



## **It's too much Josep**

Imagine if you were a tiny little ant. And that you had to pick up something reeeeeally big and heavy and carry it to the other side of the world. Sounds like hard work, doesn't it? There's no way you could do it. Too heavy, too big and too far! Well that's how Josep feels. Poor thing... he's overwhelmed, overcome, crushed and defeated... "I don't understand," I hear you say. How can he feel so miserable when summer's here? The school holidays have started. Gentle summer waves are lapping against the shore, perfect for children to splash about in. Well, despite all that, poor old Josep is down in the dumps. And the reason why he's so fed up is the subject of this story:

### **IT'S TOO MUCH! JOSEP**

The thing is, this summer, Josep has so much to do. He has to practice the piano, make sure he knows his times tables, practice his English, do all the exercises in his holiday workbook, and the hardest thing of all: he has to write a story that's one hundred words long. All that, in one summer! Whenever he thinks about it, his heart sinks. How will he do it? Where will he find the time? Poor Josep is very depressed. "It's impossible to do it all! It's too much!".

Next morning, his dad is waiting for him with the holiday workbook at the ready and the piano lid open. "Come on, you can get straight down to work". Josep sighs - oh.. He tells his dad he doesn't feel like it, he can't be bothered, it's too difficult, he can't do those sums or play that music. His dad is furious: "This boy is a layabout! He doesn't want to work! What are we going to with him?"

Grandpa Silvestre has come to spend the summer with Josep and his parents. He's the best grandpa. His favourite things are eating goat's cheese and watching the seagulls. When he hears Josep's dad, he says "Oh, leave the boy alone."

Josep's dad grumbles: when he was the boy's age, he could convert fractions to decimals and write his name in seven different languages. Grandpa says to his son: "then why don't you spend the holiday learning to write your name in seven more languages, and leave Josep to me. I think I know how to help him get through all this work."

Grandpa offers Josep a deal. Every day he has to do a bit of homework. A page of his exercise book one day, a little piano practice the next, and the next, quarter of an hour of English. The rule is, no more than one thing a day. He does one thing, and that's that. And when he's finished, they write one word, whichever word Josep likes, on the blackboard. One word for every task he completes. No more, no less.

Josep doesn't know what to do... But if he has to choose between grandpa's plan, and his mum and dad's, Josep thinks grandpa's is best.

On the first morning, Josep revises the eight times table, and then he and grandpa write the word "boat" on the blackboard. The next morning, Josep learns twenty words in English, and Grandpa lets him write the word "sea". The next day, he does a page of his workbook in his best handwriting, and writes "Giuseppe" which is Josep in Italian, and also the name of his friend in Rome. The next day he revises the seven times table, and writes "Joseph", which also means Josep. And so it goes on. Every time he does a job, he writes another word on the blackboard. And since doing one piece of homework and writing one word on the blackboard doesn't take long, Josep has time to go to the beach, watch TV, and even just to sit around doing nothing, which can be nice too.

So the days go by. Josep and his grandpa work every morning, and the words pile up. And when the end of the summer comes around, Josep has done almost all his homework, and the blackboard is covered in wonderful words like: "labyrinth," "container," "ramshackle," "scowl", "traffic lights", "tiger" and "meatballs".

The end of the holiday comes, and Josep's father asks him, "Have you done it all?"

"Nearly," says Josep. "There's just one thing left, the hundred-word story. It's so difficult. It's too much!" Then grandpa takes Josep, stands him in front of the blackboard and asks: "What can you see?"

"Words," says Josep.

"Isn't that what you need to write your story - words?"

So Josep starts to make up a story with all the words he wrote down with his grandpa, and before he knows it, he's written the whole thing. It's the story of two friends, Josep and Giuseppe. One day, they decide to set out in a boat and sail across the Mediterranean sea, until they arrive in Egypt. There, on the beach the two friends meet a boy whose name is Yosuf. When they find out that they all have the same name, they're very happy, and they promise to be friends forever.

Josep, just like Yosuf, Joseph or Giuseppe means "confidence". It means that if you don't let yourself get overwhelmed, and do things bit by bit, you can do anything you set your mind to, even if at first it all seemed 'too much'.

Script: Carme Aymerich