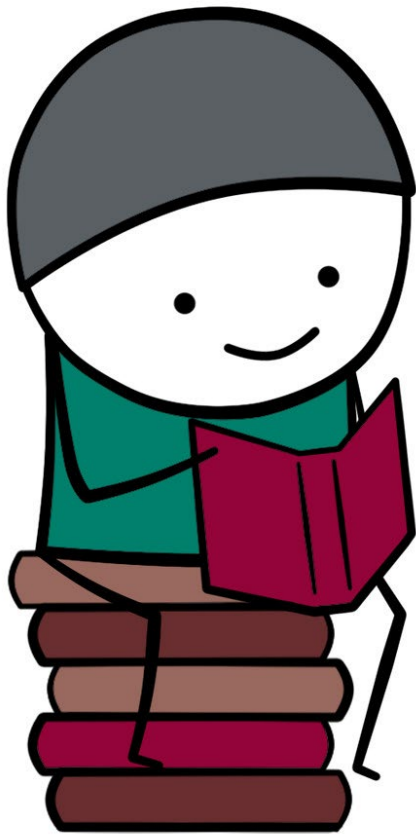




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Espoo 2021 Reading Project

English Stories and Nursery Rhymes for Grades One and Two Readers

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This reading packet is organized into two categories. The first grouping is comprised of **English Stories** for Grades One and Two readers adapted by Jenneth Sawchuk-Vehkavuori, FM. The second classification consists of popular **Nursery Rhymes and the History Behind the Rhyme** arranged by Mildred Marie Reid, EdD/PhD.

English Stories is designed for emerging readers' listening; as well as for Grades One and Grade Two independent reading. **Nursery Rhymes and the History Behind the Rhyme** is presented in two levels for use as guided or independent reading. Grade One readers have the nursery rhyme presented in text along with links for listening to the rhyme. Grade Two readers are presented with the origins and history behind the rhyme. Within each Grade Two selection, readers have links for extended enrichment.

Jenneth Sawchuk-Vehkavuori and Mildred (Millie) Marie Reid are Mother-Tongue English Language teachers with the City of Espoo.

English Stories

Beatrix Potter

Raggedy Ann Rescues Fido

Dick Whittington and His Cat

The City Mouse and the Country Mouse

George and the Dragon

The Frog Princess

How the Old Woman got Her Wish

The Lion and the Mouse

Jack and the Beanstalk

The Magic Porridge Pot

Peter Rabbit

Why Anansi has Eight Skinny Legs

Nursery Rhymes for Grade One Readers:

1. Baa Baa Black Sheep
2. Mary Had a Little Lamb
3. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

History Behind the Rhyme for Grade Two Readers:

1. Baa Baa Black Sheep
2. Mary Had a Little Lamb
3. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Best Wishes and Happy Reading,

From Jen & Millie

Beatrix Potter



Have you read **The Tale of Peter Rabbit**? It's a very famous children's book, written by Beatrix Potter. Beatrix was born in 1866. She and her brother kept many small animals as pets - rabbits, hedgehogs, guinea pigs, mice, frogs and even bats! They both liked to draw their pets, but Beatrix liked drawing animals from her own imagination most. She also loved exploring and drawing nature when they visited beautiful places like Scotland and the Lake District.

"Beatrix Potter 01" by thecmn is marked with CC-PDM 1.0

Beatrix was very smart, and studied archaeological artefacts, fossils and insects, but she was especially interested in mycology - the study of mushrooms! She even wrote a scientific paper about it, but women at that time couldn't be scientists.

To earn some money, Beatrix started drawing cards with animals. She liked writing and illustrating letters too. One day, she wrote a letter to her friend's son, and told the story of Peter Rabbit. She decided to make the story into a book. **The Tale of Peter Rabbit** was published in 1902 - and it was a great success!

Beatrix wrote, illustrated and published many more books. She also created dolls, painting books, games and other items based on her characters. In 1905, Beatrix bought a farm in the Lake District. She learned about farming and bought more farms and land to help preserve the landscape. She enjoyed country life very much, and was very active in protecting the environment.

When Beatrix died, she left almost all her farms and land to the National Trust, a charity which protects historic places and landscapes. You can even visit Hill Top Farm today, which is exactly like it was when Beatrix lived there! So if you haven't read **The Tale of Peter Rabbit**, or other Beatrix Potter books, why not visit your local library or bookshop today!



<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/sites/kids/files/attachment/short-stories-british-ales-beatrix-potter-transcript.pdf>

Creative challenge: Write your own animal story and draw illustrations for it.

"Beatrix Potter with Spot the dog" by RiversdaleEstateMedia, Tasmania is marked with CC0 1.0

Dick Whittington and His Cat

Once upon a time, there was a poor orphan boy called Dick Whittington. The people in his village believed that the streets of London were paved with gold. So Dick decided to travel there and become a rich man.

Dick walked for many days, but when he arrived in London there were no streets of gold! Tired and hungry, he fell asleep on the steps of a great house. The house belonged to a rich businessman who found Dick and gave him a job cleaning the kitchen.

Dick worked very hard and was happy. He had enough to eat and at night he could sleep by the fire. There was a problem though! At night, rats ran around the kitchen and kept him awake. So Dick went out and found the fastest rat-catching cat in London! The cat caught all the rats that came into the house and Dick could sleep at night.

The businessman heard about the amazing cat and asked Dick if he could take it on his ship to catch rats on his next journey. Dick agreed, but was very sad to see the cat go.

While the businessman was away, the other servants were very mean to Dick, so Dick decided to run away. But as he was leaving, one of the great church bells rang. It seemed to say, 'Turn back, Dick Whittington, Mayor of London!' So Dick went back to the house and soon the businessman returned. He was very happy because Dick's cat had caught all the rats on the ship. He gave Dick a reward and promoted him to his assistant.

Dick worked hard for the businessman and learned everything he could. Eventually he married the businessman's daughter and started a very successful business of his own. And, yes, he did become Mayor of London!

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/short-stories/dick-whittington>



"Dick Whittington's Cat" by It's No Game is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Discussion questions: What happened to Dick Whittington when he arrived in London? How did the cat help Dick Whittington? What qualities did Dick Whittington have that made him successful?

George and the Dragon



"Germany-00484 - St. George and the Dragon" by archer10 (Dennis) is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

Once upon a time there was a brave knight called George. George had lots of adventures as he travelled by horse across many lands. One day he came to a small village and met a man who lived in a cave next to the village. The hermit told the knight about the awful things that were happening there.

A terrible dragon had come to live in the lake and attacked the village every day. The villagers didn't know what to do. First, they gave the dragon all their food, but the dragon just took the food and still

attacked the village. So then the villagers gave the dragon all the animals from their farms. The dragon took all the animals, but continued to attack the villagers. So then they gave the dragon all their gold and jewels. The dragon took all their money, but still was not satisfied.

The king sent his army to try and capture the dragon, but the dragon was too strong, and the knights of the army were too scared and they ran away. With nothing left to give, the king could only think of one thing to help protect his people. He sent his only daughter, the princess, to the lake to wait for the dragon.

When George heard this, he rode as fast as he could to the lake. Just then the dragon jumped out from the lake and was going to eat the princess. George attacked the dragon. He fought very bravely, won the fight and killed the dragon. George and the princess returned to the village and everyone was very pleased that they would have no more problems with the dragon.

Today, the story of George's bravery is remembered, and George is known as the patron saint of many countries.

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/sites/kids/files/attachment/short-stories-british-tales-george-and-the-dragon-transcript.pdf>

Challenge: Find out what a patron saint is. Why do you think George is called a patron saint?

How the Old Woman Got Her Wish

A Story from India

A long time ago a blind old woman lived with her son and his wife in a small village in South India. They were very poor.

The old woman was very religious and prayed every day. And one day, her god, the elephant god called Ganesh, said to her 'Old woman, I am listening to your prayers and I will grant you one wish. So tell me what you want. I will return tomorrow for your answer.'

The old woman replied, 'But I don't know what to ask for.'

Ganesh said, 'Then ask your son and your daughter-in-law for advice - they may be able to tell you what to ask for.'

The old woman thought about this and decided that it was a good idea.

When she asked her son, the son replied, 'Amma, our land is poor and we are struggling to grow enough to feed ourselves, so please ask for gold that we can sell to buy food.'

But when she asked her daughter-in-law, the daughter-in-law replied, 'Your son and I really want a child so please ask for a grandson.'

The old woman considered their advice and said to herself, 'They have told me what they want, not what I want. So let me ask my neighbour. Let me see what she says.'

So the old woman went to her neighbour and said, 'Ganeshji has told me to ask him for something. What do you think I should ask him for?'

The neighbour replied, 'Don't ask for what others want. Why don't you ask for your sight, so that you can see again?'

But the old woman was kind and generous. Although she desperately wanted to see the blue sky and the green trees again, she really wanted to give her son and daughter-in-law what they had asked for as well. So she thought long and hard about what to say to Ganesh when he returned the next day.

'To keep my son and daughter-in-law happy, I should ask for what they want. To make myself happy, I should ask for what I want. So what should I ask for - gold, a grandson, or my sight?'

The next day, Ganesh appeared again and said, 'Ask me for something, old woman. Have you decided what you want?'



"Ganesha the Elephant God" by Newtown graffiti is licensed under CC BY 2.0

The old woman had made up her mind. She knew exactly what she wanted. She replied, 'I want to see my grandson drinking milk from a golden bowl. Give me that.'

Ganesh laughed and replied, 'Old woman, you have tricked me! You have asked me for everything! But as you have made me laugh, I shall grant you your wish.'

So Ganesh gave her what she wanted and the wishes of all three, the old woman, her son, and her daughter-in-law, were granted.

<https://worldstories.org.uk/reader/how-the-old-woman-got-her-wish/english/416>

Discussion questions:

What three wishes were suggested to the old woman by her son, daughter-in-law and neighbour?

How did the old woman show her wisdom by her wish?

If you could make a wish that would come true, what would it be?

Jack and the Beanstalk

Once upon a time there was a boy called Jack. He lived with his mother. They were very poor, and all they had was a cow. One morning, Jack's mother told Jack to take their cow to market and sell her so they could buy food to eat.

On the way, Jack met a man. He gave Jack some magic beans for the cow. Jack took the beans and went back home.



When Jack's mother saw the beans, she was very angry. She threw the beans out of the window.

The next morning, Jack looked out of the window. There was a giant beanstalk. He went outside and started to climb the beanstalk. He climbed up to the sky through the clouds.

Jack saw a beautiful castle. He went inside. Jack heard a voice. 'Fee, fi, fo, fum!' Jack ran into a cupboard. An enormous giant came into the room and sat down. On the table there was a hen and a golden harp.

"Jack and the Beanstalk" by thecmn is marked with CC PDM 1.0

'Lay!' said the giant. The hen laid an egg. It was made of gold. 'Sing!' said the giant. The harp began to sing.

Soon the giant was asleep. Jack jumped out of the cupboard. He took the hen and the harp. Suddenly, the harp sang, 'Help, master!'

The giant woke up and shouted, 'Fee, fi, fo, fum!' Jack ran and started climbing down the beanstalk. The giant came down after him.

Jack shouted, 'Mother! Help!' Jack's mother took an axe and chopped down the beanstalk. The giant fell and crashed to the ground. Nobody ever saw him again. With the golden eggs and the magic harp, Jack and his mother lived happily ever after.

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/sites/kids/files/attachment/short-stories-jack-and-the-beanstalk-transcript.pdf>

Discussion question: How did Jack's misfortune or bad luck turn into fortune or good luck?

Creative challenge: Draw a picture of the giant's castle with Jack visiting it.

The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter

Once upon a time there were four little Rabbits, and their names were--Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, and Peter. They lived with their Mother in a sand-bank, underneath the root of a very big fir-tree.



"Peter Rabbit" by misopocky is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

"Now, my dears," said old Mrs. Rabbit one morning, "you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden: your Father had an accident there; he was put in a pie by Mrs. McGregor."

"Now run along, and don't get into mischief. I am going out." Then old Mrs. Rabbit took a basket and her umbrella, and went through the wood to the baker's. She bought a loaf of brown bread and five currant buns.

Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail, who were good little bunnies, went down the lane to gather blackberries; but Peter, who was very naughty, ran straight away to Mr. McGregor's garden, and squeezed under the gate!

First he ate some lettuces and some French beans; and then he ate some radishes; and then, feeling rather sick, he went to look for some parsley. But round the end of a cucumber frame, whom should he meet but Mr. McGregor!

Mr. McGregor was on his hands and knees planting out young cabbages, but he jumped up and ran after Peter, waving a rake and calling out, "Stop thief!"

Peter was most dreadfully frightened; he rushed all over the garden, for he had forgotten the way back to the gate. He lost one of his shoes among the cabbages, and the other shoe amongst the potatoes. After losing them, he ran on four legs and went faster, so that I think he might have got away altogether if he had not unfortunately run into a gooseberry net, and got caught by the large buttons on his jacket. It was a blue jacket with brass buttons, and quite new.

Peter gave himself up for lost, and shed big tears; but his sobs were overheard by some friendly sparrows, who flew to him in great excitement, and implored him to exert himself.

Mr. McGregor came up with a sieve, which he intended to pop upon the top of Peter; but Peter wriggled out just in time, leaving his jacket behind him. And rushed into the toolshed, and jumped into a can. It would have been a beautiful thing to hide in, if it had not had so much water in it.

Mr. McGregor was quite sure that Peter was somewhere in the toolshed, perhaps hidden underneath a flower-pot. He began to turn them over carefully, looking under each.

Presently Peter sneezed-- "Kertyschoo!" Mr. McGregor was after him in no time, and tried to put his foot upon Peter, who jumped out of a window, upsetting three plants. The window was too small for Mr. McGregor, and he was tired of running after Peter. He went back to his work.

Peter sat down to rest; he was out of breath and trembling with fright, and he had not the least idea which way to go. Also, he was very damp with sitting in that can. After some time he began to wander about, going lippity--lippity--not very fast, and looking all around. He found a door in a wall; but it was locked, and there was no room for a fat little rabbit to squeeze underneath.

An old mouse was running in and out over the stone doorstep, carrying peas and beans to her family in the wood. Peter asked her the way to the gate, but she had such a large pea in her mouth that she could not answer. She only shook her head at him.

Peter began to cry. Then he tried to find his way straight across the garden, but he became more and more puzzled. Presently, he came to a pond where Mr. McGregor filled his water-cans. A white cat was staring at some goldfish; she sat very, very still, but now and then the tip of her tail twitched as if it were alive. Peter thought it best to go away without speaking to her; he has heard about cats from his cousin, little Benjamin Bunny.

He went back towards the toolshed, but suddenly, quite close to him, he heard the noise of a hoe--scr-r-ritch, scratch, scratch, scritch. Peter scuttered underneath the bushes. But presently, as nothing happened, he came out, and climbed upon a wheelbarrow, and peeped over. The first thing he saw was Mr. McGregor hoeing onions. His back was turned towards Peter, and beyond him was the gate!

Peter got down very quietly off the wheelbarrow, and started running as fast as he could go, along a straight walk behind some black-currant bushes. Mr. McGregor caught sight of him, but Peter did not care. He slipped underneath the gate, and was safe at last in the wood outside the garden.

Mr. McGregor hung up the little jacket and the shoes for a scare-crow to frighten the blackbirds.

Peter never stopped running or looked behind him till he got home to the big fir-tree. He was so tired that he flopped down upon the nice soft sand on the floor of the rabbit-hole, and shut his eyes. His mother was busy cooking; she wondered what he had done with his clothes. It was the second little jacket and pair of shoes that Peter had lost in a fortnight!

I am sorry to say that Peter was not very well during the evening. His mother put him to bed, and made some camomile tea; and she gave a dose of it to Peter! "One table-spoonful to be taken at bed-time." But Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail had bread and milk and blackberries for supper.

https://www.world-english.org/stories_potter.htm

Discussion questions:

What advice does Mrs. Rabbit give her children at the beginning of the story?

What happened to Peter Rabbit when he went into the garden?

How does Peter Rabbit feel at the end of the story?

What lesson does this story teach?

RAGGEDY ANN RESCUES FIDO by Johnny Gruelle

It was almost midnight, and the dolls were falling asleep in their beds; all except Raggedy Ann. Raggedy lay there, her shoe-button eyes staring straight up at the ceiling. She was thinking.

"Tell us what you have been thinking, dear Raggedy," said the tin soldier. "We hope they were pleasant thoughts."

"Not very pleasant thoughts!" said Raggedy, as she brushed a tear from her shoe-button eyes. "You haven't seen Fido all day, have you?"

"Not since early this morning," the French dolly said.

"It has troubled me," said Raggedy, "and if my head was not stuffed with lovely new white cotton, I am sure it would have ached with the worry! When Mistress took me into the living-room this afternoon she was crying, and I heard her mamma say, 'We will find him! He is sure to come home soon!' and I knew they were talking of Fido! He must be lost!"

"When I was sitting in the window about noon-time," said the Indian doll, "I saw Fido and a yellow scraggly dog playing out on the lawn and they ran out through a hole in the fence!"

"That was Priscilla's dog, Peterkins!" said the French doll.

"I think it would be a good plan for us to show our love for Mistress and try and find Fido!" exclaimed Raggedy. "Let us waste no more time in talking!" said Raggedy Ann, as she jumped from bed, followed by the rest.

The nursery window was open, so the dolls helped each other up on the sill and then jumped to the soft grass below. At the hole in the fence the Indian doll picked up the trail of the two dogs, and the dolls, stringing out behind, followed him until they came to Peterkins' house. Peterkins was too large to sleep inside, so he had a nice cozy dog-house under the grape arbor.

"Come in," Peterkins said when he saw and recognized the dolls, so all the dollies went into Peterkins' house and sat about while Raggedy told him why they had come.

"It has worried me, too!" said Peterkins. For you see," Peterkins continued, "Fido and I were having the grandest romp over in the park when a great big man with a funny thing on the end of a stick came running towards us. We barked at him and Fido thought he was trying to play with us and went up too close and do you know, that man caught Fido in the thing at the end of the stick and carried him to a wagon and dumped him in with a lot of other dogs!"

"*The Dog Catcher!*" cried Raggedy Ann.

"Yes!" said Peterkins, as he wiped his eyes with his paws. "It was the dog catcher! For I followed the wagon at a distance, and I saw him put all the dogs into a big wire pen, so that none could get out!"

"Then you know the way there, Peterkins?" asked Raggedy Ann.



"raggedy ann" by Wicked Little Cake Company is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

"Yes, I can find it easily," Peterkins said.

"Then show us the way!" Raggedy Ann cried, "for we must try to rescue Fido."

So Peterkins led the way up alleys and across streets, the dolls all pattering along behind him. It was a strange procession. At last they came to the dog catcher's place. Some of the dogs in the pen were barking at the moon and others were whining. There was Fido, all covered with mud, and his pretty red ribbon dragging on the ground. My, but he was glad to see the dolls and Peterkins! All the dogs came to the side of the pen and twisted their heads from side to side, gazing in wonder at the dolls.

"We will try and let you out," said Raggedy Ann. At this all the dogs barked joyfully. Then Raggedy Ann, the other dolls and Peterkins went to the gate.

The catch was too high for Raggedy Ann to reach, but Peterkins held Raggedy Ann in his mouth and stood up on his hind legs so that she could raise the catch. When the catch was raised, the dogs were so anxious to get out they pushed and jumped against the gate so hard it flew open, knocking Peterkins and Raggedy Ann into the mud. Such a yapping and barking was never heard in the neighborhood as when the dogs swarmed out of the enclosure, jumping over one another and scrambling about in the mad rush out the gate.

Fido, Peterkins, and all the dolls ran after the pack of dogs, turning the corner just as the dog catcher came running out of the house in his nightgown to see what was causing the trouble. He stopped in astonishment when he saw the string of dolls in white nighties pattering down the alley, for he could not imagine what they were.

Well, you may be sure the dolls thanked Peterkins for his kind assistance and they and Fido ran on home, for a faint light was beginning to show in the east where the sun was getting ready to come up. When they got to their own home, they found an old chair out in the yard and after a great deal of work they finally dragged it to the window and thus managed to get into the nursery again.

Fido was very grateful to Raggedy Ann and the other dolls and before he went to his basket, he gave them each a lick on the cheek.

The dolls lost no time in scrambling into bed and pulling up the covers, for they were very sleepy, but just as they were dozing off, Raggedy Ann raised herself and said, "If my legs and arms were not stuffed with nice clean cotton I feel sure they would ache, but I could not feel happier if my body were stuffed with sunshine, for I know how pleased and happy Mistress will be in the morning when she discovers Fido asleep in his own little basket, safe and sound at home."

And as the dollies by this time were all asleep, Raggedy Ann pulled the sheet up to her chin and smiled so hard she ripped two stitches out of the back of her rag head.

https://www.gutenberg.org/files/18190/18190-h/18190-h.htm#RAGGEDY_ANN_RESCUES_FIDO

Discussion questions: Have you ever lost a pet? How did you try to find your pet? How would you feel if you lost and then found your pet?

The City Mouse and the Country Mouse

There once was a tiny little mouse from the city. One day, the city mouse went to visit his friend from the countryside; the country mouse.

The two mice were best friends and being together made them both very happy.

The country mouse was simple yet generous. He offered his friend some food: bread, butter, cheese and beans.

However, as the city mouse started to eat the meal, he started to feel a little bit sick.

'Aren't you hungry?' asked the country mouse.

'Very. But this food is not like the food from the city. I don't like it!' said the city mouse.

The two mice spent the day together. They had fun walking around the countryside. When it grew dark, they said goodbye.

Before he went home, the city mouse invited the country mouse to his home in the city to try the incredible food there.

The following week, the country mouse scuttled all the way to the city. He found his friend.

'Here in the city we don't eat until six o' clock,' said the city mouse. 'Wait until the evening and you'll see how yummy the food is! It's worth the wait!'

The evening arrived, and the sun set. The city mouse showed the country mouse his little den in a big human house.

The humans had set their dinner table with every dessert, meat and cheese a little mouse could imagine. It was heaven!

The mice started to gobble the cakes, the meats and the different cheeses. The country mouse loved the cured ham and salami. He gobbled it up.

As the mice started to feel full, they heard a bark!

'What is that?' screamed the country mouse. He was afraid of the loud noise.

'Oh no! It's the guard dog! Run!' cried the city mouse.

They both ran quickly and tried to escape. The country mouse followed the city mouse back to the den.

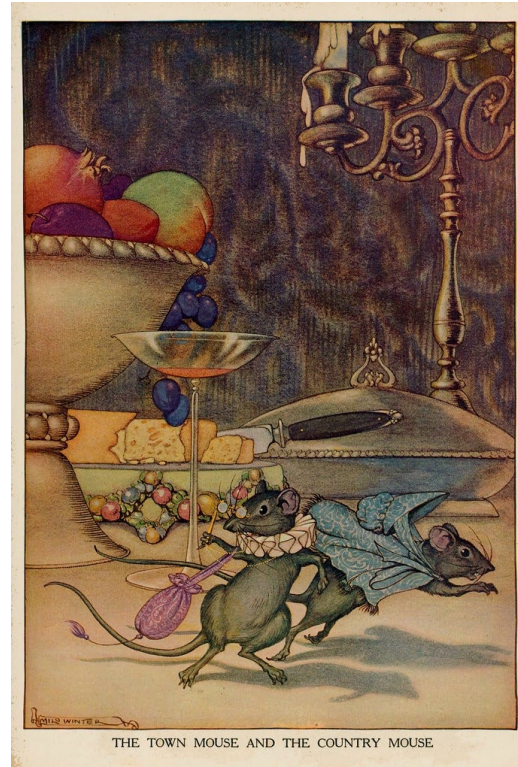
It was a close call. The dog almost caught them.

'Sorry city mouse but I'm going home now! See you!' panted the country mouse.

'Why? Don't you want to eat more delicious food?' asked the city mouse.

'I'd rather eat bread, cheese and beans in peace, than eat desserts and meat in danger!' called the country mouse over his shoulder as he began his journey home.

<https://worldstories.org.uk/reader/city-mouse-and-country-mouse/english/666>



"aesops fables Milo winter 1919 ill the town and country mouse a" by janwillemsen is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/)

Discussion questions: What did the country mouse enjoy about country life? What did the city mouse enjoy about city life? Why did the country mouse quickly leave his city friend?

The Frog Princess

Princess Ruby lived in a palace where her parents gave her everything she asked for. Her favourite plaything was a golden ball. She loved the way it sparkled when she threw it in the air.

One day she was playing in the garden with the ball when, plop! It fell into a deep pond.

'Oh no!' she cried 'My beautiful ball ...' and burst into tears.

'What's the matter?' a croaky voice said.

Looking round, she caught sight of a little green frog sitting on a stone by the side of the pond.

'My beautiful golden ball,' she sobbed. 'It's fallen in the water and I can't reach it because it's so deep. What can I do?'

'I can get it for you if you like,' said the frog, 'but what will you give me in return?'

'Anything,' said Princess Ruby. 'I will give you all my jewels if you like.'

'What I really want,' said the frog, 'is to be your best friend. I want to eat from your plate, drink from your cup and sleep in your bed.'

'Of course,' said Princess Ruby, willing to promise anything to get back her ball.

'Before I get you the ball, will you promise?'

'Yes, I promise, now please hurry up!'

The frog dived into the water and disappeared beneath it.

Princess Ruby watched from the bank anxiously. Presently, some bubbles appeared and up popped the frog balancing the ball on his nose. Quickly, she grabbed the ball and ran towards the palace.

'Wait for me!' called the frog, hopping after her.

Hurriedly she slipped through the door, slamming it behind her before the frog had a chance to catch up.

'What's all this about?' said the king, coming down the stairs.

'Oh, nothing, Father. Just a slimy old frog tried to get through the door.'

'Why would he want to come in here?' said the king. 'Frogs don't like to be indoors.'

'Well Father, the frog wants to be my friend, but I think he's horrible. Frogs are so slimy and cold.'

'Princess Ruby, that's no way to talk.'

Princess Ruby blushed and looked down.

'Come, come, is there anything more you need to tell me?' asked the king.

'Well Father, I did promise him I would be his friend if he rescued my special golden ball when it fell in the deep pond. But I wish I hadn't promised 'cos he's so horrible.'

'My dear child,' said the king, 'a promise is a promise. Haven't I always told you never to make a promise you couldn't keep?'

'But Father ...'

'No, my dear, you must learn. Let the frog in now and do everything you said you would.'

Reluctantly, Princess Ruby opened the door and the frog hopped in. That evening, when it was time for dinner, Princess Ruby left the frog sitting on the floor.

'Lift me up, lift me up,' he cried, 'so that I can eat from your plate and drink from your cup.'

Princess Ruby tried to ignore him, but then she saw that the king was watching her.

'Oh very well then, if you must.' And she bent down and lifted the frog onto the table. 'Yuck!' she said as she wiped her hands on her skirt - the frog was so slimy.

The frog enjoyed her food and drink as he ate from her plate and drank from her cup, but Princess Ruby didn't eat or drink anything at all. In fact, she felt quite sick.

That night the frog hopped up the stairs behind her to her bedroom, where, much to her disgust, he snuggled down into her bed. Princess Ruby lay down as far away from him as she could. Was the rest of her life going to be like this?

The next morning, as dawn crept through her window, she awoke and stretched. She turned to where the frog had been sleeping but, to her joy, he wasn't there! Looking up she saw, standing by the open window, a handsome young man.

'Thank you,' he said turning. 'You have broken the spell. A wicked witch cursed me and made me into a frog. She said I would remain one forever unless a beautiful princess would become my best friend and let me eat from her plate, drink from her cup and sleep in her bed. Until I saw you, I thought I would be a frog forever.'

From that day forth Princess Ruby and the young man became the best of friends and I wouldn't be at all surprised if, when they grew up, they got married and lived happily ever after.

<https://worldstories.org.uk/reader/the-frog-princess/english/267>

Discussion question: What lessons did the princess learn in this story?

Creative challenge: Draw an illustration for this story.

The Lion and the Mouse

A lion was asleep in the sun one day when a little mouse came out to play. The little mouse ran up the lion's neck and slid down his back.

The lion caught him with a great big smack! 'I'm going to eat you!' the lion roared, his mouth open wide.

'No, no, please don't!' the little mouse cried. 'Be kind to me and one day I'll help you.'

'I'm a lion! You're a mouse! What can you do?' The lion laughed, very hard, and the mouse ran away.

But when the mouse was out walking the very next day, he heard a big roar. He squeaked when he saw the king of the jungle tied to a tree. But the mouse had a plan to set him free.

The mouse worked quickly and chewed through the rope.

The lion said, 'Oh little mouse, I had no hope. You were right, little mouse - thank you, I'm free. You're the best friend there ever could be!'



"The Lion and the Mouse" by thecmn is marked with CC PDM 1.0

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/sites/kids/files/attachment/short-stories-story-time-the-lion-and-the-mouse-transcript.pdf>

Discussion questions: Why did the lion think the mouse could not help him? How did the mouse help the lion? Explain what this means: "In time of need the weak may help the strong."

The Magic Porridge Pot

A poor girl lived with her mother in a town. They were hungry, but they had nothing to eat.

The girl said, 'I'll go into the wood to look for mushrooms and berries.'

There she met an old woman who said, 'Take this pot. When you say to the pot: 'Pot cook!' then it will cook tasty porridge for you. When you say: 'Pot stop!' then it will stop cooking.'

'Thank you, many thanks,' said the girl, and she went home with the gift.

At home the girl said, 'Pot cook!'

The porridge was sweet and tasty and eventually mother and daughter were full up.

'Pot stop!' said the girl, and the pot gave no more porridge.

One day the girl went to visit friends. Later, her mother felt hungry, so she said, 'Pot cook!'



"Sorghum Porridge" by Rod Waddington is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

The mother ate, but when she'd had enough porridge, she had forgotten the correct word to stop the pot.

The pot cooked ... and cooked ... and cooked! The kitchen was soon full of porridge! The house was soon full of porridge! The road and the neighbours' houses were full of porridge!

At last the girl came home again.

'Pot stop!' shouted the girl.

The pot cooked no more porridge, but the people had to eat a great deal of porridge in order to get back into their houses!

<https://worldstories.org.uk/reader/the-magic-porridge-pot/english/658>

Discussion questions: Why is porridge an important food to many people around the world? What toppings do you like to put on your porridge? What is your favourite type of porridge? Can you draw a picture of the overflowing pot of porridge?

Why Anansi has Eight Skinny Legs

Once upon a time, there lived a greedy spider called Anansi. He loved nothing more than to taste other people's food. One day, Anansi stopped by to visit his friend, the rabbit.

'Hmm!' exclaimed the greedy spider as he entered the kitchen. 'Those are really lovely greens you are cooking, Rabbit.'

'Why don't you stay for dinner?' replied the friendly rabbit. 'The greens are not yet cooked, but they will be soon.'

Anansi knew that if he stayed while the meal was still cooking, then Rabbit would surely give him chores to do, and the greedy spider did not visit his friend in order to do chores.

So Anansi said to the rabbit, 'Please forgive me, dear friend, but I have some things I must do right away. Why don't I spin a length of web and tie one end around my leg and the other end around your cooking pot? That way you can tug on the web when the greens are cooked, and I will come running back for dinner.'

Rabbit agreed that this was a very good idea, and so he tied Anansi's web to his pot and waved his friend goodbye.

Moments later, the greedy spider found himself walking past the house of his good friend, the monkey. And it just so happened that Monkey was also in the middle of preparing his dinner.

'Hmm!' exclaimed the greedy spider as he entered the kitchen. 'That is a lovely meal of beans and honey you are cooking, Monkey.'

'Why don't you wait until they are cooked and then stay for dinner?' replied the friendly monkey.

Once again, Anansi knew that if he stayed while the meal was still cooking, then Monkey would surely give him chores to do, and the greedy spider had no desire to do chores.

So Anansi said to the monkey, 'I am very sorry, dear friend, but I have some things I must do right away. Why don't I spin a length of web and tie one end around my leg and the other end around your cooking pot? That way you can tug on the web when the beans and honey are cooked and I will come running back for dinner.'

Monkey agreed that this was an excellent idea, and so he tied Anansi's web to his pot and waved his friend goodbye.

On his way home, Anansi visited six more friends, all of whom were busy preparing their evening meals. He visited the tortoise, the hare, the squirrel, the mouse, the fox, and last of all he visited his good friend, the hog.

And on each visit, Anansi spun the same old story. And for each friend he spun a length of web for their cooking pot. And so it was that all eight of Anansi's legs were attached to different cooking pots by long lengths of web.

The greedy spider simply could not resist tricking each of his friends so that he might eat from every pot while avoiding any chores along the way.

'I have really outdone myself this time,' thought the greedy spider. 'So much lovely food to eat and I even avoided doing any chores in return! I wonder which pot of food will be ready first?'

Just then, Anansi felt one of the lengths of web tug at his leg. 'That must be the rabbit with his tasty dish of greens,' thought the greedy spider.

But then another length of web tugged at another of Anansi's legs. 'Oh dear!' he exclaimed out loud. 'That must be the monkey with his pot of beans and honey.'

Then another leg was tugged! And another! And another! Until all eight of Anansi's legs were being pulled in different directions at once!



Anansi dragged himself towards the river and jumped into the water so that all of his webs would be washed from his legs. One by one the webs released their grip on his legs until the greedy spider was finally able to climb back onto the riverbank.

When Anansi had recovered and managed to dry himself off, he noticed something very strange. All eight of his legs had been stretched. Where once they were short and wide, now they were thin and long!

'Oh how could I have been so greedy?' thought Anansi. 'Now look at what has become of me. Not only do I have eight skinny legs, but now I must even cook my own dinner!'

And that is why Anansi has eight skinny legs.

<https://worldstories.org.uk/reader/why-anansi-has-eight-skinny-legs/english/255#:~:text=And%20so%20it%20was%20that,any%20chores%20along%20the%20way.>

Discussion questions: What does it mean to be greedy? What was result of Anansi's greed in this story? What lesson does this story teach?

GRADE ONE

BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP

Nursery Rhyme



<https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/8f29ae54-1099-4819-856e-db166f1d3274>

**A classic children's nursery rhyme
from the 13th Century.**

BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP

Baa, baa, black sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir,
Three bags full.
One for the master,
One for the dame,
And one for the little boy
Who lives down the lane¹

Discussion Question:

WHY ARE SOME SHEEP BLACK?

Find the answer in Safaripedia (2020)

<https://www.safariltd.com/safaripedia/black-sheep>

Listen to

Baa Baa Black Sheep:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKSaW1cm5zM>

Reference

Safaripedia. (2020). *Black Sheep*. <https://www.safariltd.com/safaripedia/black-sheep>

¹ The nursery rhyme Baa Baa Black Sheep is in the public domain. Verification of this can be found in Finnish law <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1961/en19610404.pdf>

GRADE ONE

MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB

Nursery Rhyme



<https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/48887a67-ad31-4c97-ad1d-048a9fed68f>

A classic children's nursery rhyme
from the 1800's.

MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB

Mary had a little lamb
Its fleece was white as snow
And everywhere that Mary went
The lamb was sure to go
He followed her to school one day
Which was against the rule
It made the children laugh and play
To see a lamb at school
And so the teacher turned him out
But still he lingered near¹

Discussion Question:

WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENED NEXT?

Listen to

Mary Had a Little Lamb

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkRdvGmcCBE>

¹ The nursery rhyme Mary Had a Little Lamb is in the public domain. Verification of this can be found in Finnish law <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1961/en19610404.pdf>

GRADE ONE

TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR

Nursery Rhyme



<https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/4745062d-cf20-4ea4-80a2-82d2762a0f29>

A classic children's nursery rhyme
written by Jane Taylor in 1806.

TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR

Twinkle, twinkle,

little star,
How I wonder

what you are!
Up above

the world so high,
Like a diamond

in the sky. ¹

(Taylor, 1854)

Discussion Question:

WHY DO STARS TWINKLE?

Find the answer in Khan Academy

<https://www.khanacademy.org/science/in-in-class10th-physics/in-in-the-human-eye-and-the-colourful-world/in-in-atmospheric-refraction/v/why-do-stars-twinkle-but-planets-dont>

(Shenoy, M., 2019)

¹ The nursery rhyme Twinkle Twinkl Little Star is in the public domain. Verification of this can be found in Finnish law <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1961/en19610404.pdf>

Listen to
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCjJyiqpAuU>

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<https://www.khanacademy.org/science/in-in-class10th-physics/in-in-the-human-eye-and-the-colourful-world/in-in-atmospheric-refraction/v/why-do-stars-twinkle-but-planets-dont>

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GRADE TWO

BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP

The History Behind the Rhyme



<https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/8f29ae54-1099-4819-856e-db166f1d3274>

A classic children's nursery rhyme
from the 13th Century.

The History Behind the Rhyme

BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP

The nursery rhyme *Baa Baa Black Sheep* was first published in 1744 in *Tommy Thumbs Pretty Songbook*. The original version is slightly different than the current rhyme. It went like this:

Bah, Bah, a Black Sheep.

Bah, Bah a black Sheep,
Have you any Wool,
Yes merry have I,
Three Bags full,
One for my Mafter,
One for my Dame,
One for my little Boy
That lives in the lane.

Today's version is as follows:

**Baa, baa, black sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir,
Three bags full.**

**One for the master,
One for the dame,
And one for the little boy
Who lives down the lane¹**

The rhyme *Baa Baa Black Sheep* originated in medieval times which are the decades in the 1200's. These years are also referred to as the 13th century.

During this period, sheep farmers had to give a sack of wool first to the King of England (the master); and then a sack of wool to the Church (the dame). The farmer (the little boy) could keep one sack of wool for himself, but nothing was left for the Shepherd who tended to the sheep.

If a farmer had a black sheep, the wool of the black sheep was worth less money because the fleece of black sheep could not be dyed. (Black sheep were also thought to be bad luck.)

¹ The nursery rhyme Baa Baa Black Sheep is in the public domain. Verification of this can be found in Finnish law <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1961/en19610404.pdf>

Discussion Question:

WHY ARE SOME SHEEP BLACK?

Find the answer in Safaripedia (2020)

<https://www.safariltd.com/safaripedia/black-sheep>

Discussion Question:

**WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO
VERSIONS OF BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP?**

Listen to

Baa Baa Black Sheep

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKSaW1cm5zM>

Reference

Safaripedia. (2020). *Black Sheep*. <https://www.safariltd.com/safaripedia/black-sheep>

GRADE TWO

The History Behind the Rhyme

MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB



<https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/48887a67-ad31-4c97-ad1d-048a9fef68f>

MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB

The nursery rhyme, *Mary Had A Little Lamb* was first published in 1830. The rhyme was based on a true story of a

nine-year-old girl, Mary Elizabeth Sawyer, who lived on a farm in Sterling, Massachusetts, in the United States of America.

While helping her dad with farm chores, Mary discovered a newborn lamb that was very sick. Mary told her dad she would look after the little lamb and nurse it back to good health. Mary's father did not believe the little lamb would live very long, but he said, "Yes, Mary, you may nurse the little lamb."

Mary's little lamb, whose fleece was white as snow, grew in strength every day. The little lamb learned to stand. The little lamb learned to drink milk. The little lamb wanted to be with Mary every day. The little lamb followed Mary everywhere on the farm.

One day, when Mary was walking to school, the little lamb followed her to school. Mary loved her little lamb, so Mary was happy to have little lamb follow her.

When Mary got to school, the little lamb followed her inside into the classroom. Mary was surprised! What did Mary do? Mary hid the little lamb under her desk, then covered the little lamb with a blanket. (The Teacher kept blankets in the room for students to keep warm during the winter months.)

Shortly after Mary covered the little lamb, the Teacher called upon Mary to come to the front of the class to recite her homework. Can you predict what happened next? You guessed it. As Mary walked to the front of the class to recite

her homework, the little lamb followed her. Mary's classmates, excited to see a lamb at school, yelled out with excitement!

Mary's Teacher, though kindly toward the little lamb, could not allow the little lamb to remain in the classroom. So, the little lamb was put outside where it waited patiently for Mary. During lunch time, Mary walked the little lamb back to her farm.

The very next day, one of Mary's classmates by the name of John Roulstone supposedly gave Mary a piece of paper with the following words:

*Mary had a little lamb;
Its fleece was white as snow;
And everywhere that Mary went,
The lamb was sure to go.*

*It followed her to school one day,
Which was against the rule;
It made the children laugh and play
To see a lamb at school.*

*And so the teacher turned it out;
But still it lingered near,
And waited patiently about
Till Mary did appear.*

(Amelinckx, 2017)

Did John Roulstone, just a year or two older than Mary actually write the rhyme with proper poem form and punctuation? Lo and behold, Mary's Teacher, Sarah Josepha Hale published the poem in 1830 with a few more verses. Hale's poem reads:

MARY'S LAMB.

Mary had a little lamb,
Its fleece was white as snow,
And everywhere that Mary went
The lamb was sure to go ;
He followed her to school one day—
That was against the rule,
It made the children laugh and play,
To see a lamb at school.

And so the Teacher turned him out,
But still he lingered near,
And waited patiently about,
Till Mary did appear ;
And then he ran to her, and laid
His head upon her arm,
As if he said—' I'm not afraid—
You'll keep me from all harm.'

' What makes the lamb love Mary so ?'
The eager children cry—
' O, Mary loves the lamb, you know,'
The Teacher did reply ;—
' And you each gentle animal
In confidence may bind,
And make them follow at your call,
If you are always *kind*.'

(Butterfield, 1965)

Discussion Questions:

**WHO DO YOU THINK WROTE THE POEM:
ROULSTONE OF HALE?**

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS?

**WHY DID LITTLE LAMB FOLLOW MARY
EVERYWHERE?**

Listen to

Mary Had a Little Lamb

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkRdvGmcCBE>

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GRADE TWO

TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR

The History Behind the Rhyme



<https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/4745062d-cf20-4ea4-80a2-82d2762a0f29>

**This is a classic children's nursery rhyme
from the 19th Century.**

TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR

The nursery rhyme *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* is sung today as:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

This nursery rhyme *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*, written by Jane Taylor, was first published in 1806 under the title *The Star*. Jane Taylor's poem included many more verses than we know today.

The Star.

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, through the night.

Then the traveller in the dark
Thanks you for your tiny spark;
He could not see where to go,
If you did not twinkle so.

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveler in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

(Taylor, A., 1854)

The poem *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* was set to the melody (tune) of the popular French folk song *Ah! Vous dirai-je, maman* from the 1740's (eighteen century). The author of the French song is anonymous. This means no one

knows the name of the author. The French song's lyrics (words) translated into English are:

Oh! Shall I tell you, Mama,
What is causing my torment?
Daddy wants me to reason
Like a big, big person,
But I say that candies,
Are worth more than the reason!¹

Around the year 1781, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed twelve (12) variations of the *Ah! Vous dirai-je, maman* melody (Mozart et al., 1955).²

Discussion Questions:

1. WHICH OF MOZART'S TWELVE (12) VERSIONS DO YOU LIKE THE BEST?

Listen at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCKBl-TpRzc>

(Rousseau, 2019)

2. WHY DO STARS TWINKLE?

Find out at:

<https://www.khanacademy.org/science/in-in-class10th-physics/in-in-the-human-eye-and-the-colourful-world/in-in-atmospheric-refraction/v/why-do-stars-twinkle-but-planets-dont>

(Shenoy, M., 2019)

¹ *Ah! Vous dirai-je, maman* in English is translated as *Oh! Shall I tell you Mama*. Kafker, F. A., & Pinault-Sørensen, M. (1995).

² Rousseau, (2019) performs these twelve variations on YouTube. Piano enthusiasts can watch his fingers play the notes on the piano.

Listen to the popular melody of

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCjJyiqpAuU>

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