildings were dark and serious. The winter trees looked bare and dead. People in somber black coats elbowed their way to the subway, never smiling.



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Marie and Pierre climbed the stairs to their apartment. Marie hated the steep, dark stairs and the closed-up feeling of the heated rooms.

Mama kissed Marie's forehead. "Did you have a good day?" she asked.

"No," Marie frowned, yanking off her dripping boot. Marie hadn't had a good day since her family left Haiti.



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Chapter 2: Someone Who Will Understand

The smell of flavorful stew made things better. It reminded Marie of the smells of Port-au-Prince, the city that was her home in Haiti.

It was always warm there, and the storefronts were wide open. People sold delicious food on the street. Colorful flowers spilled out of every window.



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In Port-au-Prince, Marie's oldest brother Claude played soccer with her and Pierre every afternoon. Here in Boston, Claude drove a delivery truck until after dark.

That evening, the family sat down to eat after Claude came home.

"I spoke to Aunt Elsie on the phone," Mama announced. Everyone looked up, eager for news from Port-au-Prince.



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“She finally saved up enough money to come to America. When she arrives, we’ll move into a bigger apartment together. Marie, you and your cousin Johanne will share a room,” Mama said, beaming.

Marie’s favorite cousin was coming to live with them!

Finally someone would understand how Marie felt about this dreadful place.



Chapter 3: Happy to Be Here

A few weeks later, Marie sat in the moving truck while Papa, Claude, and Pierre carried furniture into the new apartment. She shivered. Even in April, Boston was cold and her skin felt raw.

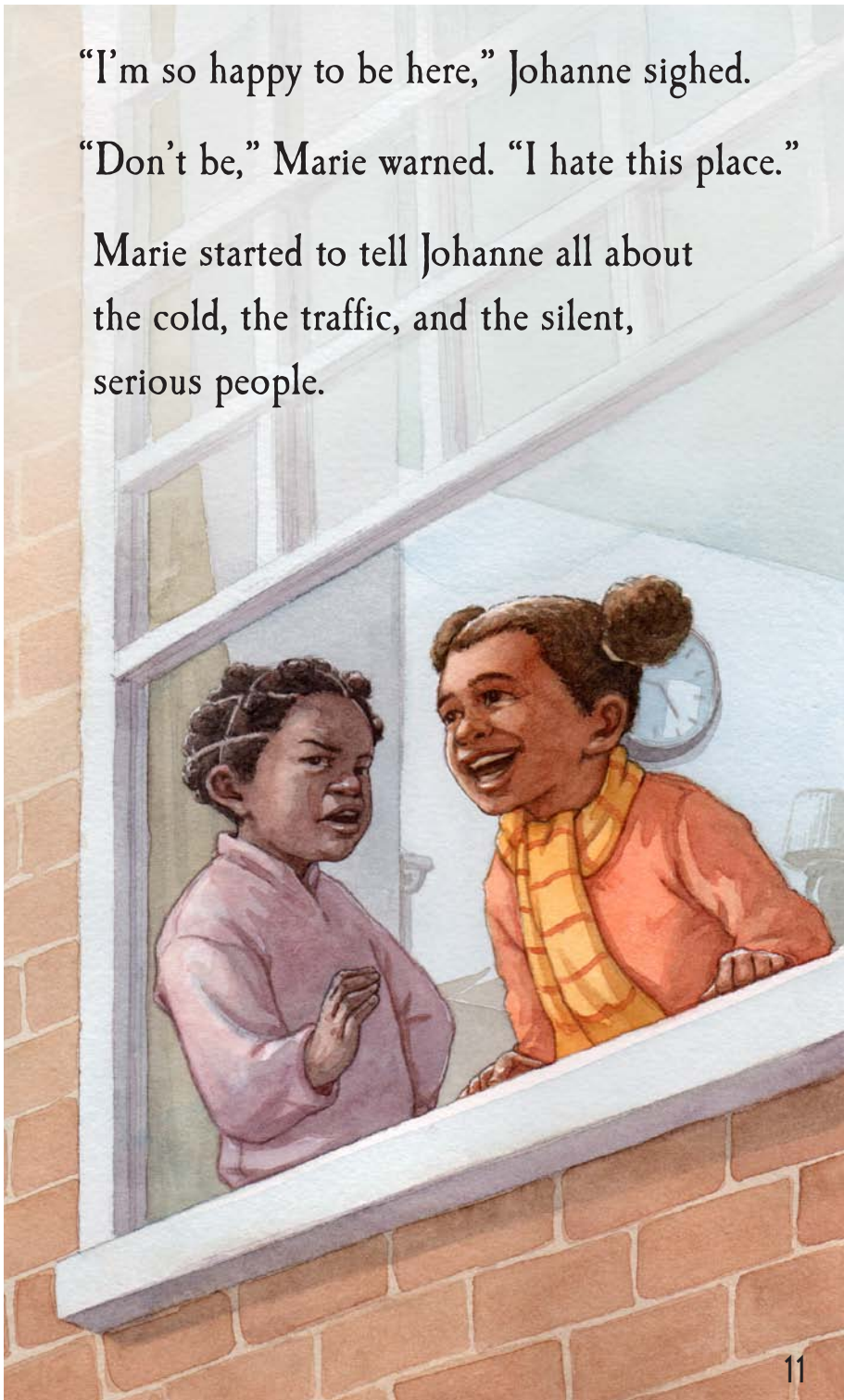
Mama’s car pulled up, honking. Everyone ran outside. Aunt Elsie and Johanne were here!

Marie twirled with her cousin, laughing.



"I'm so happy to be here," Johanne sighed.
"Don't be," Marie warned. "I hate this place."

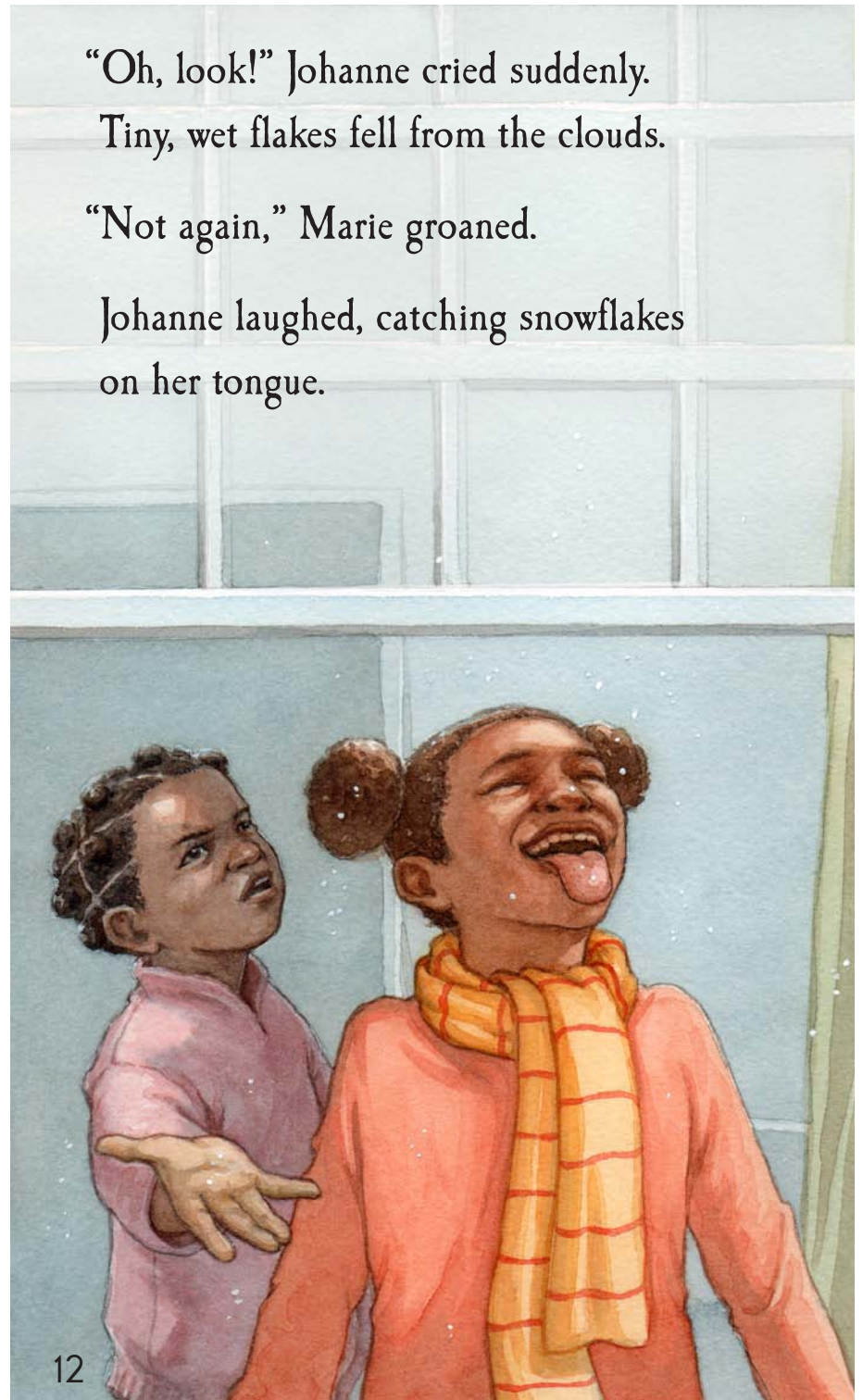
Marie started to tell Johanne all about
the cold, the traffic, and the silent,
serious people.



"Oh, look!" Johanne cried suddenly.
Tiny, wet flakes fell from the clouds.

"Not again," Marie groaned.

Johanne laughed, catching snowflakes
on her tongue.



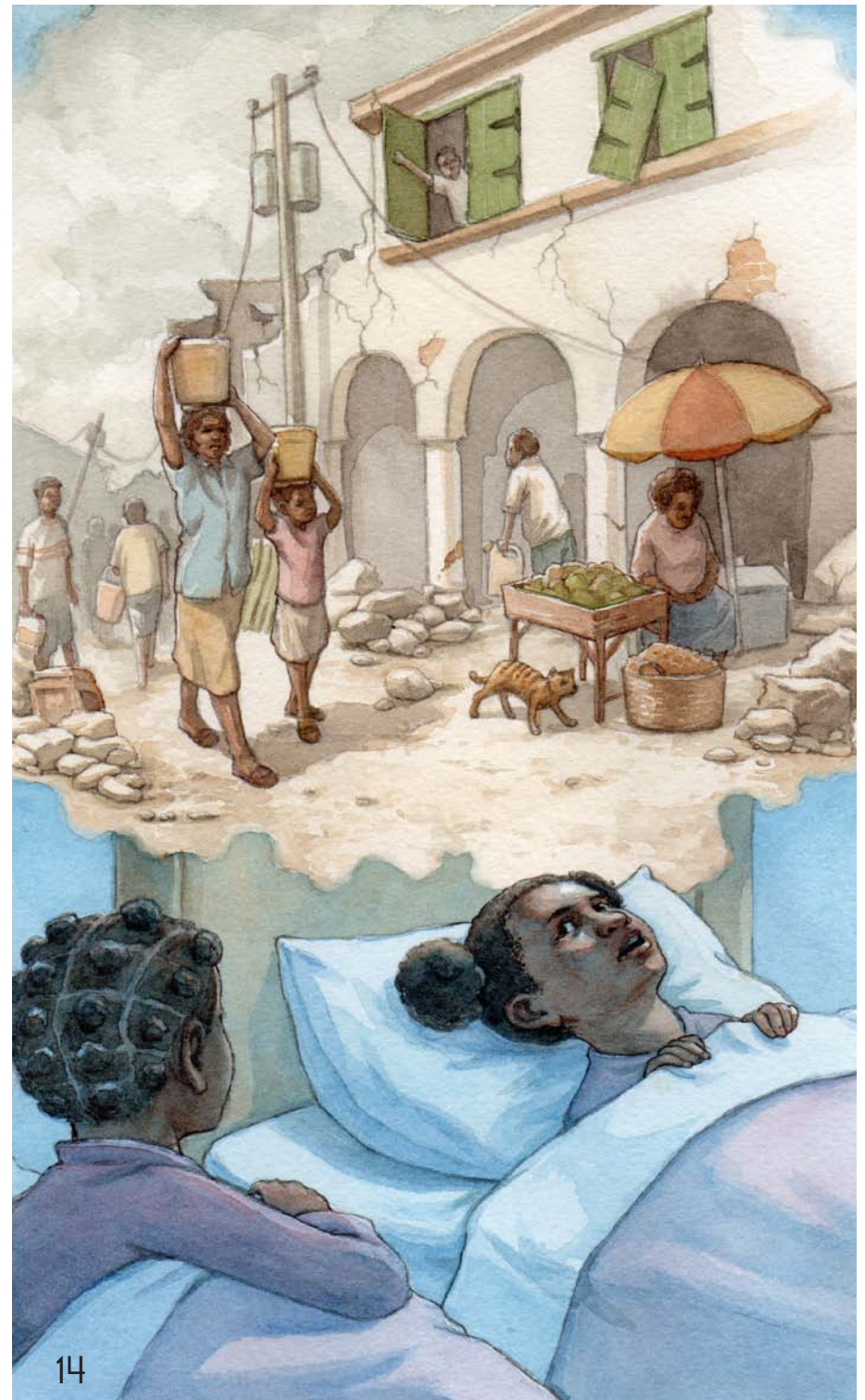
Chapter 4: After the Earthquake

That night, Mama and Aunt Elsie tucked the girls into their side-by-side beds and kissed them goodnight. The joyful sound of Creole, one of the languages of Haiti, followed the women down the stairs.

“Don’t you miss Haiti?” Marie whispered in the dark.

“No,” Johanne said, sounding sorrowful.

“Marie, I could not wait to leave. It’s been awful there since the earthquake. A year later, the walls of the buildings are still cracked wide open. People live in tents right on the street. Broken bricks and wood spill out of every window. We never have electricity, and the water tastes bad.”



"I'm thankful to sleep in a safe, closed-up room," Johanne said.

That night, Marie dreamed of Haiti. She was happy to be in her old house. Then, the walls disappeared. Dust covered everything. She called Johanne's name, but she could not find her cousin.



Chapter 5: There Are Good Things

The next day, Marie, Johanne, and Pierre walked to the bus stop.

"What do you think of Boston?" Pierre asked Johanne.

"The glass buildings are so shiny," Johanne said.

Marie looked up. The clouds had cleared, and the skyscrapers sparkled in the sun.

"The trees look graceful with no leaves on them," Johanne said.

Marie had never noticed the patterns of the branches.

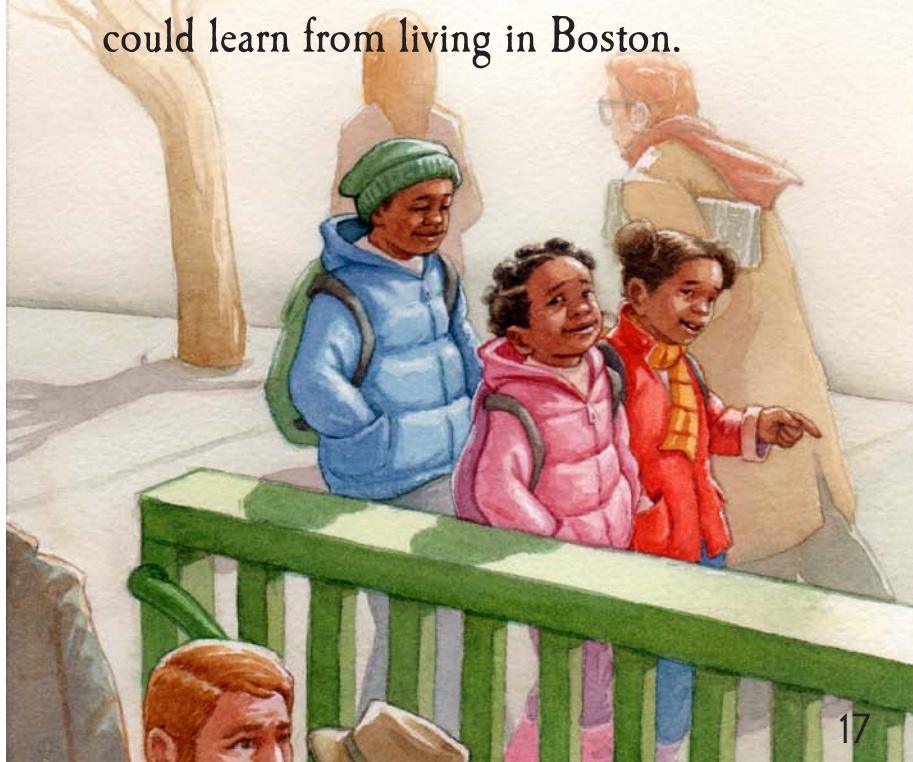
Grown-ups hurried by on their way to the subway. Pierre motioned for the girls to step aside and let some grown-ups pass them.

“Everyone moves so quickly because the trains and buses are always running,”
Johanne said.

Marie hadn’t thought about how easy it was to get around.

“I think I like it here,” Johanne said. “We should take what we learn here and use it to help rebuild Haiti when we grow up.”

Marie had never thought about what she could learn from living in Boston.



As Johanne pointed out, there were good things about Boston. The buildings were safe and strong. The electricity stayed on, and the water was clean. Maybe one day she and Johanne could help bring those things to Haiti.

At the bus stop, Johanne jumped in the muddy slush. She splashed Marie, laughing. Instead of being mad, Marie laughed and jumped in it, too.

