

Where are the igloos of Iglooville ?

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Dear colleagues

In this new adventure Professor Sneeze, Breakneck and Reckless are confronted with all sorts of problems to do with the climate change : the thawing of the permafrost, the diminishing size of the ice pack and thus the space available for the polar bears, the movement of marine creatures and the opening up of a sea passage for the oil tankers.

By drawing up together a « code of conduct » our friends want to get the message across that everyone must make a concerted effort to save the earth.

It's up to you to convert the « Kyoto protocol » to a scale suitable for your class, so it will require some imagination on your part.

Each child should draw or write, according to his age, something that he (or she) promises to do to save energy and thus protect the planet from global warming.

Then put them together in a folder and send them to your favourite person in our story.

All that will encourage Breakneck and Reckless to continue their expeditions.

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Dear parents

You should also write or draw with your children a code of conduct that is adapted to your way of life at home.

Just a few points are enough. Don't try to do too much then loose patience.

In French there is an expression : « great rivers start from small streams » (les petits ruisseaux font le grandes rivières)

Our friends in this story look forward to receiving your news in the post.



Breakneck, the famous explorer, who lives down in the forest of Rabbitville, was getting into a frenzy of activity.

That morning the postman had delivered a huge parcel. On one side he saw in large red letters :
« exploration equipment for testing in extreme cold ».

Breakneck couldn't believe his eyes. He had been waiting for this for so long that he had assumed it had been forgotten and that he wouldn't be going to Iglooville, that village where all the houses are made of ice.



He quickly called Reckless, his fellow traveler, then feverishly began undoing the big box.

Reckless come hopping along and the two of them discovered anoraks, boots, sleeping bags, skis... but it was the little rucksack with a rounded back that particularly attracted their attention.

- Look ! It looks like the shell of a tortoise ! laughed Breakneck putting it on his back.



They were inquisitive so opened the bag. Inside there were some instructions : « this bag should be thrown in the air ».

Since they were intrigued, they followed the instructions. And to their surprise it opened out and a tent appeared.

- That's magical said Breakneck. Let's try again!

The two explorers had a lot of fun.



Then they were in a hurry to leave, so they loaded their sledge, not forgetting anything because they would have to be very organised and tough to survive in the polar regions.

- Have you got the plane tickets, Reckless asked all of a sudden.
- No, that's out of the question. We are going by boat, answered Breakneck. We must protect the planet. Aircraft make too much pollution and you know that !
- But boats don't go fast and I prefer planes ! murmured Reckless.
- That's too bad, we all have to make an effort ! As for me I'm going by boat. I'll see you at Iglooville, said Breakneck, who was cross with Reckless's reaction.

He left dragging the sledge behind him and leaving Reckless to make his mind up on his own.



Reckless left too but in the direction of the airport.

He thought that Breakneck was exaggerating and that a plane trip was not such a bad thing for the planet.

On his way he passed the laboratory of Professor Sneeze, the scientist at Rabbitville.

- Where are you going with such a full sledge ? Professor Sneeze called out from his window.
- We are going to Iglooville, answered Reckless.
- But you re alone, where is Breakneck ? asked Professor Sneeze.

Reckless told Professor Sneeze about his argument with Breakneck. Professor Sneeze scolded Reckless:

- Breakneck us right. The climate is changing and planes make much more pollution than boats and trains. You just think about yourself, that's unforgivable !

When he left Professor Sneeze, Reckless rather sheepishly went to the port. He found Breakneck who welcomed him warmly.

That was the beginning of a lovely trip to Iglooville...



After a long journey at sea the boat reached Iglooville, the village where the white hares of the Arctic meet to spend the winter.

- Do you think this is the right place ? asked Reckless. I can't see any igloos and there are lots of mosquitoes.
- Yes, that's funny ! Where has the ice gone ? What are we going to do with our sledges ? said Breakneck, who was worried.

They were disappointed because that had imagined a lovely white village with lots of igloos. They went to look for a place to set up their magical tent.



On the way they met and greeted some hares.

- They are a bit fat ! mentioned Breakneck.
- They seem to eat well ! said Reckless, licking his lips.
- Come on, let's get on with setting up camp, said Breakneck.

That was soon done with such a fantastic tent.



Iglooville seemed rather sad to Breakneck.

He let greedy Reckless follow a group of white hares towards the large expanses where delicious black currents were still growing thanks to the mild weather and he went off on his own towards the beach.



At the water's edge a skinny hare was dreamily relaxing, looking at the occasional iceberg. It was Mr Flake, the teacher at Iglooville.

Breakneck sat down next to him and they started talking.

- We aren't going back to school this year, said Mr Flake sadly. In these parts we go to school when it snows ! I don't understand what is going on.
My friends are all going to be ill, they eat too much. With all the snow in winter we normally eat less because we can't find much food any more, he continued.

As for Breakneck, he was bothered. He was wondering how he was going to test the new equipment and was sorry he was so far from home.



Breakneck continued his walk in the imposing silence of those wide open spaces and he heard a mummy bear consoling her two starving cubs.

- When the sea ices over we will go back to the ice pack and I will go hunting for seals. Meanwhile eat these black currents. I know you are hungry but we must wait for it to get cold.

Breakneck thought there was a real problem at Iglooville. He had to tell Professor Sneeze.

That was soon done with the satellite phone that he had brought with him.



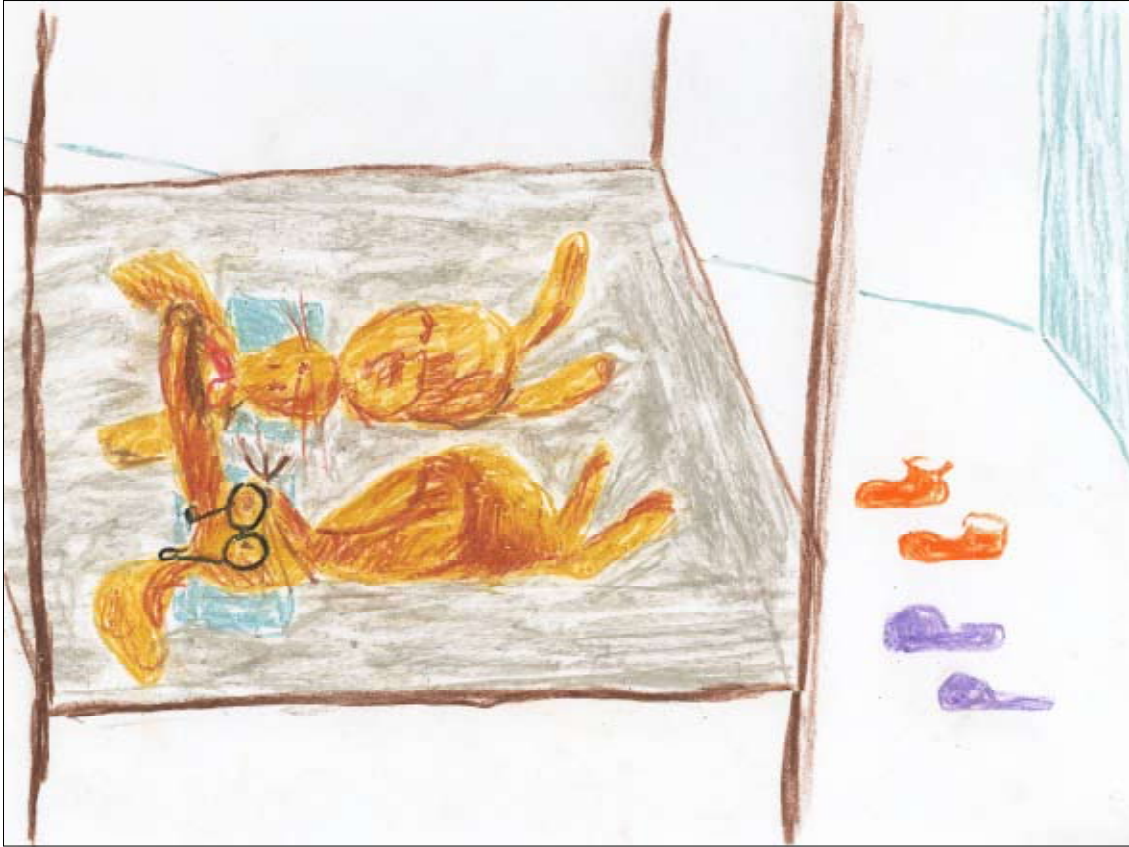
Whenever Professor Sneeze heard the words « problems » and « climate » he was always ready to take action.

For him it was urgent and he wanted to be off as soon as possible. By boat of course ! This was an ideal excuse for a trip with his family. Iglooville was waiting for them !

Lady Trumpet and their three baby rabbits, Bigoudis, Patatras and Turlutu were quickly packing their bags. But the scientific equipment was packed carefully. Ten days later Professor Sneeze and his family found themselves in the magical tent of Breakneck and Reckless.

- My school is empty and I would be happy if you lodged there, said Mr Flake, who had joined the group.

Patatras, Turlutu and Bigoudis were delighted to be staying at the school.



The family soon got to sleep. The following morning they were woken by the noisy laughter of their neighbours.

- Ho ! Ho ! Ho ! Your bed has sunk into the ground. You have got too fat ! said one of the hares.
- Hi ! Hi ! Hi ! Yours too, answered the fat hare laughing. We will have to go on a diet !

From one of the other tents they heard :

- Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! The chair sinks into the ground when I sit on it. I'm too fat.
- Hi ! Hi ! Hi ! Me too !

Professor Sneeze and Lady Trumpet found their new neighbours very cheerful and decided to go and join them for breakfast.

But when Professor Sneeze tried to go out he couldn't open the door ! The school had sunk into the ground as well.

Something funny was going on at Iglooville.



Professor Sneeze jumped out of the school window. He was worried and looked everywhere for Breakneck and Reckless.

- Where have those two gone now ? he said angrily.

He went to the beach and found a high place to look out towards the horizon.
Far away in kayaks made from walrus skins he saw his two friends.

Whilst he waited for them he sat down and had a hard think.



Suddenly Professor Sneeze felt himself sinking then he slid down towards the sea like on a fast slide. The ground was sinking.

- Help ! Help ! he called out as he landed in the cold water.
- Now I understand, he shouted struggling to get out of the water.
- What have you understood whilst taking your cold bath ? asked two familiar voices just behind him coming from the sea.

Professor Sneeze grabbed Breakneck's kayak and all three of them got back on dry land.

- The ground is going through a deep thaw ! said Professor Sneeze with chattering teeth, who had not yet got over his upset. It's no longer hard. Everywhere in Iglooville is sinking and in some places there are landslides down to the sea. It's too warm.
- Out at sea we met Dr Shrimp. He's on the « Albatross », that lovely white boat belonging to the scientists, said Breakneck.
- Let's go and join him, suggested Professor Sneeze. Together we will find out how to save Iglooville.



The news spread quickly in Iglooville.

It was time to stop laughing and stop stuffing oneself with black currents ! The inhabitants decided that all the little rabbits would return to school, that the strong hares would put the tents straight again, and that only some of the mothers would pick black currents for the whole village. They would have to be careful with the ground which was melting.

Mr Flake promised to look after Bigoudis, Patatras and Turlutu.

Everyone in Iglooville was frightened.



Breakneck, Reckless, Professor Sneeze and Lady Trumpet headed off towards the ice cap in kayaks.

The lovely white boat was majestically surrounded by blocks of ice, but all was strangely silent.

- Hello ! Dr Shrimp, we're here ! the whole kayak party called out.

No answer !

Then Breakneck, Reckless cried out very loud :

- Dr Shrimp, where are you ?

Nobody answered.

Then all of a sudden from the bridge they heard a crowd exclaiming with surprise :

- Oh ! Ah ! Magnificent

That made the four friends so inquisitive that they climbed on board the Albatross.



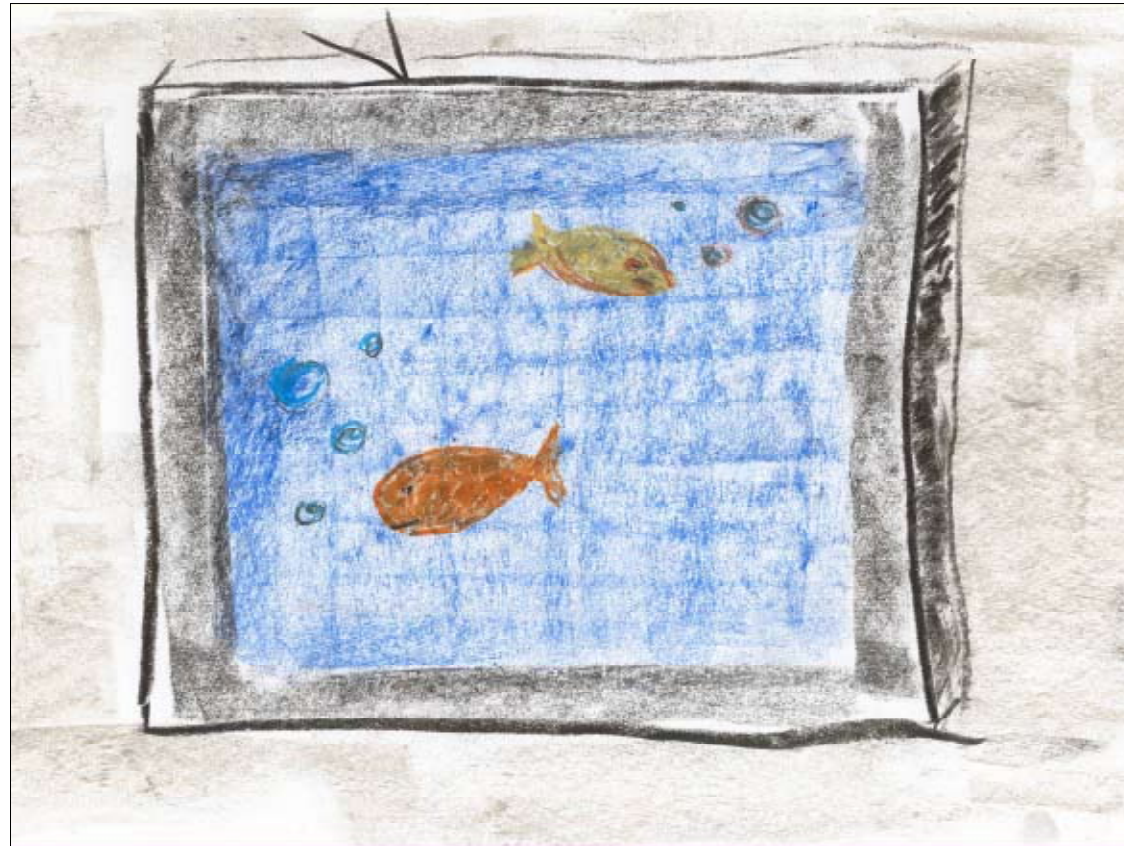
They found Dr Shrimp and all the scientists sitting on the deck with their eyes fixed on a big TV screen.

Nobody moved when the newcomers arrived.

They were looking at pictures that the robot photographer was sending up from the bottom of the sea, where noone had ever been before. The pictures were so captivating that Breakneck and his friends didn't dare to move.

Suddenly Dr Shrimp pointed his paw towards something small and almost transparent swimming near Victor the robot and he called out :

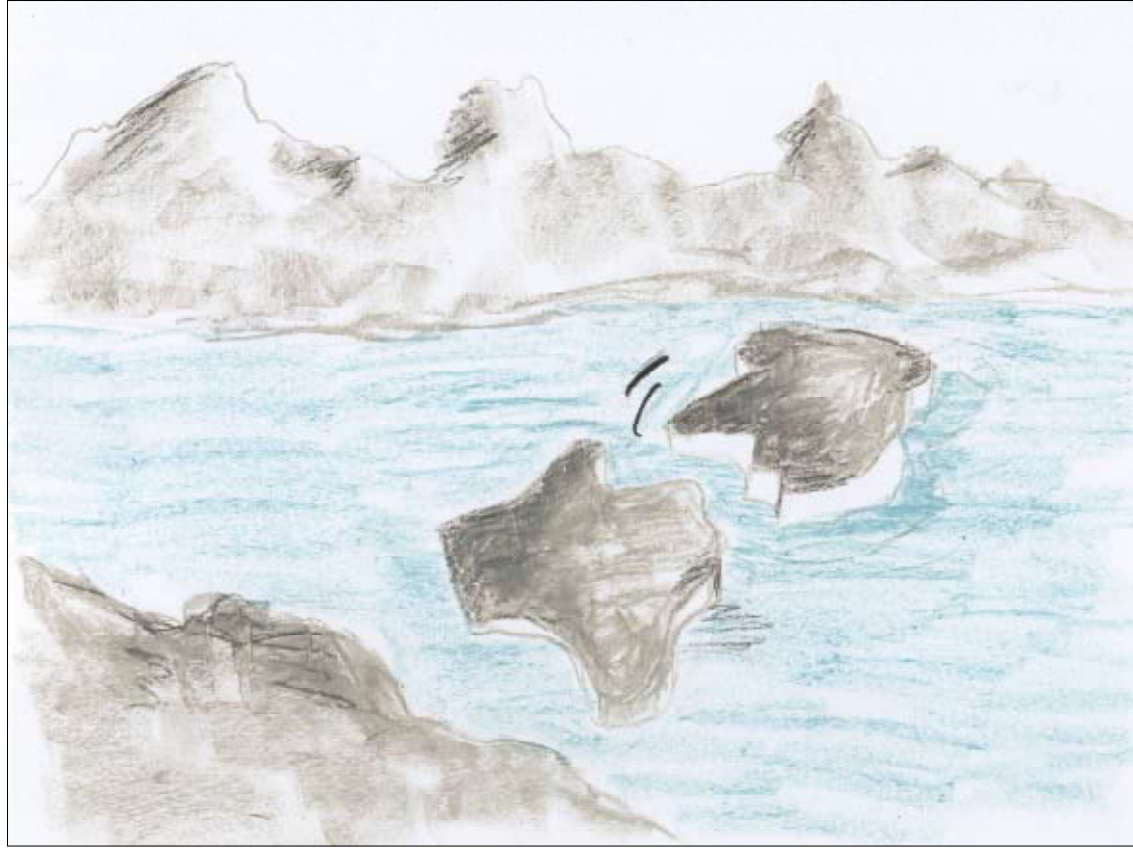
- But that type of shrimp normally lives in warm water ! What's it doing here ?



At that moment Professor Sneeze stepped forward. That piece of news was so worrying that nobody asked where he had come from.

- The ocean is warming up, he explained. It's a catastrophe : the sea animals are disrupted. At Iglooville, he continued, the inhabitants are afraid because the ground is thawing.

On the screen Victor was now showing two small fish swimming around that they weren't familiar with.



- Let's bring Victor up then we can have a think, said Dr Shrimp.

Lady Trumpet was admiring from a distance the wonderful spectacle of pieces from the ice cap knocking against each other with a sound like thunder. Meanwhile the scientists were busying themselves with the computerised controls to put Victor on the lift, which would bring him back on the deck.

Suddenly Lady Trumpet cried out :

- Look at that huge monster over there !

Everyone stopped and Victor stayed in the water.



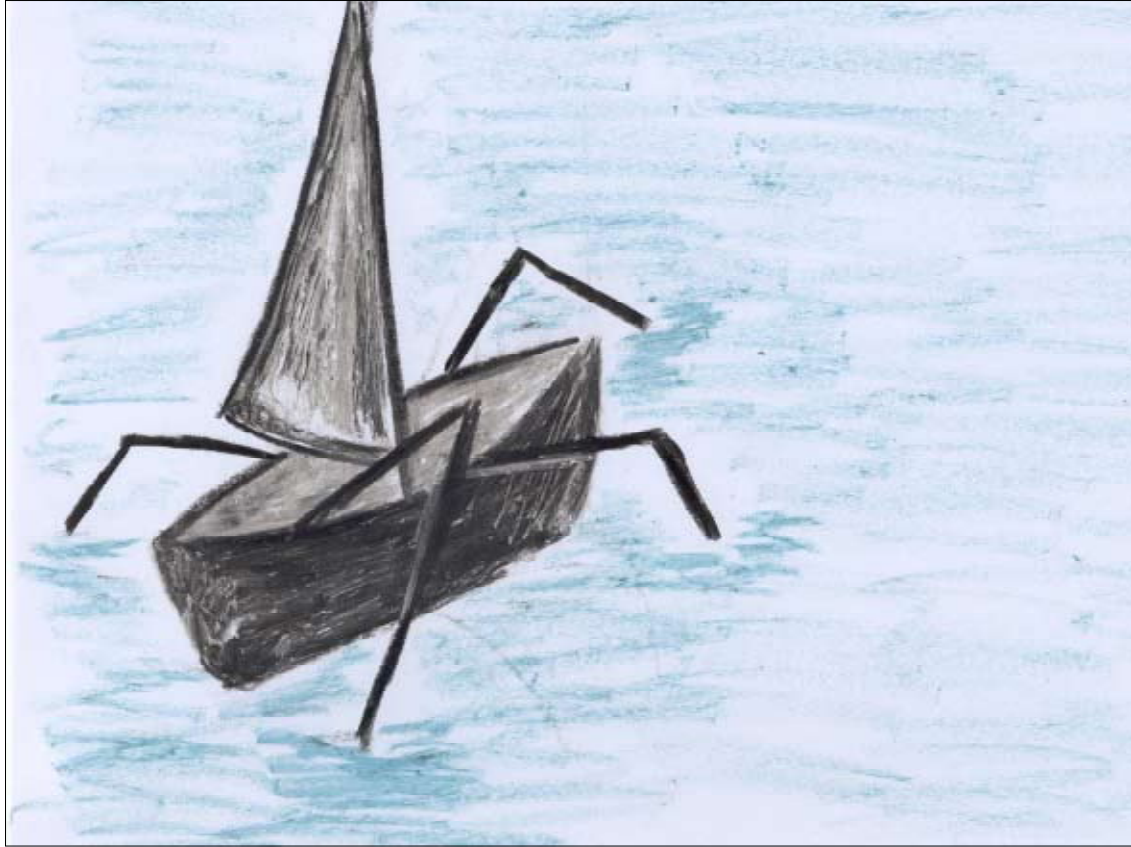
Far away towards the horizon a black object with four arms was moving slowly.

They quickly got out their binoculars but the thing was too far away. There was no way of knowing what it was !

The captain of the Albatross announced in the microphone :

- We are going to move the boat nearer the unidentified intruder. Be on your guard !

They quickly got Victor back on board and set off.



As the Albatross moved closer to the monster Lady Trumpet's cheeks got redder and redder with anger. In fact the monster with arms was a huge black boat with levers.

Professor called out :

- But it is a monster !

With his binoculars he could read the name of the boat : « Oil Slick ».

- Call him on the radio ! ordered Lady Trumpet.

The captain of the Albatross was rather taken back by this bossy manner but carried out the order.

- Hello ! « Albatross » calling « Oil Slick », he repeated several times.

« Oil Slick » was making so much noise that he didn't hear the call. They were breaking up the ice pack that was in their way but finally Mr Petrol, the captain replied :

- No time to talk. Looking for a new and shorter passage between Petroville and Polluville for all our boats... Got to deliverer this load of oil before Monday.



Everyone on the Albatross was amazed. This beautiful area that they loved so much was going to turn into a motorway for petrol tankers. The warm weather was making the ice melt.

- We must stop that at all costs, said Professor Sneeze.
- We will never succeed on our own, said Dr Shrimp. The climate is changing. it's of concern to everyone.
- We should have a meeting with all the other towns and decide together what must be done to stop the climate warming up, said Breakneck.

The small group of friends got down to business. They sent out invitations by internet to the inhabitants of Butterflyville, Polluville, Petroville etc ... to meet at Mr Flake's house at Iglooville.

Pea, the ivory-coloured gull, a friend of Breakneck and Reckless, had overheard everything. She flew off to spread the news. Thanks to her bird friends the whole world would be advised.



Delegations from the four corners of the earth arrived in Iglooville.

Professor Sneeze invited his visitors in by the school window since the ground had sunk and they couldn't open the window.

- Ho, ho ! These people in Iglooville are funny !
- We are going to have fun said someone from Petroville. In any case there's no way I'm going to change anything ! I earn a lot of money selling oil. I don't care a fig about the climate !

Professor Sneeze pretended not to have heard but noticed that the rabbit's paws were black and sticky from the oil and that he was making a mess everywhere. We was wondering what would make him change his mind...



Professor Sneeze settled down to start speaking when suddenly the school sank further into the ground.

- Help ! cried all the visitors.

Everyone began to panic.

- But this is awful, said the rabbit from Petroville, we didn't realise it was so serious !

No need for any speeches. The situation was obvious to all.

Everyone wanted to get out of Iglooville quickly because of the melting ground, so they hurriedly wrote down in a nice notebook given by Mt Flake, indicating the things that should not be done in order to protect the environment. Above all energy had to be saved.

Everyone that signed the book committed themselves to making an effort. Everybody was in agreement.



Once the delegations had left Professor Sneeze, Lady Trumpet and their friends wanted to invite the journalists to show them the fine book with all the signatures.

On the cover Mr Flake had written in his best handwriting « Code of conduct for saving the planet ».

But the frost, snow and strong blizzard wind prevented the planes landing in Iglooville and blocked the boats in the ice.

Nobody could come to or leave Iglooville any more.

So Professor Sneeze gave the fine book to Pear, the ivory gull. He put it in an envelope and Pear flew off with it.



A few days later all the newspapers across the world printed in large letters :
« Let's save the earth with Professor Sneeze »

After that they gave some of the advice listed in the book :

- Put a lid on the saucepan when you are cooking ;
- Don't leave the charger of your mobile phone plugged in when you are not recharging your phone ;
- If you are cold put another pullover on and close the doors but don't turn the heating up ;
- Think of some good ways of using less energy ;
- When you have the choice take the train rather than the plane, or your bike rather than the car.



They didn't receive the papers in Iglooville, but that didn't matter. The whole village was busy building wonderful igloos , those ice homes in which people live all winter.

Professor Sneeze had found among Breakneck's equipment for testing enough warm clothing for his whole family to last them through to the following summer.

Bigoudis, Patatras and Turlutu would learn at school how to ruffle up their hair to protect themselves from the cold.



- Everyone get out of the tent, we've got to fold it up, said Breakneck, who was in a hurry to leave for the North Pole.
- Straight away, answered Dr Shrimp. I'm going to spend the winter on the boat stuck in the ice pack. To continue studying the krill (the proper name for that sort of shrimp), I will make holes in the ice like the seals.
- But our igloo isn't finished yet, regretted Professor Sneeze.
- That's because you don't know the right way to do it, said Mr Flake. Don't worry, at Iglooville everybody helps each other.

Breakneck and Reckless loaded their sledges in view of their imminent departure. But before facing the icy expanses Breakneck wanted to show his friends how his magical tent worked.

He threw it in the air... and it flew far, far away because the wind at Iglooville was blowing very hard. And it disappeared.

Everyone had a good laugh. They didn't need it any more. Thanks to the efforts their friends made to save energy there would always be lovely igloos at Iglooville in which they could stay.

«Great friendships are made pursuing an ideal, when defending a cause, in the adventures encountered during research...»

Teilhard de Chardin

This is dedicated

- to **Alain** and **Gauthier**

- to all the children that are fighting against sickness, and especially to **LAURENCE** , who left us too soon and whom we miss.

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