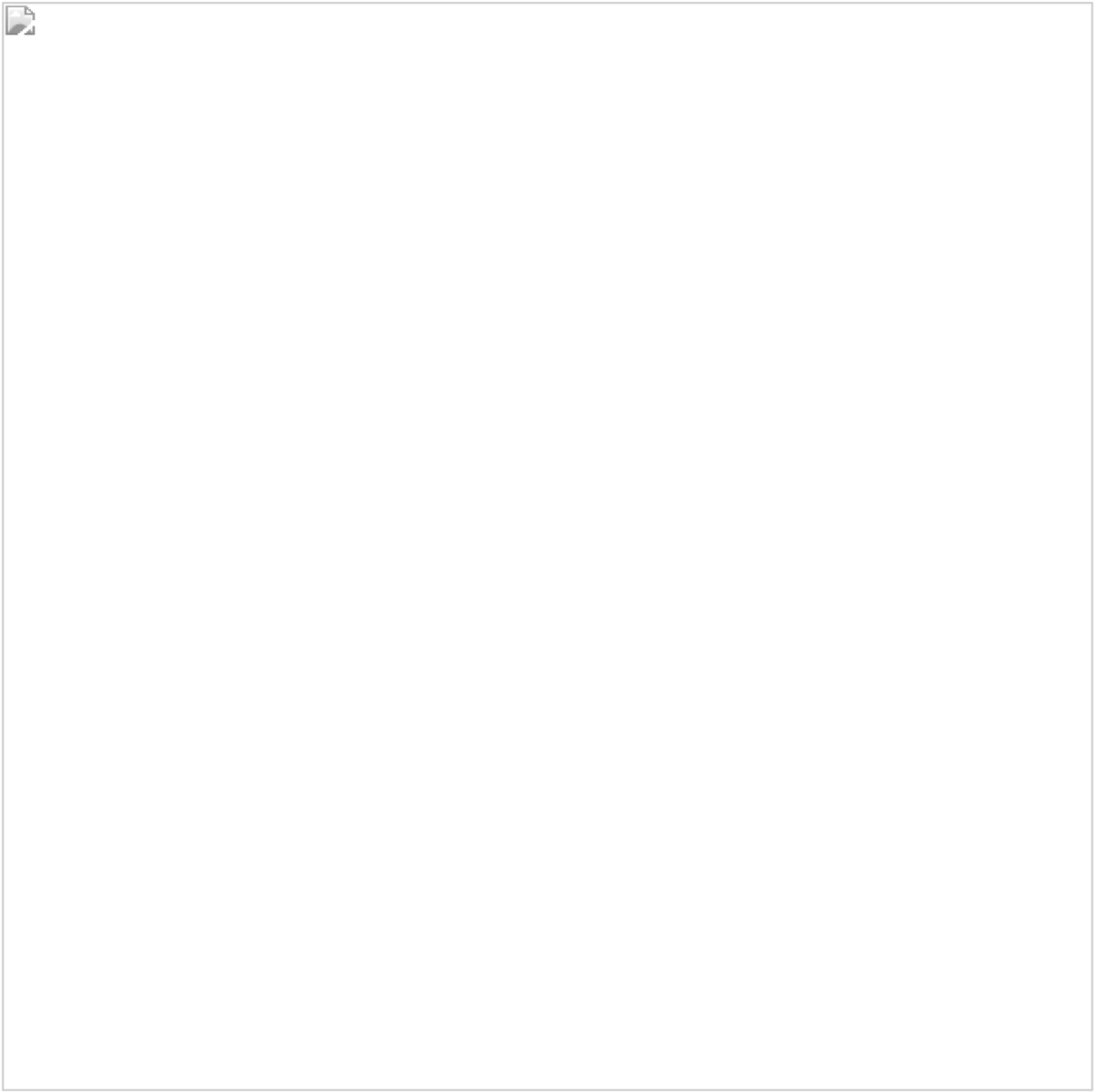
COLORING THE CLASSICS

Aesop's Fables

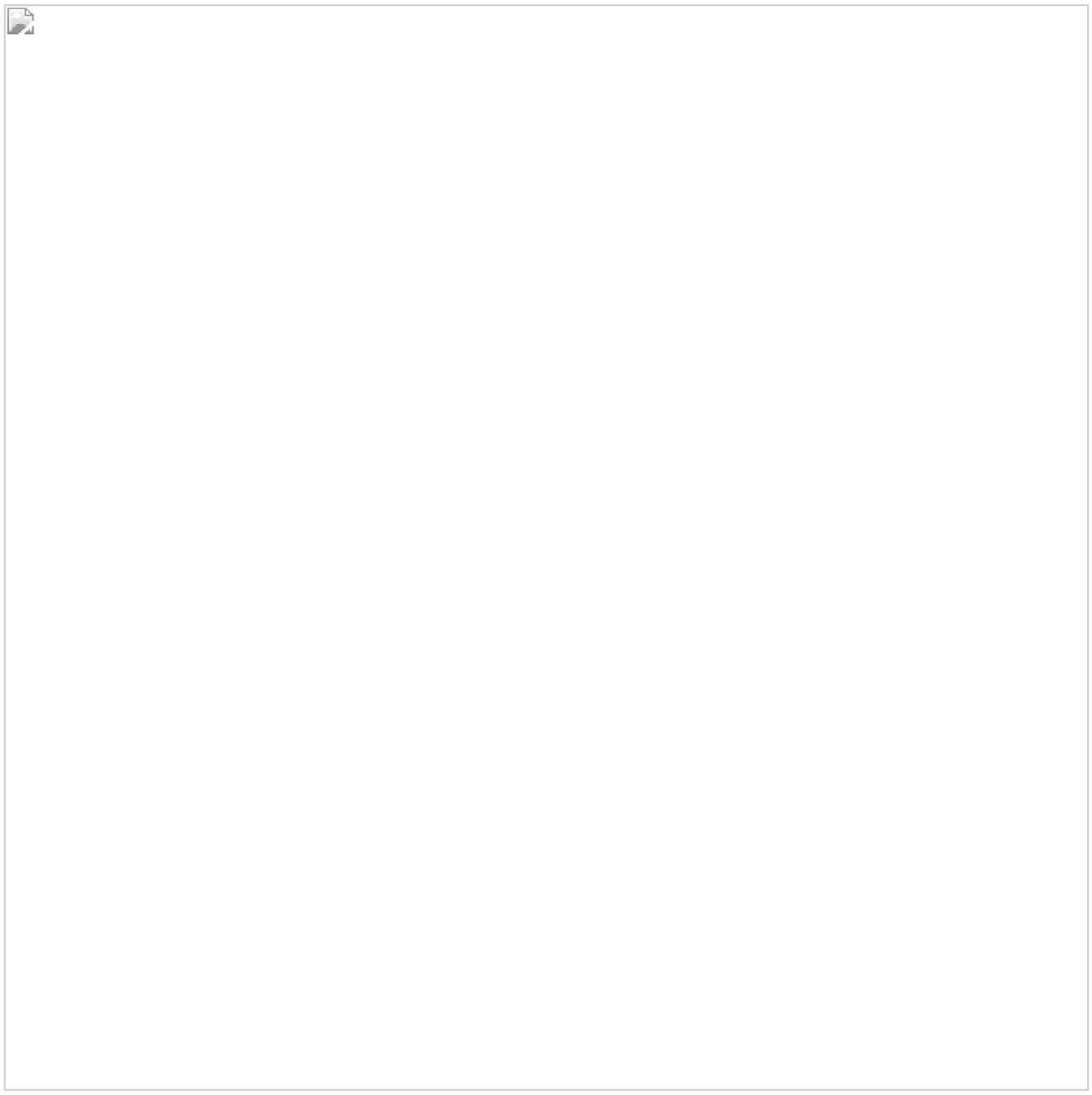
Sixteen Little Stories with Big Ideas



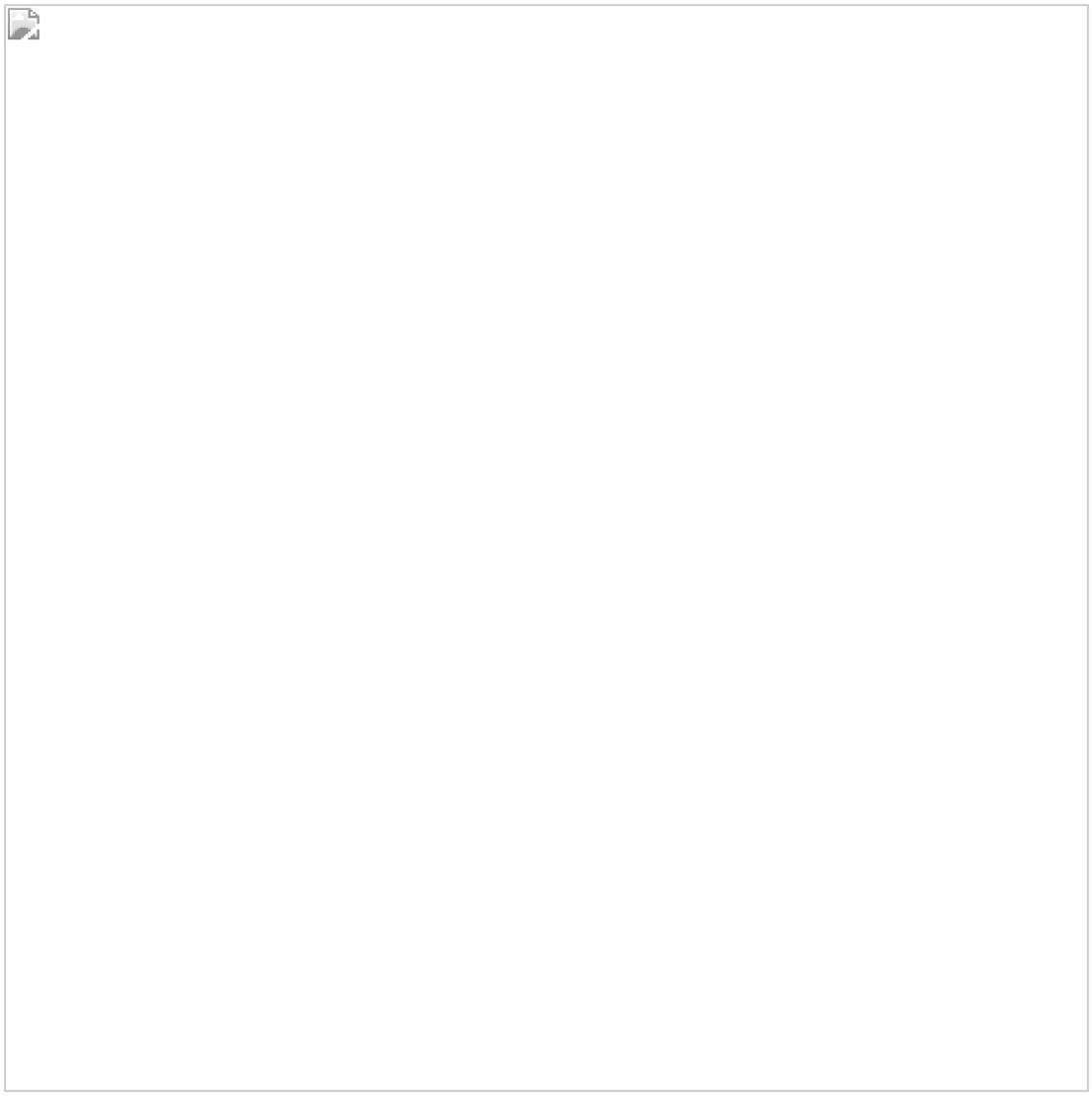
TALK ABOUT IT

A fable is a short story, often about animals, that teaches something. What animal would you put in a story?

This book belongs to _____



The Hare and the Tortoise



A Hare laughed at the Tortoise for her short feet and slow walk.

The Tortoise laughed too. “Though you be swift as the wind,” she said, “I will beat you in a race.”

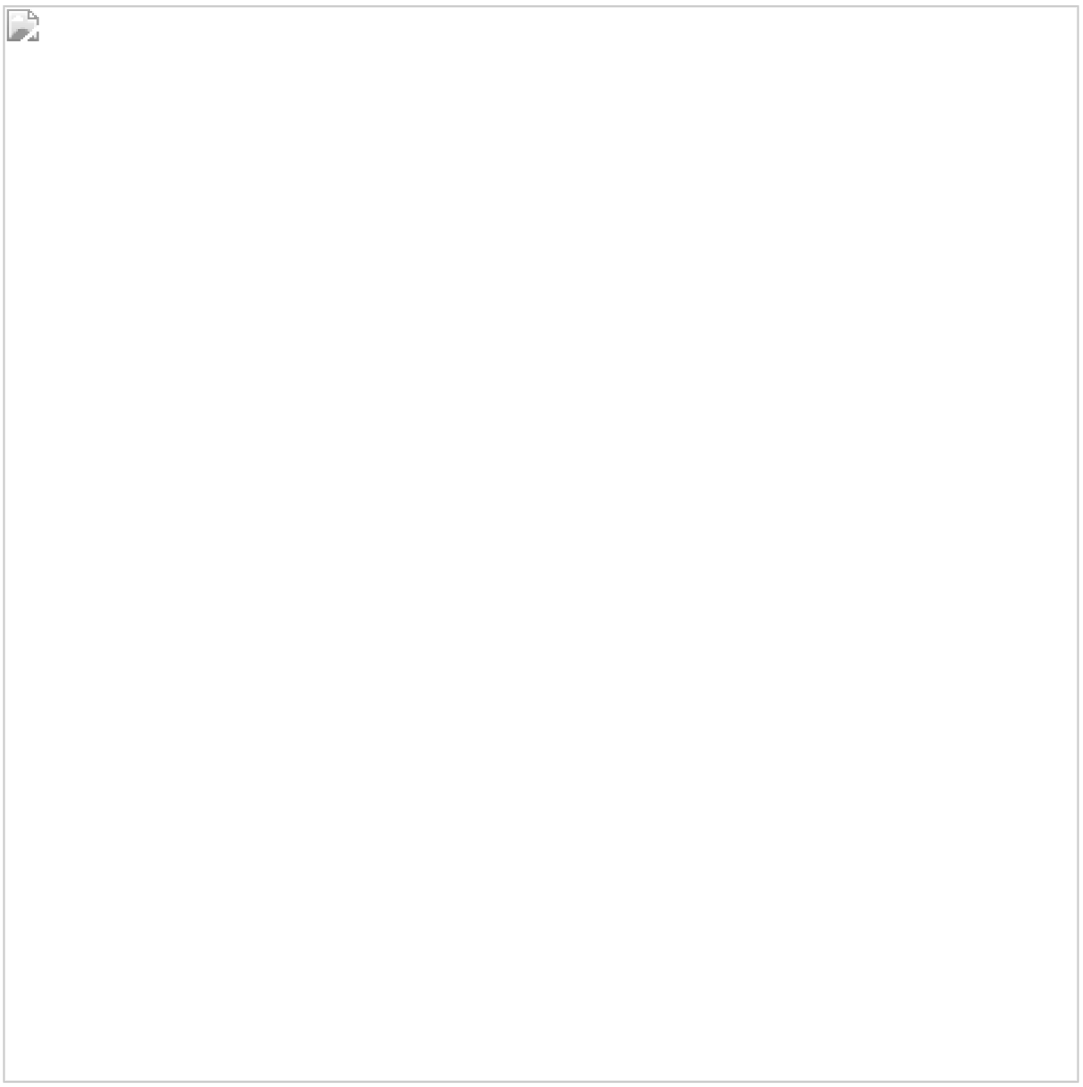
The Fox picked the path and the finish line, and off they went. The Tortoise never stopped once. She just kept going, slow and steady. The Hare lay down by the road and fell fast asleep.

When he woke up and ran as fast as he could, the Tortoise was already at the finish, taking a nap.

The old book says: “Slow but steady wins the race.”

TALK ABOUT IT

What is something you are getting better at, slow and steady?



Think about it

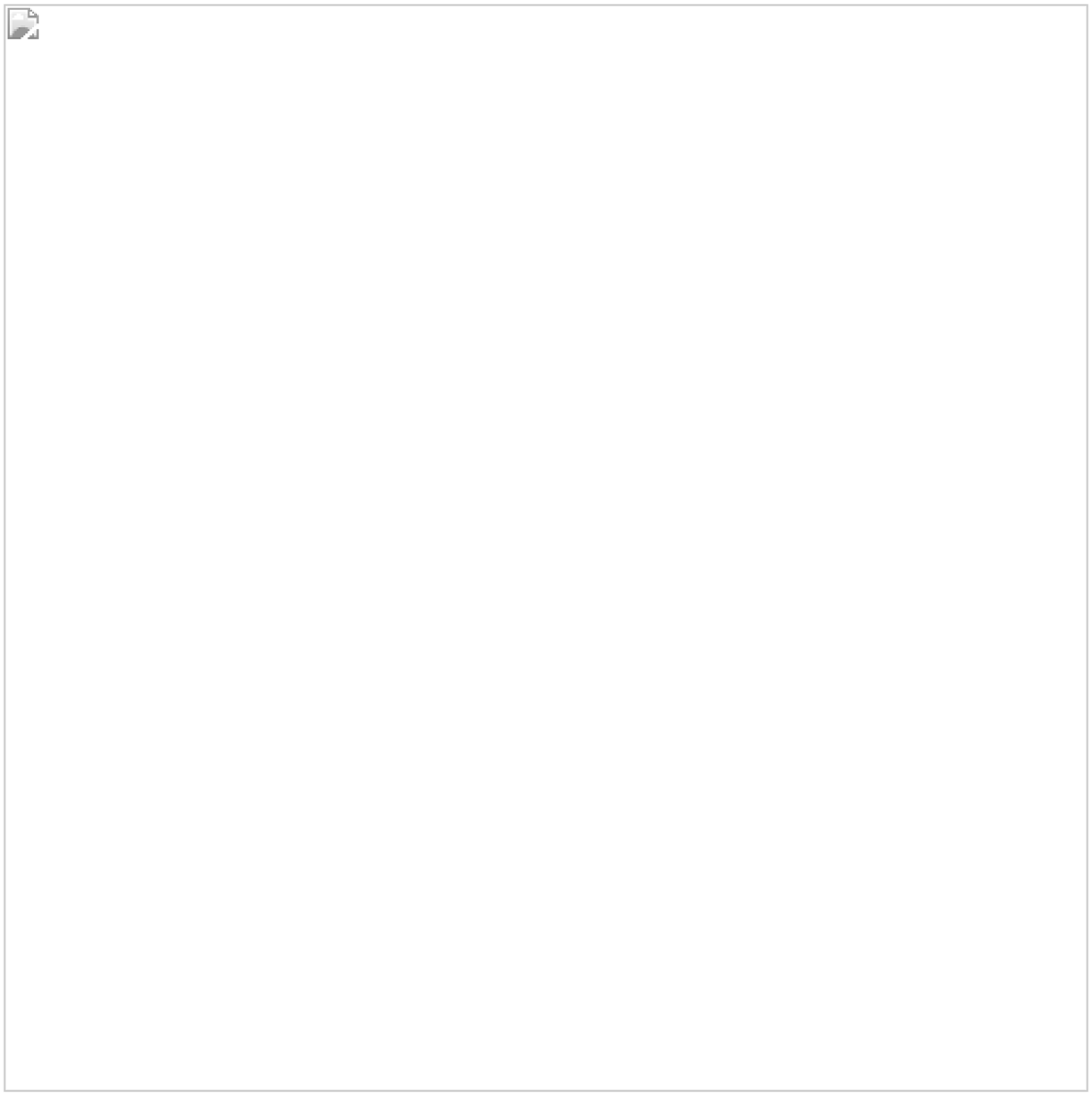
1. Who chose where the race would go?

- ○ The Fox
- ○ The Hare
- ○ The Tortoise

2. Why did the Tortoise win?

- ○ She never stopped
- ○ She was faster
- ○ She took a shortcut

The Crow and the Pitcher



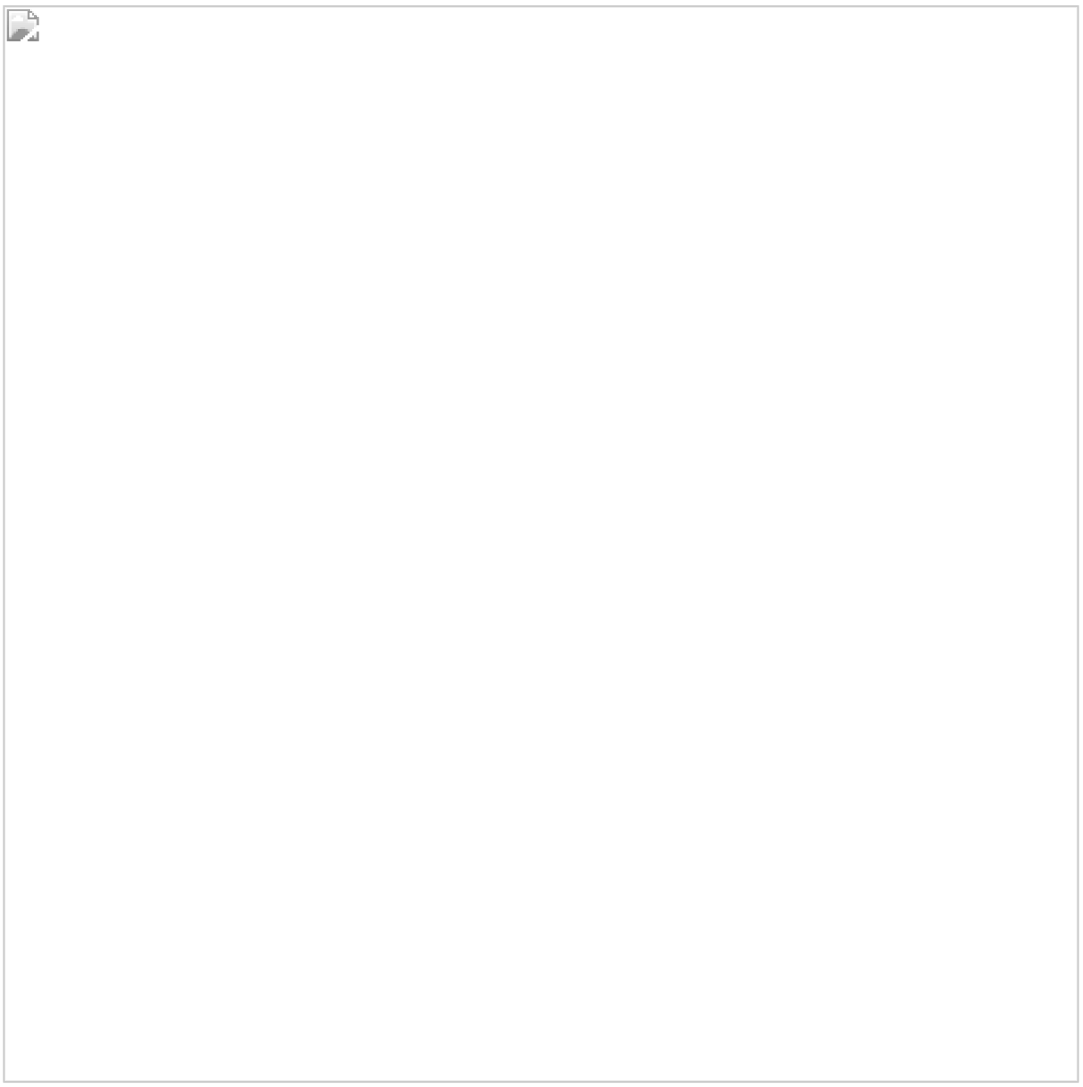
A Crow was very thirsty. He found a pitcher, and he hoped there was water inside.

There was water, but only a little at the bottom. His beak could not reach it. He tried everything he could think of.

At last he gathered stones and dropped them into the pitcher with his beak, one by one. Plink, plink, plink. The water rose higher and higher, until he could drink.

The old book says: “Necessity is the mother of invention.” That means needing something can help you think up a new way.

TALK ABOUT IT
The Crow did not give up. Tell about a time you found a new way to do something.



Think about it

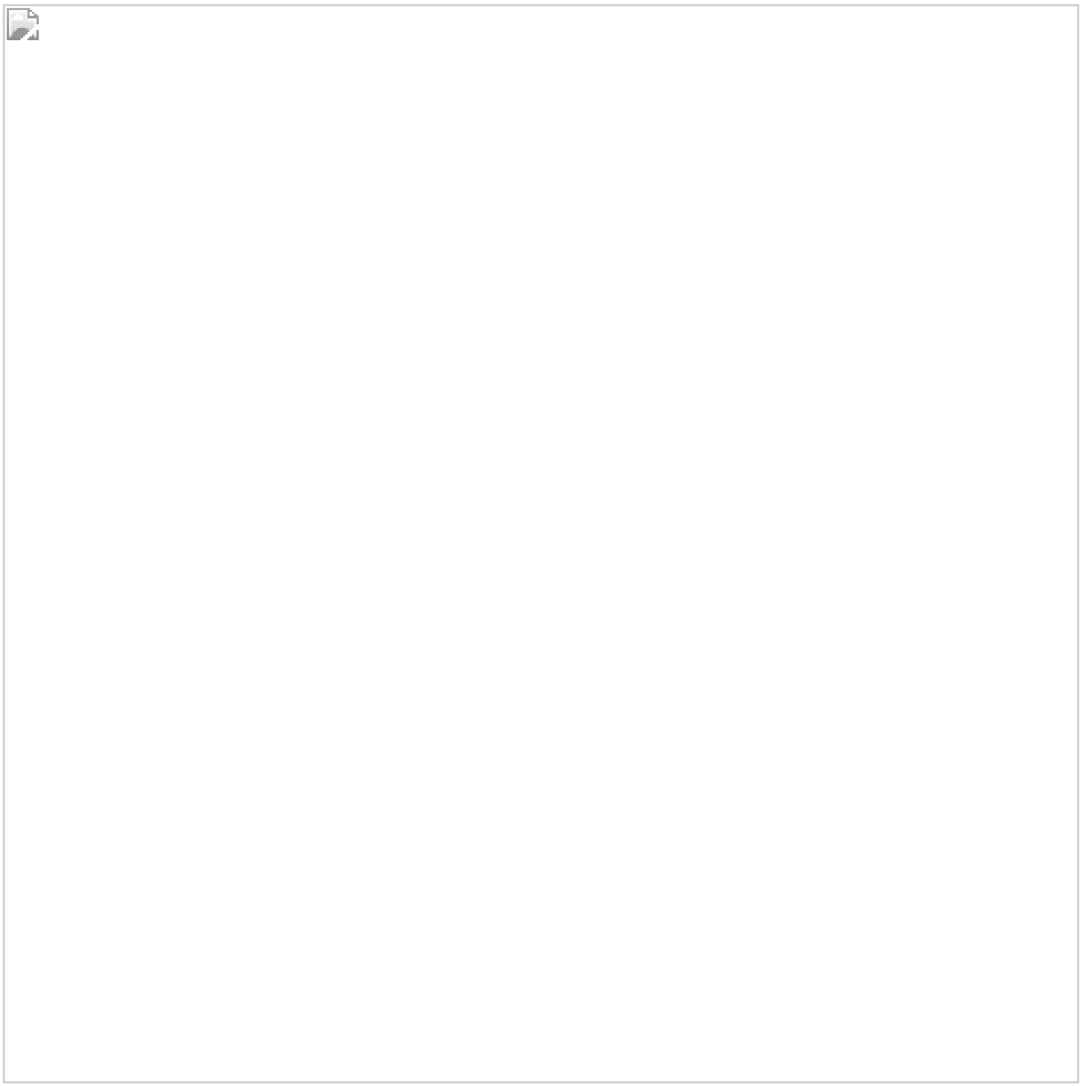
1. What did the Crow drop into the pitcher?

- ○ Stones
- ○ Leaves
- ○ Sticks

2. Why did the water come up?

- ○ The stones took up room at the bottom
- ○ It rained
- ○ The pitcher tipped over

The North Wind and the Sun



The North Wind and the Sun argued about which of them was stronger. “Let’s see who can make that traveler take off his clothes,” they said.

The North Wind went first. He blew and blew with all his might. But the harder he blew, the tighter the traveler wrapped his cloak around him.

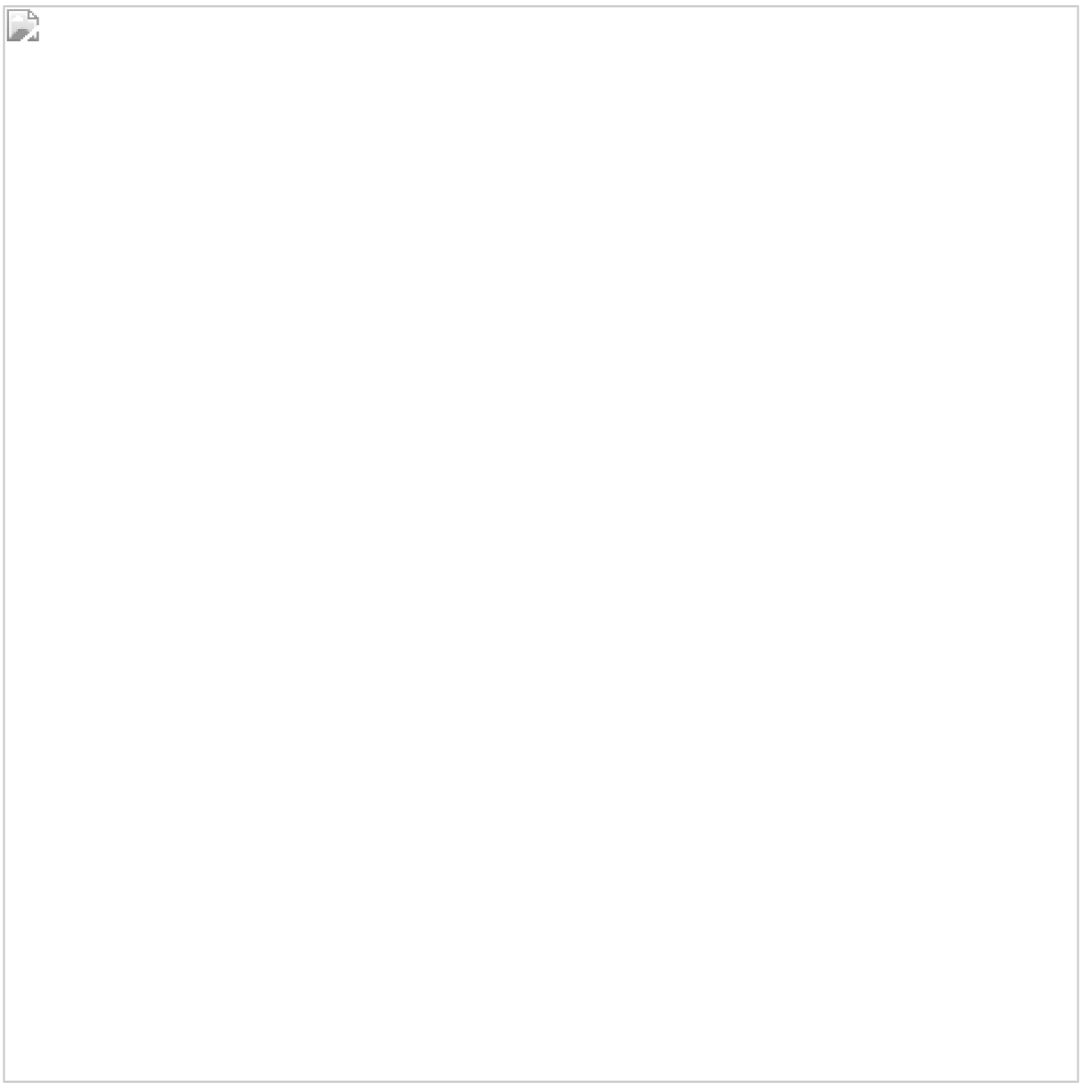
Then the Sun came out and shone, warm and bright. The traveler grew warm. He took off his cloak, and then more clothes, and at last he jumped into a cool stream for a bath!

The old book says: “Persuasion is better than Force.” That means kindly asking works better than pushing.

TALK ABOUT IT

When someone wants you to do something, which works better on you: pushing or kindness?

The North Wind and the Sun · another picture



Think about it

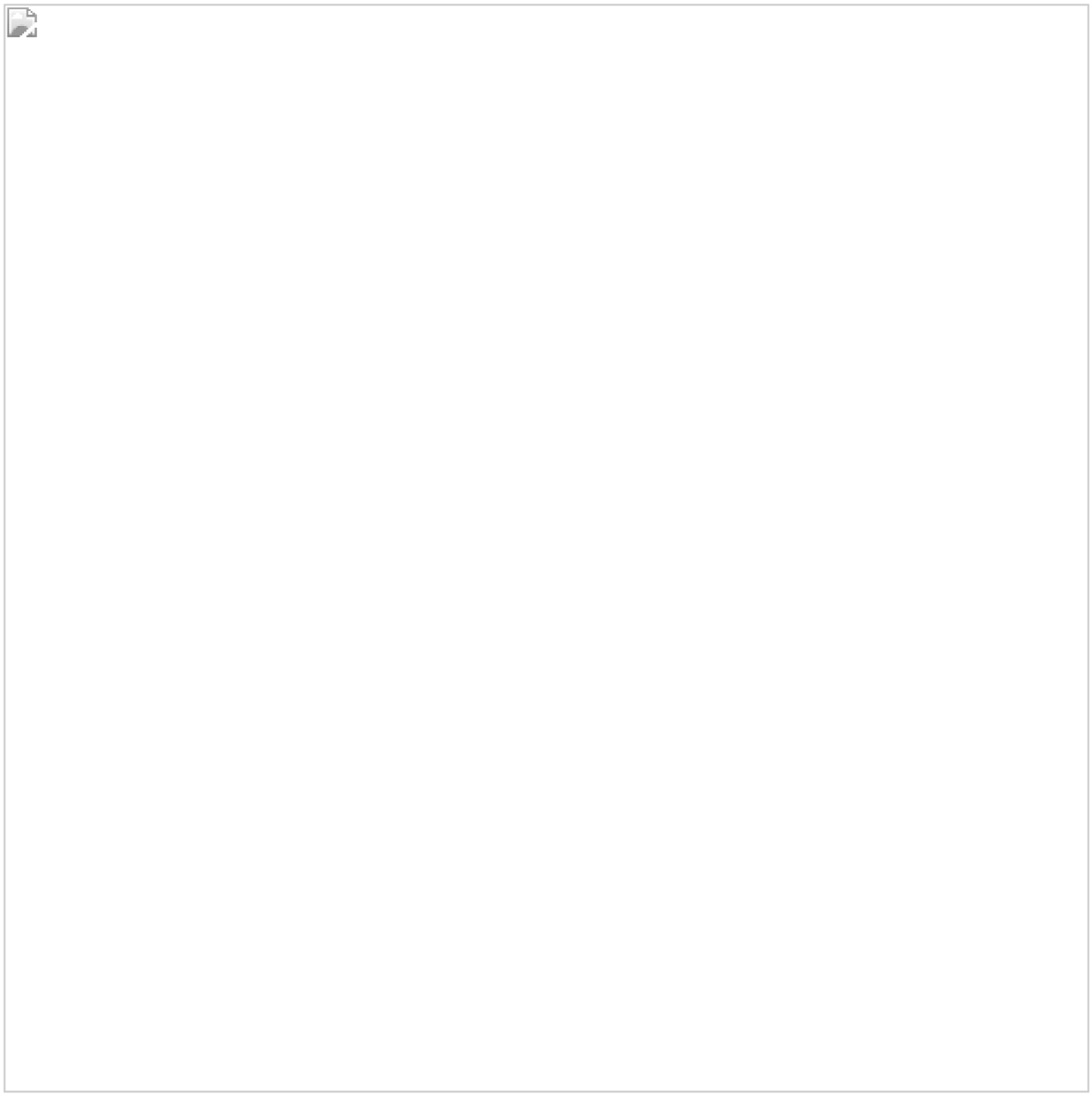
1. What did the traveler do when the Wind blew hard?

- ○ Held his cloak tighter
- ○ Took it off
- ○ Ran away

2. What did the Sun do?

- ○ Shone warm and bright
- ○ Blew harder
- ○ Made it rain

The Ant and the Dove



An Ant went to a river for a drink. Whoosh! The water swept her away.

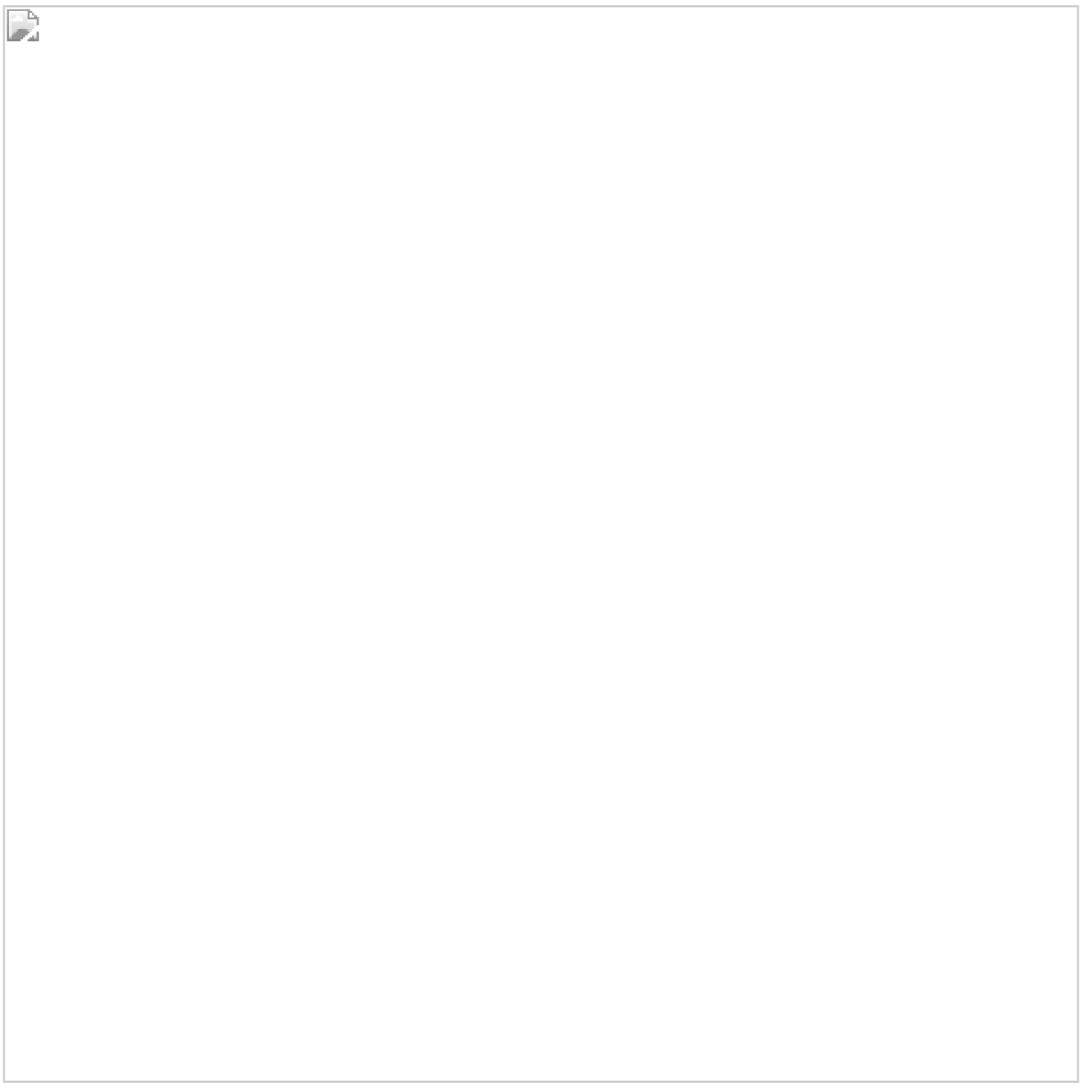
A Dove in a tree above saw her. She picked a leaf and let it fall into the water, right next to the Ant. The Ant climbed on and floated safely to the shore.

Not long after, a bird catcher came and stood under the tree. He set out sticky twigs to catch the Dove.

The Ant saw what he was doing. She stung him on the foot! “Ow!” He dropped his twigs, and the noise made the Dove fly safely away.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Dove helped the Ant, and then the Ant helped the Dove. Who has helped you? How could you help them back?



Think about it

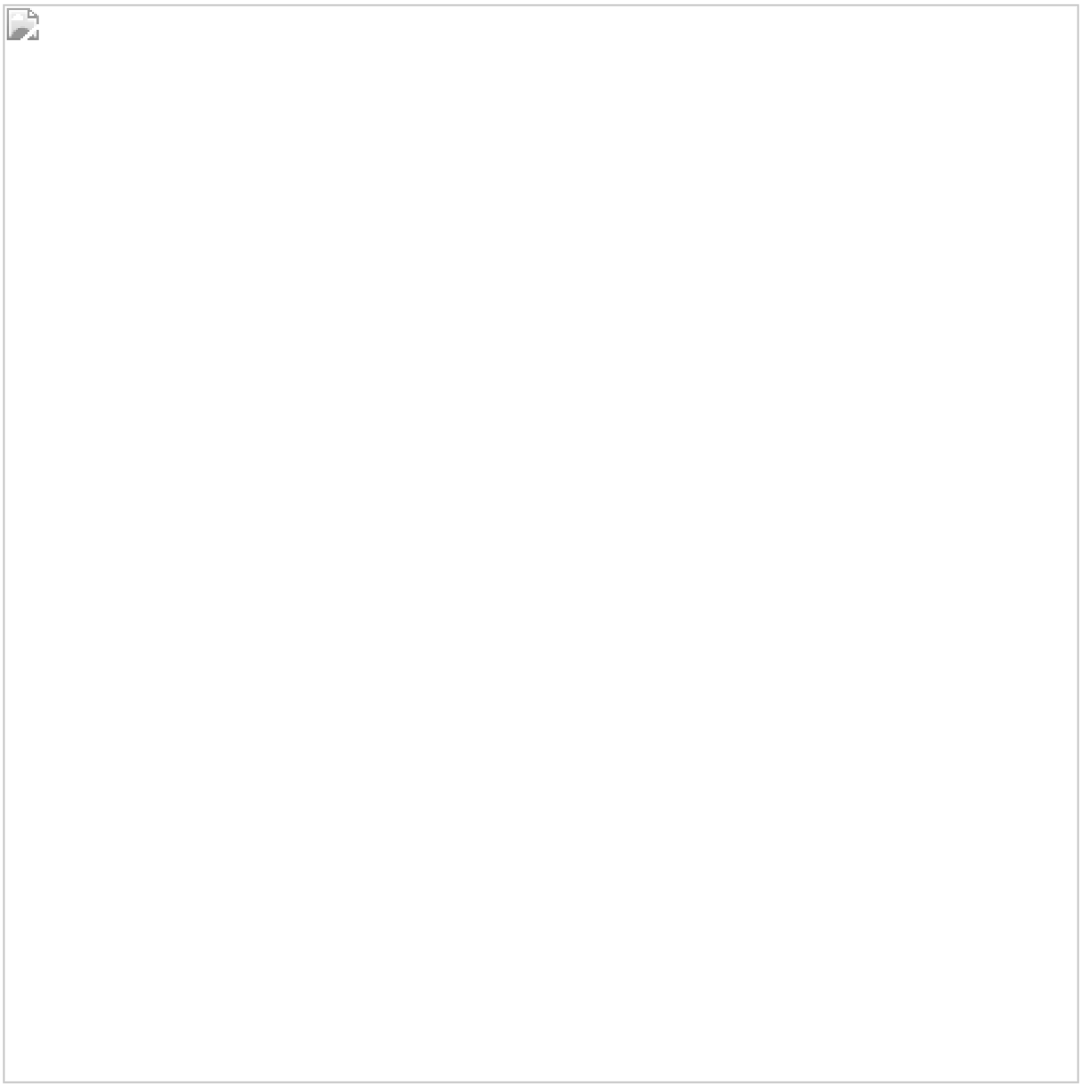
1. How did the Dove save the Ant?

- ○ She dropped a leaf into the water
- ○ She picked her up
- ○ She called for help

2. How did the Ant save the Dove?

- ○ She stung the bird catcher's foot
- ○ She hid the twigs
- ○ She warned the Dove with a song

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse



A Country Mouse invited his friend the Town Mouse to dine on wheat stalks and roots in the bare fields.

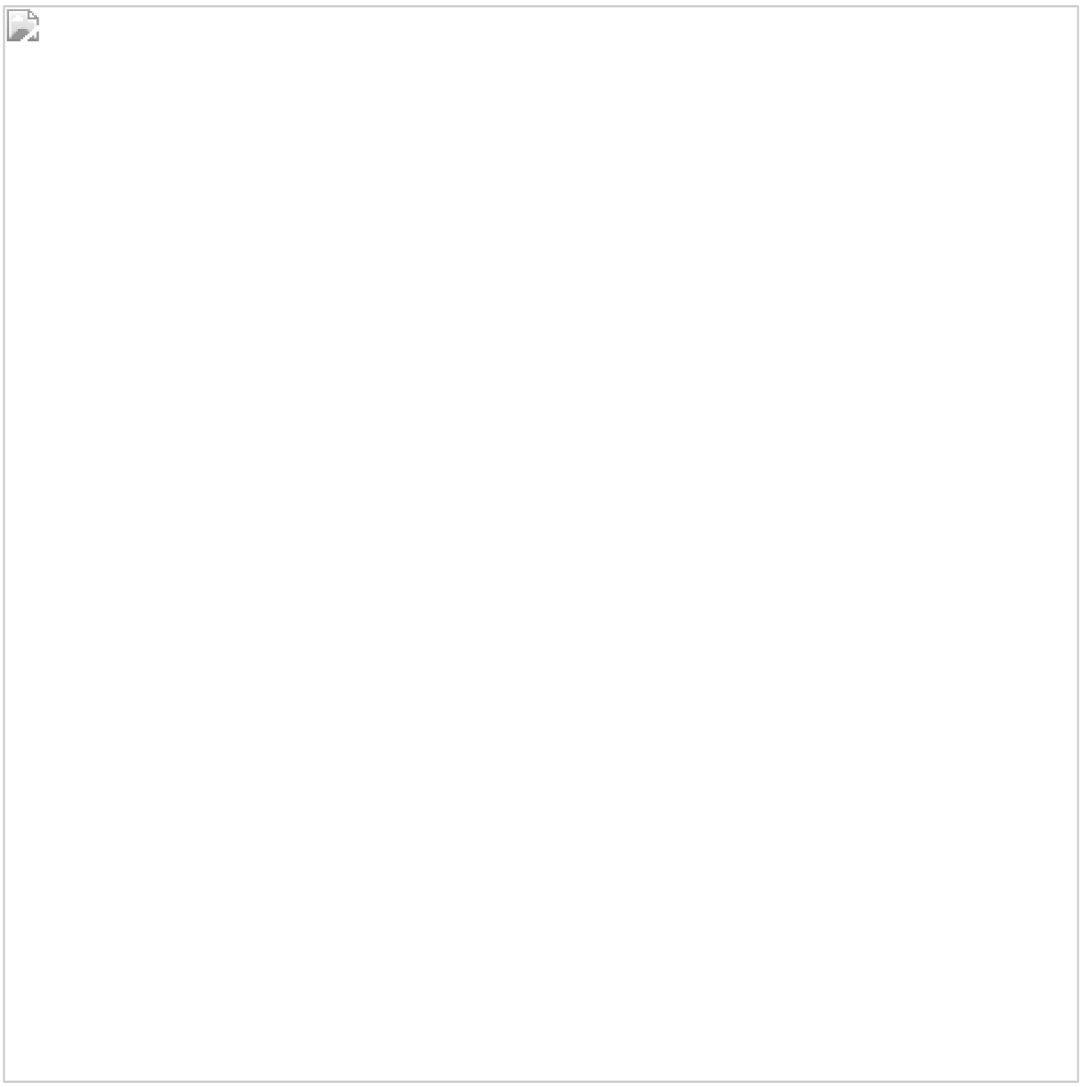
“Come to my house in town,” said the Town Mouse. “I have every good thing to eat.” There was bread, barley, beans, dried figs, honey, raisins, and last of all, a piece of cheese!

But each time they began to eat, someone came in, and the mice ran squeaking into a hole.

The Country Mouse said he would go back to his bare fields and roots, “where I can live in safety, and without fear.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Which would you choose: lots of treats with lots of scares, or plain food in a safe, quiet place? Why?



Think about it

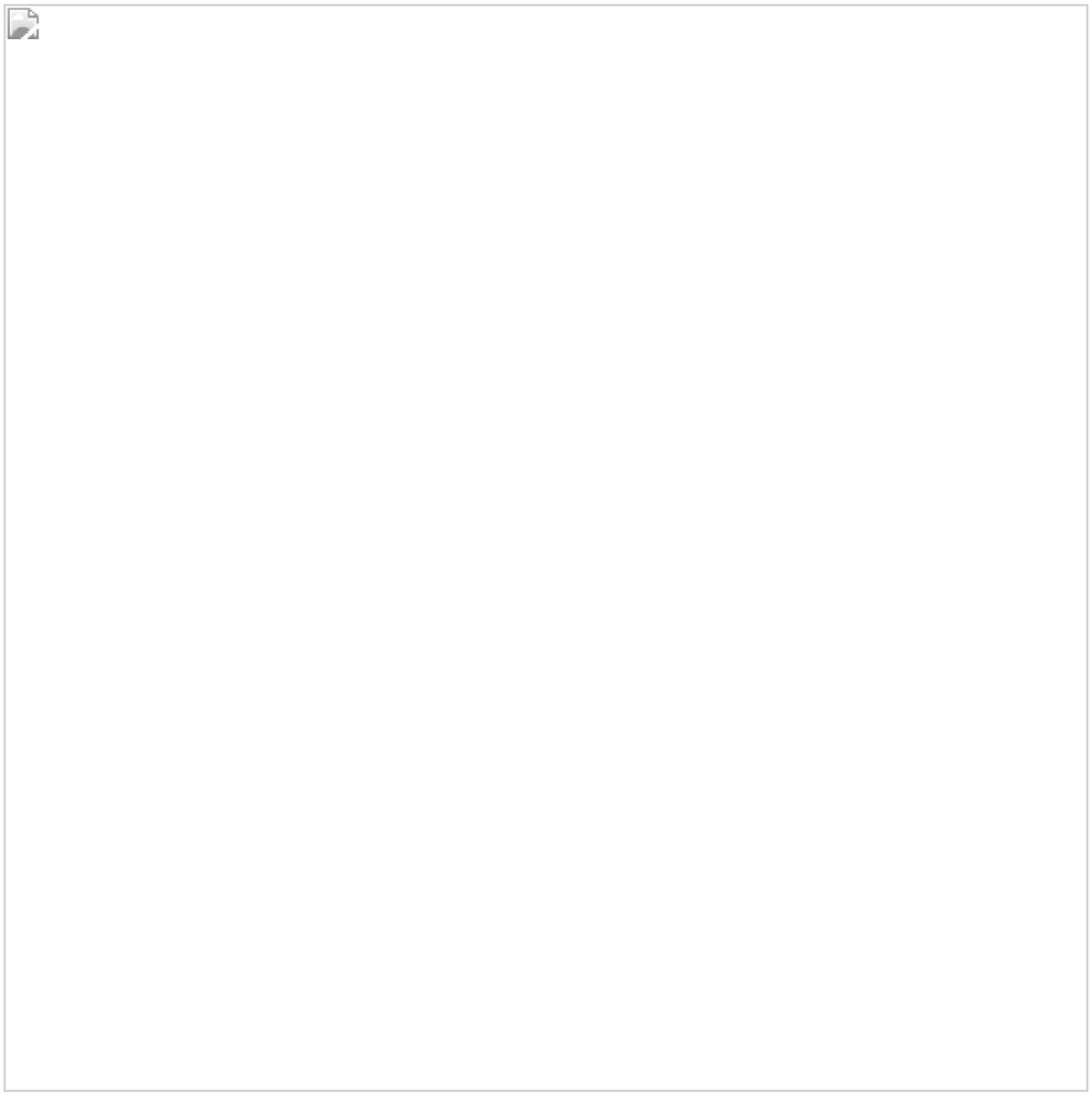
1. What was the last treat the Town Mouse brought out?

- ○ A piece of cheese
- ○ A cake
- ○ An apple

2. Why did the Country Mouse go home?

- ○ He wanted to live without fear
- ○ He did not like cheese
- ○ He got lost

The Father and His Sons



A father had sons who were always quarreling with each other. Talking to them did not help.

So one day he asked them to bring him a bundle of sticks. He handed the bundle to each son and said, “Break it.” Each one tried with all his strength. None of them could.

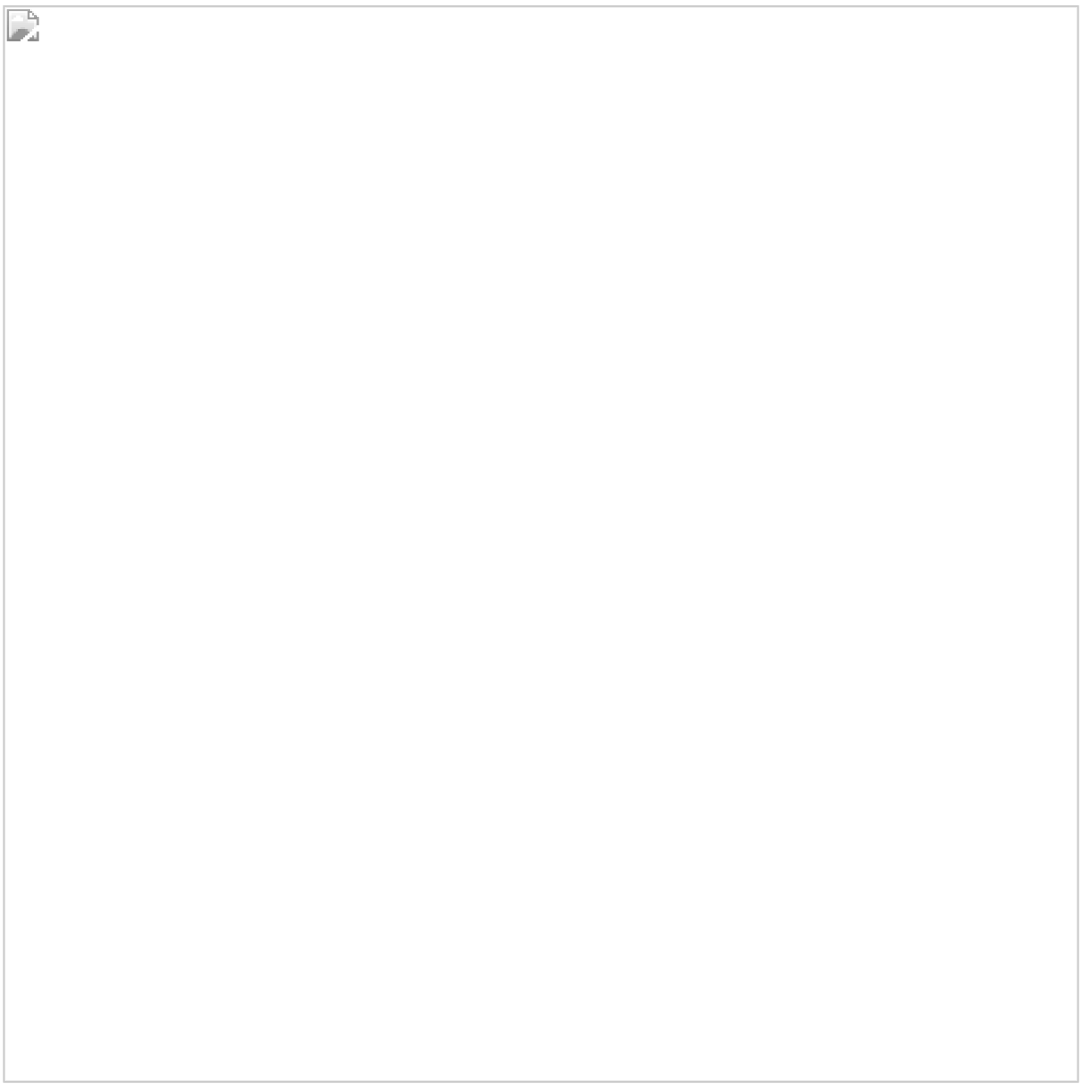
Then the father untied the bundle and gave each son one stick at a time. Snap! Snap! They broke them easily.

“My sons,” he said, “if you stick together and help each other, you will be like this bundle. But if you quarrel, you will be broken as easily as these sticks.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Who are the people in your bundle, the ones you stick together with?

The Father and His Sons · another picture



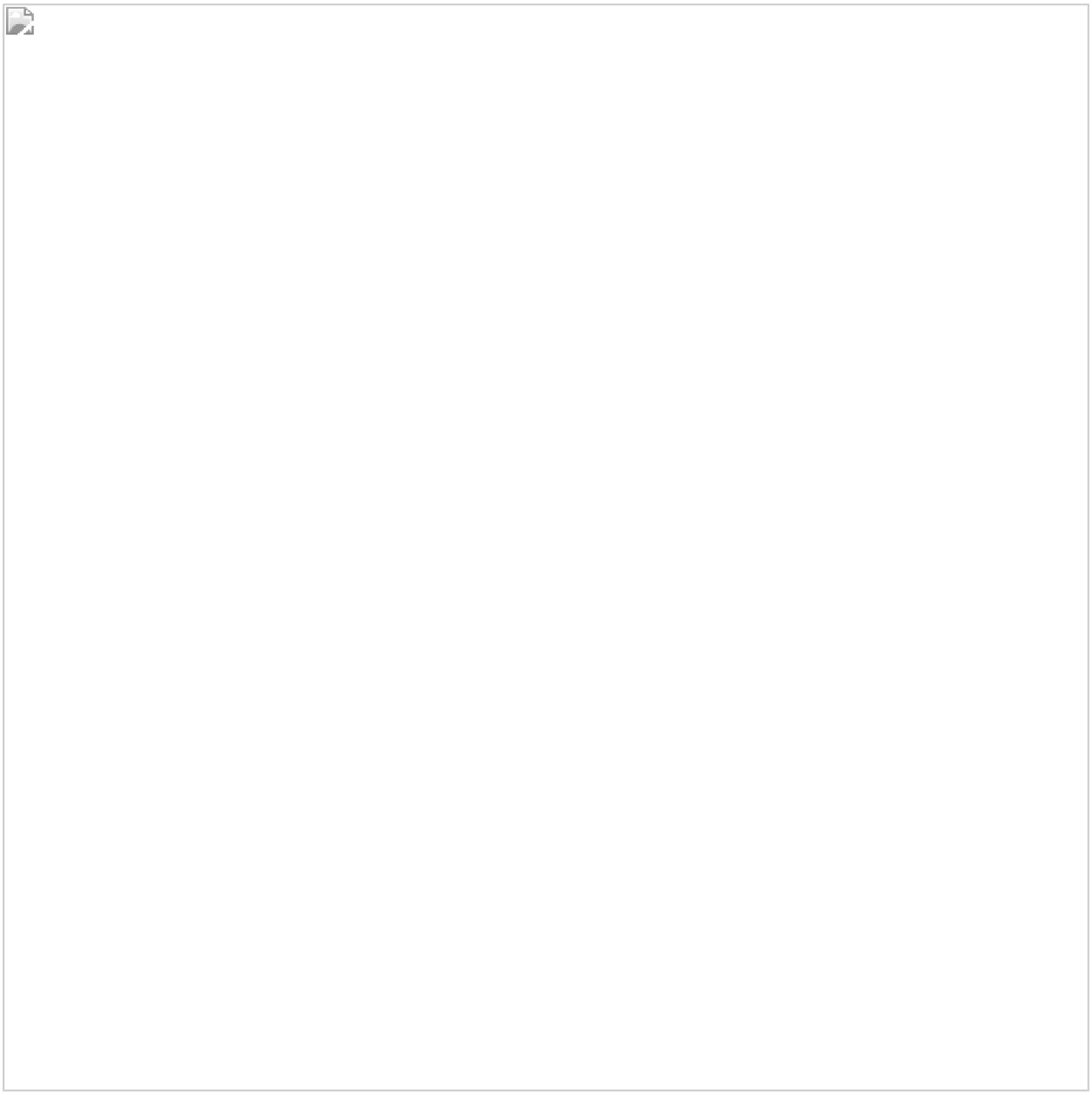
Think about it

1. Could the sons break the whole bundle?

- ○ No, not one of them could
- ○ Yes, easily
- ○ Only the oldest could

2. What did the father want his sons to learn?

The Dog and the Shadow



A Dog was crossing a bridge over a stream with a piece of meat in his mouth.

He looked down and saw his own shadow in the water. He thought it was another dog, with a piece of meat twice as big as his!

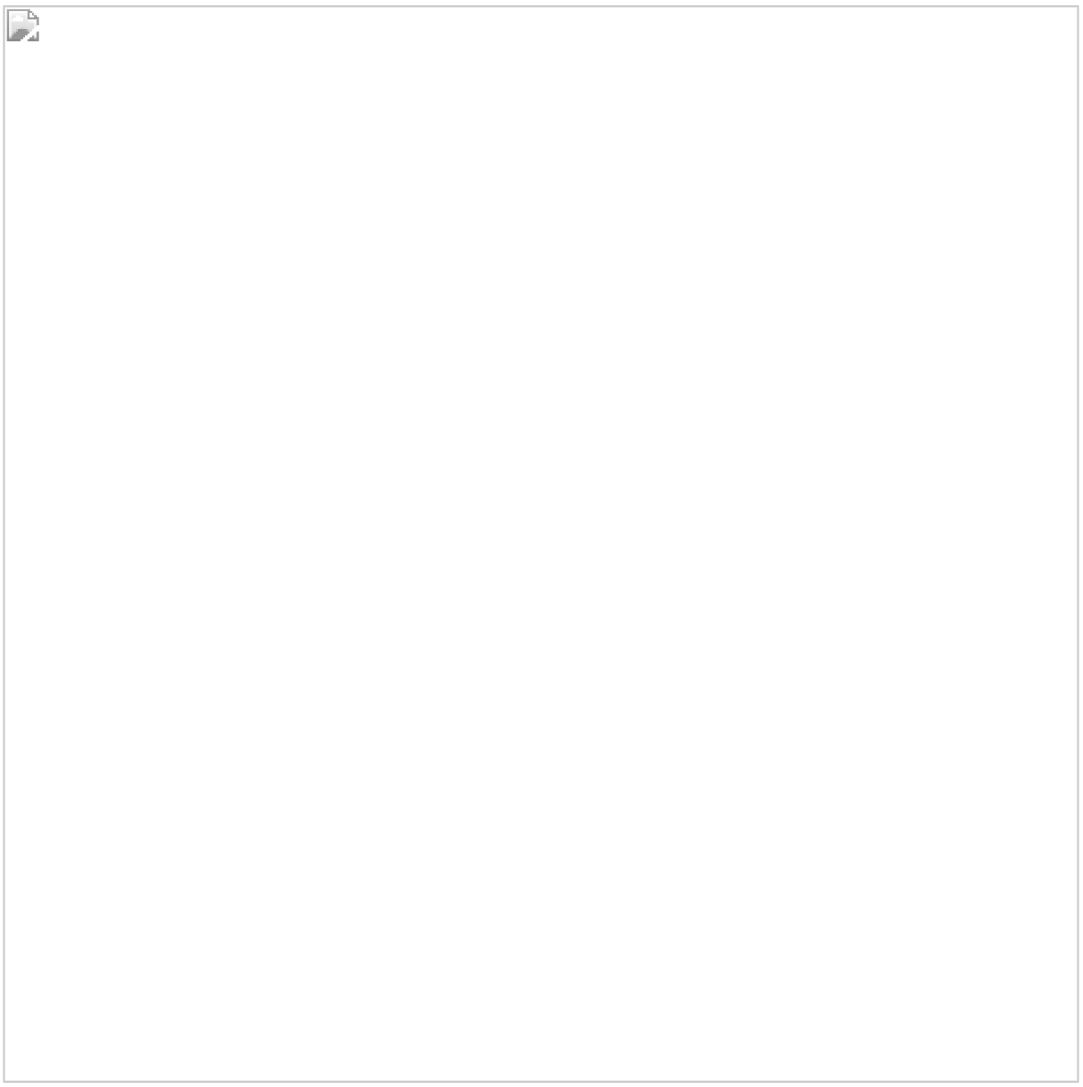
He let go of his own meat and snapped at the other dog to grab the bigger piece.

Splash! The bigger piece was only a shadow, and his own piece was carried away by the stream. Now he had nothing at all.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Dog already had something good. Why do you think he wanted more?

The Dog and the Shadow · another picture



Think about it

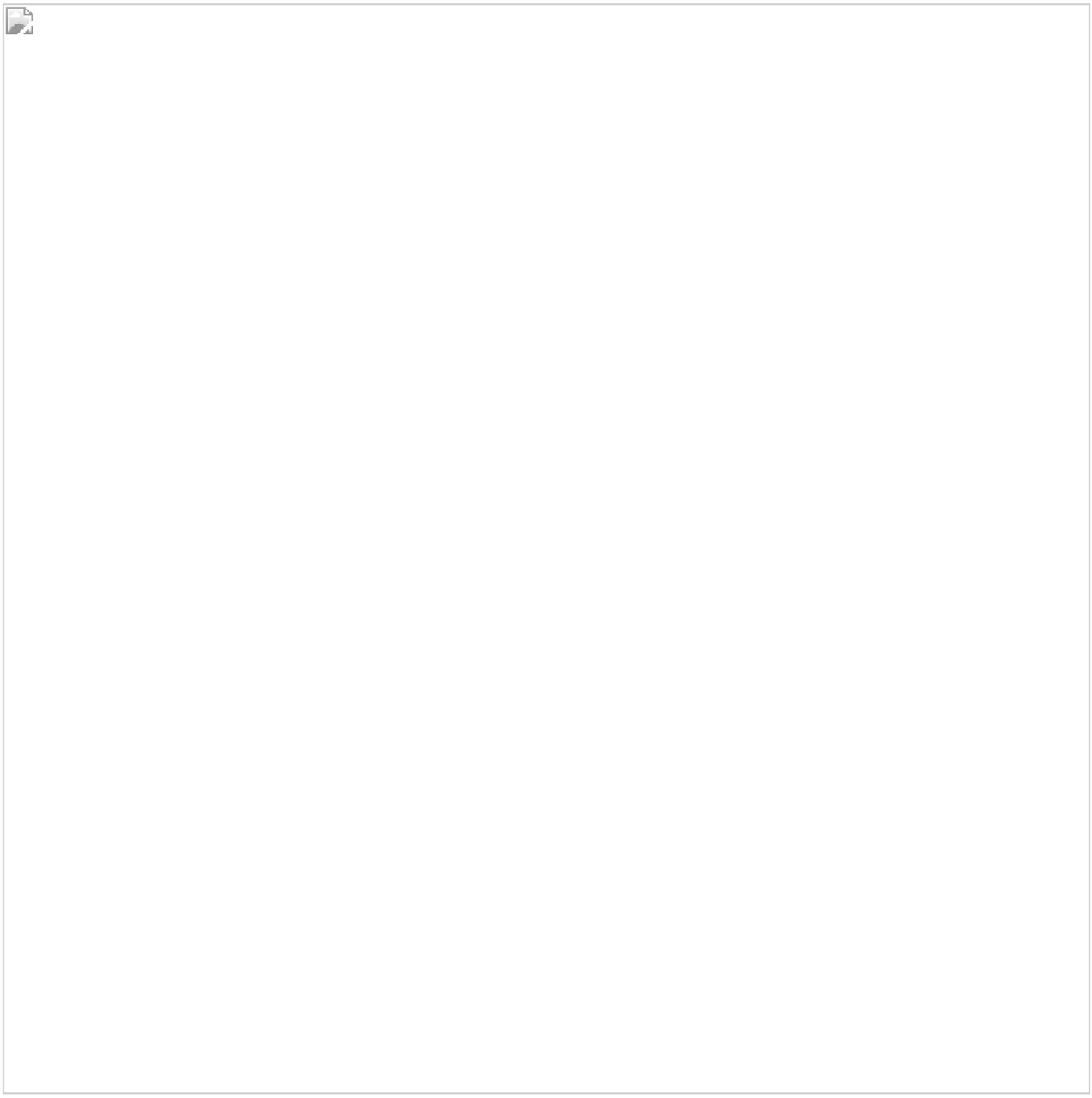
1. What did the Dog see in the water?

- ○ His own shadow
- ○ A real dog
- ○ A fish

2. What happened to the Dog's own meat?

- ○ The stream carried it away
- ○ He ate it
- ○ He shared it

The Fox and the Grapes



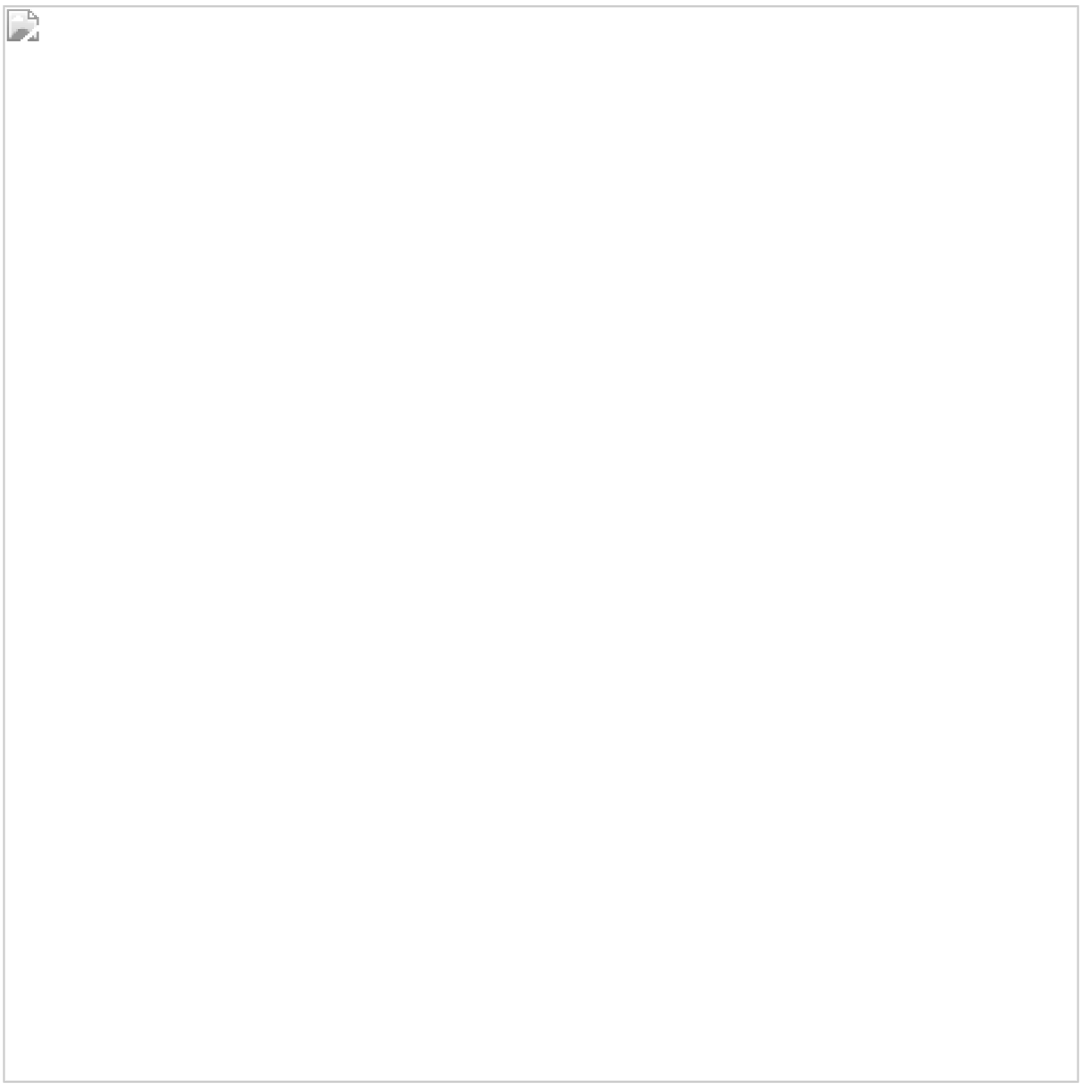
A very hungry Fox saw bunches of ripe black grapes hanging from a vine high up on a frame.

She tried every trick she knew to reach them. She jumped and stretched until she was worn out. But she could not reach them.

At last she turned away. “The grapes are sour,” she said, “and not ripe as I thought.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Fox said the grapes were sour, but were they? Why do you think she said that?



Think about it

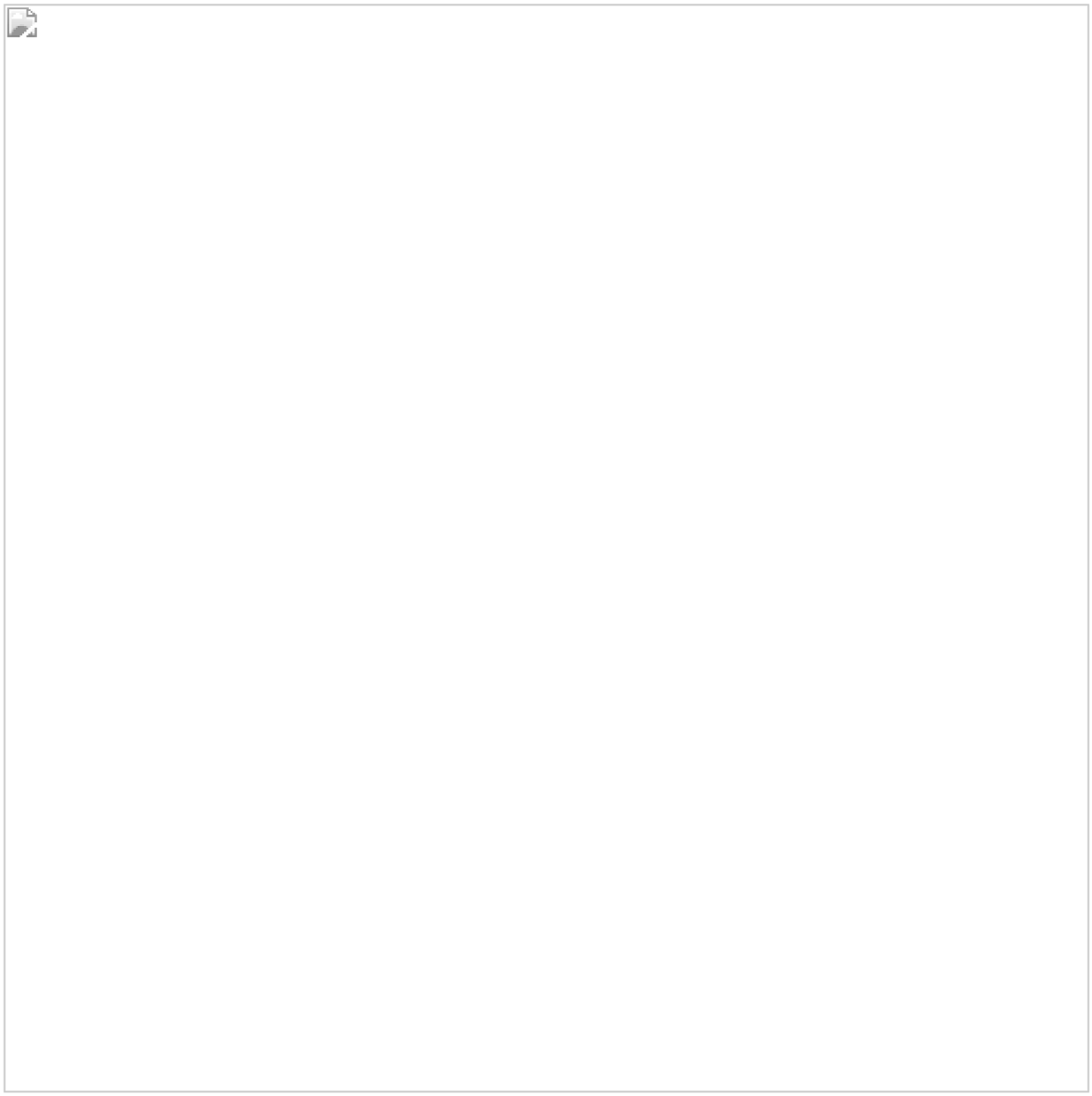
1. What color were the grapes?

- ○ Black
- ○ Green
- ○ Red

2. Did the Fox know the grapes were sour?

- ○ No, she never tasted them
- ○ Yes, she tasted one
- ○ Another fox told her

The Fox and the Crow



A Crow had taken a bit of meat. She sat up in a tree and held it in her beak.

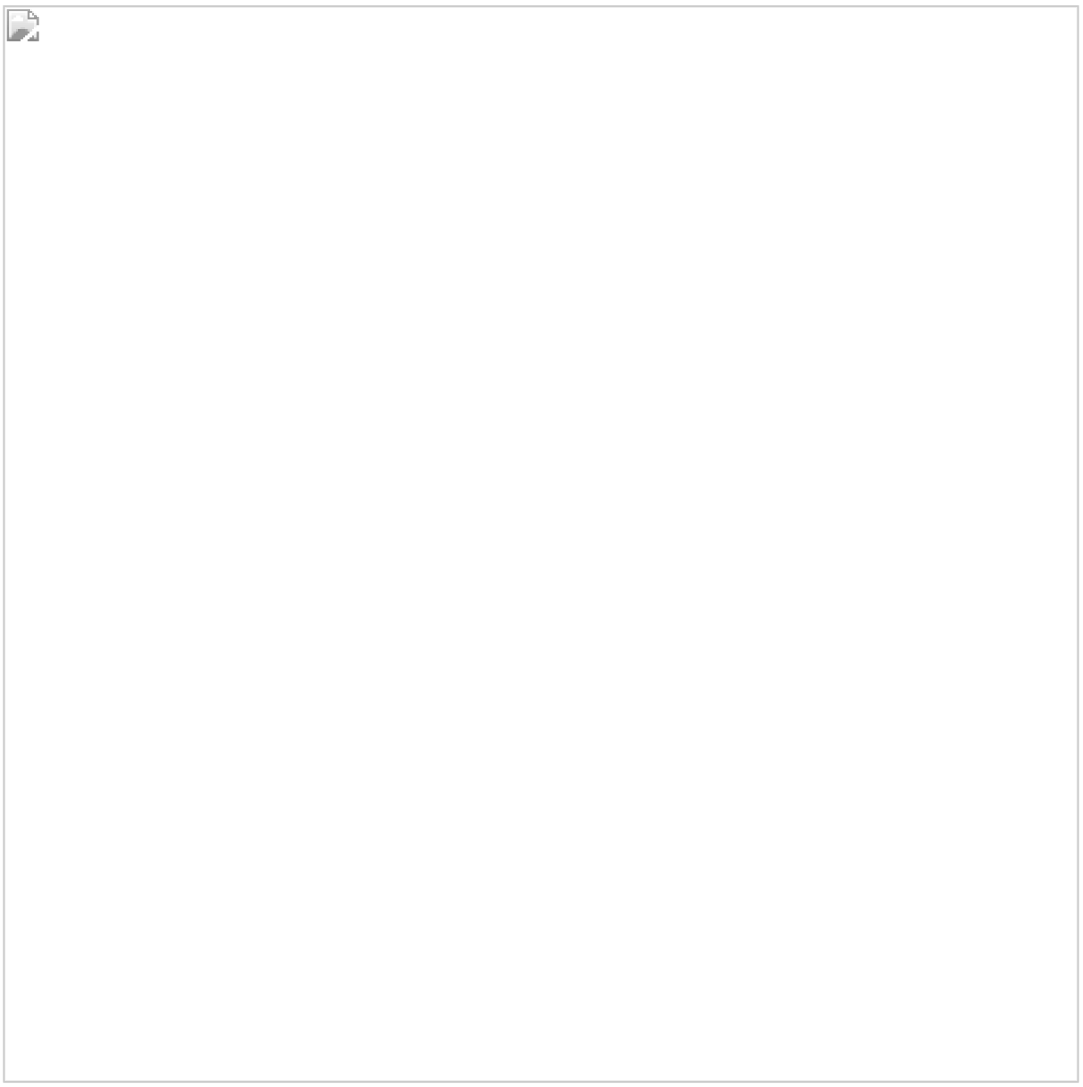
A Fox wanted that meat. “How beautiful the Crow is!” he said. “If only her voice were as lovely as she is, she would be the Queen of Birds!”

The Crow wanted to show him her voice. She opened her beak and gave a loud “CAW!” Down dropped the meat.

The Fox snapped it up. “My good Crow,” he said, “your voice is right enough, but your wit is wanting.” That means she did not stop to think.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Fox said nice things, but not because he meant them. How can you tell when someone means what they say?



Think about it

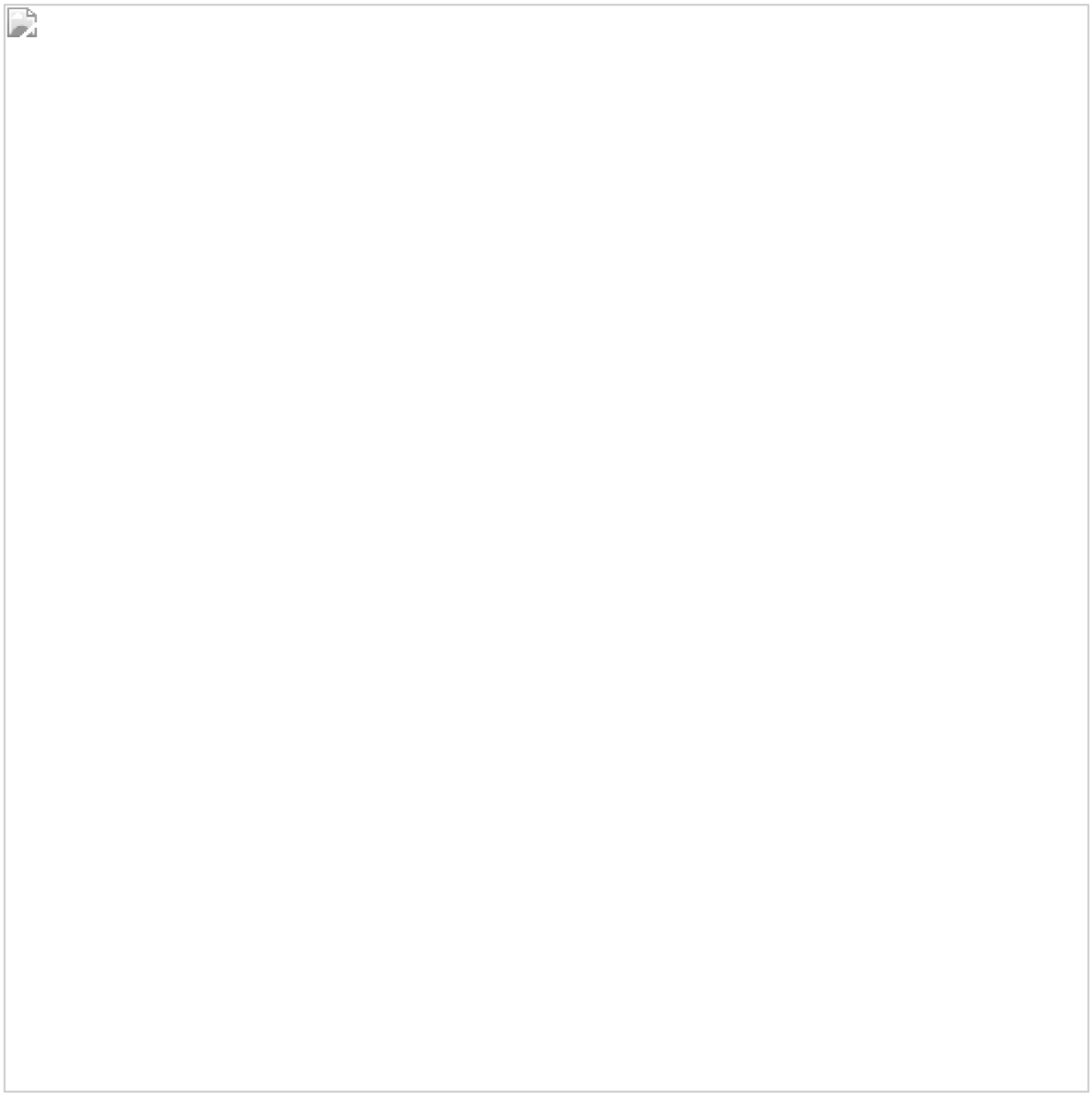
1. Why did the Fox say nice things to the Crow?

- ○ He wanted her meat
- ○ He wanted to be friends
- ○ He liked her singing

2. What made the Crow drop the meat?

- ○ She opened her beak to caw
- ○ She fell asleep
- ○ The wind blew

The Mice in Council



The Mice held a big meeting. How could they know when their enemy the Cat was coming?

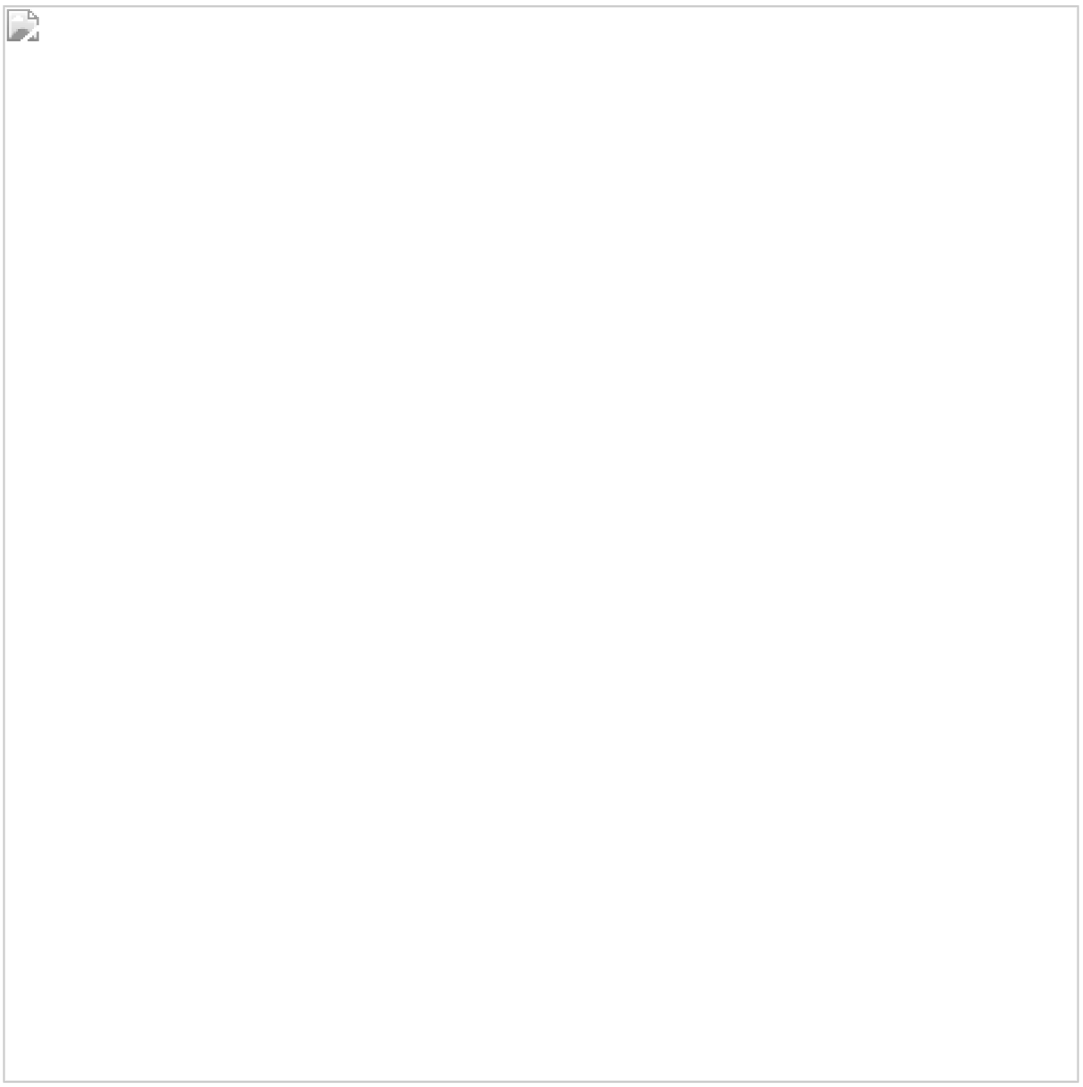
They talked about many plans. The one they liked best was this: tie a bell around the Cat's neck! Then they would hear it tinkle and have time to run and hide.

Everyone thought it was a fine idea. Then someone asked, "Who will tie the bell on the Cat?"

Not one mouse would do it.

TALK ABOUT IT

A plan is only good if someone can really do it. What plan have you made that you really did?



Think about it

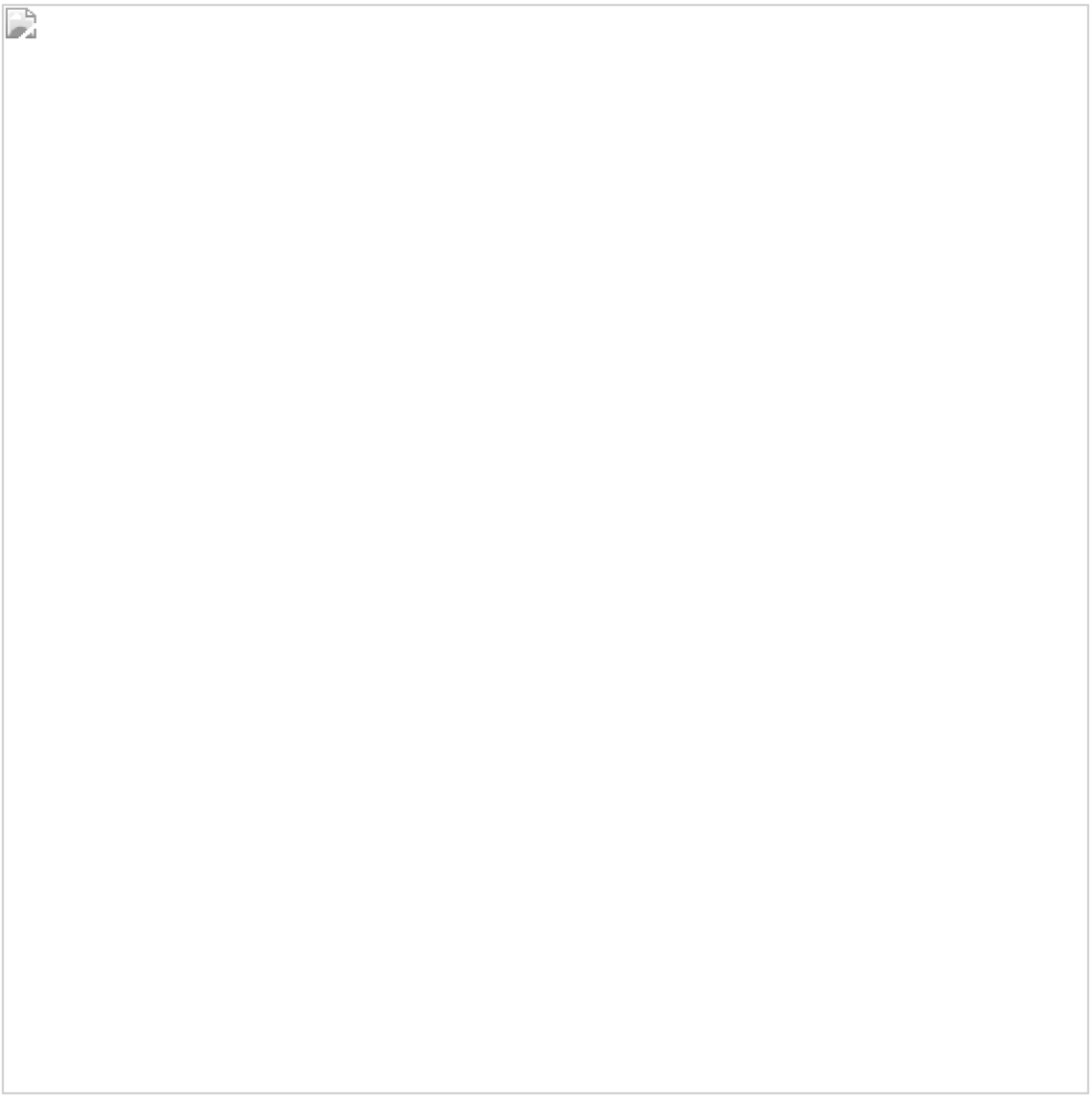
1. What was the Mice's plan?

- ○ Tie a bell on the Cat
- ○ Build a wall
- ○ Move away

2. What was wrong with the plan?

- ○ No mouse would tie the bell on
- ○ The bell was too quiet
- ○ The Cat liked bells

The Milk-Woman and Her Pail



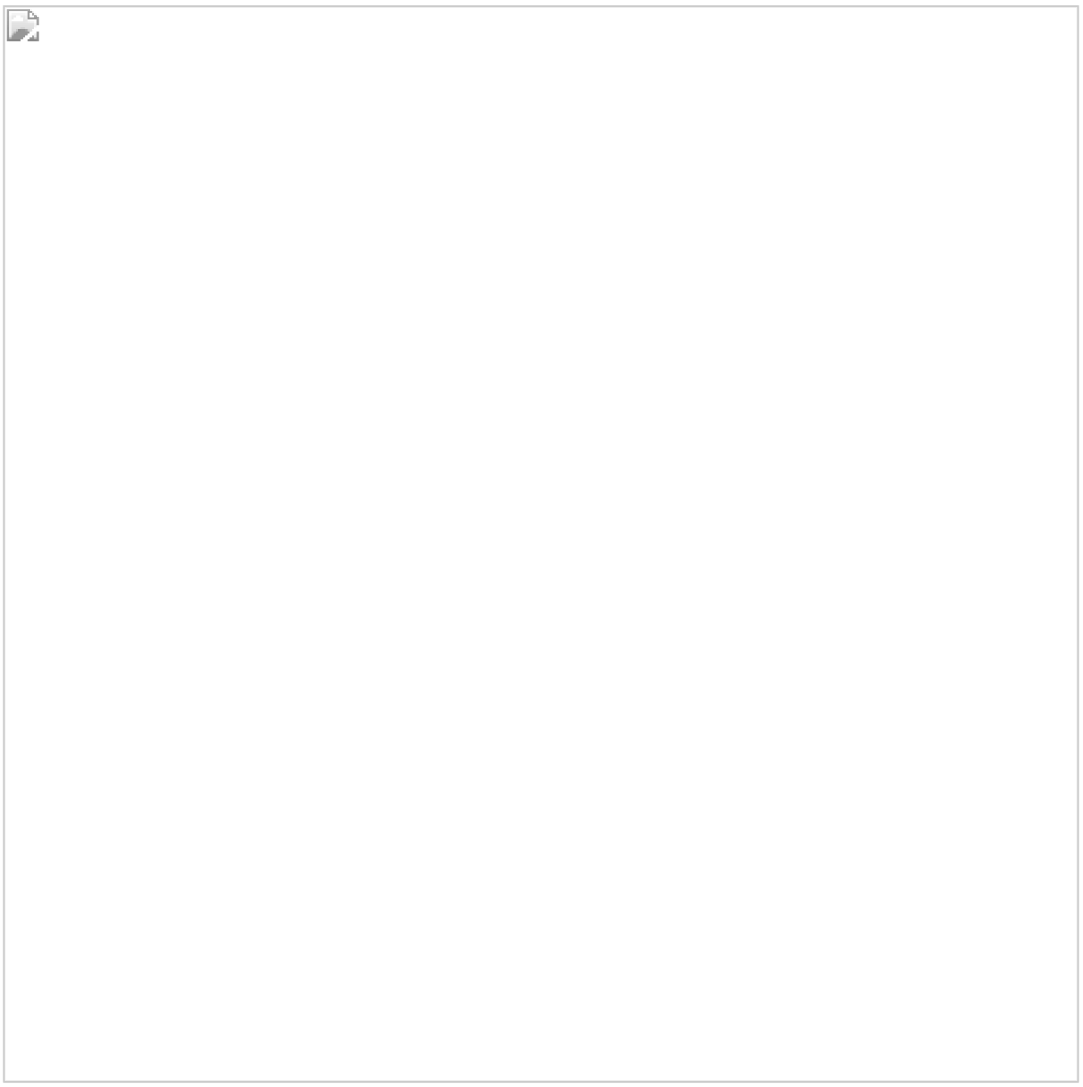
A farmer's daughter was carrying a pail of milk home from the field, and she began to daydream.

"I will sell this milk and buy three hundred eggs. The eggs will hatch into chickens. I will sell the chickens and buy a new dress. At the Christmas parties, everyone will want to dance with me, but I will toss my head and say no to every one!"

And she tossed her head, just like that. Down fell the pail! The milk spilled on the ground, and all her plans were gone in a moment.

TALK ABOUT IT

Daydreams are fun. What happened because she was not paying attention to what was in front of her?



Think about it

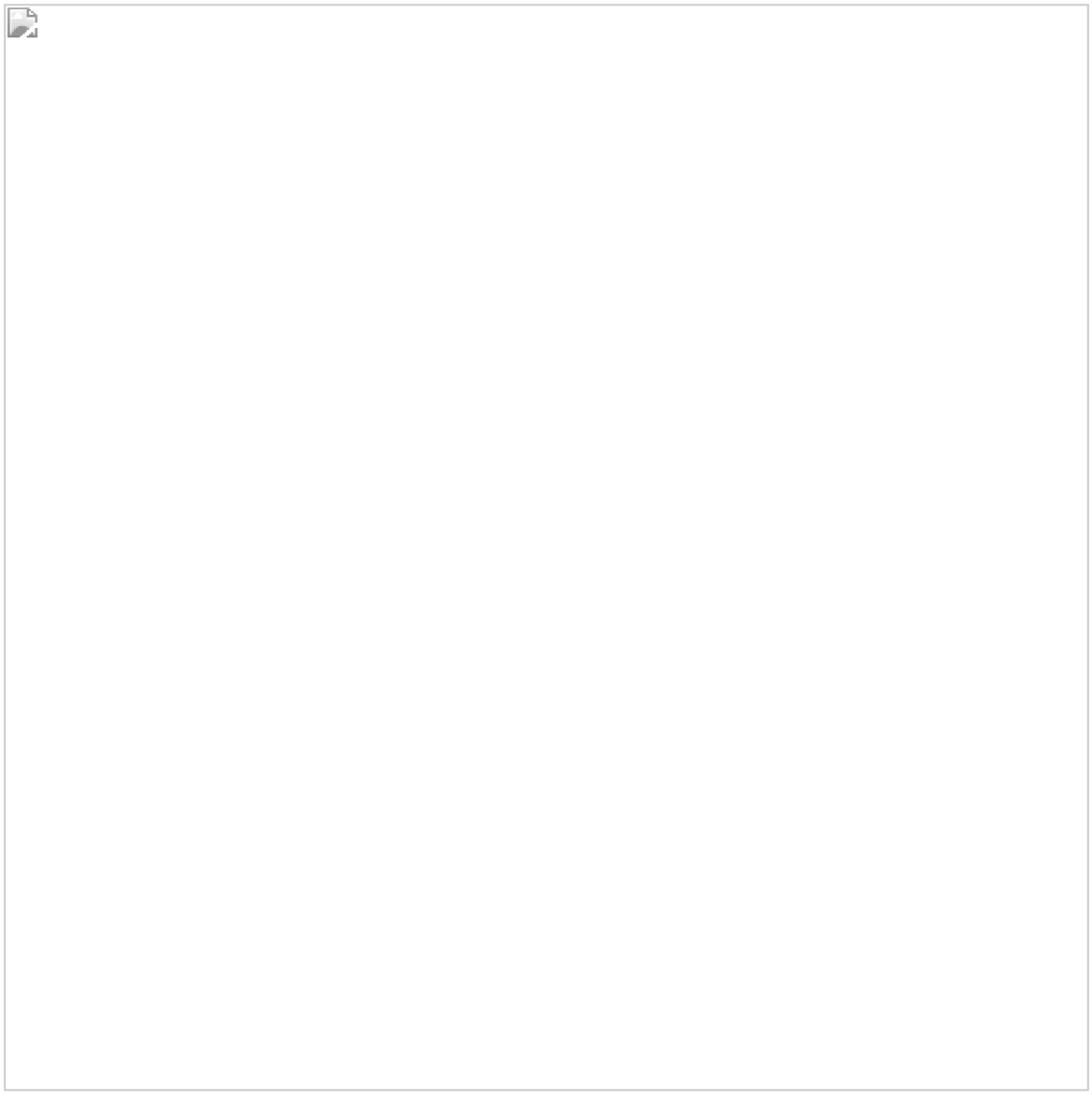
1. What was she going to buy first with the milk money?

- ○ Eggs
- ○ A dress
- ○ A cow

2. Why did the milk spill?

- ○ She tossed her head
- ○ She tripped on a rock
- ○ A dog bumped her

The Oak and the Reeds



A very big Oak tree was pulled up by the wind and thrown across a stream. It landed among some thin Reeds.

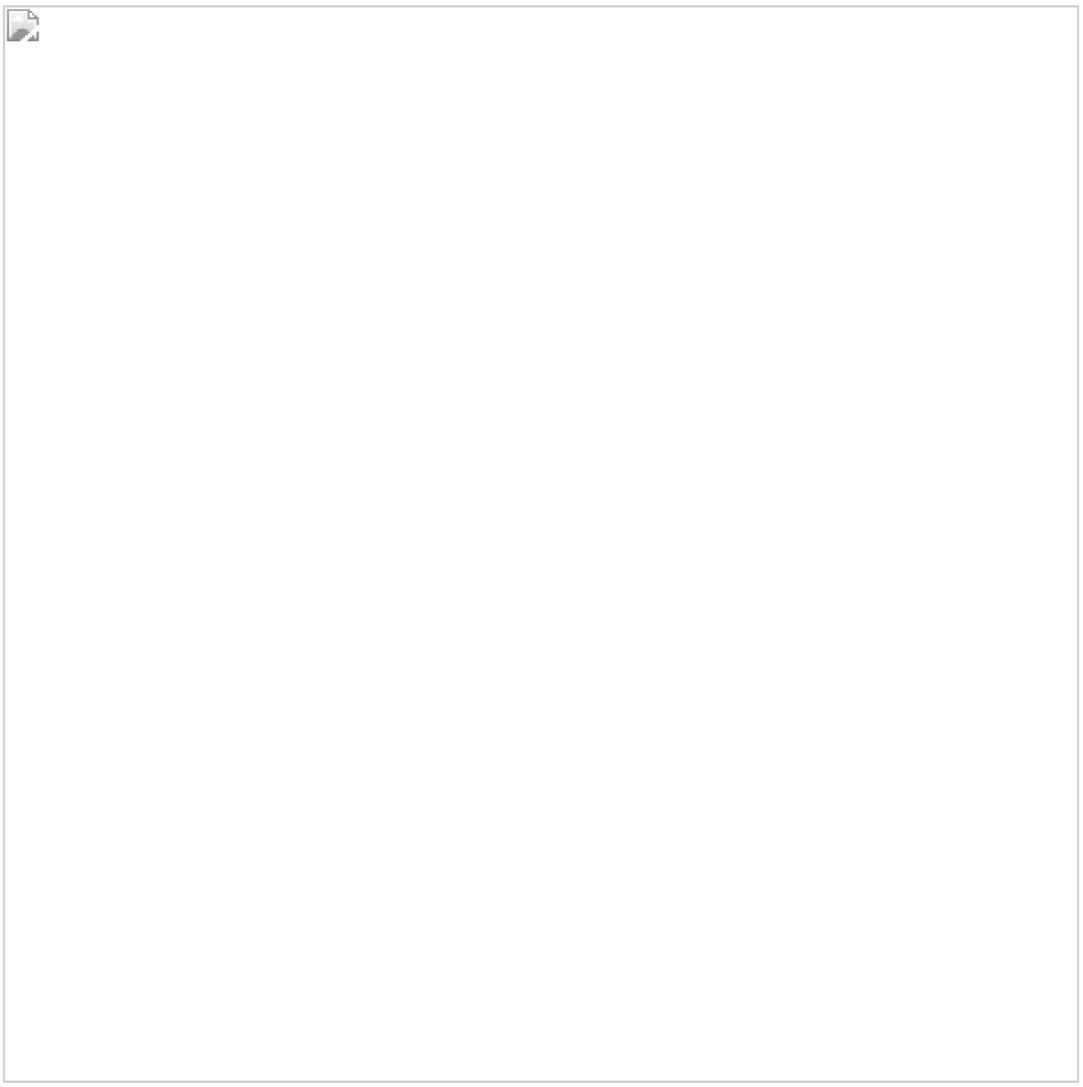
“How is it,” said the Oak, “that you, so light and weak, are not crushed by these strong winds?”

“You fight the wind,” said the Reeds, “so you are broken. We bend with even the smallest breeze, so we stay whole.”

The old book says: “Stoop to conquer.” That means bending a little can be the strong thing to do.

TALK ABOUT IT

When is it good to bend a little, like the Reeds?



Think about it

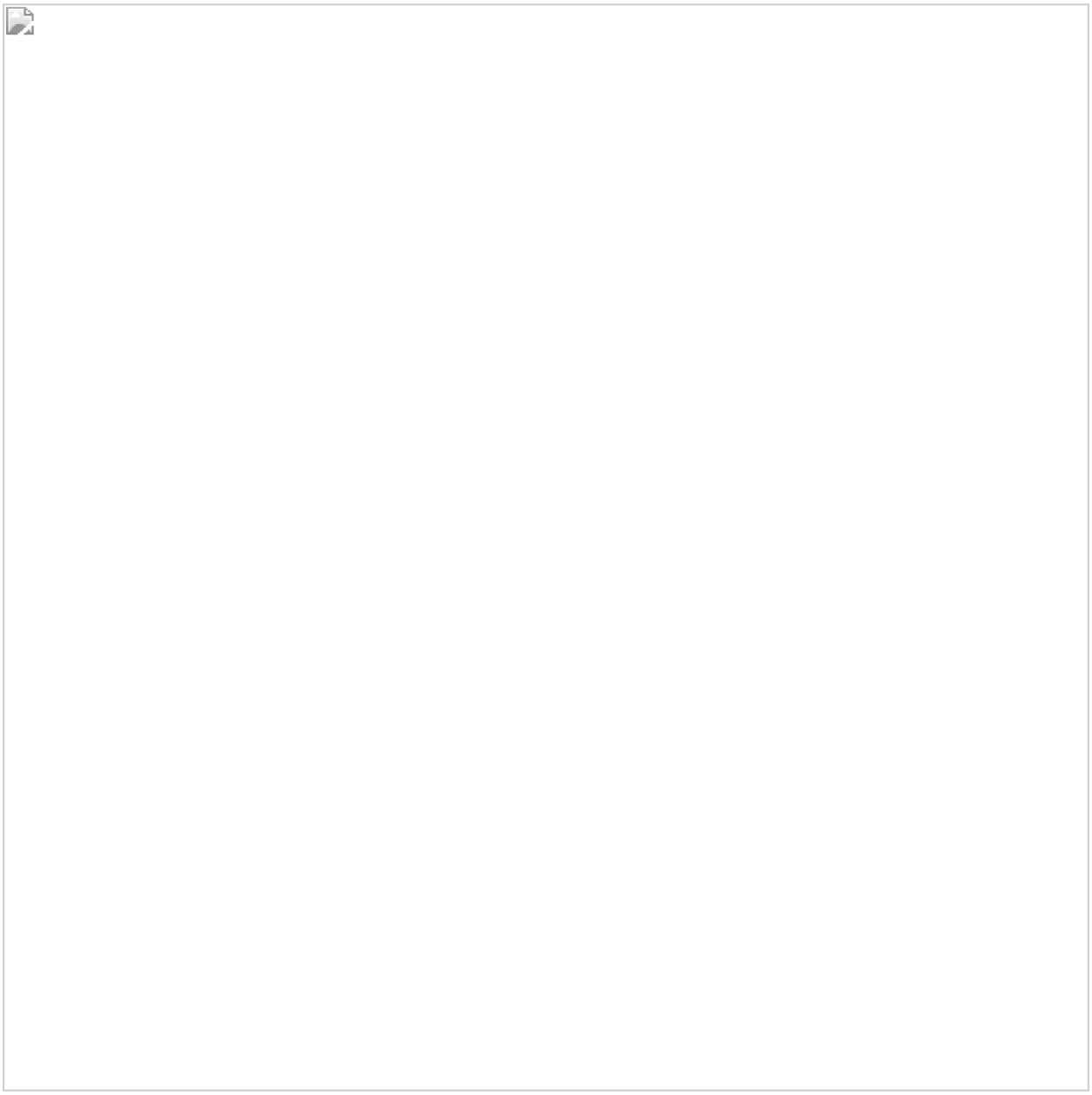
1. What happened to the big Oak?

- ○ The wind pulled it up
- ○ It grew taller
- ○ It was cut down

2. Why were the Reeds not broken?

- ○ They bent with the wind
- ○ They were stronger
- ○ They hid underground

The Hen and the Golden Eggs



A man and his wife had a Hen that laid a golden egg every single day.

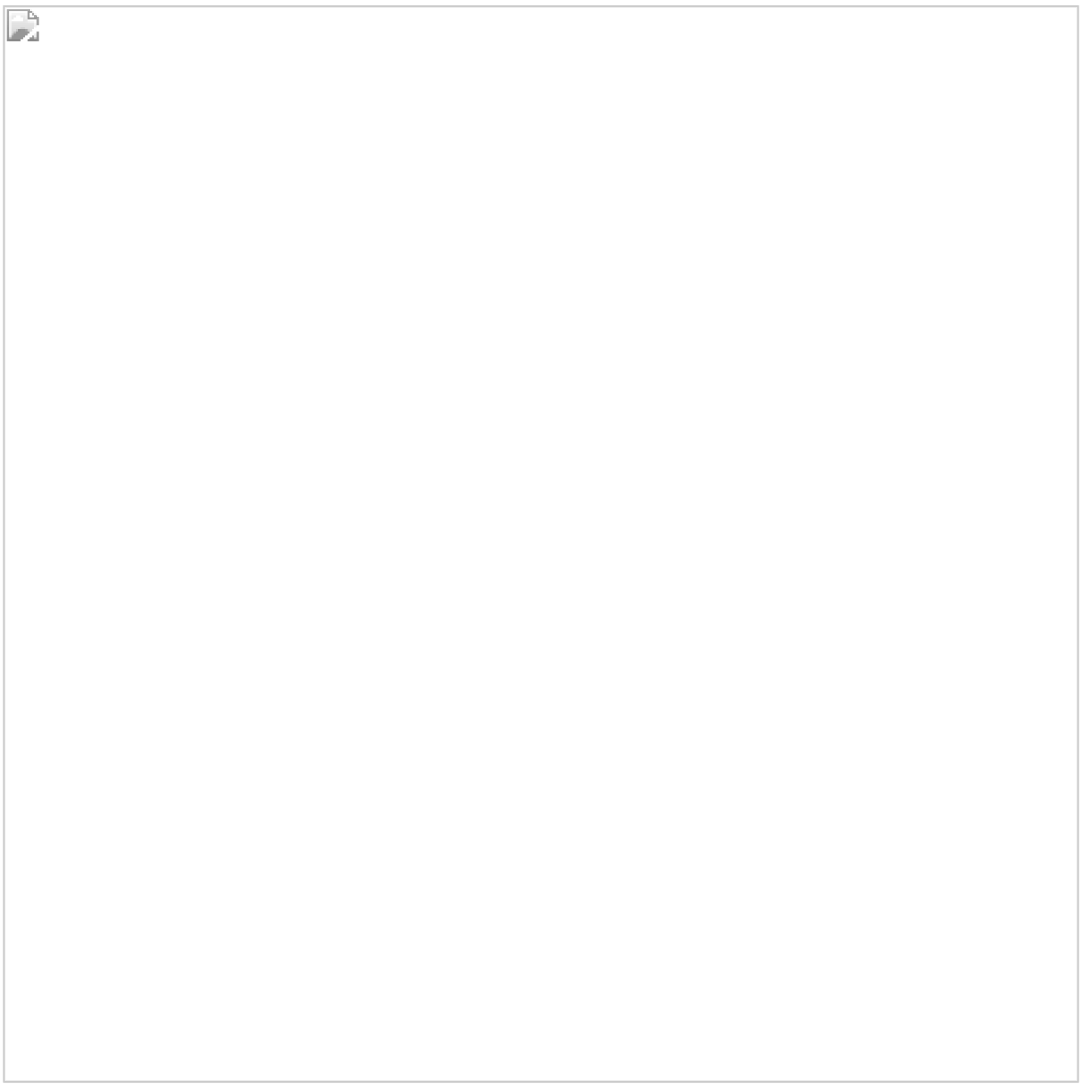
“She must have a big lump of gold inside her,” they said. They did not want to wait one egg at a time. They wanted all the gold at once.

So they killed the Hen. But inside, she was just like any other hen. There was no lump of gold.

Now there would be no more golden eggs, ever.

TALK ABOUT IT

They had a gift every day, but they wanted everything at once. Why is it hard to wait?



Think about it

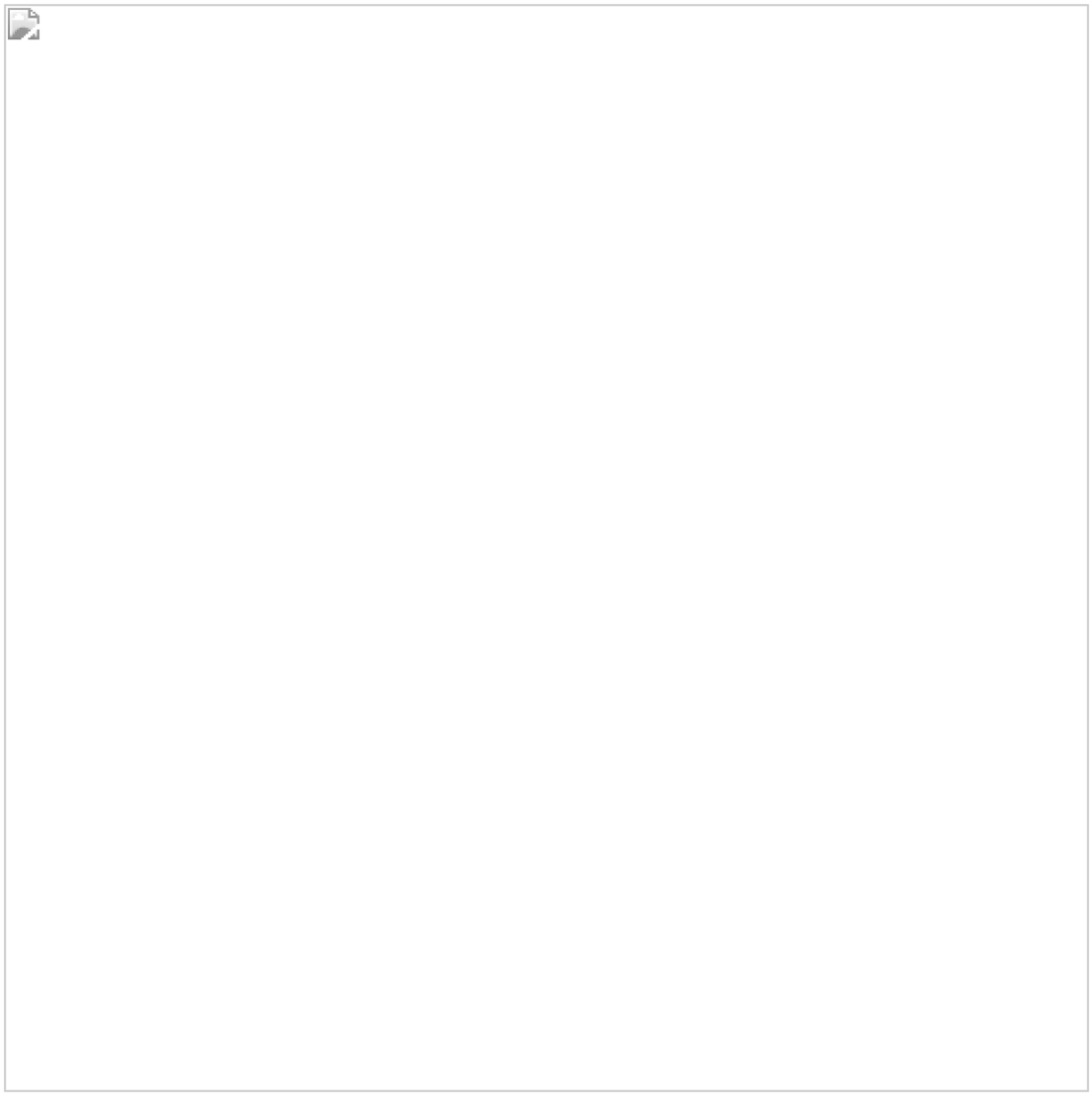
1. How often did the Hen lay a golden egg?

- ○ Every day
- ○ Once a year
- ○ Only once

2. What did they find inside the Hen?

- ○ Nothing special
- ○ A lump of gold
- ○ More eggs

The Shepherd's Boy and the Wolf



A shepherd boy watched sheep near a village. Three or four times, just for a joke, he shouted, "Wolf! Wolf!"

Each time the neighbors came running to help, and each time he laughed at them.

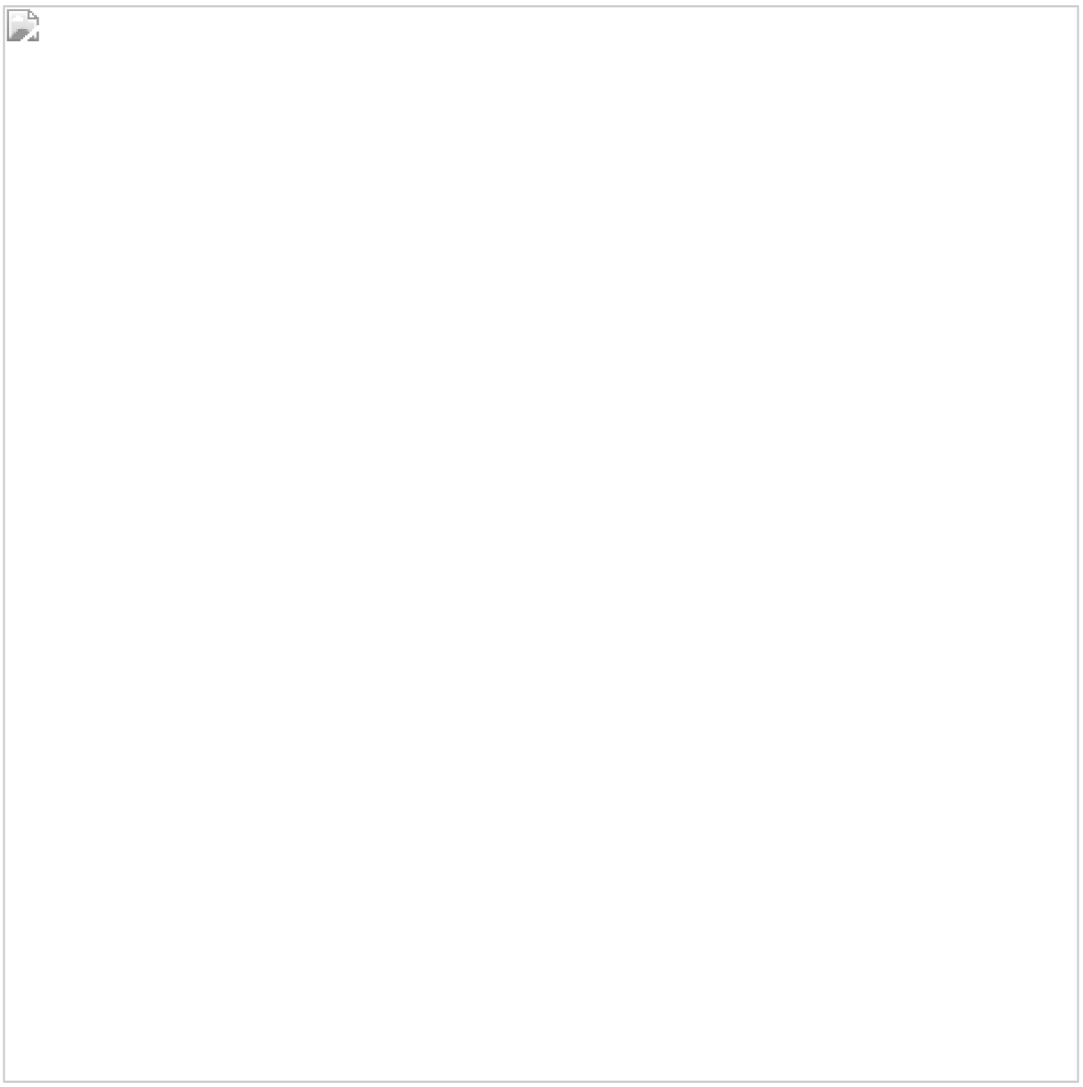
Then one day the wolf really came. "Please come and help me!" the boy cried. "The wolf is after the sheep!"

But no one came. They thought it was another joke. And the wolf did as he pleased with the whole flock.

The old book says: "There is no believing a liar, even when he speaks the truth."

TALK ABOUT IT

Why is it important that people can believe what you say?



Think about it

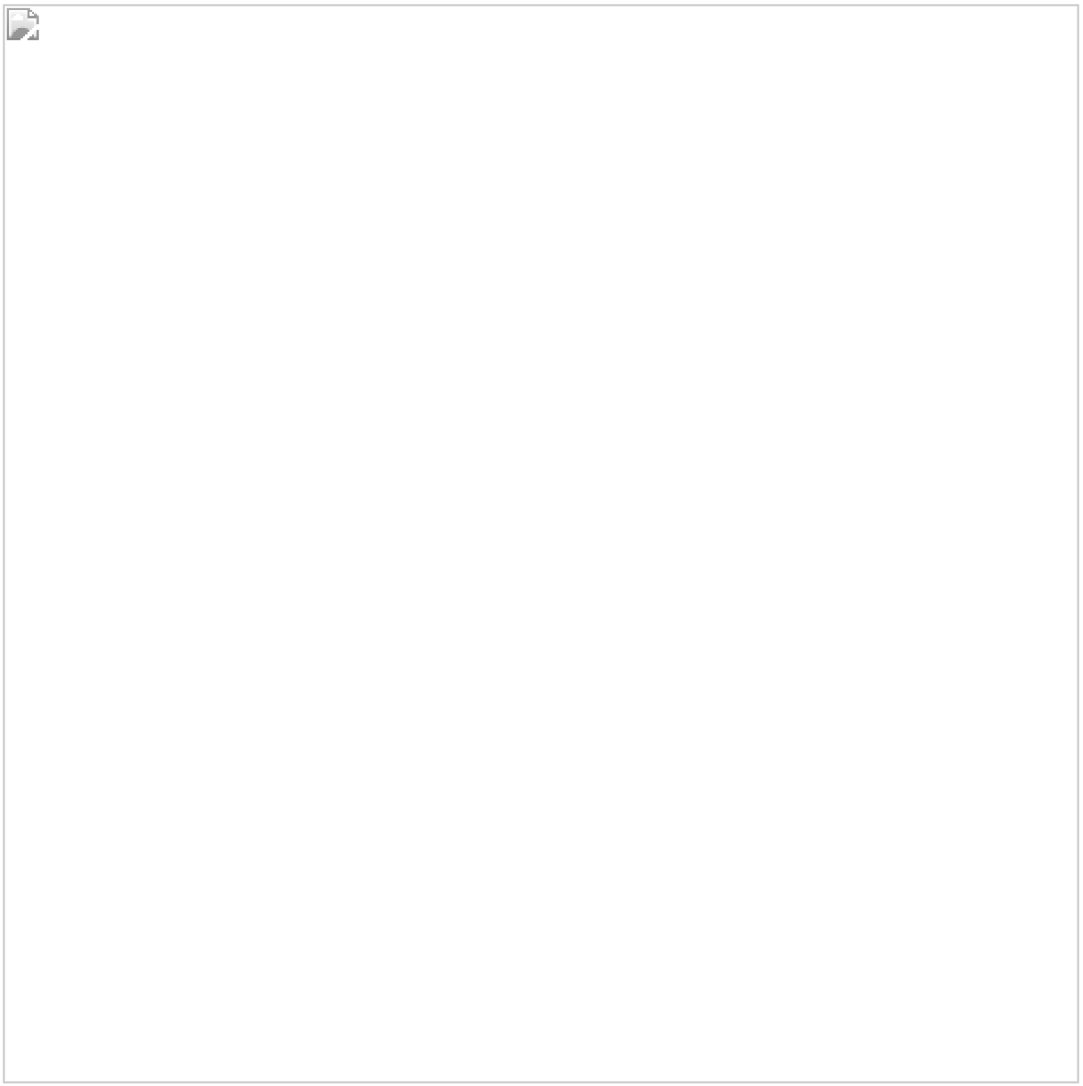
1. How many times did the boy shout "Wolf!" as a joke?

- ○ Three or four times
- ○ Once
- ○ Ten times

2. Why didn't anyone come when the wolf was real?

- ○ They thought he was joking again
- ○ They could not hear him
- ○ They were asleep

The Ants and the Grasshopper



On a bright winter day, the Ants were drying the grain they had gathered all summer.

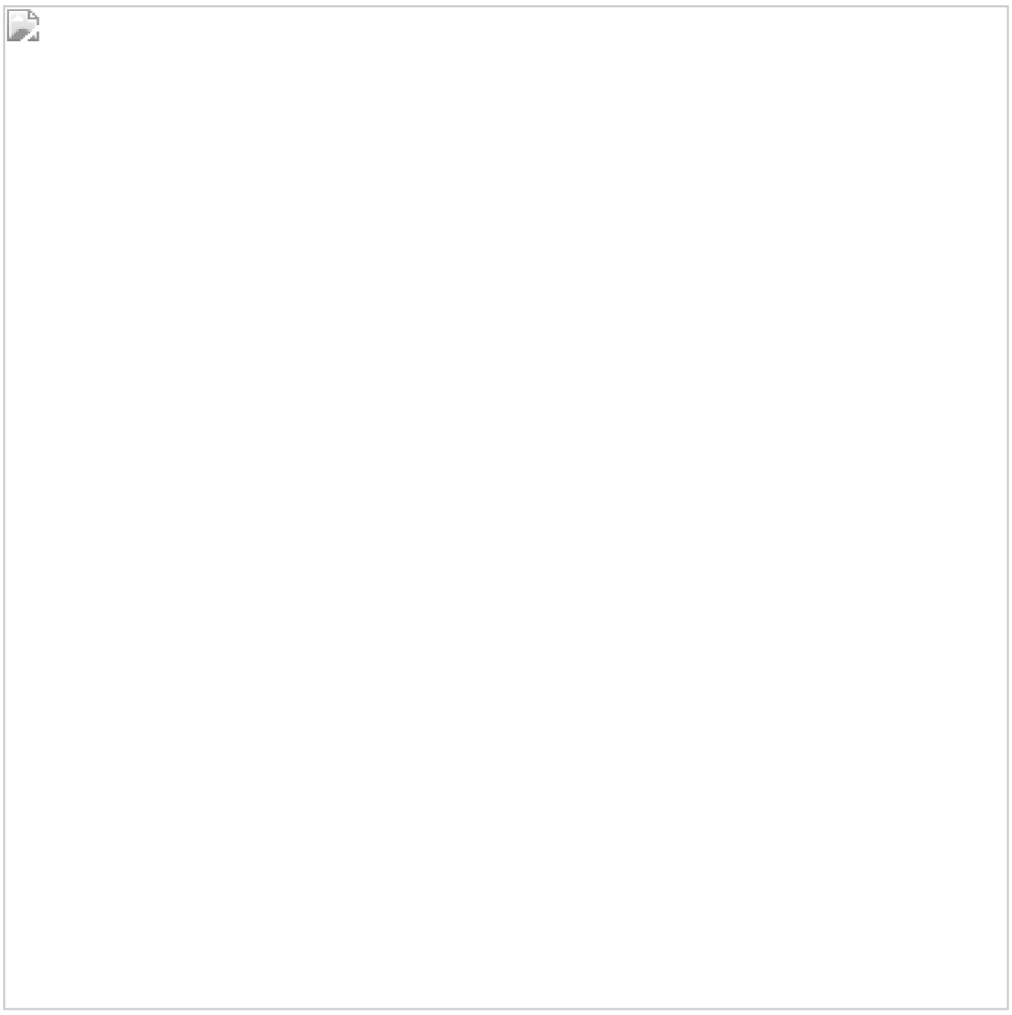
A Grasshopper came by. He was very hungry, and he begged them for a little food.

“Why didn’t you save food during the summer?” the Ants asked. “I didn’t have time,” he said. “I spent the days singing.”

The Ants laughed at him. “If you were foolish enough to sing all the summer,” they said, “you must dance supperless to bed in the winter.” Supperless means with no supper. And that is how the old story ends.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Ants worked hard, but they laughed and gave nothing. What would you have done if you were an Ant?



Think about it

1. What did the Grasshopper do all summer?

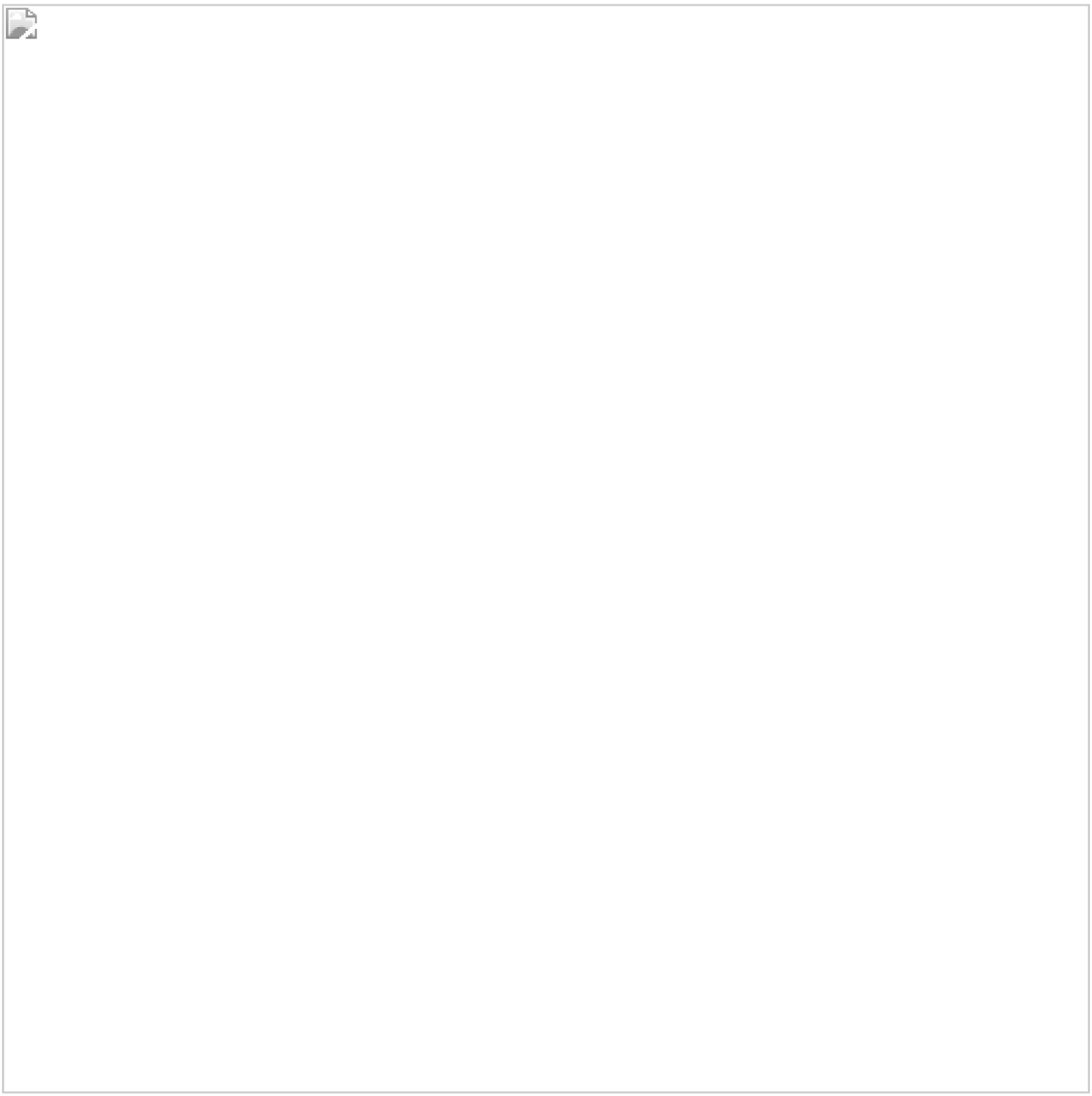
- ○ He sang
- ○ He gathered grain
- ○ He slept

2. Did the Ants share their food?

- ○ No, they laughed at him
- ○ Yes, a little
- ○ Yes, all of it

3. Is there a way to be wise like the Ants and kind at the same time?

The Lion and the Mouse



A Lion was asleep when a Mouse ran right over his face. The Lion woke and caught him in his paw.

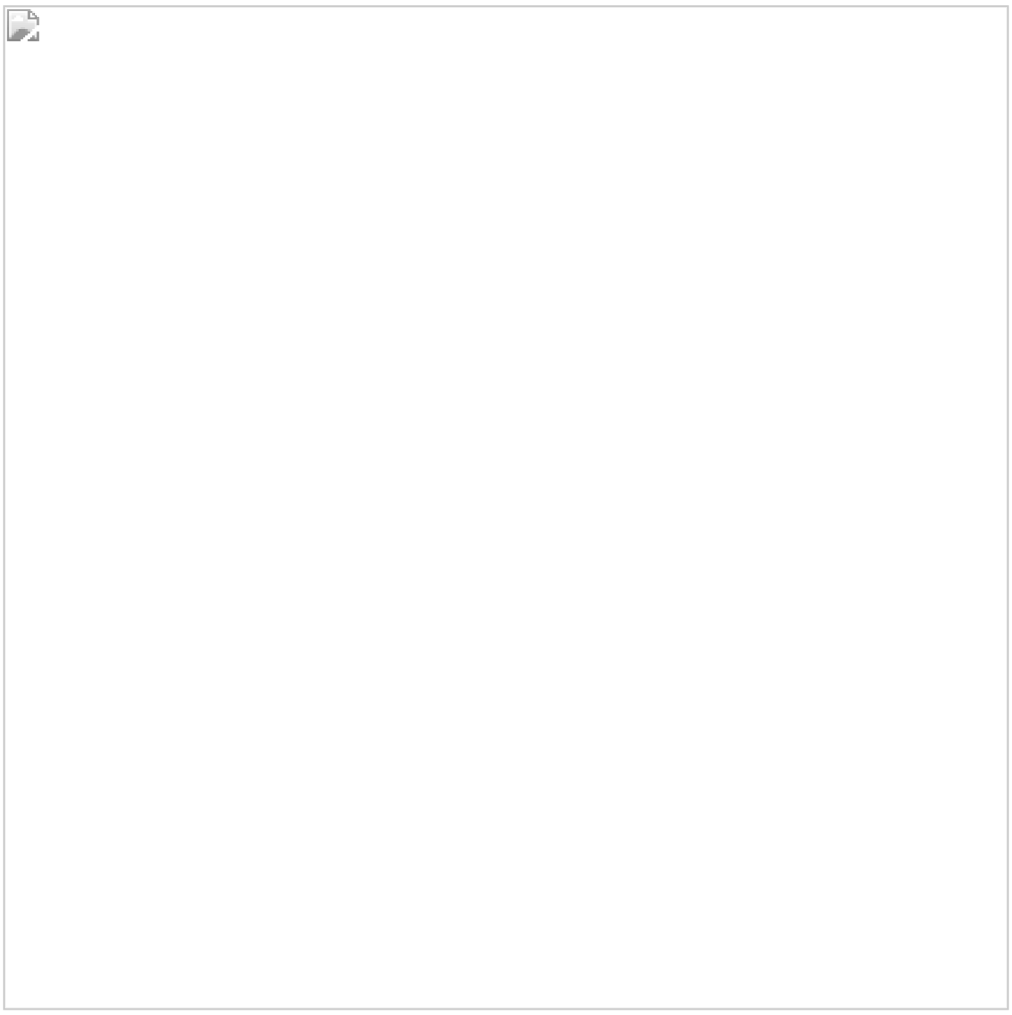
“If you would only spare my life,” said the Mouse, “I would be sure to repay your kindness.” The Lion laughed. A tiny mouse help a lion? But he let him go.

Later, hunters tied the Lion to the ground with strong ropes. Hearing him roar, the Mouse ran and chewed through the ropes until the Lion was free.

“You laughed when I said I could help you,” said the Mouse. “Now you know that even a Mouse can help a Lion.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Lion was kind first, and the Mouse never forgot it. Who is someone small you can be kind to?



Think about it

1. How did the Mouse free the Lion?

- ○ He chewed through the ropes
- ○ He untied the knots
- ○ He called other lions

2. Why did the Lion laugh at first?

- ○ He didn't think a tiny mouse could ever help him
- ○ The Mouse told a joke
- ○ The Mouse tickled him

3. Which fable in this book was your favorite? What did it teach you?

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

Free to read, color, and print in the Book Library

Made with love by Love is a Habit