Woo Zen,  
A Cinderella Story

Story adapted by Meg Livingston and Laura Burton Rice  
Illustrations by Scott Mattern
Green Words and *Challenge Words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wives</th>
<th>ugly</th>
<th>froze</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*lovely</td>
<td>*lazy</td>
<td>Zig-Zag</td>
<td>grateful</td>
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<td>fuzz</td>
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<th>*became</th>
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<td>*appeared</td>
<td>size</td>
<td>*told</td>
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Red Words to practice every day:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>only</th>
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Once upon a time, a rich man lived in the south of China. He had two wives. Each wife had a little girl. Their names were Woo Zen and Woo Ling. One day, the rich man died. Woo Zen’s mom was so sad, she soon died, too. So Woo Ling’s mom raised the little girls.
Woo Zen was lovely, sweet, and bright. She had a face like the moon and soft skin like the fuzz on a peach. And she had very tiny feet.

But her stepmother hated her. She was mad that Woo Ling was not like Woo Zen. Woo Ling was ugly, mean, and lazy.
The stepmother made Woo Zen clean all day. She let Woo Ling spend lazy days in the shade of a tree.

Woo Zen had rags for clothes. In the winter, she froze. Woo Ling sat by the fire in her fine, thick robes.
Woo Zen’s only friend was her pet fish, Zig-Zag. Zig-Zag swam quickly in his fish pond, this way and that way. But he always stopped to listen to Woo Zen’s problems. Woo Zen shared her meals with the fish. She kept his pond clean. Zig-Zag was grateful for Woo Zen’s care.
The time came for the king’s big New Year feast at the palace. Woo Zen wanted to go. But her mean stepmother made her stay home. Woo Ling and her mother dressed in their best silk robes. Then they went to the New Year feast.
Woo Zen sat by the pond and cried.
She said, “I wish I could go to the New Year feast too!”
As her tears fell into the water, Zig-Zag spoke. Woo Zen was amazed!

Zig-Zag said, “You may go to the king’s New Year feast. I will be your robe, slippers, and fan. You can hide your face with the fan.”
Suddenly, in a haze of white fog, Zig-Zag disappeared. In his place were a lovely silk robe, a fan, and tiny slippers. They were bright and shining. They looked like the scales of a fish. Woo Zen was so happy! She dressed and went to the New Year feast.
At the New Year feast, everyone looked at Woo Zen. "Who is that lovely girl?" they all asked. "Why does she hide her face?"

The king saw Woo Zen and asked her to dance. As they danced, Woo Zen forgot to hold up her fan.

Woo Ling saw her and yelled, "That is Woo Zen!" Woo Zen was so scared that she ran back home.
Woo Zen sadly unzipped the robe and dropped it into the pond.

It became Zig-Zag’s body again. Then she dropped in the fan and he waved his tail. When she put in one slipper, a fin appeared.

But the other slipper was missing! Woo Zen had dropped it running home. She felt very bad that Zig-Zag had only one fin. So did Zig-Zag!
Meanwhile, the king had picked up the lost slipper. He wished to find the lovely girl whose foot fit the slipper. “I will make her my bride,” he said. He sent his men to find her. All the girls in the city tried the tiny slipper. It was not the right size for any of them.
One day, the king’s men came to Woo Zen’s house. The stepmother made Woo Zen hide. She wanted Woo Ling to be the king’s bride. But her big, fat foot would not fit the tiny slipper.

The men started to leave. Suddenly, Zig-Zag leaped out of his pond. He flopped to the place where Woo Zen was hidden. Everyone stared at the fish. They were amazed!
Woo Zen tried on the slipper. It was just the right size! At last, Zig-Zag’s other fin magically appeared.

The king’s men took Woo Zen and Zig-Zag to the palace. They told the king how Zig-Zag had helped them find Woo Zen.

Woo Zen married the king. Now she lived at the king’s palace. Zig-Zag had a big fancy pond. They were very, very happy.
1. Who was Woo Zen’s only friend?

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

2. Write the answer on the blank line.
I was too cold without a coat. I ________________________.
A. burned  B. froze  C. melted

1. Why did Woo Zen run back home?

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

2. Write the answer on the blank line.
Woo Zen was ________________________ when Zig-Zag spoke.
A. amazed  B. agreed  C. about

1. What did Zig-Zag do when the king’s men came?

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

2. Write the answer on the blank line.
The robe ________________________ Zig-Zag’s body again.
A. between  B. begin  C. became
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Reading Roots, Level 4

Reading Roots Shared Stories were developed under the direction of Robert E. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden, codirectors of the Success for All Foundation Family of Programs.

Success for All Foundation is a nonprofit education reform organization that develops and disseminates research-based reading and math programs for students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, elementary and middle schools. These programs were originally developed at Johns Hopkins University.

Illustrations for this book were colored digitally by Jason Lego.

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