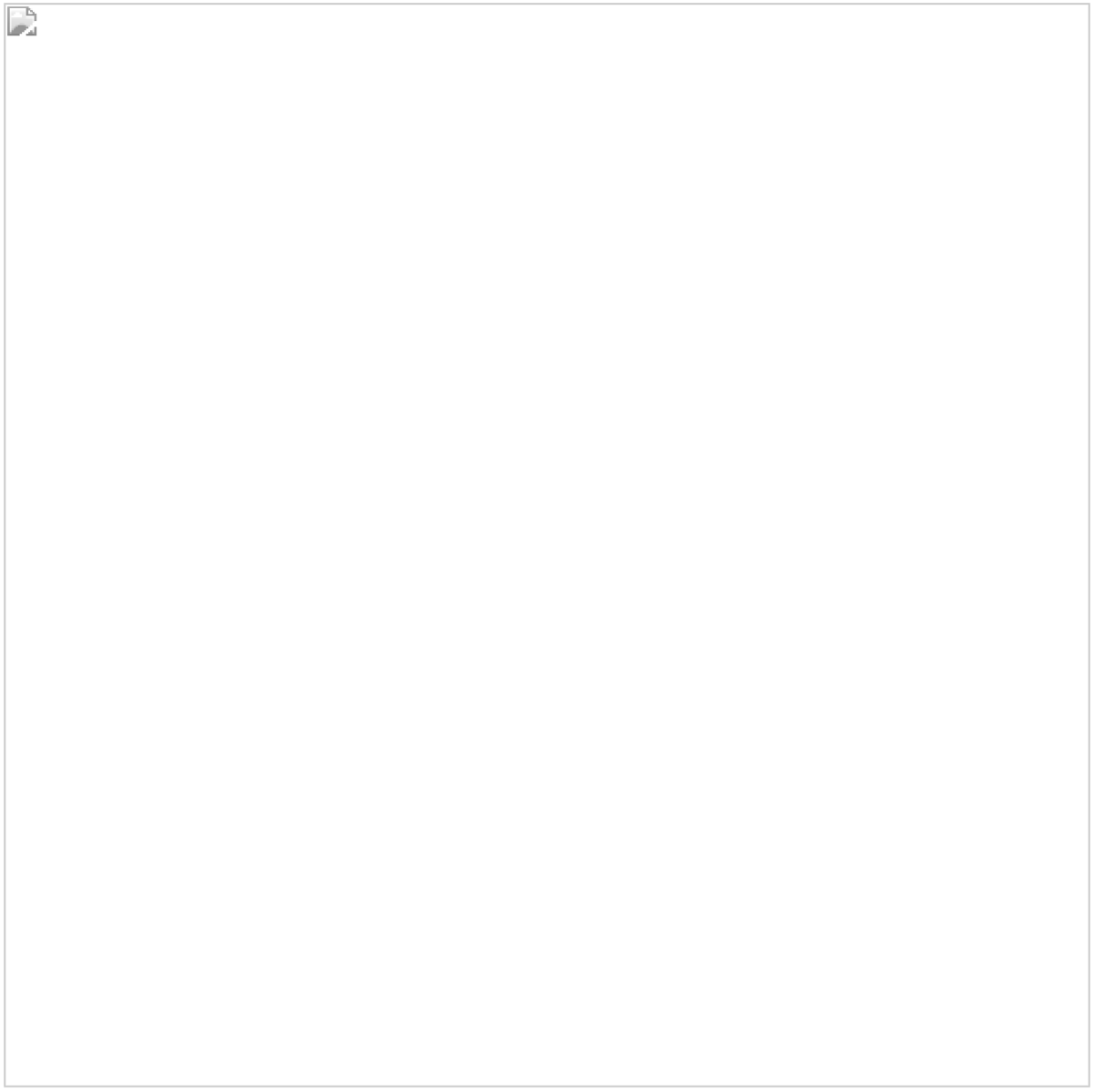
COLORING THE CLASSICS

The Wind in the Willows

A story of the River Bank



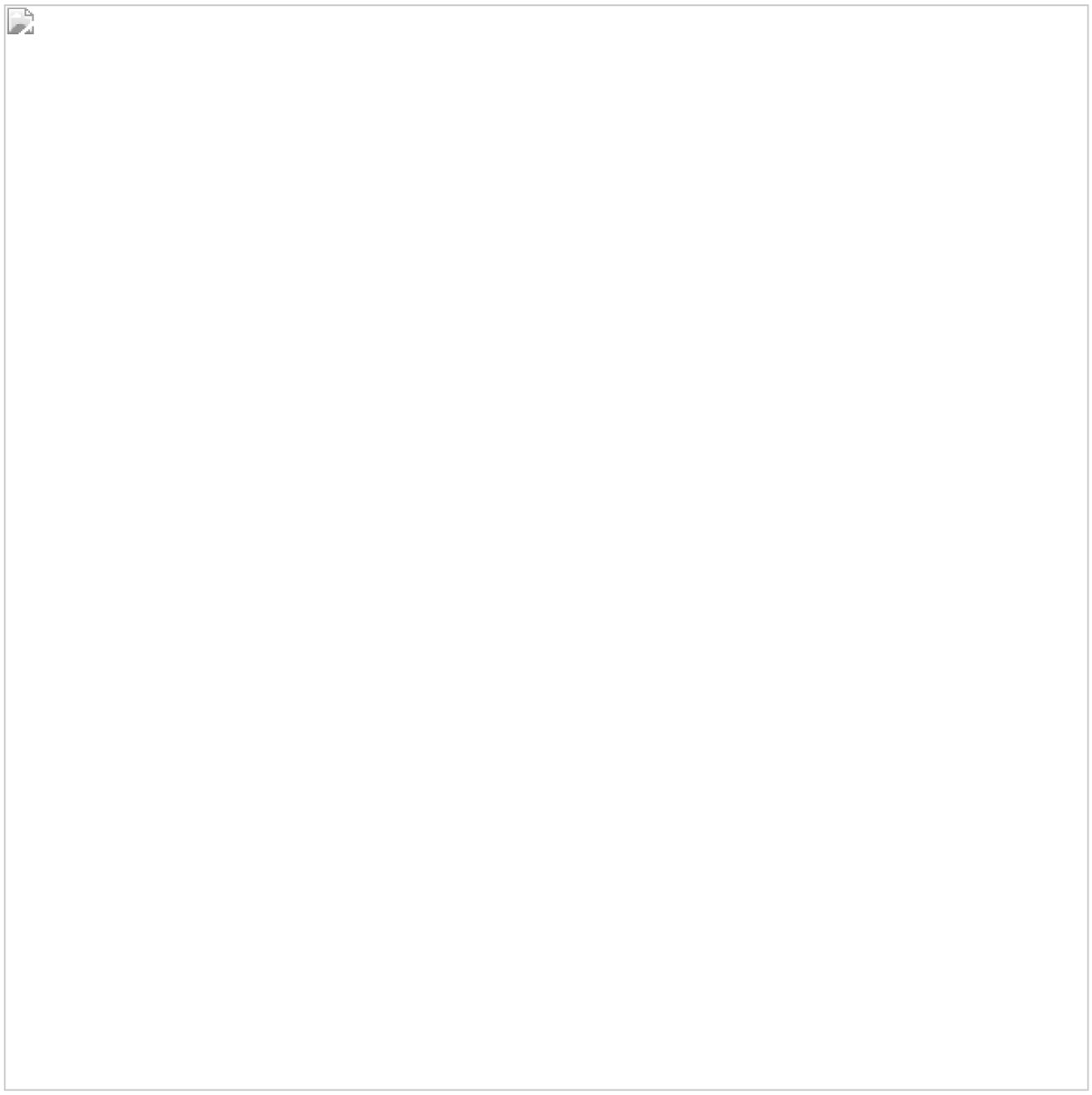
By Kenneth Grahame

TALK ABOUT IT

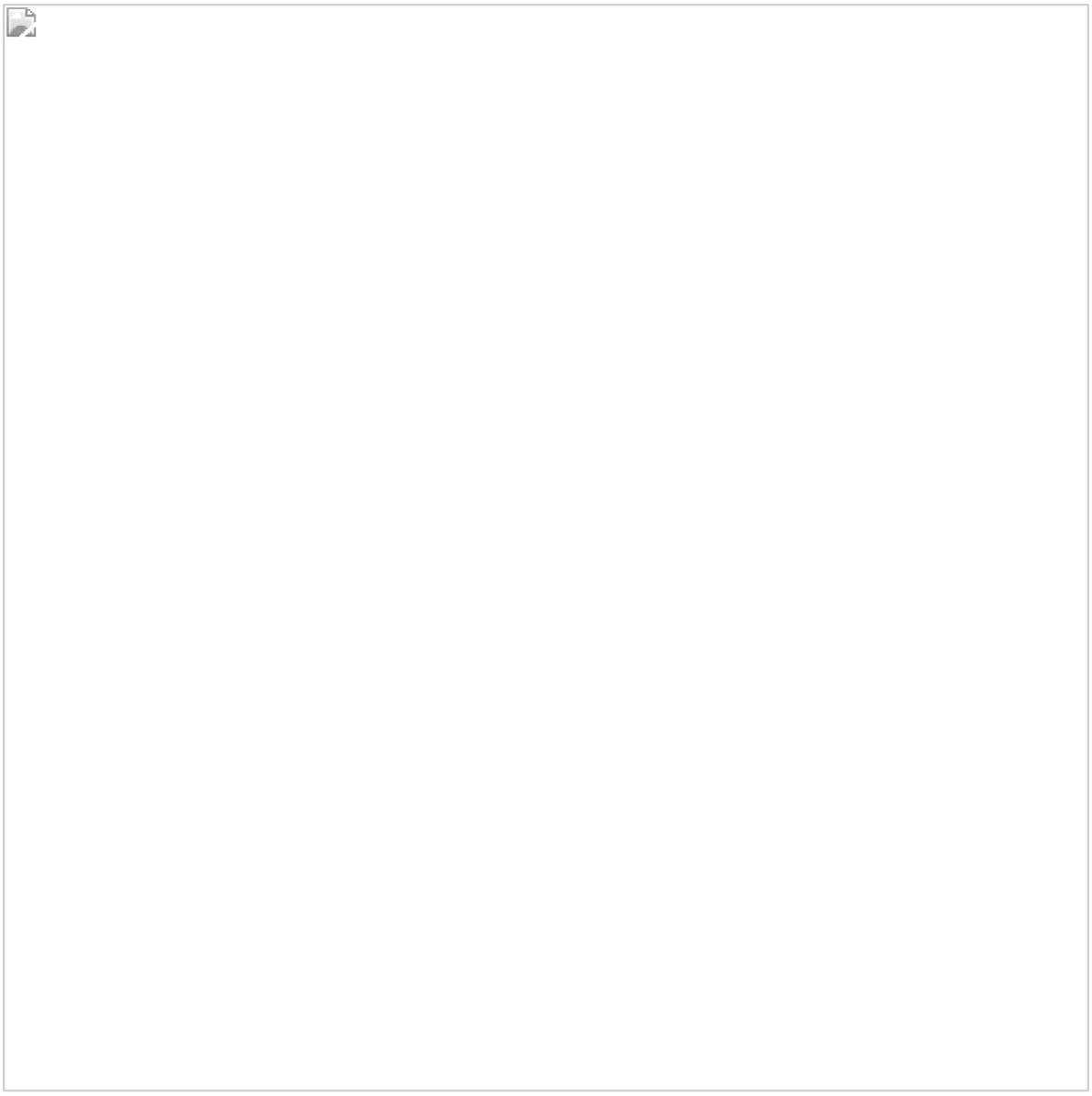
Look at the cover. Where do you think this story happens?

This book belongs to _____

The Wind in the Willows · another picture



Mole Leaves His Spring Cleaning



Mole had been cleaning his little home all morning. First came brooms and dusters. Then came a brush and a pail of whitewash. He was tired, and he had whitewash in his fur.

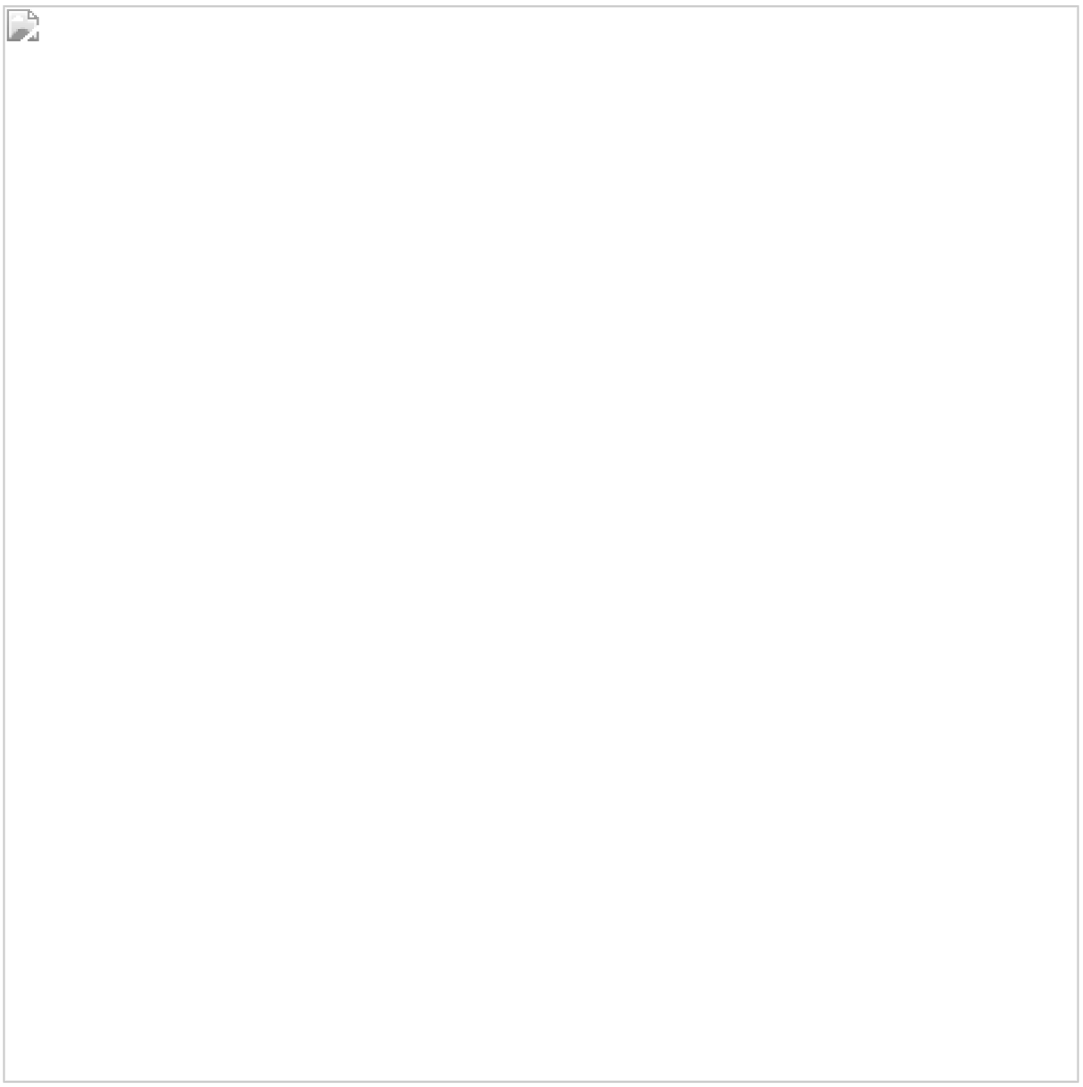
Then something up above seemed to call him. Mole flung down his brush and said “Bother!” and “O blow!” and also “Hang spring-cleaning!”

He ran up a steep little tunnel, scraping and scrabbling. “Up we go! Up we go!” he said, until at last he popped out into the sunshine.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you like to do when the first warm days of spring come? What would you see if you popped out of a tunnel into the sunshine?

Mole Leaves His Spring Cleaning · another picture



Think about it

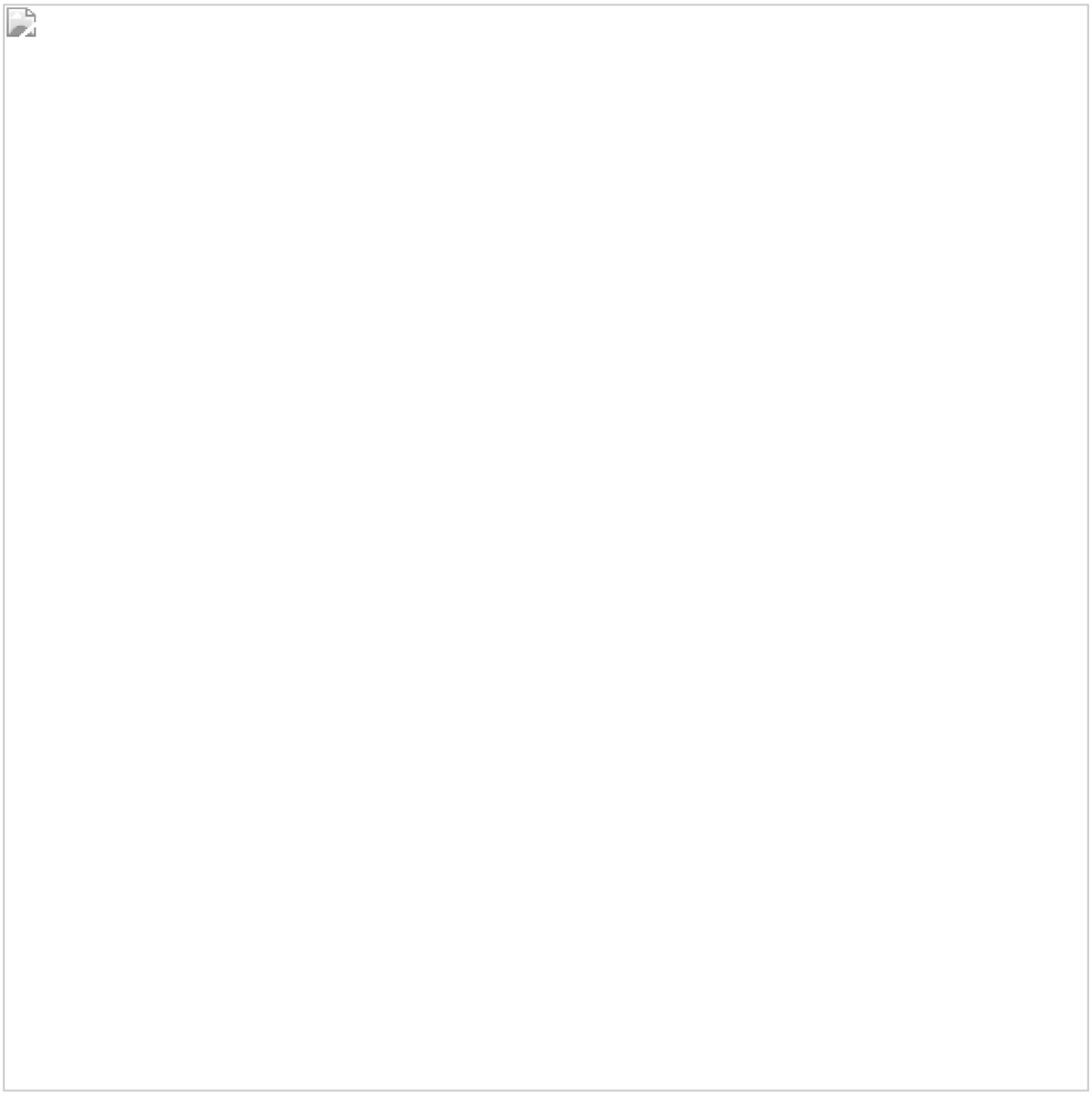
1. What was Mole doing before he ran out?

- ○ Spring-cleaning his home
- ○ Baking a cake
- ○ Rowing a boat

2. What did Mole do with his brush?

- ○ Flung it down on the floor
- ○ Took it with him
- ○ Gave it to a friend

Mole Meets Ratty



Mole wandered across the meadows and came to a river. He had never seen one before. It was bright and shining and full of chatter.

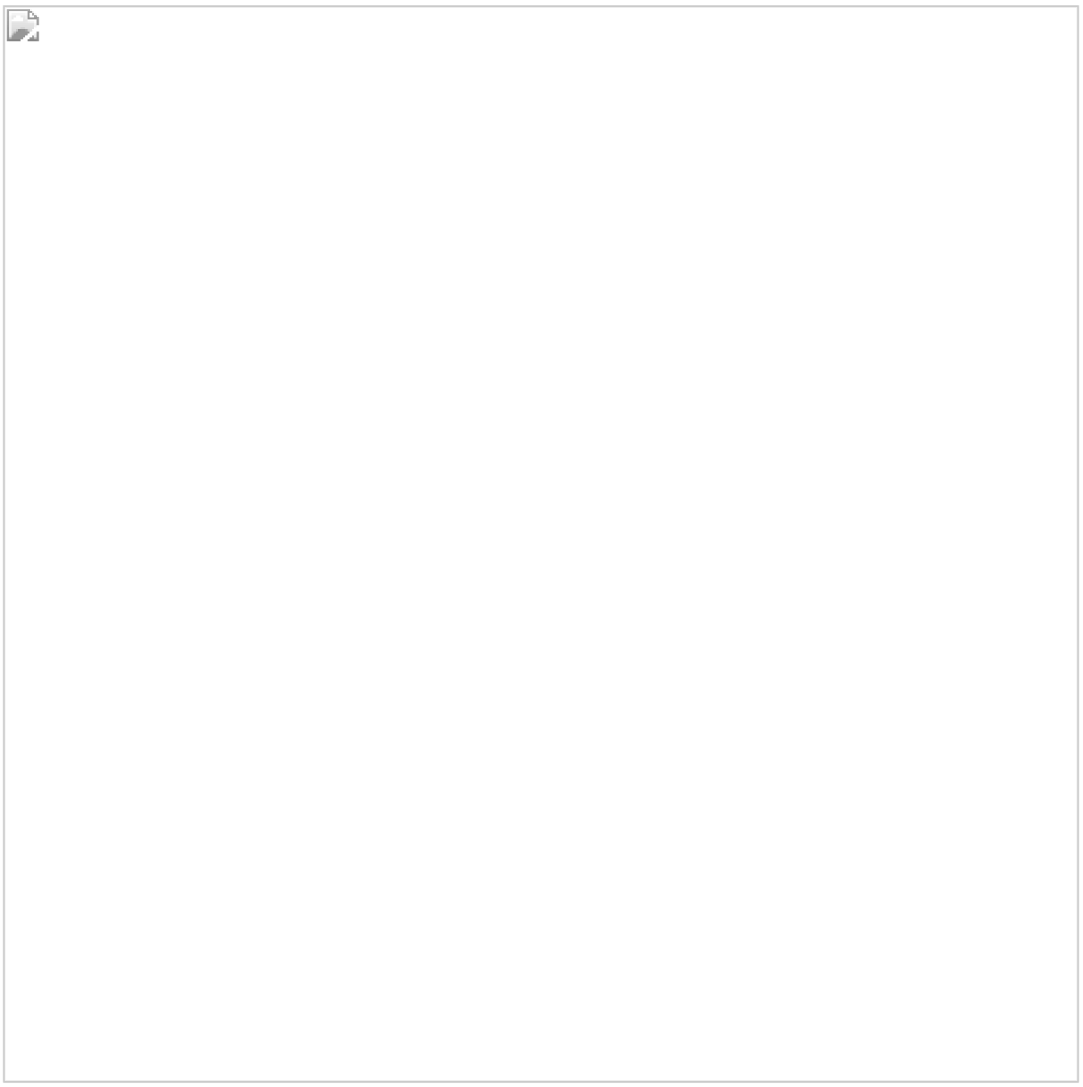
On the other bank a Water Rat sat by his front door. “Hullo, Mole!” said the Water Rat. “Hullo, Rat!” said the Mole. “Would you like to come over?”

Rat pulled out a little boat and Mole climbed in. Rat rowed and Mole watched the river go by. “Believe me, my young friend,” said Rat, “there is nothing—absolute nothing—half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.”

TALK ABOUT IT

What is the nicest thing you have ever done on or near water? Why do you think Rat loved boats so much?

Mole Meets Ratty · another picture



Think about it

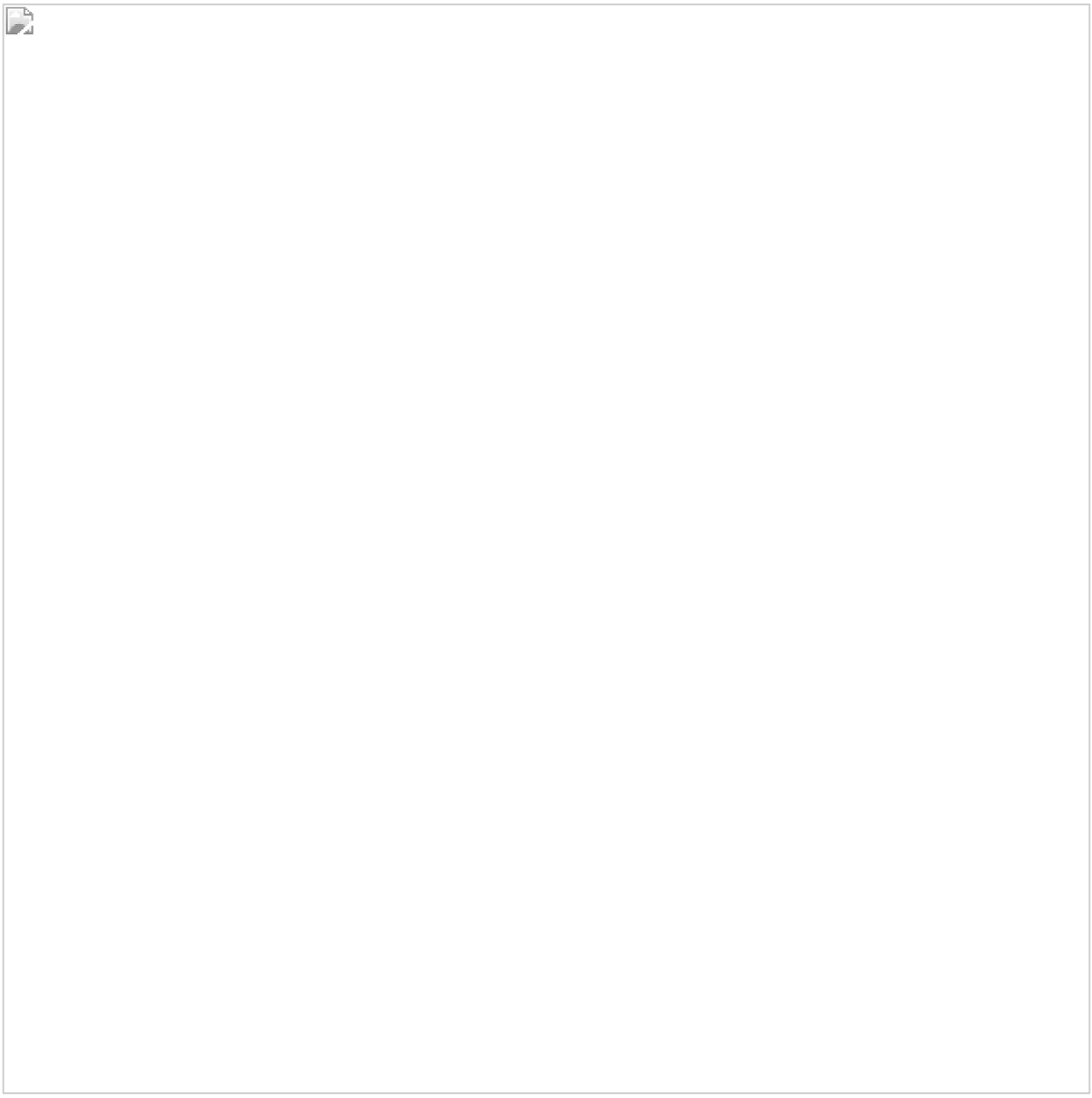
1. Who did Mole meet at the river?

- ○ A Water Rat
- ○ A Badger
- ○ A Toad

2. What did Rat say was the best thing to do?

- ○ Messing about in boats
- ○ Cleaning the house
- ○ Sleeping all day

The Picnic Basket



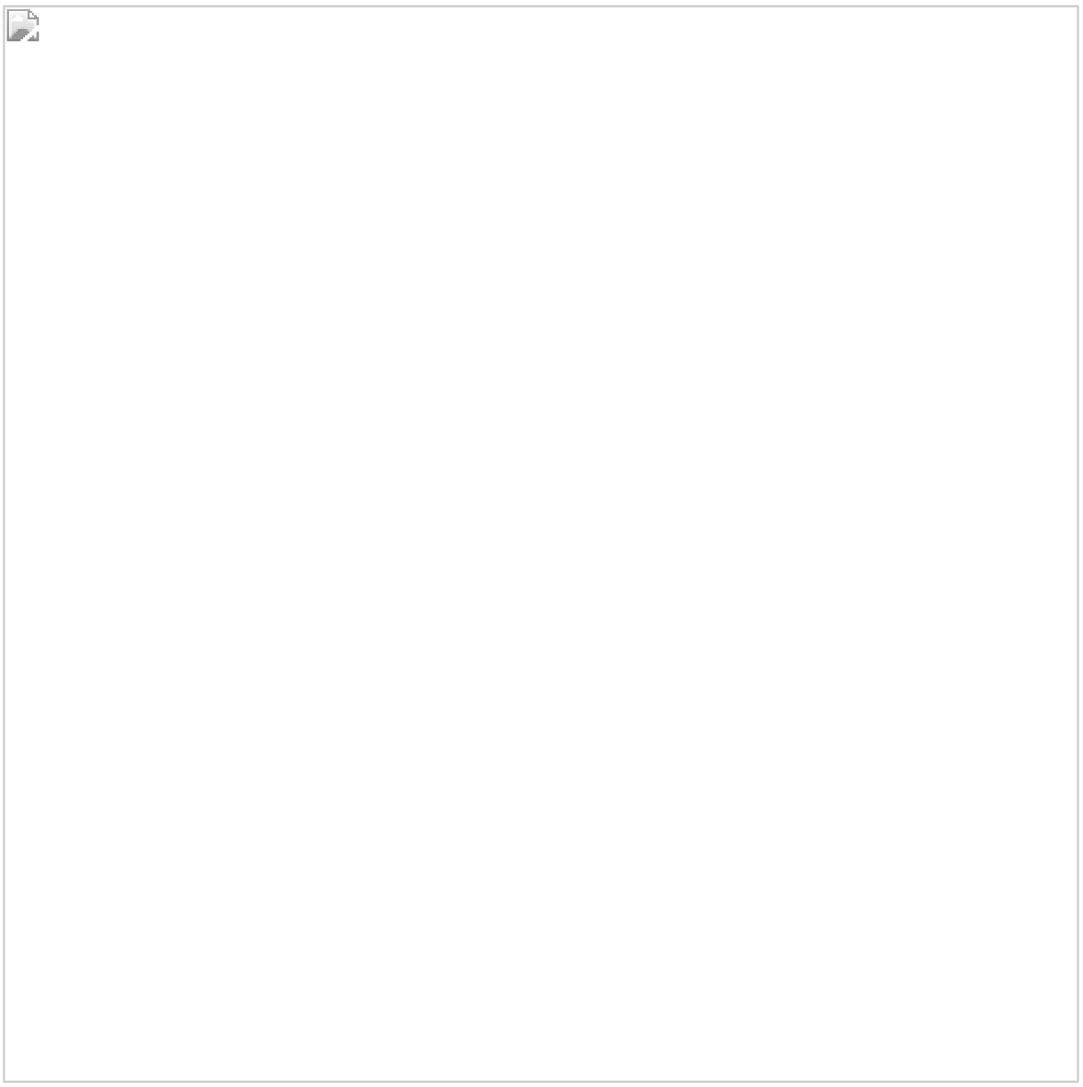
Rat said it was a fine day for a picnic, and he packed a big wicker basket. Mole could hardly sit still.

He wanted to know what was inside, and he looked at the basket again and again. At last he could not help himself. “O my! O my! O my!” he said.

Rat had packed cold chicken and a great many other good things. They found a shady spot on the bank and got ready to eat.

TALK ABOUT IT

What would you put in a picnic basket? Where is the best place you have ever had a picnic?



Think about it

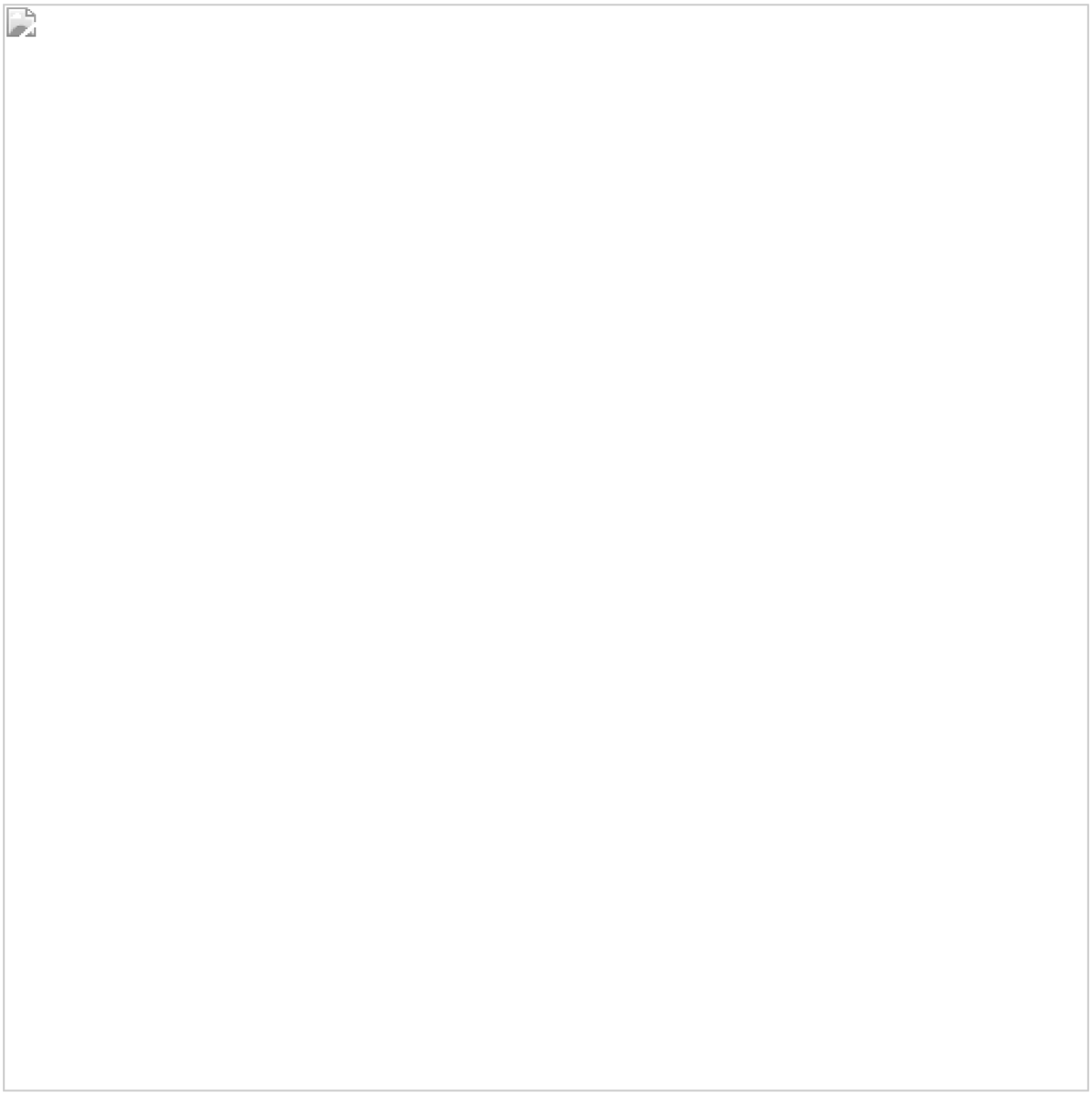
1. Where did Rat and Mole go for their picnic?

- ○ Along the river
- ○ Up a mountain
- ○ Into a castle

2. What did Rat pack?

- ○ A big basket of food
- ○ A tent
- ○ A fishing net

Over Went the Boat



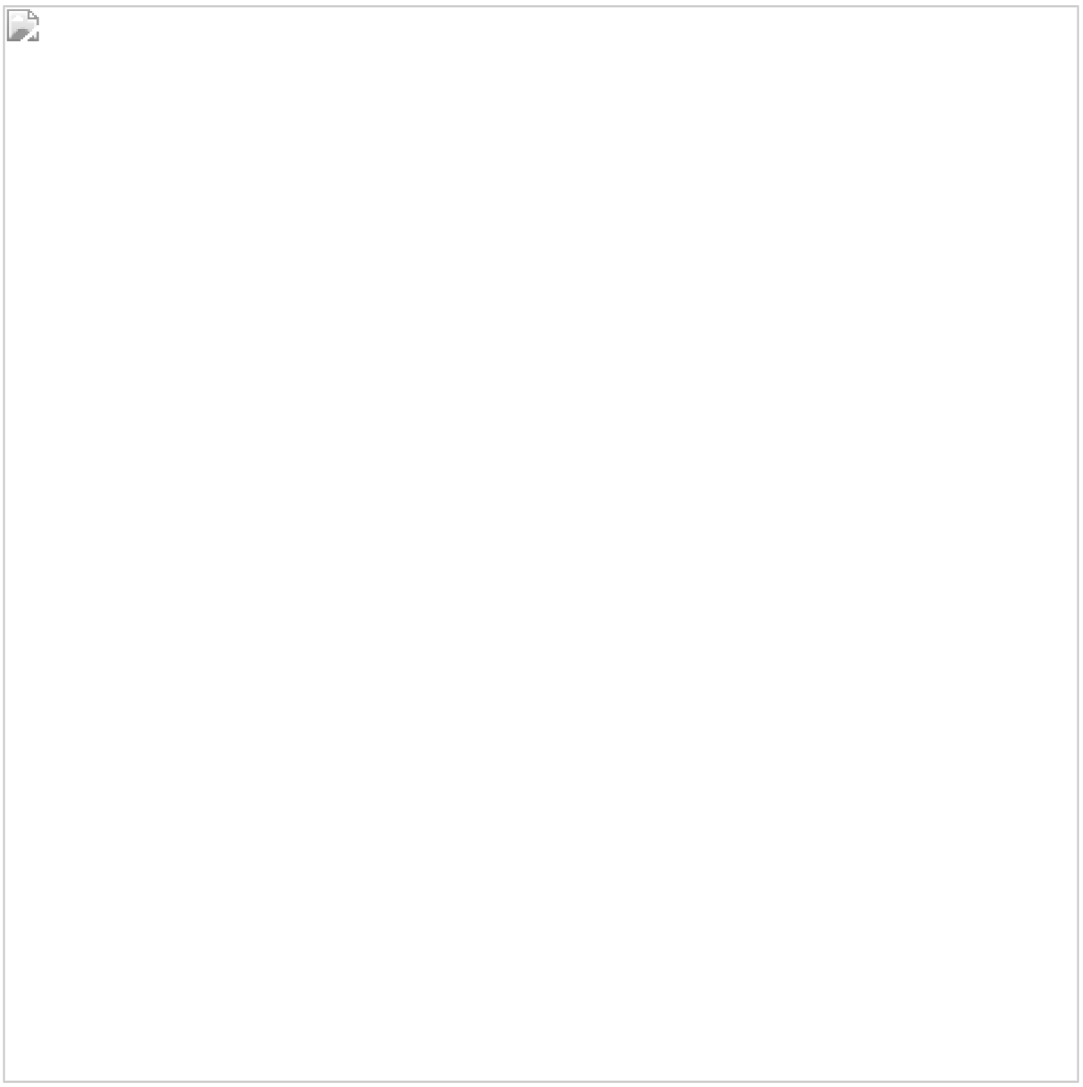
Mole had never rowed a boat, but he badly wanted a turn.

He jumped up and seized the oars. The boat rocked, and over it went, and into the river went Mole. Sploosh!

A firm paw took hold of Mole by the back of his neck. It was Rat, and he was laughing. Rat got him to shore and dived for the picnic basket. Mole was wet and sorry, but Rat only said, “That’s all right, bless you!” and “What’s a little wet to a Water Rat? I’m more in the water than out of it most days.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Have you ever tried something new and it did not go as planned? What did Rat do when Mole fell in? What would you have done?



Think about it

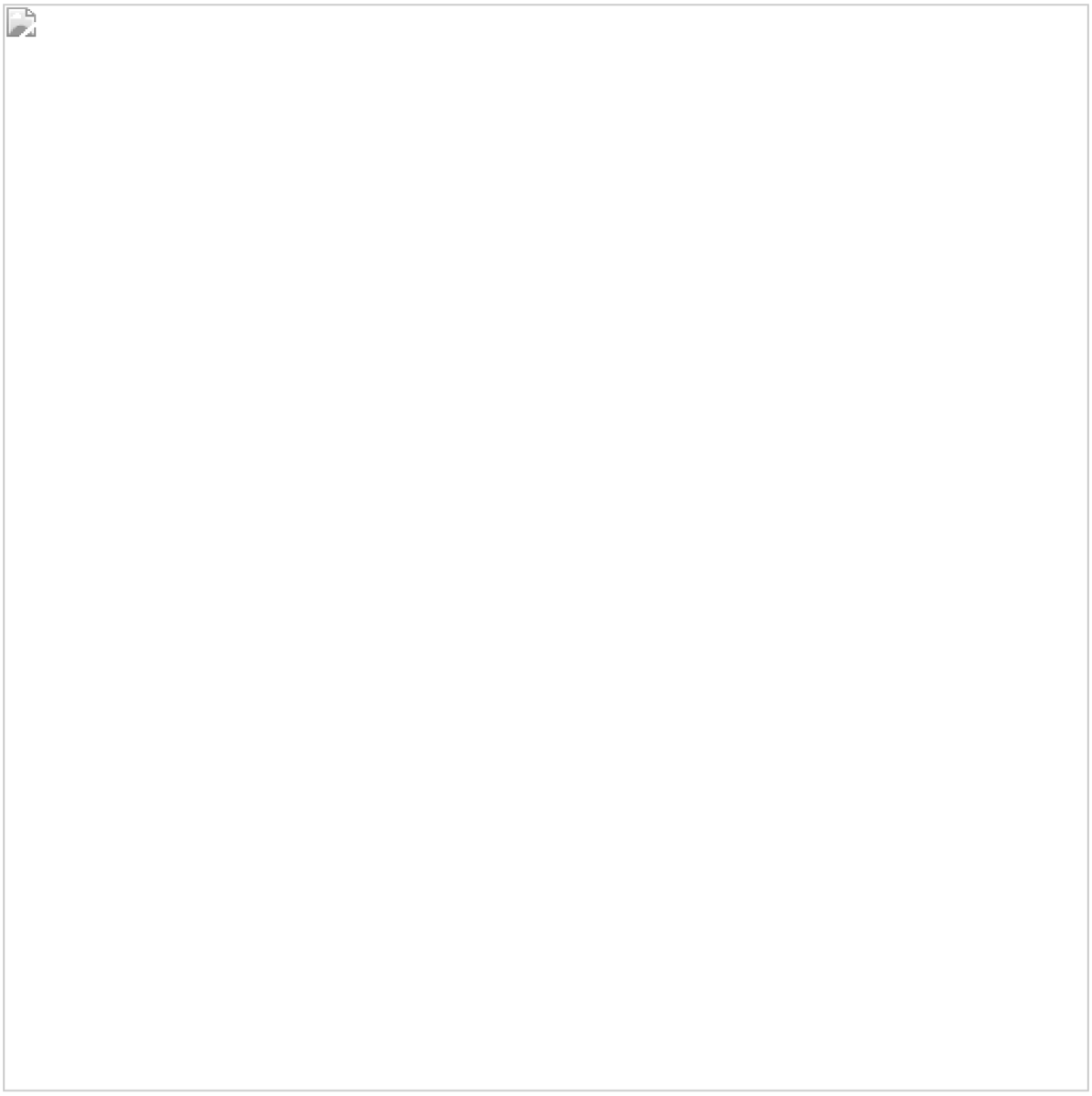
1. What happened when Mole grabbed the oars?

- ○ The boat tipped over
- ○ The boat flew
- ○ Rat fell asleep

2. How did Rat answer when Mole fell in?

- ○ He said, “That’s all right, bless you!”
- ○ He sailed away
- ○ He was cross for a week

Toad of Toad Hall



Rat took Mole to meet Mr. Toad, who lived at Toad Hall, a very fine house by the river. Toad was rich, cheerful and always full of a new idea.

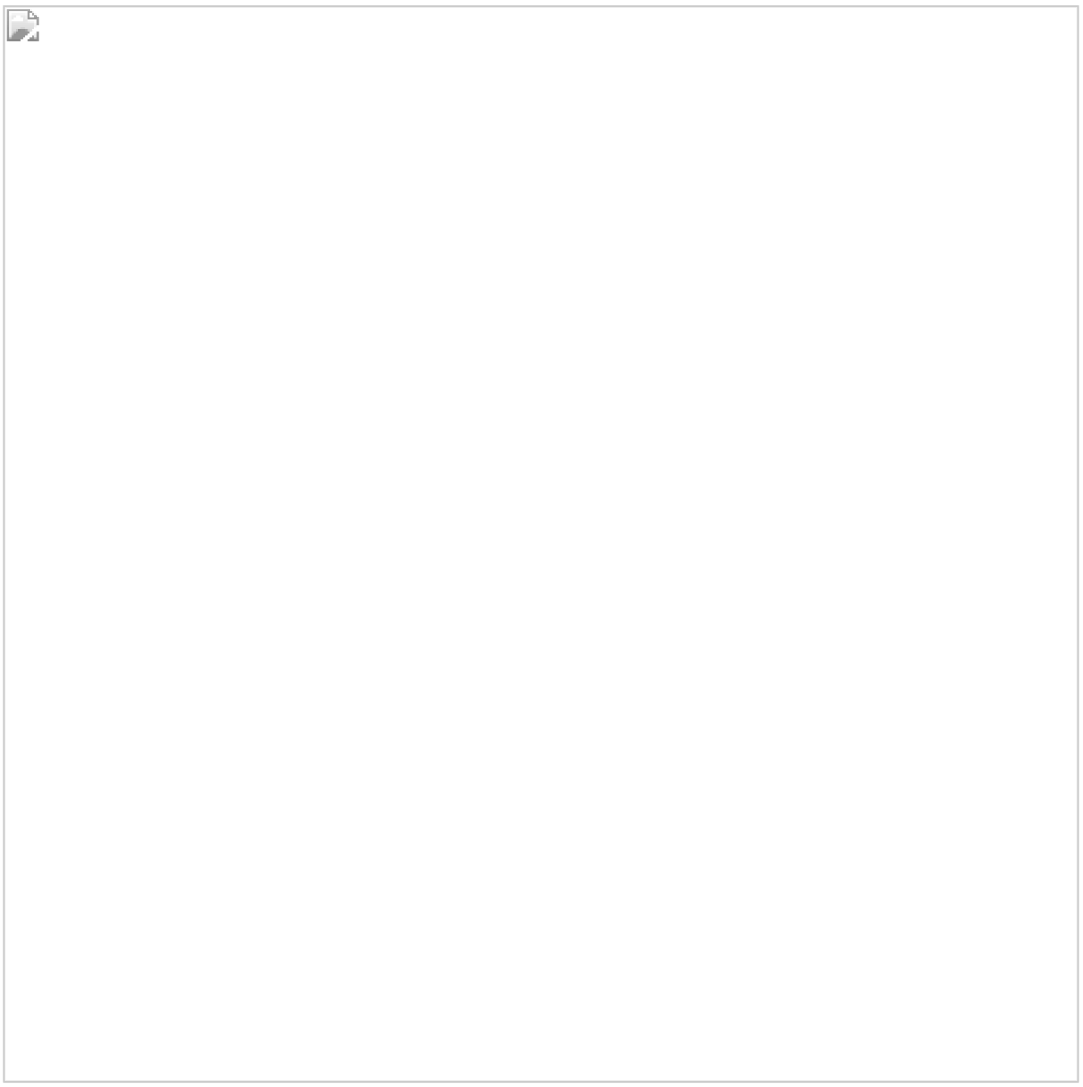
This time his idea was a caravan, painted yellow with green and red wheels. Inside were a cooking-stove, lockers, bookshelves and even a bird in a cage. Toad said they must all set off on the open road together.

Rat did not want to go at first. But Toad talked so brightly that in the end Rat and Mole agreed.

TALK ABOUT IT

What would you take if you could travel in a yellow caravan? Toad always has a new idea. What kind of idea would you have?

Toad of Toad Hall · another picture



Think about it

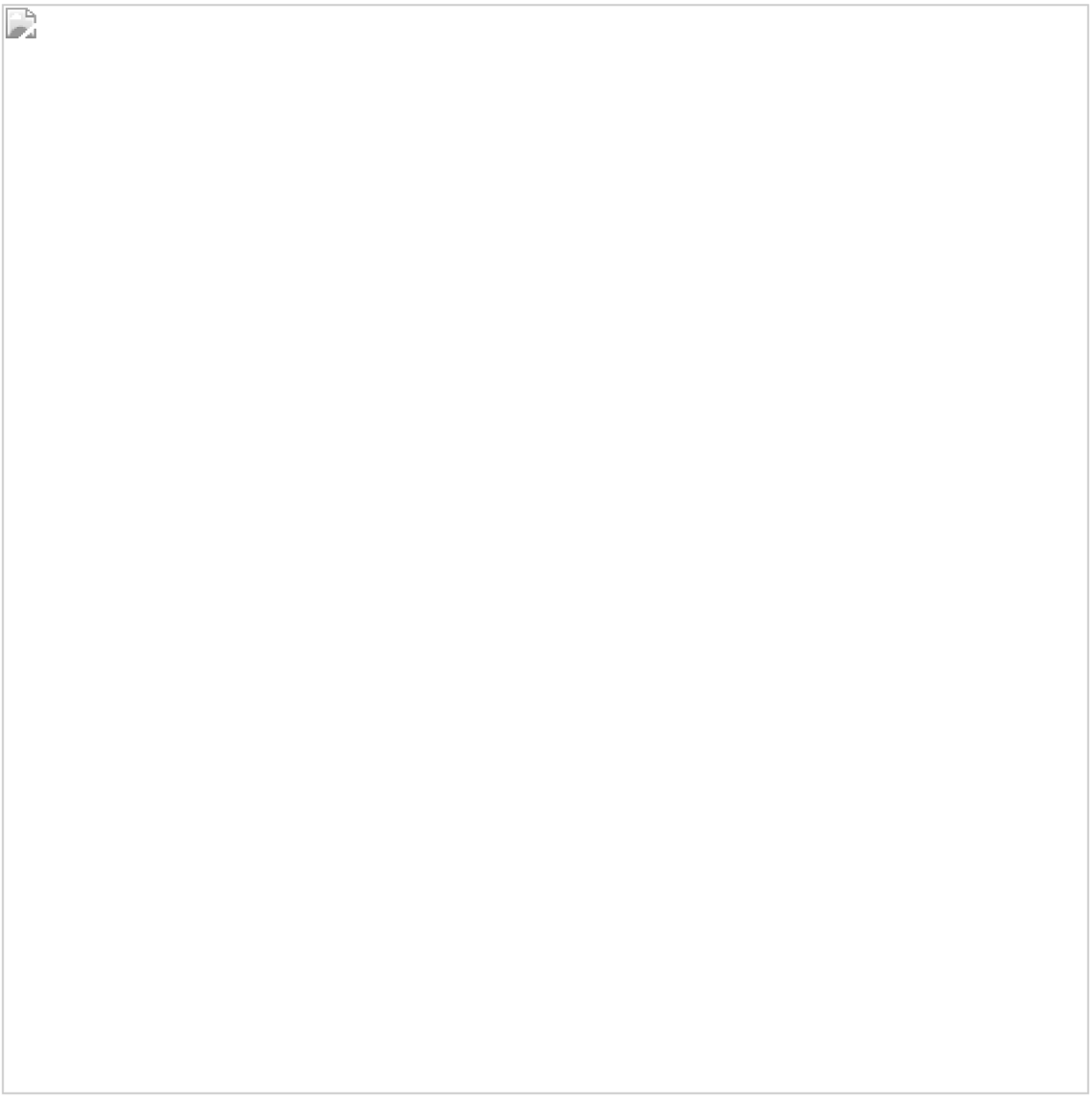
1. What did Toad want to travel in?

- ○ A yellow caravan
- ○ A hot air balloon
- ○ A rowing boat

2. Where did Toad live?

- ○ Toad Hall
- ○ A burrow
- ○ A hollow tree

Poop-Poop!



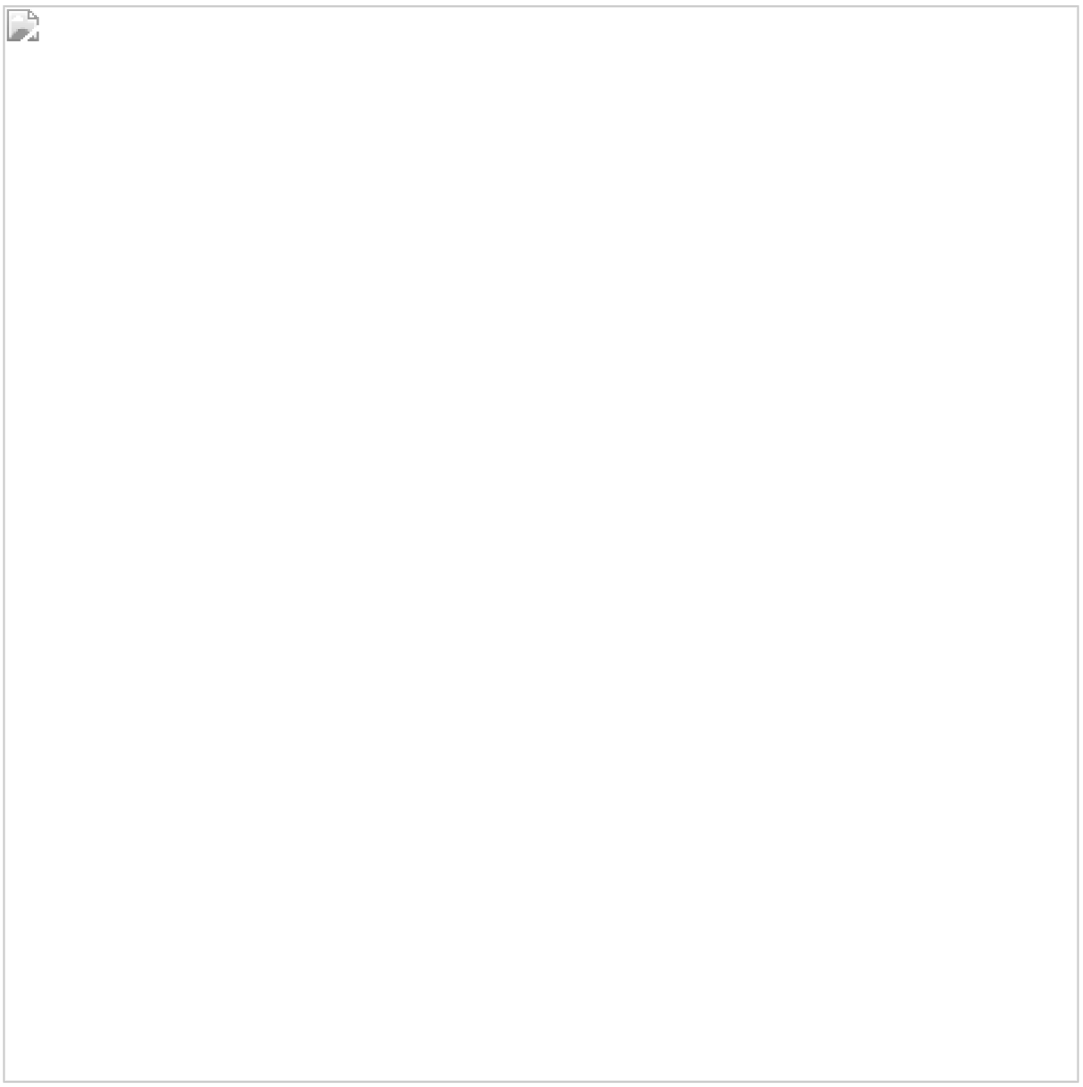
The friends were walking down the dusty road when a noise came from behind. “Poop-poop!” A motor-car roared past in a cloud of dust, and the horse was frightened. The caravan tumbled into a ditch.

Rat was cross, but Toad sat in the middle of the road and gazed after the car. “The poetry of motion!” he said.

Toad had forgotten all about the caravan. He sat there murmuring, “O bliss! O poop-poop! O my! O my!” He wanted a motor-car of his own more than anything.

TALK ABOUT IT

Toad forgot about everything else. Has anything ever made you do that? What sound would your favorite machine make?



Think about it

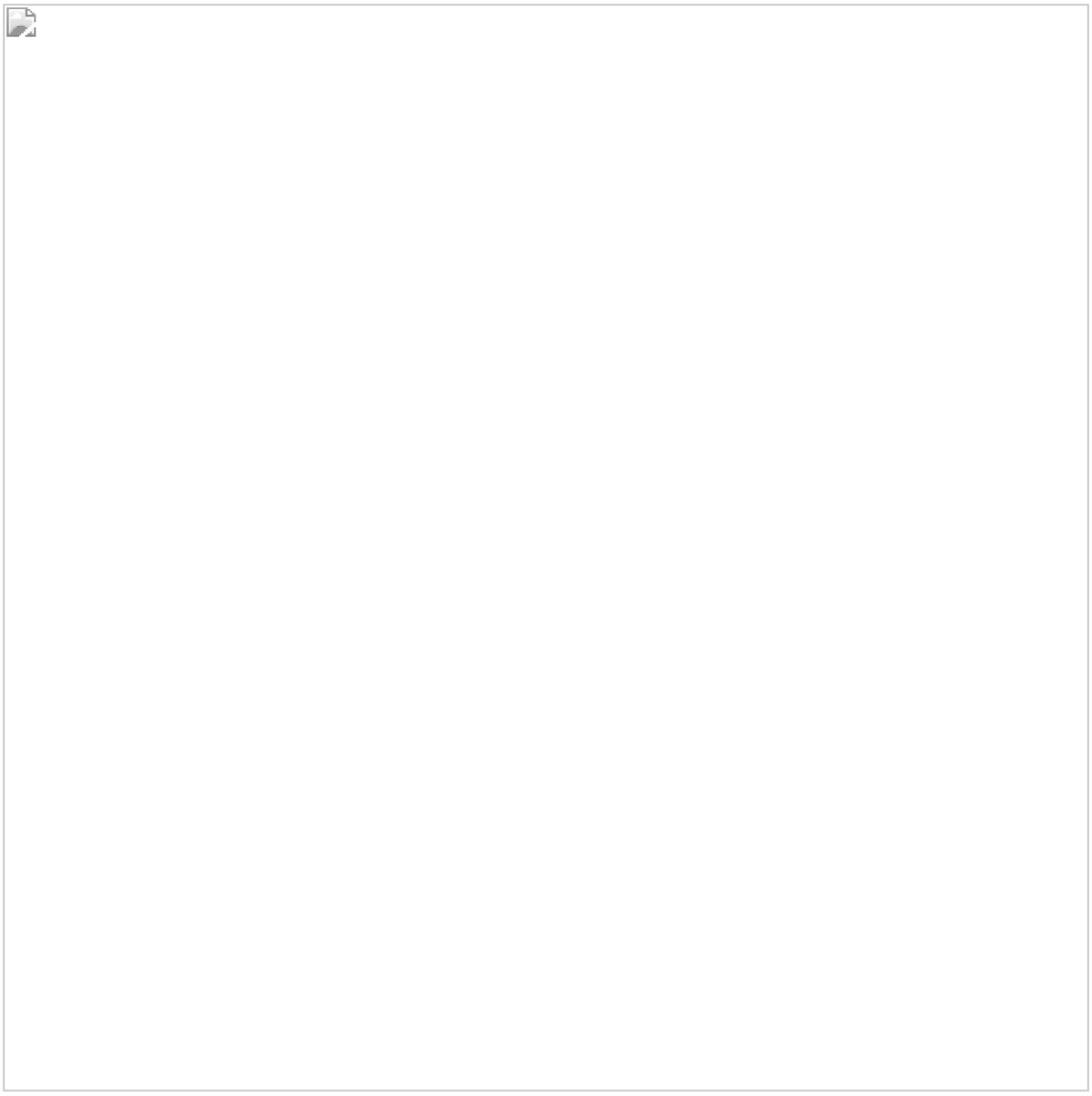
1. What sound did the motor-car make?

- ○ Poop-poop!
- ○ Quack-quack!
- ○ Ding-dong!

2. What happened to the caravan?

- ○ It ended up in a ditch
- ○ It flew away
- ○ It sailed down the river

The Wild Wood



Winter came. Rat dozed by the fire, and Mole slipped out alone. He wanted to see the Wild Wood, a place Rat had said was best left alone.

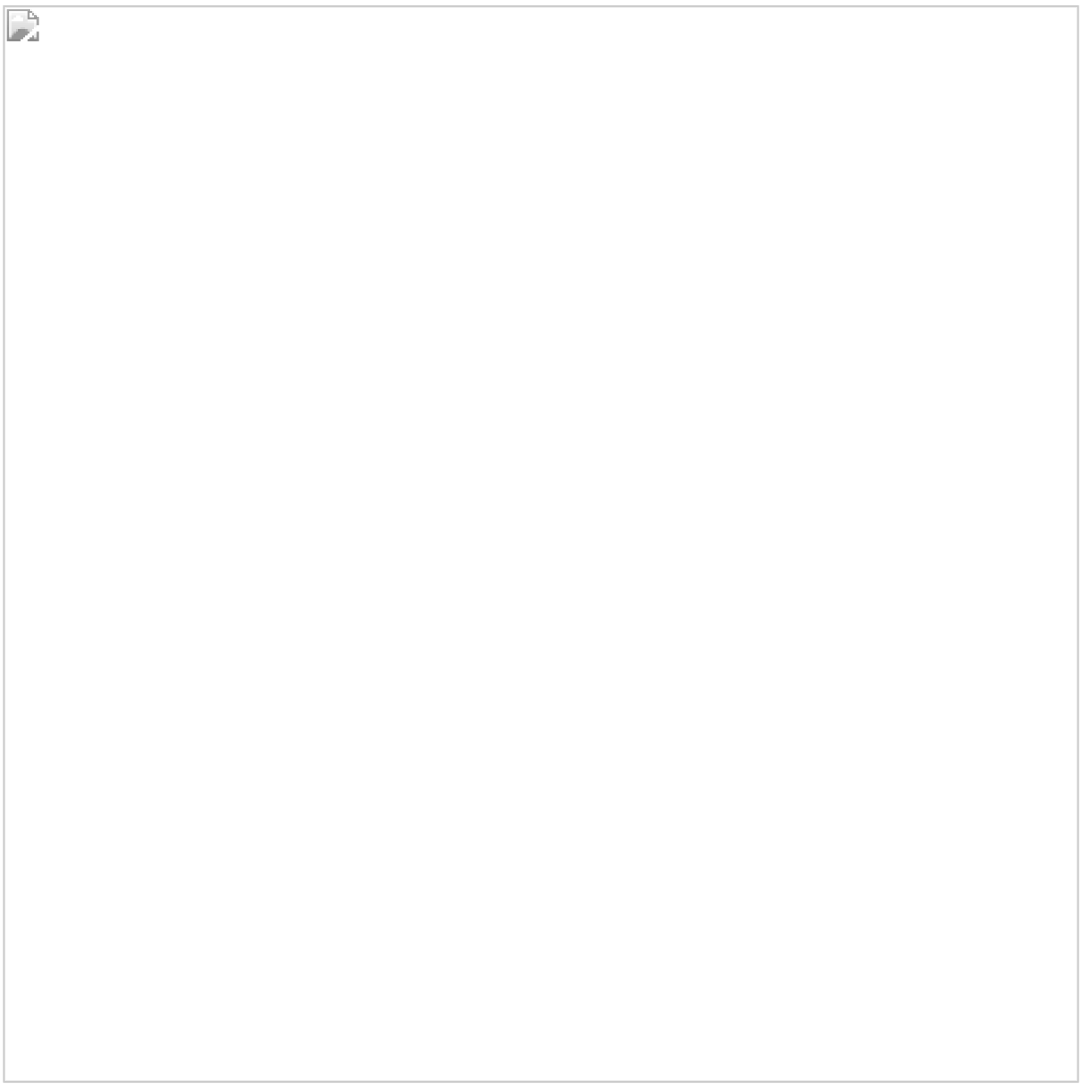
At first it was only dark trees. Then the faces began. Then the whistling began. Then the pattering began. Mole grew frightened and ran, and a rabbit rushed past him muttering, “Get out of this, you fool, get out!”

Mole found a hollow under an old beech tree. He crept inside, out of breath, and stayed very still.

TALK ABOUT IT

Mole was told to stay out of the Wild Wood. What do you think of what he did? What would you do if you were lost in a dark wood?

The Wild Wood · another picture



Think about it

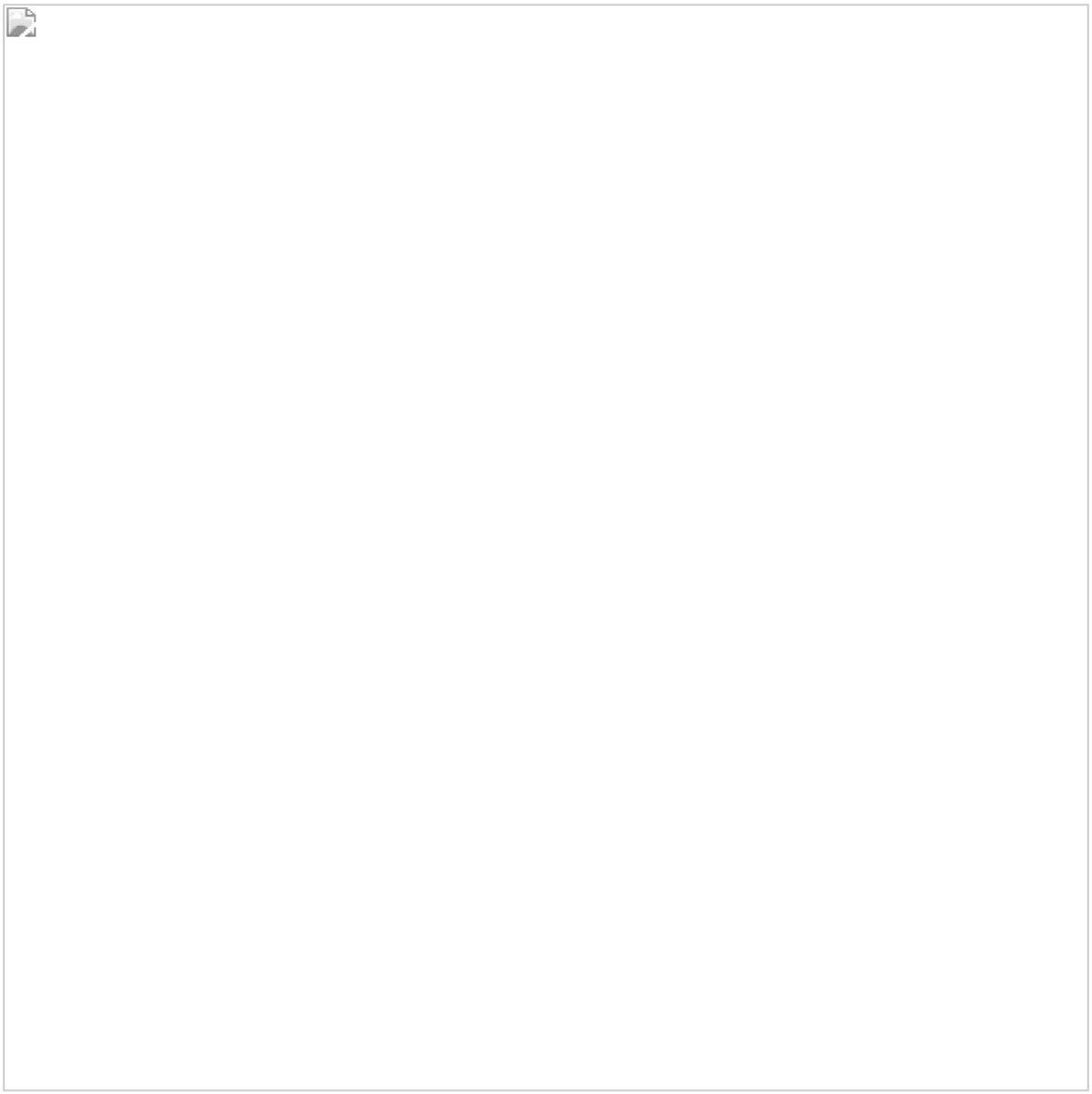
1. Where did Mole go alone?

- ○ Into the Wild Wood
- ○ To the sea
- ○ To Toad Hall

2. Where did Mole hide?

- ○ In a hollow beech tree
- ○ Up a tall pine
- ○ Behind a rock

Ratty Finds Mole



Rat had woken up and found Mole gone. He followed the little footprints into the Wild Wood. “Moly, Moly, Moly! Where are you? It’s me—it’s old Rat!” he called.

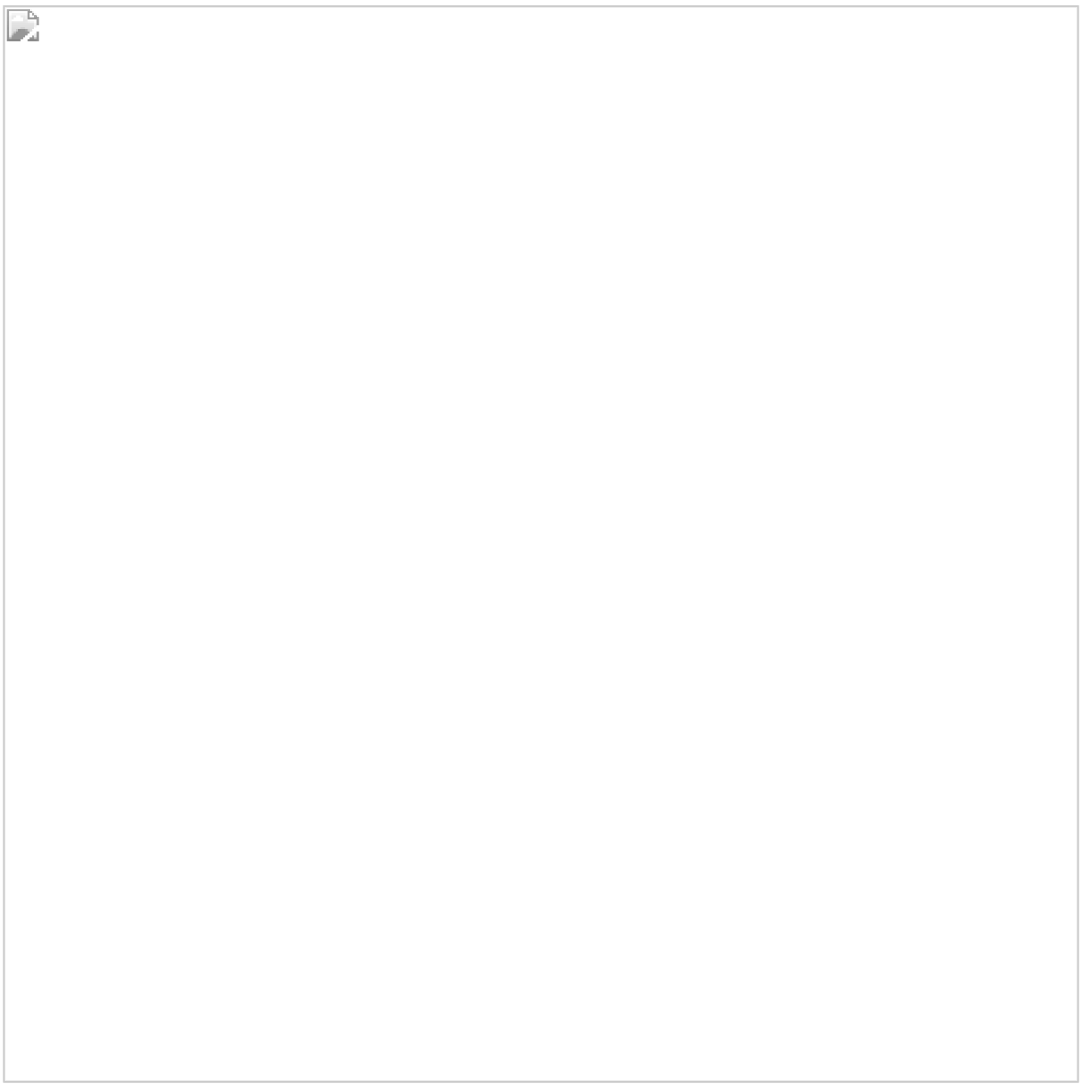
Mole came out of his hollow. “Ratty! Is that really you?” he said. Rat told him it was snowing, and that they must find the way home soon.

On the way, Mole cut his shin on something hidden in the snow. Rat dug around it and found a door-mat. Beneath the snow was a green front door, with a brass plate that said MR. BADGER.

TALK ABOUT IT

What did Rat do when he found Mole was missing? Who has come looking for you when you needed help?

Ratty Finds Mole · another picture



Think about it

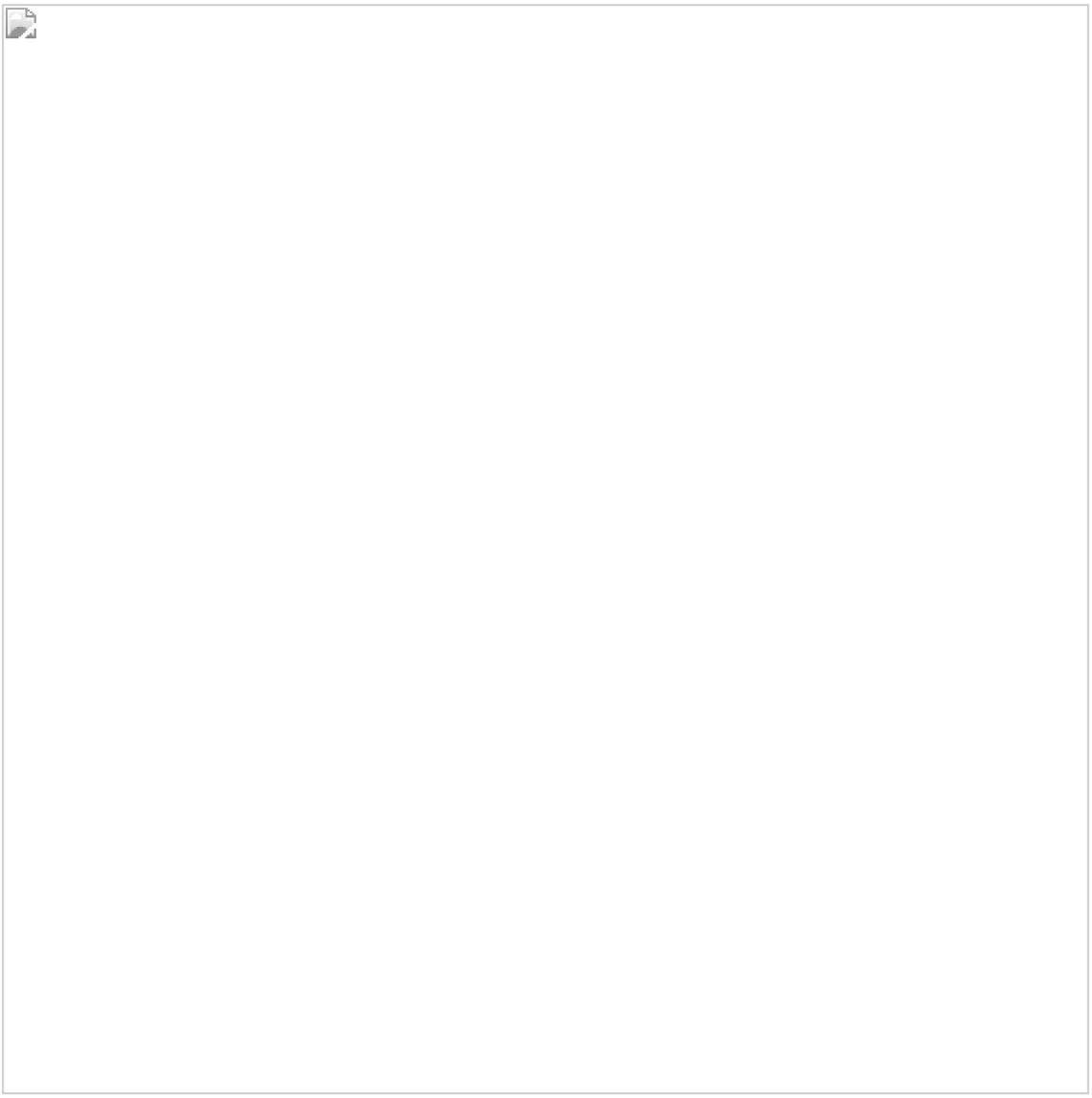
1. How did Rat find Mole?

- ○ He followed the footprints
- ○ He asked a bird
- ○ He flew above the trees

2. Whose name was on the brass plate?

- ○ Mr. Badger
- ○ Mr. Toad
- ○ Mr. Otter

Badger's House



Rat rang the bell and knocked. At last the door opened, and there stood Badger in a long dressing-gown and slippers.

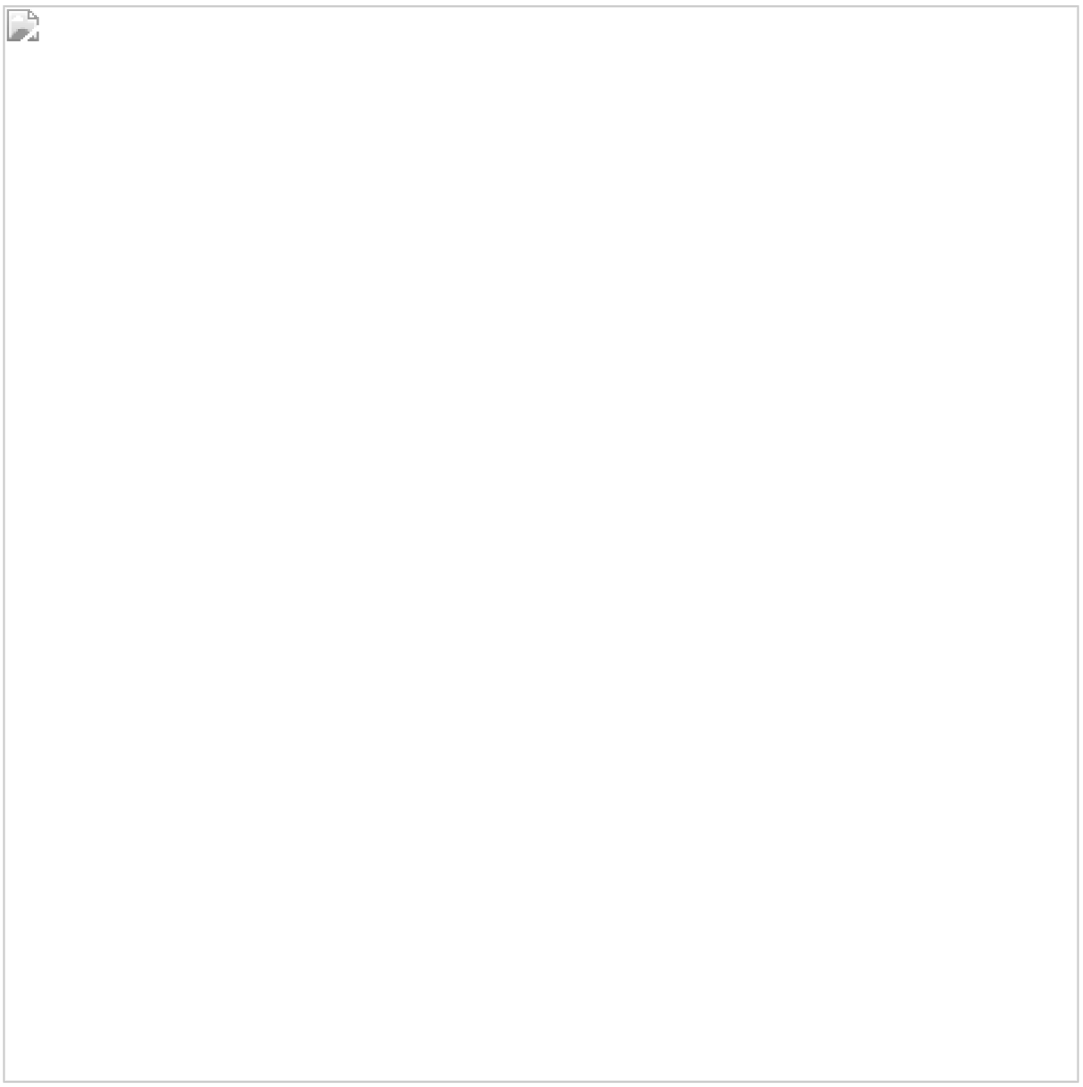
Badger said, "Come along in, both of you, at once." He took them into a big warm kitchen with a first-rate fire. He found them dry things and bathed Mole's shin.

Then they all had supper. Badger did not mind about elbows on the table or talking with your mouth full. He listened to their story, and he never said, "I told you so," or scolded them.

TALK ABOUT IT

What is the cosiest place you know on a cold night? Badger did not scold them. What do you think about that?

Badger's House · another picture



Think about it

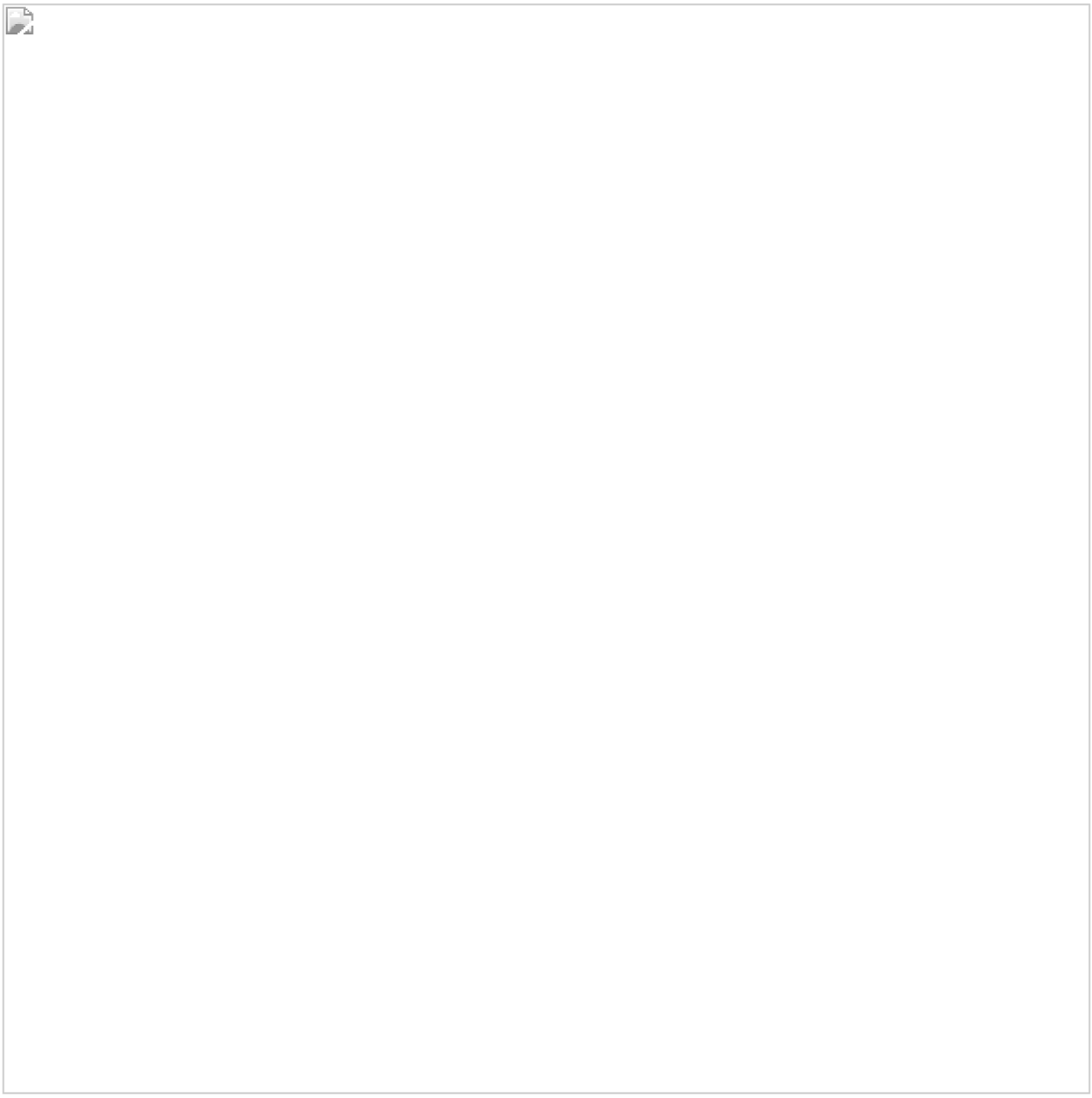
1. How did Badger welcome Rat and Mole?

- ○ He brought them in at once
- ○ He sent them away
- ○ He did not answer

2. What did Badger do for Mole's shin?

- ○ He bathed it and mended it
- ○ He ignored it
- ○ He wrapped it in snow

Mole Smells Home



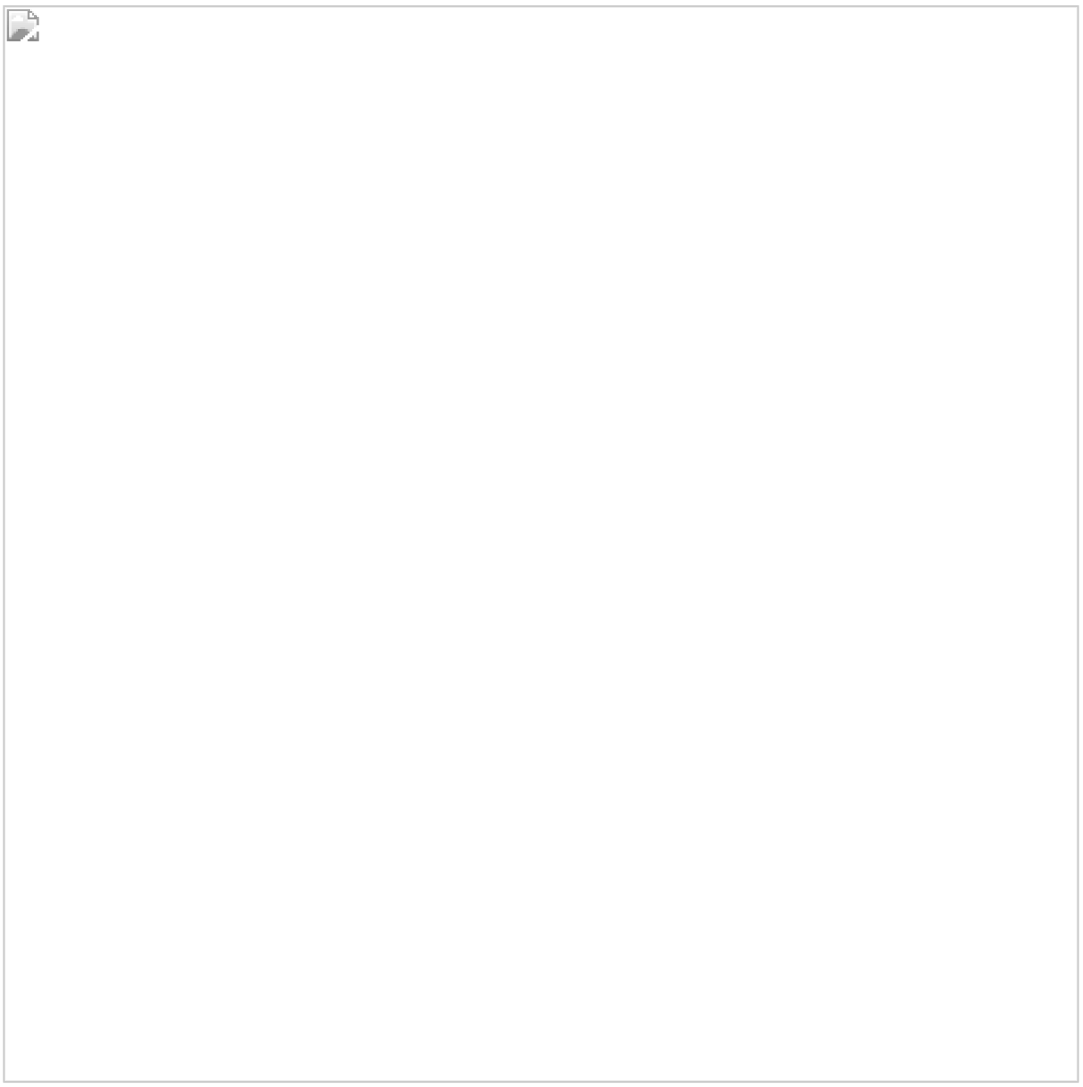
Later, in mid-December, Rat and Mole were walking back to the river after dark. They passed the lighted windows of a village and then took a quiet road.

Suddenly Mole stopped. A smell had reached his nose. “You don’t understand! It’s my home, my old home!” he told Rat, and the tears ran down his face.

Rat had been in a hurry to go on. Now he turned back. “We’re going to find that home of yours, old fellow,” he said.

TALK ABOUT IT

What smells remind you of home? Rat turned back for Mole. Why do you think he did?



Think about it

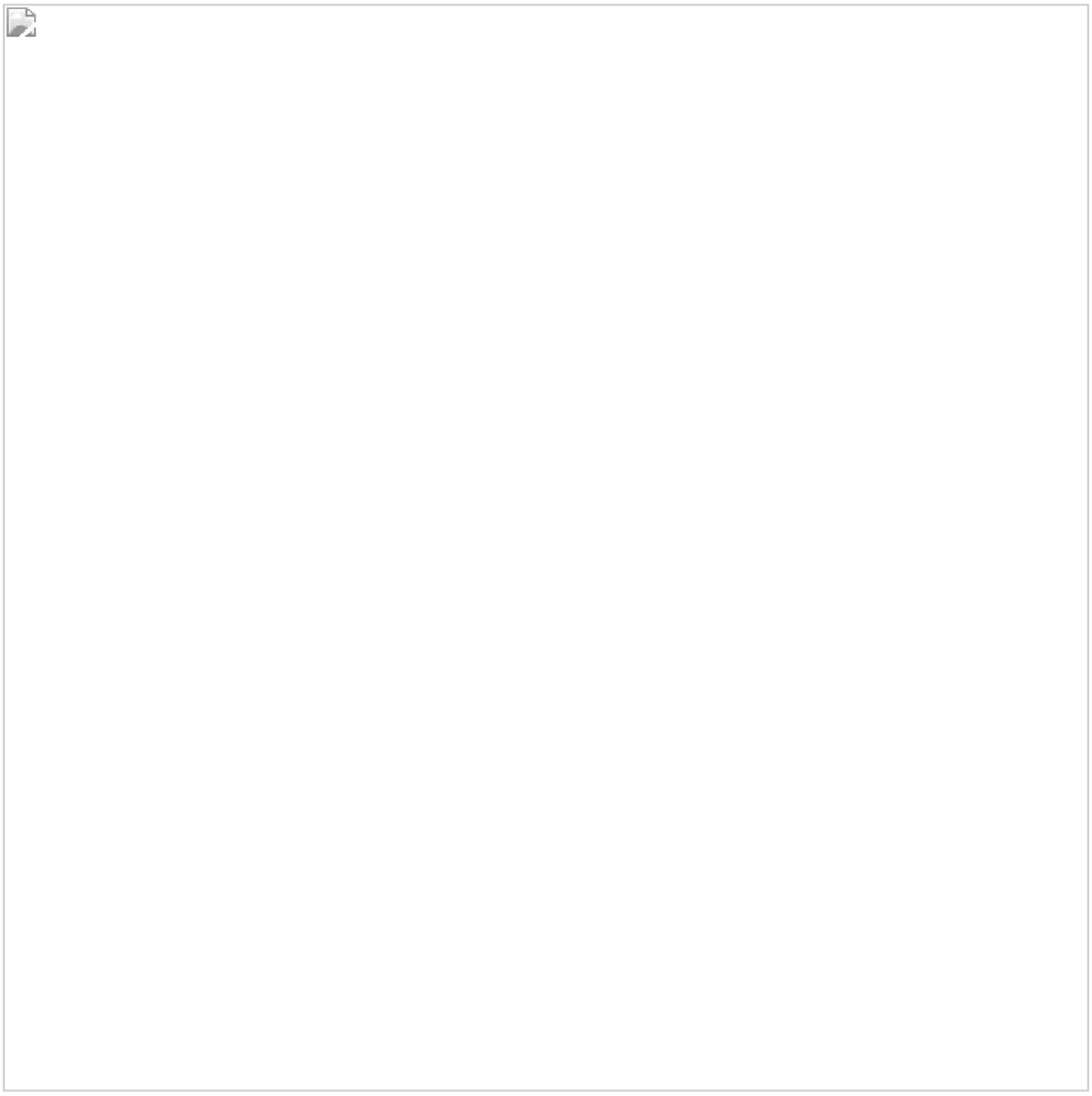
1. What did Mole notice?

- ○ The smell of his old home
- ○ A bell
- ○ A bright star

2. What did Rat decide to do?

- ○ Find Mole's old home
- ○ Keep walking
- ○ Go to sleep

The Field-Mice Sing



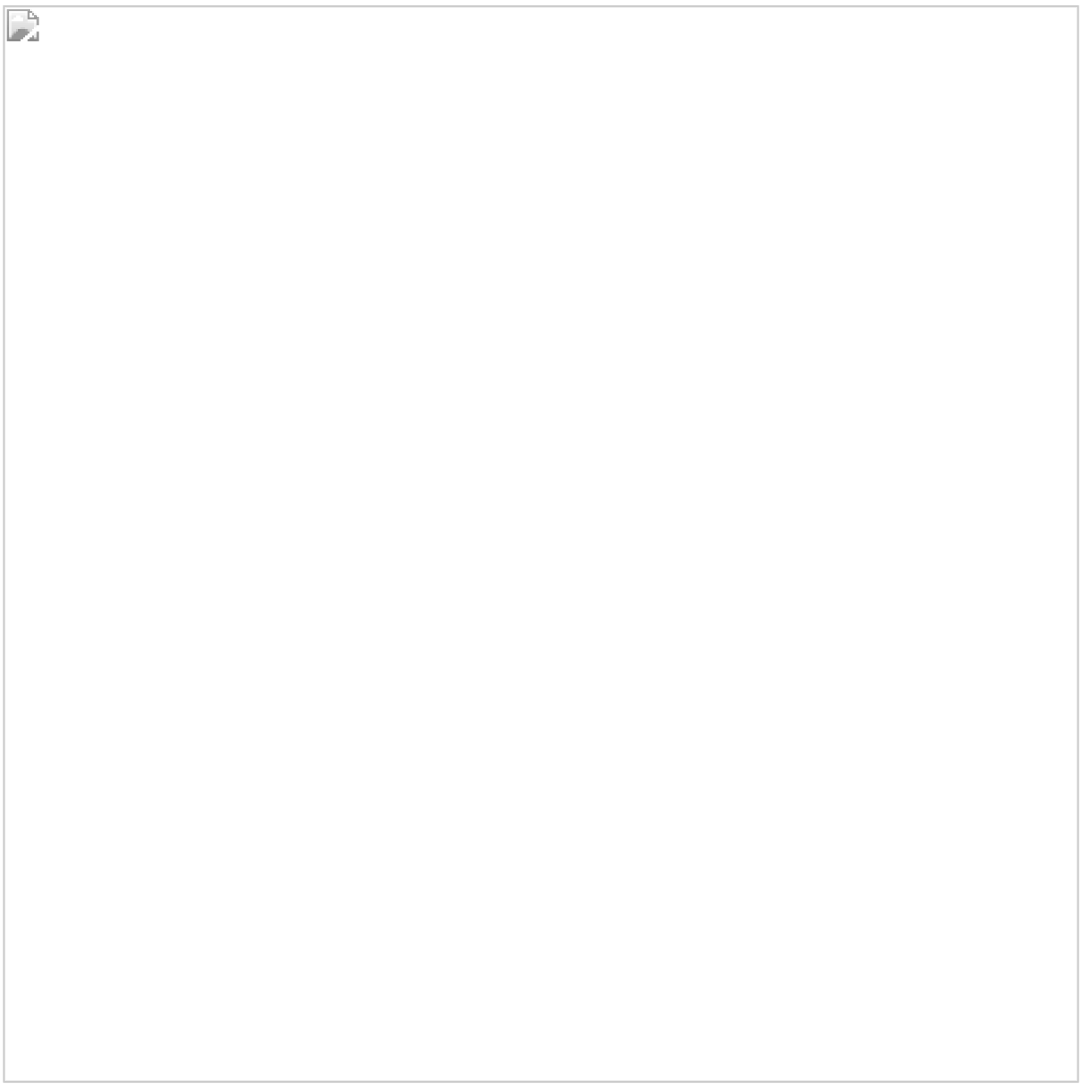
Mole's nose led them to a little door, and there was his old home, small and dusty. Rat lit the lamps. "What a capital little house this is!" he called out cheerily.

Then they heard voices outside. A crowd of field-mice stood in the snow with lanterns and red woollen scarves. They had come to sing carols.

Rat invited them in and sent a field-mouse to buy supper. "Very well sung, boys!" he said. That night Mole slept in his own bed, and he was glad to be home.

TALK ABOUT IT

Have you ever sung for other people? What was it like? Why do you think Mole's own bed was so nice?



Think about it

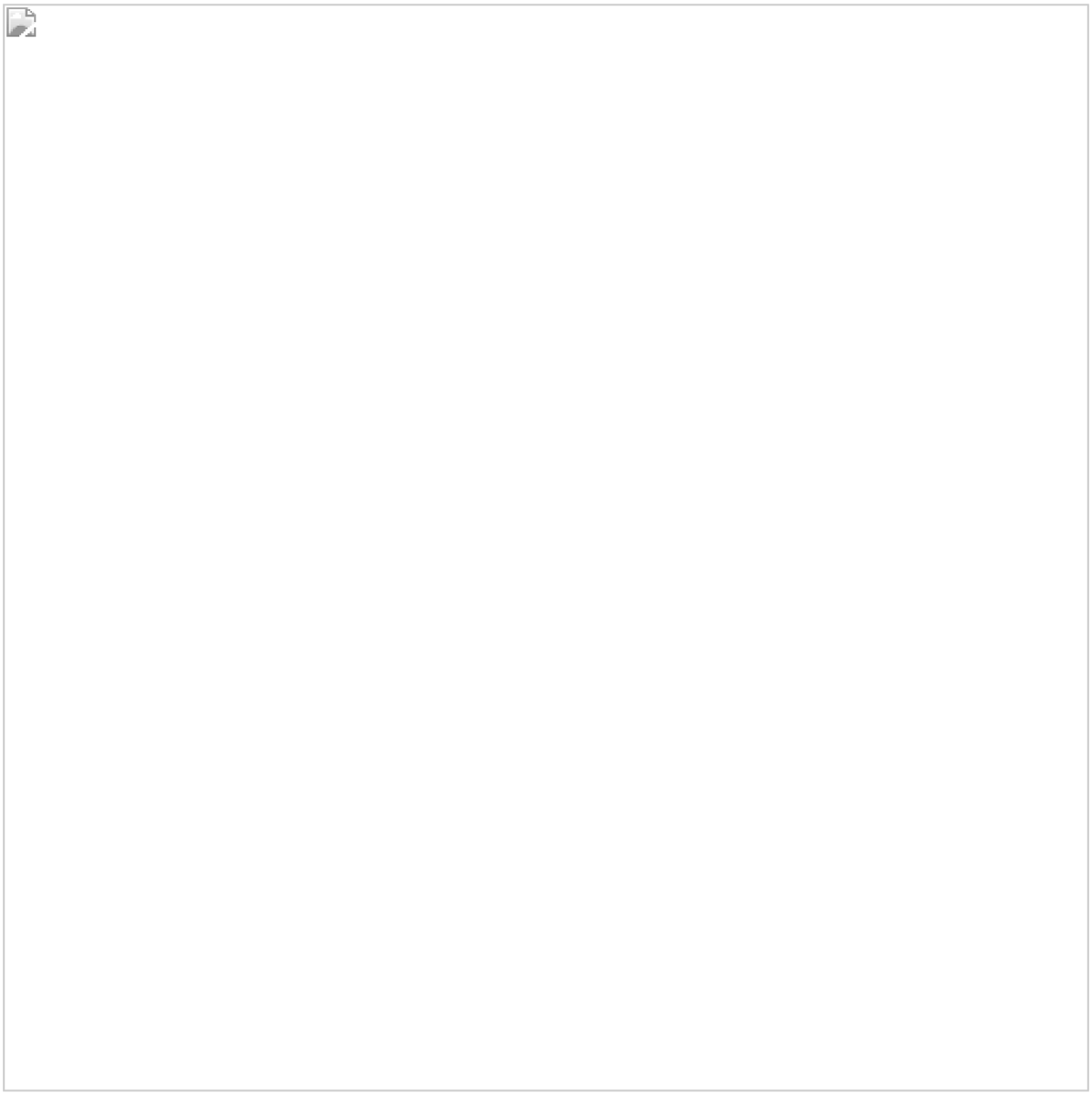
1. Who came to sing at Mole's door?

- ○ Field-mice
- ○ Rabbits
- ○ Owls

2. What did Rat say about Mole's house?

- ○ That it was a capital little house
- ○ That it was too dull to stay in
- ○ That it was too small to sit in

Toad Takes the Car



Spring came again. Badger said, “The hour has come!” And Mole cried, “Toad’s hour, of course!” Toad had crashed so many cars that his friends were worried, and they meant to stop him.

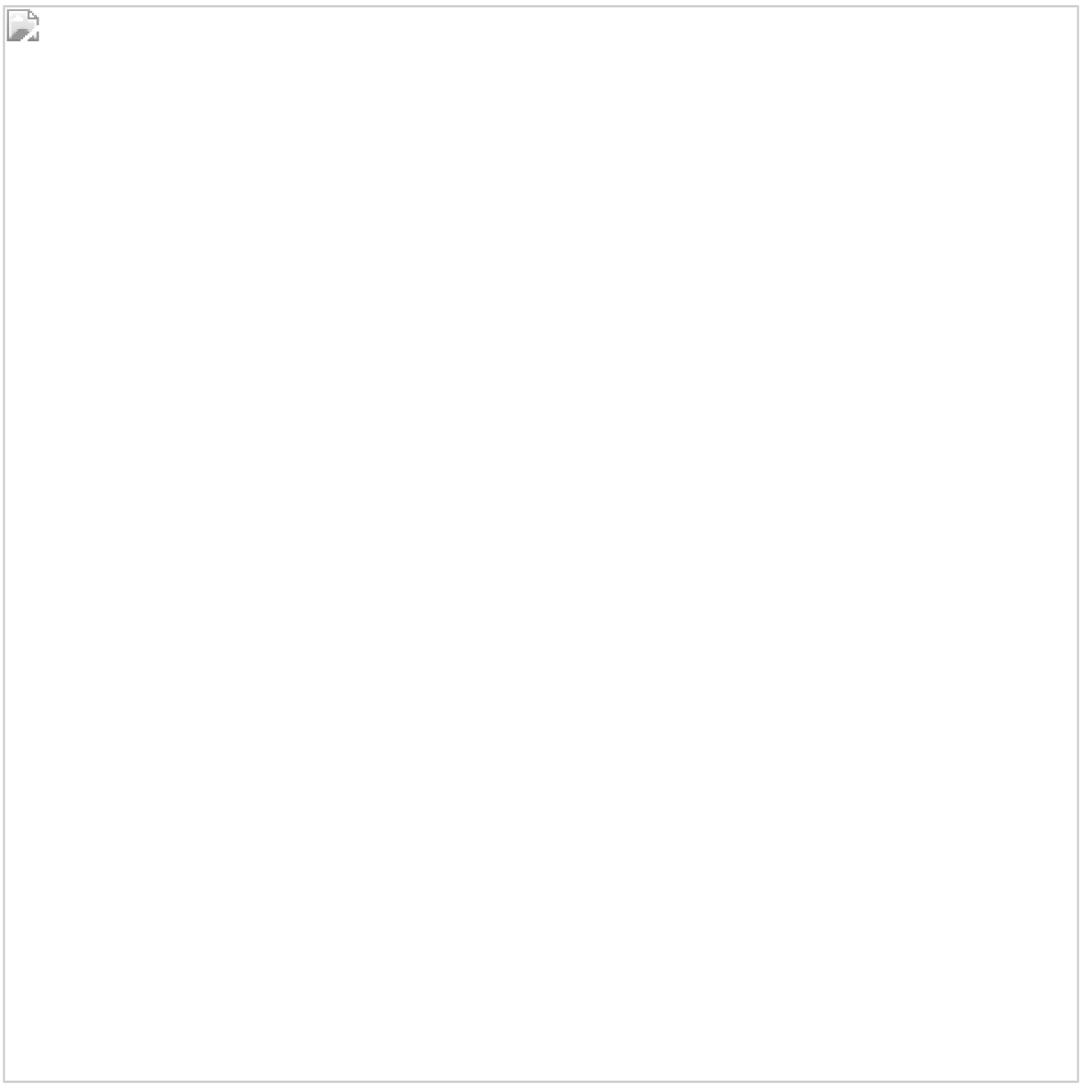
They shut Toad in his room. But he pretended to be ill and got out of the window on knotted sheets. At an inn he found a car, jumped in and drove off.

That was stealing. Toad was caught and sent to prison in a dungeon, and the judge gave him twenty years. He sat on the straw and was very sorry for himself.

TALK ABOUT IT

Toad took something that was not his. What should he have done instead? Why do you think his friends wanted to help him?

Toad Takes the Car · another picture



Think about it

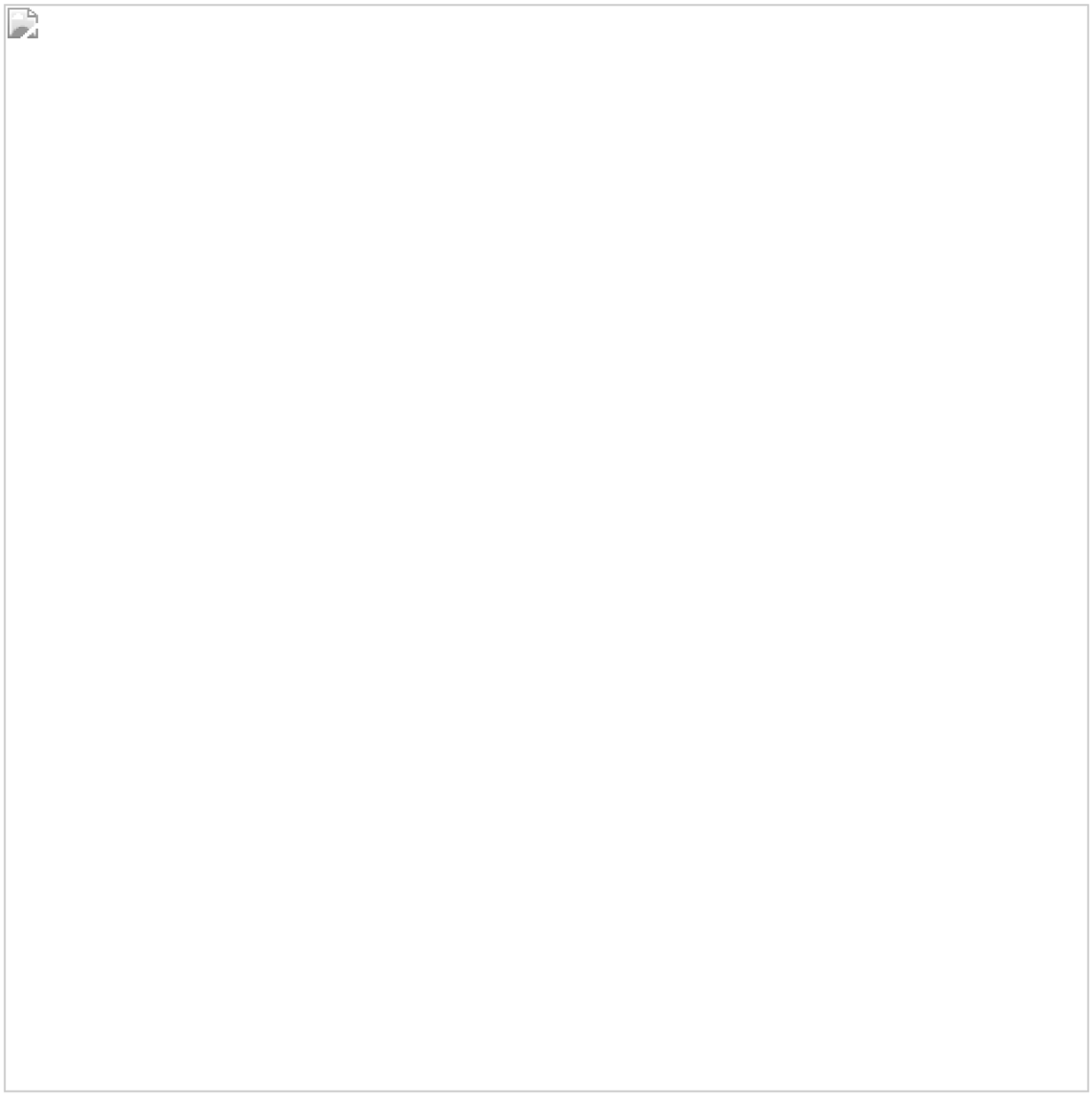
1. How did Toad get out of his room?

- ○ Down knotted sheets
- ○ Through a tunnel
- ○ On a rope of vines

2. What happened to Toad after he took the car?

- ○ He went to prison
- ○ He won a prize
- ○ He got a new house

The Washerwoman Escape



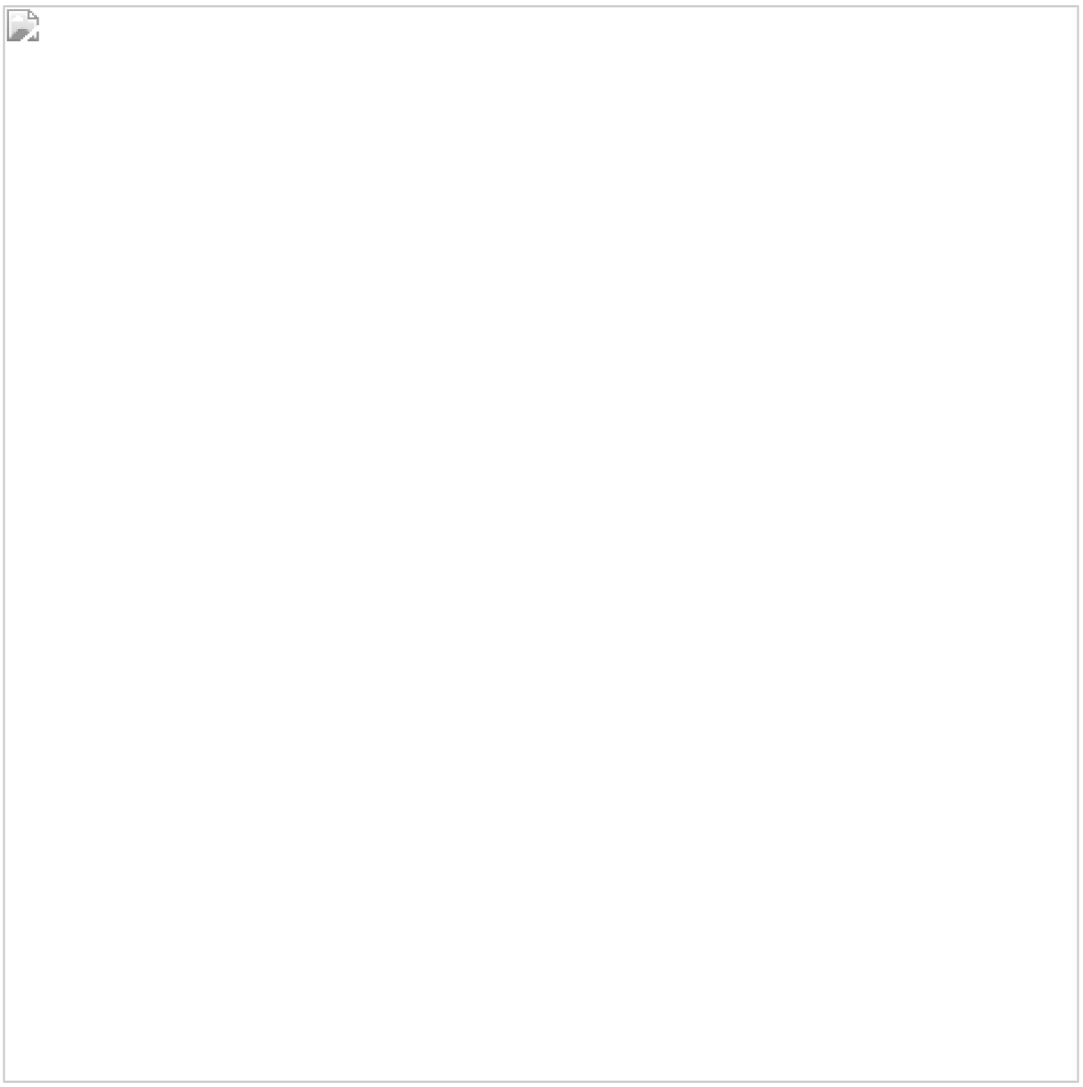
The gaoler's daughter was kind to Toad. She brought him buttered toast, and she was sorry to see him so sad.

She had an aunt who was a washerwoman. Toad paid her for a cotton print gown, an apron, a shawl and a rusty black bonnet. Dressed as a washerwoman, he walked out past the guards.

At the station Toad had no money. A kind engine-driver offered him a ride on his engine if he would wash a few shirts when he got home. Toad climbed up, and the train carried him toward Toad Hall.

TALK ABOUT IT

Toad dressed up as someone else. What would you wear in a disguise? Why do you think the gaoler's daughter helped him?



Think about it

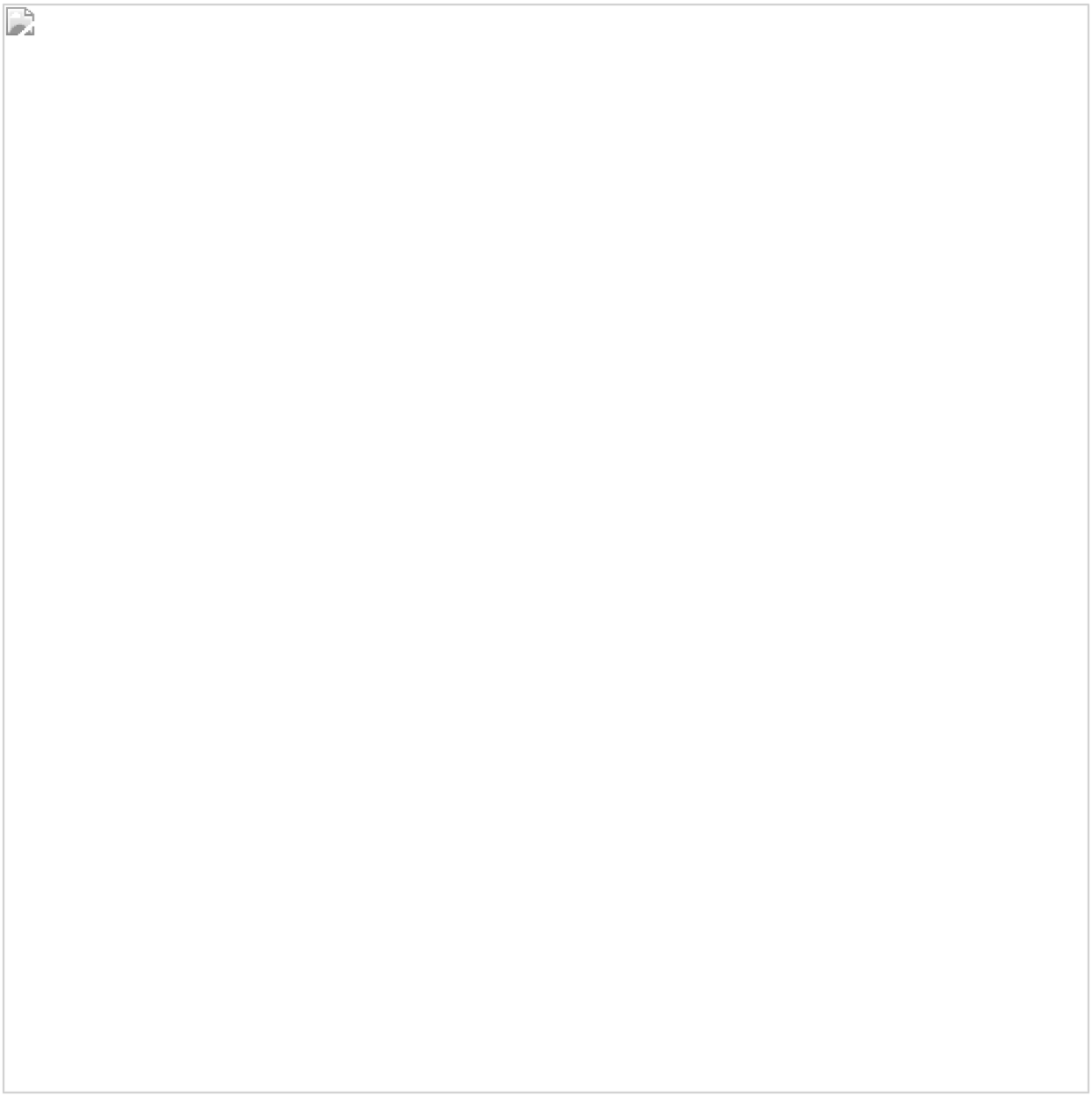
1. What did Toad wear to get away?

- ○ A washerwoman's gown and bonnet
- ○ A crown
- ○ A suit of armor

2. Who gave Toad a ride?

- ○ An engine-driver
- ○ A farmer
- ○ A fisherman

Winning Back Toad Hall



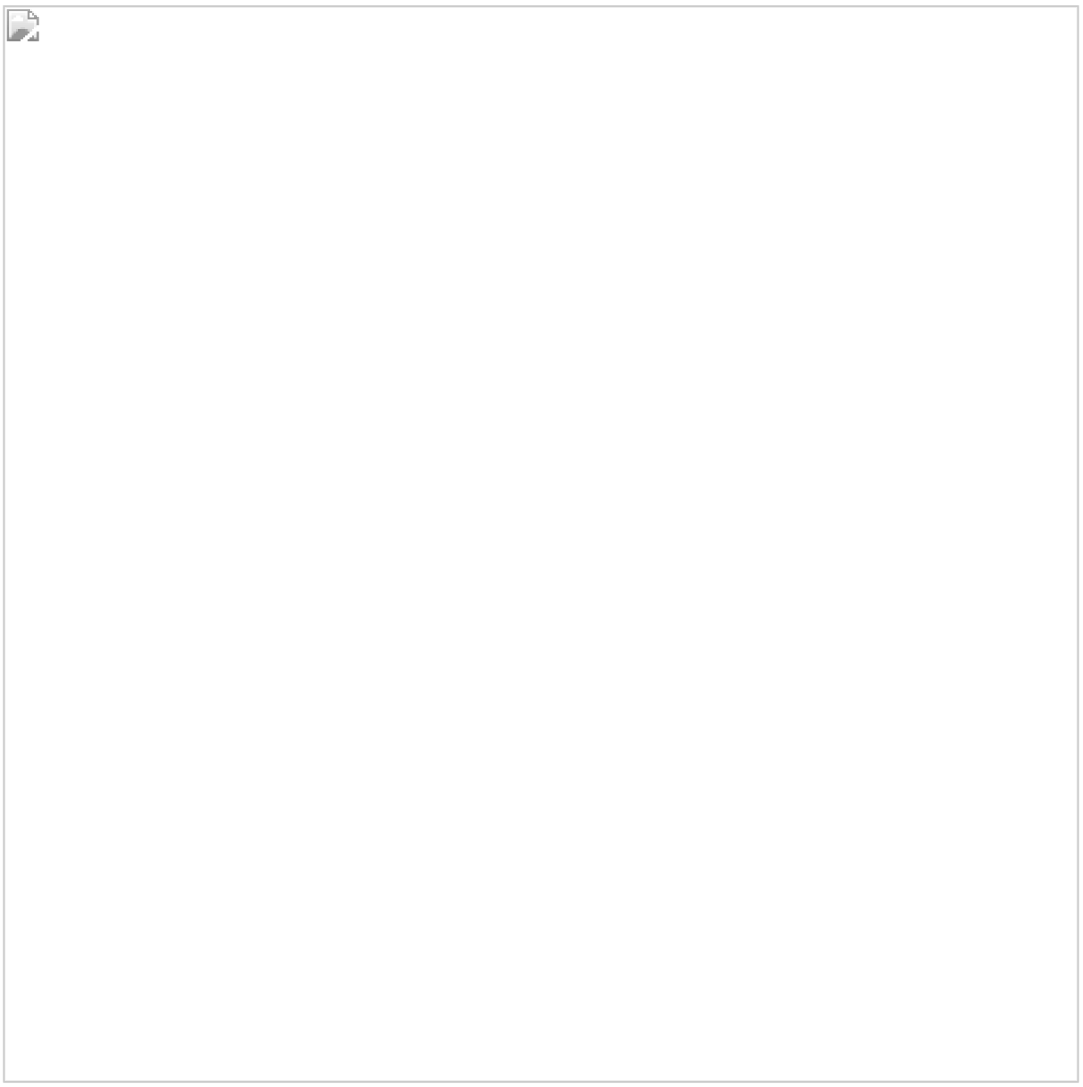
Toad found out that the Wild Wooders, weasels and stoats and ferrets, had taken over Toad Hall. They were living there as if it were theirs.

Badger knew a secret passage from the river bank right up into the Hall. Rat, Mole, Toad and Badger crept through it in the dark.

“The hour is come! Follow me!” said Badger. The four friends burst out together. The weasels ran off in a fright, and Toad Hall was Toad’s once more.

TALK ABOUT IT

Why did the four friends go in together? What would you do if someone moved into your home?



Think about it

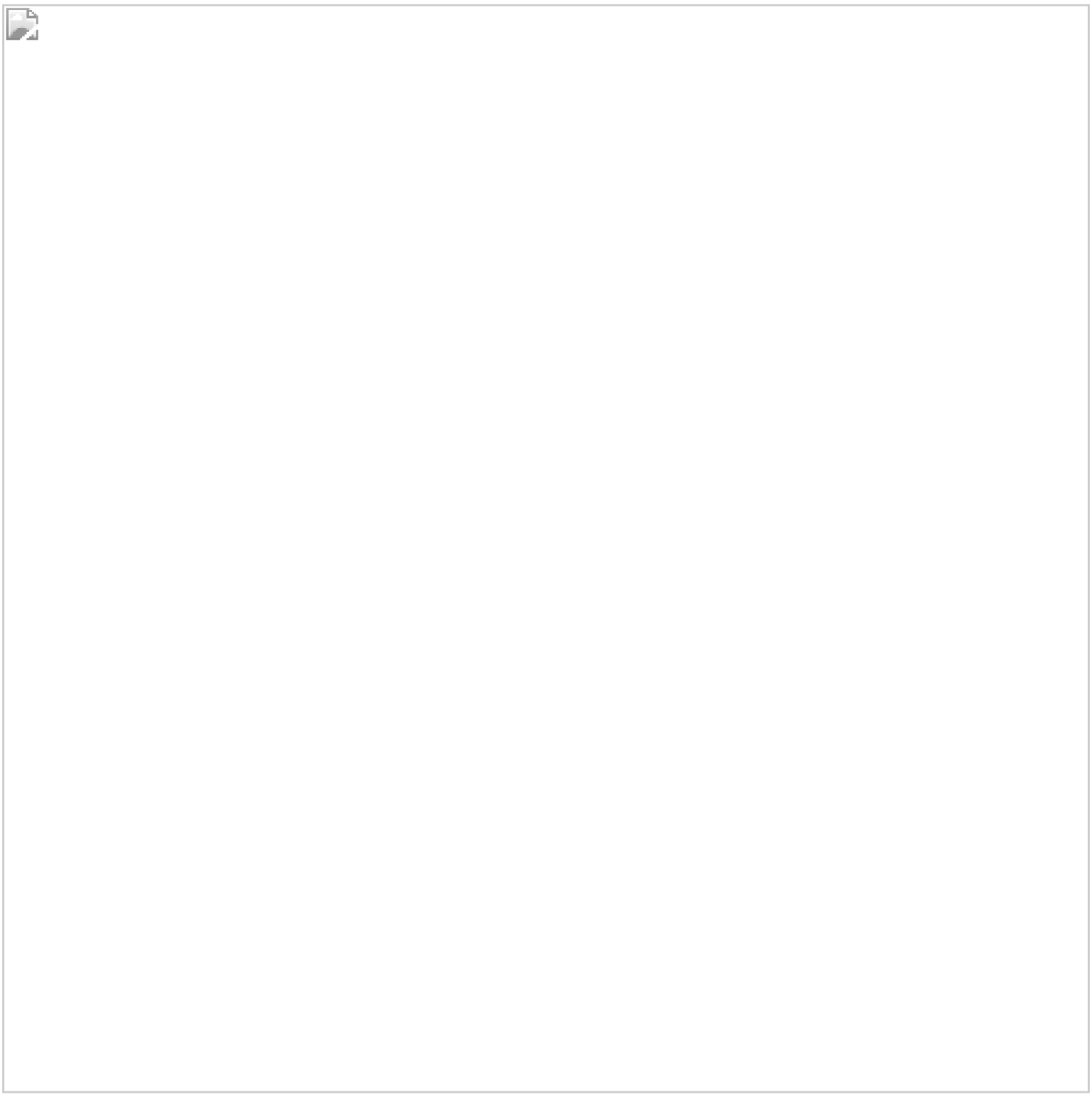
1. Who had moved into Toad Hall?

- ○ The Wild Wooders
- ○ The field-mice
- ○ The fishermen

2. How did the friends get inside?

- ○ Through a secret passage
- ○ Over the roof
- ○ By boat

An Altered Toad



That night Toad gave a big supper at the Hall. Everyone thought he would stand up and boast. But he stayed in his seat and was quiet and modest. “Badger’s was the mastermind,” he said, and he spoke of how the others had helped.

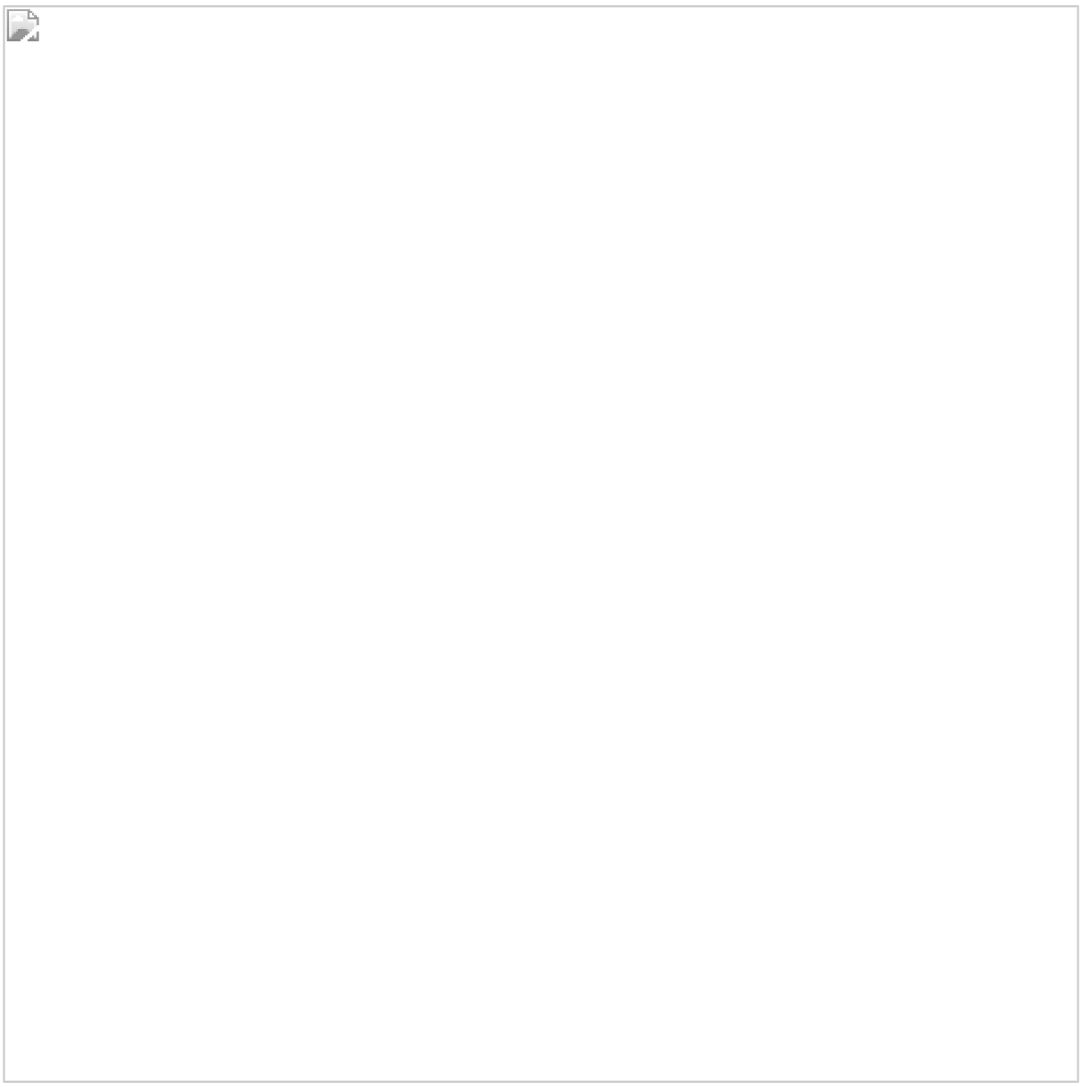
He was indeed an altered Toad! He thanked the gaoler’s daughter and the engine-driver, and he paid the barge-woman for the horse he had once taken from her and sold.

In the days that followed, Rat, Mole and Badger took their walks in the Wild Wood again. The animals there were polite now, and the friends went about in peace.

TALK ABOUT IT

What changed in Toad? How could you tell? What would you like to say to a friend who has helped you?

An Altered Toad · another picture



Think about it

1. How did Toad act at the supper?

- ○ Quiet and modest
- ○ Loud and boastful
- ○ Angry and cross

2. Where did the friends walk after that?

- ○ In the Wild Wood
- ○ In the desert
- ○ On a ship

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

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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