



Dylan learns to help and save



There are three things you need to know about Dylan. He is kind, he loves to learn, and he is a dragon. Dylan looks out of his window and thinks some very big thoughts. Very big thoughts lead to lots of questions and Dylan's friends help him to answer those questions.

Dylan has lots of friends, who live in the nearby village. When Dylan tried to understand what money is and where it comes from, his friend Rhiannon helped him. Now he knows all about money and even has a job. Dylan helps light the bonfire at the village green when they have a festival or party. Looking after fire is one of Dylan's skills, because he is a dragon.

Dylan looks around his room at all of the new things he has bought.

"I have earned so much money," he says to himself, "that I have bought all of the things I want." He looks over at the pile of money, spilling out of his savings box. "What do I do with the rest of this money?" he asks himself.

It is a cool and crisp day, so Dylan decides to fly over to the village to see some friends. As he arrives at the village, he notices his friend Rhiannon walking down the street.

"Hello Rhiannon," Dylan shouts.

"Well hello Dylan. How lovely to see you!" Rhiannon replies.

Dylan smiles. "I was just going to visit you at your shop," says Dylan.

"I'm not working today," Rhiannon replies. "It is my day off. I have a few things that I need to do. Would you like to join me?" she asks.

"Yes, please," replies Dylan eagerly. "So, where are we going?" he asks excitedly.

"First, I need to visit the Building society," explains Rhiannon. "I have a savings account with the Building society, and I am going to deposit some of my money."

"Ooooh!" squeals Dylan, excited at the sound of something new to learn about.

"What is a Building society and what is a savings account?"

As they walk to the Building society, Rhiannon tells Dylan all about savings. "I'm sure you remember, Dylan, that we use money to buy things?"

"Of course," replies Dylan "I have bought lots of things for myself with my money."

"Well," Rhiannon explains, "sometimes we buy the things we need, and some of the things that we want and still have money left over. It is a good idea to put that money somewhere safe and save it. We can save it for the future."

Dylan continues to walk alongside Rhiannon as he thinks about this. Finally, he asks "but won't we have other money in the future? Why do we need to save this money when we can get more money?"

"That is a very good question Dylan and there are two very good answers," Rhiannon replies. (1)

"First of all, if we save our money, the total will grow, and we can buy more expensive things. One day I would like to buy a boat. If I keep saving my money, one day I may have enough to buy my boat and sail around the world."

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Dylan thinks that Rhiannon's idea sounds wonderful. He would love to travel the world one day too. "That is a very good reason to save your money," Dylan agrees.

"The other reason, is even more important," adds Rhiannon. "No one knows how things could change in the future. I am able to earn money now, but I might not be able to earn money in the future. If that happens, I will have my savings to buy the things I need."

Dylan thinks very carefully about this, all the way to the building society. As they arrive, a friendly man, in a very smart uniform, welcomes them into the branch. (2)

The friendly man introduces himself. "My name is James." He says. "How can I help you today?"

Rhiannon replies, "I would like to deposit some money into my savings account, please?"

"Of course," says James, "Susan, at the counter, can help you."

Rhiannon and Dylan head to the counter. Rhiannon takes a little book out of her bag and shows Dylan. Whenever I deposit or withdraw money from my account my book is updated and tells me how much money I have saved. It shows the date, the amount of money I am depositing or withdrawing, and my new balance. The balance is the total."

"That is right," agrees Susan, sitting behind the counter with a big smile. "When Rhiannon deposits money into her account, her balance increases. When she withdraws money, her balance goes down." (3)

While Susan helps Rhiannon to deposit her money, Dylan wanders over to James. "Excuse me," Dylan says to James, "can I have a savings account?"

"Of course, you can," replies James with a smile, "I can help you."

Dylan sits opposite James as he types into a computer. Dylan notices lots of posters of houses around the room. They all have the word 'mortgage'. "What is a mortgage?" Dylan wonders aloud.

"A mortgage is a way of paying for a house," James explains, looking up from the computer. "Houses are very expensive, and most people don't have enough money to buy one. Instead, they save as much as they can, and they borrow the rest from us. A mortgage is a type of loan." (4)

"If I want to buy a house when I grow up, I will need to get a mortgage?" Dylan asks.

"That is right," replies James. "You would choose a house that you wanted to buy, see how much money you had saved, and then borrow the rest to buy the house. You would pay back a little bit of the mortgage every month until it was all paid," James adds as he finishes typing. "And that is your account all set up."

"Thank you. I am very excited to have my own savings account. Maybe I will save for a new home" Dylan suggests. Dylan jumps down from the chair to tell Rhiannon his exciting news. (5)

James and Susan have been really helpful and friendly. Dylan has opened a savings account and deposited £5. He has a little book, just like Rhiannon, that he must keep safe at home.

Rhiannon and Dylan wave their new friends goodbye and continue along the street. "I have one more job to do," Rhiannon tells Dylan. "I have to pop into a building, just over the road and make a donation."

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Dylan looks over at the building and notices a large colourful sign that reads 'Here to help' with a picture of smiling faces. "What is that place?" Dylan asks Rhiannon. "Is it a shop?"

"No, Dylan, it is a charity," replies Rhiannon. "A charity is a group of people who work to help those in need. This charity helps people who have become too ill to work and earn money. The charity gives them food and other things they need. I give them some of my money to help pay for those things. It is important to help those who are not as lucky as we are, if we can."

This made Dylan quite sad. He had never considered that other people might not have what they need. He felt bad that he had bought so many lovely things for himself and didn't realise that some people don't have everything they need. (6) Rhiannon notices that Dylan looks upset.

"You don't have to feel bad, Dylan," Rhiannon reassures him. "You didn't know that people needed help. You are the kindest dragon I have ever met. I am certain, that you will do lots of good things to help people in the future."

"I will," says Dylan "I am going to think very hard about how I can help, and I am going to make a donation too."

Rhiannon smiles at him proudly, "that is very nice of you. I think they will be very grateful."

As Dylan flies home, he has a lot to think about. He has learned that it is important to save some of your money for the future. He has also learned that it is important to think about other people sometimes and how we can help them. He looks towards his beautiful home and is filled with gratitude. (7)

1. What reasons can you think of to save? Why should we save money?
2. A branch is the name for the different buildings that you can visit to pay money into your bank or building society accounts. Why do you think they are called branches? What does branch usually mean?
3. Try to engage learners in a discussion about the use and definitions. 'We have learned three new words. Deposit, withdraw and balance. Do we know which is which? Which word means adding money to your account? Which word means to take money out of your account? If you deposit money, will your balance be higher or lower?'
4. Do you know what a loan is? A loan is an amount of money that is borrowed, to be paid back in the future. A loan can be paid back the next day or the next year. It can be paid off bit by bit over many years. Offer examples to learners.
5. What would you save for?
6. This charity helps people who don't have enough money to buy the things they need. What sort of things do you think the charity might do for these people? What other sorts of charities can you think of and why are they important?
7. What did we think about Dylan's story? He has learned a lot. What have we learned? What did you like about the story?

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