



THE LION AND THE MOUSE

Read the story. Then answer the questions on your own paper.

A lion was sleeping when a mouse ran across his face and woke him up. The angry lion caught the mouse and held him in his large paw. The mouse begged in a tiny voice, "If you let me go, I will repay your kind act by helping *you* someday." The lion laughed. How could a mouse help a lion? Still laughing, he set the mouse free.

Soon after, hunters captured the lion. They tied him with strong ropes. The mouse heard the lion roar and came running. He gnawed through the ropes with his teeth and set the lion free. Then the mouse said, "You laughed at the idea that I could ever help you. Now you know that even a little mouse can help a big lion."

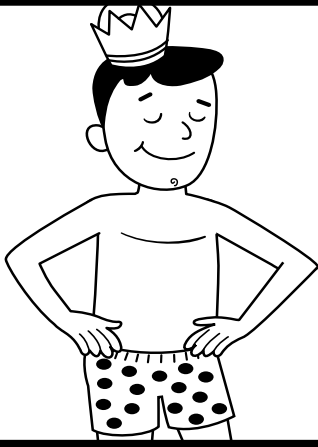
Moral: No act of kindness—big or small—is ever wasted.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- 1) Why is the lion angry at the beginning of the story?
- 2) How do you think the lion feels when the mouse rescues him?
- 3) A fable is a story that has a moral, or lesson. Do you think the moral of this fable is true? Explain your answer.

TRY THIS!

Think of two other animals that would not usually help each other, such as a spider and a fly. Write a fable using these animals as characters.



THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

Read the story. Then answer the questions on your own paper.

Once there was an emperor who was very proud of his appearance. Knowing this, two tailors promised to make him a magic suit. They said the suit would be invisible to anyone who was foolish.

When the tailors showed the emperor the suit, he saw nothing. "I must be foolish!" he thought. "I cannot let the tailors know." So he said the suit was beautiful and pretended to put it on. Then, thinking he was wearing the magic suit, he paraded before his subjects.

Not wanting to be seen as foolish, the people pretended to admire the emperor's new clothes. Then a young child, who knew no better, called out, "The emperor has no clothes!" Soon, everyone took up the cry. The emperor realized he had been tricked, but he held his head high as he marched back to his castle.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- 1) What is magical about the clothing the tailors promise to make?
- 2) Is the emperor foolish? Why or why not?
- 3) Folk tales are passed along from person to person. They often teach people how to behave. What is the message or lesson of this tale?

TRY THIS!

What do you think the emperor does when he gets back to his castle? Write a new ending for the story.



THE SUNFLOWER

Read the story. Then answer the questions on your own paper.

Fiona was a fairy who lived at the bottom of the ocean. She wore beautiful green gowns made from seaweed. Her long, golden hair floated all around her. One day, Fiona heard a mermaid singing about a golden light above the water. Fiona wanted to see this light!

She swam to the surface and climbed onto the shore. She saw the golden light. It was the sun! All day, Fiona gazed at it happily. When she turned to swim back to the bottom of the ocean, she saw herself in the water. Her golden hair had become yellow petals. Her green gown had turned into leaves. Her tiny feet were now roots. Fiona had become a sunflower—a small copy of the sun she loved.

To this day, sunflowers turn on their stems all day so they can gaze upon the sun as it travels across the sky.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- 1) What is the setting of this story?
- 2) How do you think Fiona feels when she becomes a flower?
- 3) A myth often explains something about nature. What does this myth explain?

TRY THIS!

Imagine that Fiona lived in a dark cave instead of at the bottom of the ocean. How would the story change? Rewrite the story with Fiona as a cave fairy.