



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## MARSHA

Marsha lived with her stepmother Minty and her father Moppy in a large mansion. Her father had his own business and was often traveling across the country. Marsha was left home with her stepmother and her two stepbrothers, Muddy and Mushy.

Every morning the boys would yell at her and put dirty socks under her bed. They would leave cookie crumbs on the floor of her bedroom. They would use their muddy shoes to track dirt all over the floors in the hallway. Their rooms would look like pigpens, and they would force Marsha to clean them before she went to school.

One day while her father was away, she and her friend Maria had a wonderful idea. They put on rubber gloves, went to the woods, and gathered poison ivy plants. They smeared the leaves all over the sheets of Muddy and Mushy's beds.

That evening, the boys were up to their usual mean tricks. Marsha just smiled and said, "Thanks guys, but now it's my turn."

The very next morning, the boys woke up feeling very itchy. Their mother suggested they stay home from school. They did not want to miss the baseball game, though, so they grabbed their backpacks and ran out the door.

As the day went on, they got more and more itchy. They were sent to the nurse. Muddy and Mushy had poison ivy all over their arms, legs, and bodies. The nurse sent them home for two weeks.

Marsha and Maria got them good, so they never bother Marsha again. (Well, not as much anyway!)

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Why was Marsha often left with her stepbrothers and stepmother?
  - Her dad was on vacation in Hawaii.
  - Her father was away on business.
  - Her father liked to eat out.
  - She liked being left home with them.
- A **synonym** for *gathered* would be . . .
  - collected.
  - let loose.
  - met.
  - mixed together.
- Why did Marsha use rubber gloves?
  - They were good for her skin.
  - So she and Maria wouldn't get poison ivy.
  - They helped her with her homework.
  - She didn't want to touch her stepbrothers.
- This fairy tale is most like . . .
  - "Cinderella."
  - "Three Billy Goats Gruff."
  - "Sleeping Beauty."
  - "Jack and the Beanstalk."



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## THREE LITTLE ANTS

One day, three little ants—Frank, Albert, and Tommy—set out to seek their fortune. They waved goodbye to their mother and set off down the road with suitcases under their arms.

Frank, the oldest, found a nice place on a hillside to build his home. He built his out of pieces of straw he found lying on the ground. His house went up quickly, in just one day. Frank settled in and was happy.

Albert was the second oldest. He wanted to make a house that was a little sturdier than his brother's house. He gathered sticks, tied them all together with strong ropes, and cut windows and doors. He also made an oven out of mud, rocks, and dirt. It took him about three days to build his house, and he was happy.

The youngest brother was Tommy. Tommy was very wise and careful. He collected strong pieces of wood, cut each one carefully, and fitted the pieces together perfectly. He bought tiles for the roof and poured a cement floor. His house was the talk of the neighborhood, and he finished in two months.

One morning, Billy, the anteater, was walking around the neighborhood. He noticed the three new houses. Billy smelled ants, so he stopped to see if he could get a few to snack on. Frank's house was easy to push over; it was made of straw. Unfortunately for Billy, Frank ran out the back door to Albert's. Albert's house was a little tougher to knock over, but Billy succeeded. Albert and Frank escaped again, and Billy got sticks in his nose. Finally, he came to the last house. He sucked as hard as he could, but the three ants would not come out the front door. Instead, he got a nose full of hot sauce!

That Tommy! Billy's nose was burning. He ran away and never bothered the brothers again.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Which words describe Tommy?
  - mean, ugly, patient
  - quick, hasty, lucky
  - reckless, careless, sloppy
  - careful, patient, smart
- How were Albert and Frank unlike Tommy?
  - They were both careless and lazy. Tommy was hardworking.
  - They were both hardworking. Tommy was lazy.
  - They were both sleepy. Tommy was wide awake.
  - They were both interested in fireplaces. Tommy was interested in drawing.
- In the passage, *sturdier* means . . .
  - dirtier.
  - stronger.
  - weaker.
  - cleaner.
- This fairy tale is most like . . .
  - "Cinderella."
  - "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."
  - "The Three Little Pigs."
  - "Jack and the Beanstalk."



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## JESSIE AND THE CORNSTALK

Early one rainy morning in Iowa, Jessica's mother sent her to town with the last five dollars of cash in the house. She told her daughter to get a loaf of bread and a half-gallon of milk.

Jessica put on her blue rain jacket and blue boots. She was walking along dreaming, when she ran into Jake from school.

"What do you have in your hand, Jessie?"

"It's five dollars to buy some bread and milk."

He offered to sell Jessica some magic corn plants to make the family rich. She gave him the five dollars and went home with the plants.

When she came home, her mother was furious and sent Jessica to bed with no supper. She hurled the "magic plants" out into the cornfield and went to bed.

In the middle of the night, Jessica awoke to hear a loud banging on her window. It was a huge branch. She opened her window, grabbed her cell phone, and started climbing the stalk.

When she reached the top, she found a large castle, a friendly maid, and a sleeping giant. She noticed a suitcase full of money was lying next to the bed.

Jess grabbed the money and ran out the castle door. She called her dad on the cell phone and told him to get the ax. As she climbed down the cornstalk, her father chopped it away. When she reached the bottom, she gave him the suitcase. Their family bought their farm, and they were never hungry again.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Which color might be Jessica's favorite?
  - blue
  - orange
  - brown
  - red
- The word *hurled* in this story means . . .
  - tossed gently.
  - picked up.
  - threw.
  - touched.
- What modern technology does Jessica use to reach her father?
  - a computer
  - a cell phone
  - an iPod® nano
  - a walkie-talkie
- This fairy tale is most like . . .
  - "Sleeping Beauty."
  - "Jack and the Beanstalk."
  - "The Little Red Hen."
  - "Three Billy Goats Gruff."



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## LITTLE BROWN HUMMINGBIRD

On a farm in Kansas lived a little brown hummingbird, a blue jay, a robin, and a mean crow. The little brown hummingbird did all the work on the farm. She took care of the animals, made the meals, and took the grain to the market.

The blue jay spent each day in the kitchen, eating everything the little brown hummingbird made. Blue jay would follow her and gobble up the goodies when they came out of the oven.

The robin sat on the porch each day. He told the hummingbird that she was not fast enough with her work. He also loved to steal her fresh pies off the windowsill. He would eat them while she did the morning egg gathering.

The crow was always hanging out in the yard. He constantly pecked at the animals' food. He also loved to get the animals mad at each other. The hummingbird had to stop the fights and remind the crow to mind his own business.

One day, it was the hummingbird's birthday. She was tired of doing all the work and wanted to celebrate. She asked the blue jay to help, but he was too hungry. She asked the robin to help, but he was in a bad mood. She asked the crow to help, but he had to bother the chickens. So she made a birthday cake by herself. But, this time, when it came out of the oven, she sat down and ate the whole thing all by herself. She didn't share one crumb. Her friends were angry. They yelled at her, but she enjoyed every bite of her fresh chocolate cake.

From that day on, the other birds always helped with the chores.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What does the phrase "mind his own business" mean?
  - think about everything he was eating
  - act in a play
  - think about himself
  - stay out of other people's way
- A **synonym** for *bother* could be . . .
 

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| a. disturb. | c. bake.   |
| b. share.   | d. scream. |
- Which words best describe the hummingbird?
  - mean and nasty
  - hardworking and patient with others
  - impatient and rude
  - lazy and cruel
- This fairy tale is most like . . .
 

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. "Puss in Boots."     | c. "The Little Red Hen."   |
| b. "The Ugly Duckling." | d. "The Little Pear Girl." |



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## THREE SISTER SHEEP

In the mountains lived three sheep sisters. Their names were Joleen, Julia, and Jenna. Joleen was the oldest, Julia was second, and Jenna was the youngest sister. Each morning they went across the bridge to eat the delicious green grass on the other side of the mountain.

A mean wolf named John was in charge of the bridge. Each day he charged the sisters 25 cents to cross the bridge.

John was getting very rich from collecting money from the three sheep sisters. But he was also a wolf, and wolves love to eat sheep. One day he decided he wanted to eat the sisters.

Joleen returned first, walking slowly and happily. John tried to catch her and take her home for dinner. But Joleen suggested he wait for Julia because Julia would have a much sweeter taste. John let her go.

When Julia came across the bridge, John stopped her and suggested she join him for dinner. She, too, escaped, calling back, "Ask Jenna to dinner. She will be the tastiest of all of us!"

So John sat down to wait for Jenna. Soon she came across the bridge. John called out to her, "Jenna, have dinner with me."

Jenna knew what the wolf was trying to do. She pretended to go with him. But then, in a surprise move, Jenna kicked him over the edge of the bridge. He fell into the freezing water below. Because of that, he caught a terrible cold and had to stay in bed for weeks. After that, he never invited the sisters to dinner again.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- The wolf was getting rich by . . .
  - collecting money from the sheep.
  - selling the sheep.
  - selling tickets for a boat ride down the river.
  - giving 25 cents to the sheep each day.
- Which sheep is the oldest?
 

|          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| a. Julia | c. Joleen |
| b. John  | d. Jenna  |
- How did Joleen keep from getting eaten by the wolf?
  - She told him Jenna was the best sheep to eat.
  - She told him Julia had a sweeter taste.
  - She told him that she was too old and tough to eat.
  - She told him she had to go home first before dinner.
- The fairy tale this is most like is . . .
 

|                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. "The Three Little Pigs."       | c. "Sleeping Beauty."        |
| b. "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." | d. "Jack and the Beanstalk." |



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PENNY LOAFER AND THE THREE MONKEYS

One morning Mother, Father, and Baby Monkey woke up to see the sun shining brightly through the kitchen window. They decided it was a fabulous day for a picnic. They packed their lunch and headed out to the jungle.

Meanwhile, on the edge of the jungle, Penny Loafer was walking, too. She was singing happily as she walked along. Suddenly, she noticed a strange little hut. It had a coconut-shelled roof and jungle vines around all the windows. It was simply adorable.

She went to the door and knocked, but no one answered. Her parents had told her never to go into someone's house without asking first. But she was very curious. She opened the door and walked in.

Penny noticed three bowls of oatmeal in the kitchen. She tasted the big bowl, but there wasn't enough brown sugar in it. She tasted the medium-sized bowl. This had too much sugar. She tasted the small bowl and found it had just the right amount of brown sugar. So she ate it all up.

By now Penny was exhausted from her long walk and unusual adventure. She went to find a bed in which to lie down for a nap. The first bed she came to was gigantic. It felt too hard on her back. She found a medium-sized bed, but it was too soft and puffy. Then she found a small bed that was just right. She pulled the covers up and fell into a deep sleep.

Suddenly, she was awakened by the laughter of three monkeys. They were standing over her with their big eyes wide in amazement. Penny Loafer screamed, ran out of the cottage and all the way home. After that, she never again went into people's homes without permission.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. An **antonym** for the word *screamed* could be . . .
 

|              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| a. yelled.   | c. shrieked.  |
| b. bellowed. | d. whispered. |
2. A **synonym** for *gigantic* could be . . .
 

|          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| a. huge. | c. small.   |
| b. tiny. | d. perfect. |
3. Why didn't Penny Loafer eat the father monkey's big bowl of oatmeal?
 

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| a. It had too much sugar.   | c. She did eat it, and it was just right. |
| b. It had too little sugar. | d. She wasn't hungry.                     |
4. This fairy tale is most like . . .
 

|                              |                                      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. "Paul Bunyan."            | c. "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." |
| b. "Little Red Riding Hood." | d. "The Three Little Pigs."          |



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PETER AND PATTY

Peter and Patty lived with their mother and father in a small cottage at the edge of the big forest. One tragic day, their mother died.

Not long after that, their father remarried. Peter and Patty's new stepmother did not like children. She told the father to send them to an orphanage.

Their father loved Peter and Patty very much. He did not want to take them to an orphanage. He decided to tell them they were going camping in the woods. Because they had camped many times with their mother and father, Peter and Patty did not suspect a thing. They packed their sleeping bags, a few changes of clothes, and some food. The stepmother sent them off with a smile.

That evening their father sat with them around the campfire and told them how special they were. He reminded them how well they knew and understood survival in the woods.

The very next morning, Peter and Patty awoke to find their father gone. He had left a note wishing them well.

Peter and Patty did not know what to do. They didn't know how to get home. They started walking, hoping to find their father. They came upon a cottage made of fresh fruit and vegetables. The sweet lady who owned the cottage adopted them, fed them well, and sent them to a good school. Patty and Peter got to have rooms of their own, and they lived happily for the rest of their lives.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why were the children left in the woods?
  - a. Their new stepmother didn't want them.
  - b. They got lost.
  - c. They were camping.
  - d. They were playing hide and seek.
2. Why didn't the stepmother like Peter and Patty?
 

|                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. They were very messy.  | c. They teased her.          |
| b. They were mean to her. | d. She didn't like children. |
3. A **synonym** for the word *suspect* could be . . .
 

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| a. tattle. | c. survive. |
| b. guess.  | d. confess. |
4. This fairy tale is most like . . .
 

|                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. "Hansel and Gretel."      | c. "The Princess and the Pea." |
| b. "Jack and the Beanstalk." | d. "The Little Red Hen."       |





Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## SKY BLUE

In a small kingdom far away lived a beautiful princess named Sky Blue. She lived with her father and stepmother in a castle. Sky Blue's stepmother was beautiful to look at, but evil underneath. She hated Sky Blue, because she was beautiful inside and out. Also, Sky Blue was loved by all the people in the kingdom.

Each morning the stepmother would look in her magic mirror and ask the same question, "Who is the most beautiful woman in the kingdom?" The answer was always the same—"Sky Blue."

The stepmother was furious. She paid a man to kidnap Sky Blue and take her deep into the forest and leave her there. The man drove her deep into the forest, but he didn't want to leave her alone. So he took her instead to the house of seven kind lumberjacks. The lumberjacks promised to take care of her.

All went well until the stepmother discovered Sky Blue was still alive. She disguised herself as a door-to-door saleswoman and went to the home of the lumberjacks. Sky Blue, being as kind as she was, invited the saleswoman to lunch. The stepmother put poison in Sky Blue's drink. Immediately upon sipping the drink, Sky Blue fell into a deep sleep. The lumberjacks came home to find her still asleep. They couldn't wake her. They put her body in a glass box in the forest and opened it toward the sun.

A visiting prince heard of the beautiful princess. He went to look upon her beauty that very day. He kissed her lips, and she sighed with relief. Sky Blue sat up, reached for the prince, and together they rode off into the sunset.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What did the stepmother ask the mirror each morning?
  - "Who is the ugliest woman in the kingdom?"
  - "Who is the richest woman in the kingdom?"
  - "Who is the poorest woman in the kingdom?"
  - "Who is the most beautiful woman in the kingdom?"
- A **synonym** for *sipping* could be . . .
 

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| a. drinking. | c. eating.   |
| b. chewing.  | d. coughing. |
- How did the prince wake Sky Blue?
 

|                   |                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. He shook her.  | c. He yelled her name in her ear. |
| b. He kissed her. | d. He honked a horn.              |
- This fairy tale is most like . . .
 

|                                 |                         |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. "The Frog Princess."         | c. "Snow White."        |
| b. "The Tortoise and the Hare." | d. "The Ugly Duckling." |



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## LIZARD PRINCE

One stormy morning the princess, Henrietta, was out walking in the rain. She was wearing her favorite pale green rain jacket, green gloves, and her new green rubber boots.

As she jumped in and out of puddles, one of her new rubber boots got stuck in the mud outside the castle wall. She tugged, and tugged, but the boot just sank lower. The only thing she could do was pull her foot out and hop back to the castle wearing one boot. What a sight she was! A princess hopping on one muddy boot!

Because she was used to getting her way, she started to shriek, "My favorite boot! Who will jump into the puddle and save my favorite boot?"

An ugly lizard was sleeping nearby. He heard the cries of the princess and decided to help. He dove deep into the mud and brought up the boot. He asked the princess to kiss him and promise that she would take him with her everywhere from that moment on. However, the princess thought the lizard was the ugliest creature she had seen. She took the boot and ran away, straight for the palace.

For several days she didn't see the lizard. Then one day, he appeared, sitting on her dinner plate. She shrieked and demanded he be thrown out of the castle. Her father asked what the lizard wanted. The princess had to confess that he had saved her boot, on the condition that she would take him everywhere.

Her father told her she must honor her promise. Henrietta was so angry, she threw the lizard out the window. As he hit the ground, he became a handsome prince. He told her that the wicked witch had put a spell on him. She was the only one who could break the spell.

Henrietta and the prince were married, and they lived happily ever after in the castle.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What do you think is Henrietta's favorite color?
  - blue
  - red
  - green
  - purple
- Why was the princess wearing her rain jacket, gloves, and rubber boots?
  - The weather was rainy.
  - It was hot outside.
  - These were her favorite clothes.
  - There were piles of snow to walk through.
- Why was Henrietta going to have to keep the lizard?
  - The lizard was her friend.
  - Her father made her honor her promise.
  - She wanted to play with him.
  - He promised to give her money.
- A **synonym** for *wicked* could be . . .
  - cruel.
  - nice.
  - sweet.
  - kind.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## THE SLOTH AND THE TIGER

The race was on. All the animals of the jungle had gathered for the final showdown. They had put aside their differences for the day and were dressed in their sportiest outfits.

Signs read, "Go Sloth! You're the Boss!"

Others said, "Tiger, Tiger, he's our man. If anyone can run fast, he sure can!"

Bang! The two runners were off.

Tiger was in the lead from the very beginning, with his long strides and fast legs. Until he reached the edge of the jungle, he put on a good show for the crowd. But as soon as he stepped into the forest, he looked back and grinned. "Silly sloth, who does he think he is, trying to beat such a fast animal as me?" With that, Tiger pulled out the lawn chair he had hidden behind a tree and fell fast asleep. Sloth kept moving slowly along the path.

Several hours later, a deafening roar awoke him. The band was playing, and animals were cheering wildly. He knocked over his lawn chair and ran off in a flash. However, as he rounded the bend to the finish line, he noticed that sloth was already there. Around his neck was a shiny, gold medal. He was holding a massive trophy in the air.

The only thing Tiger could do was shake Sloth's hand and smile weakly.

"Congratulations, Sloth. You deserve the medal."

"Thanks," said Sloth politely. "I would sure like to take a nap in a lawn chair about now! I've had a long day!"

They both smiled.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- A **synonym** for the word *massive* could be . . .
  - tiny.
  - gigantic.
  - small.
  - little.
- Which of the words below could be used to describe Sloth?
  - polite
  - mean
  - very fast
  - angry
- Why did Tiger awaken from his nap?
  - The roar of the crowd woke him up.
  - The sound of sirens woke him up.
  - The cry of the birds woke him up.
  - His grandmother woke him up.
- Which story does this remind you of?
  - "Goldilocks and the Three Bears"
  - "The Tortoise and the Hare"
  - "The Little Red Hen"
  - "How the Elephant Got Its Trunk"



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## GOOFY GOOSE

Gus, the goose, came into the world just as the sun peeked its head over the mountains. Mother hen noticed that one of her eggs was much larger than the rest, but that didn't bother her any. An egg was an egg, and her job was to sit on it until it hatched.

When he finally pecked his way out of the egg, Gus's mother was even more surprised. He had a long neck and a fuzzy head. His little body was round, fat, and dirty white. He didn't look anything like any of her other fuzzy, yellow chicks. But it was her job to care for her chicks, so she did.

As Gus grew, his body grew differently than his brothers' and sisters'. His neck grew so much he could barely talk to his mother unless he bent over, nearly touching the ground.

Gus talked funny, his brothers and sister thought, so they teased him. He made a honking noise rather than a chirping noise. He also walked funny, with a waddle. One day, he finally went and talked to his mother about all the jokes and mean things his brothers and sisters said.

She answered simply, "The day you were born, you were different from all of the other babies. But don't you know, Gus? You are not a chicken, but a beautiful goose!"

With that, she pointed her beak to the farm next door, and Gus noticed animals that looked just like him. A beautiful girl goose named Gerty was staring right at him.

"May I go over, Mother?" he asked.

"Certainly, and have a great time, you gorgeous goose, you!" she said as she waved.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Why didn't the mother hen worry about the egg that was different?
  - She was always hunting for eggs that were different.
  - She loved bigger eggs.
  - She liked the way it shone in the sun.
  - Her job was to sit on an egg (any egg) until it hatched.
- According to the passage, how was Gus different from the other chicks on the farm?
  - He wasn't different.
  - His eyes and nose were different.
  - He was a boy, and the rest were girls.
  - The way he walked and talked was different.
- What discovery did Gus make one day?
  - He was a goose.
  - He was a chicken.
  - He was too old to play in the pond.
  - His mother was mad at him.
- This fairy tale is most like . . .
  - "The Three Little Pigs."
  - "The Ugly Duckling."
  - "The Little Red Hen."
  - "The Frog Princess."



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## LITTLE BANANA GIRL

"Give me what you owe me!" demanded the king. "I want a full basket of bananas each time I pass by your house!"

"Your Majesty, the crop has not been good. I only have a small basket of bananas."

"I will be back at 5 P.M., and I want a large basket!" bellowed the king.

Ashley's father sadly shook his head. No matter what he did there would never be enough bananas by 5 P.M.

Ashley, being the smart child she was, offered a solution. She suggested that her father hide her in the bottom of the basket, and then cover her with bananas. This would save the family from the anger of the king. She told her father that she would keep in touch with the family as best she could. Her father finally gave in. He placed her in the basket, and covered her with bananas.

At exactly 5 P.M., the king returned. He was pleased to find a basket full of bananas. As he drove off, the father looked on sadly. But he smiled to think of the surprise that would be waiting for the king when he went to use the bananas in the basket.

The servants quickly discovered the basket trick. They hid the girl in the maid's room. Ashley did well in the castle. All of the servants adored her, as did the king's son, Prince Patrick.

The king was informed, one sad day, of the trick Ashley's family had played on him. He was so angry that he sent her to kill a dragon in another land. He figured she would never return. But Ashley accomplished the chore. She returned with the dragon's head. The king told her that whatever she wished would be hers.

She asked for a basket of bananas. However, the prince made the servants place him in the bottom of the basket. He was secretly in love with Ashley. When the trick was discovered, the king had to allow his son to marry Ashley. They lived happily ever after with bananas each week, from their own trees on the palace grounds.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. What was Ashley's solution to her father's problem?
  - a. She told her father to hide from the king.
  - b. She hid in the basket so it would look like there were a lot of bananas in it.
  - c. She and her father hid under the basket of bananas.
  - d. She told the king that they had already given him a basket of bananas.
2. Ashley could be described as . . .
 

|                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| a. ugly and mean.     | c. smart and determined. |
| b. selfish and cruel. | d. jealous and thin.     |
3. An **antonym** for the word *sadly* could be . . .
 

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| a. miserably. | c. gloomily. |
| b. unhappily. | d. joyfully. |
4. Why did the prince hide in the basket that the king gave to Ashley?
  - a. He wanted to run away from his father.
  - b. He was secretly in love with Ashley.
  - c. He wanted it to look like there were a lot of bananas in the basket.
  - d. He wanted to see where Ashley lived.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## WHY ANTS BITE LEGS AT PICNICS

Nearly every Saturday, a family of five would spend the entire day at the park. The mother, father, two boys, and a girl loved having picnics in the park. They also enjoyed riding bikes, playing, and feeding the ducks that swam in the pond.

However, there was one problem. In the park lived a colony of ants. Each day they would look for food. Each of them did his or her own job. Everything was fine, until the family started coming to the park.

While their parents and sister were getting the picnic basket unloaded, Jeremy and James would look for anthills. Once they found them, they would put in small sticks of dynamite. They would light the fuse, and then BOOM! The two boys loved to see the ants scatter and run for their lives. They rolled on the ground as the adult ants were thrown high into the air, and the babies were tossed another way. They were terrible and mean.

One day, as the ants watched the boys sit down on a blanket for lunch, they made a plan. They called other ants for miles around. They all hid under the blanket on which the family was sitting.

Suddenly, screams could be heard all across the park. The ants were attacking James and Jeremy. Ants of all shapes and sizes swarmed on Jeremy's and James's legs as they sat on the blanket. The ants bit hard. The boys yelled and slapped, but the ants continued to march and bite. Finally, when the boys' legs were puffy and swollen, the queen ant led the ants back to her hill. Mission accomplished. From this day forward, the boys never bothered them again . . . or they got bites as souvenirs.

So if an ant ever bites you, you have Jeremy and James to thank!

### STORY QUESTIONS

- "A colony of ants" is another way of saying . . .
  - a boatload of ants.
  - a wagonload of ants.
  - a basketful of ants.
  - a group of ants.
- Jeremy and James could be described as . . .
  - kind and thoughtful.
  - gentlemen.
  - troublemakers.
  - angels.
- "Mission accomplished" means . . .
  - the space mission was underway.
  - the task was completed.
  - the astronauts have landed.
  - get ready for the mission to Mars.
- A **synonym** of *swollen* could be . . .
  - shrunk.
  - bitten.
  - red.
  - enlarged.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## BEETLE BOY AND THE TALKING COCONUT

Beetle Boy was known all over the jungle as a prankster. He was always playing tricks on the other animals, even if it hurt their feelings. He didn't care. He was having too much fun to stop.

One day, while he was playing in a coconut tree, he noticed Pinky the parrot flying overhead. Beetle Boy dived inside the nearest coconut and began one of his tricks.

"Hey, dumb bird. Why are your wings so funny? Why are you flying so slowly?"

Pinky looked around, but all he could see were coconuts. One coconut kept calling to him and making rude remarks.

He went up to the tree and picked it up. "I will take you to see the king of the jungle. Let's see if you talk to him this way. He will be pleased to have a coconut that can talk."

When the king of the jungle, George the Great, saw the coconut and heard the story, he didn't believe it could talk. He whispered to the coconut, and then shouted at it, but it would not answer. George the Great was becoming angry. He lifted the coconut and threw it with all his might. It cracked, and out ran Beetle Boy.

Pinky and the king smiled. So, Beetle Boy was behind all this noise!

"Beetle Boy," said George the Great. "I declare that you will work for me in the coconut trees for the rest of your life. Without pay."

From that day on, the joke was on Beetle Boy. He worked in the coconut trees with no pay and was only given bread and water. He was never allowed to play tricks again.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. Who was George the Great?
  - a. the queen of the castle
  - b. the king of the jungle
  - c. the jester of the palace
  - d. the king of the banana trees
2. Beetle Boy is . . .
  - a. mean and full of mischief.
  - b. generous and giving.
  - c. kind and thoughtful.
  - d. helpful.
3. What was Beetle Boy's punishment?
  - a. He had to work in the banana trees and eat coconuts for all meals.
  - b. He had to work in the coconut trees for free and eat bread and water.
  - c. He had to work hard in the castle.
  - d. He had to eat coconuts for the rest of his life.
4. Which of the following is **NOT** true of Beetle Boy?
  - a. He liked to play tricks on others.
  - b. He made fun of other animals.
  - c. He was a good friend to everyone.
  - d. He pretended to be a talking coconut.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## SPEEDING SPIDER

As the sun was setting low in the sky, Camel was munching on some grass when he noticed Spider running past. "Something must be wrong," he thought. "If Spider is running, I should be running, too." So he started to run after Spider.

Fox was sitting and watching the sunset. He saw Spider and Camel race by. He thought something must be wrong. He decided to run after Spider and Camel.

Rabbit was in his kitchen cutting fresh vegetables. He noticed Camel out the window. He called Snake on his cell phone. Snake called Roadrunner and Quail on walkie-talkies. Quail called Hedgehog on the house phone.

Before long, Rabbit, Snake, Roadrunner, Quail, and Hedgehog were running madly after Fox, Camel, and Spider.

Hedgehog started to get tired of all the running. He was having trouble breathing and keeping up with the rest of the animals. He called out to Fox. "Fox, why are we running?" Fox asked Snake, and Snake asked Roadrunner. None of the animals knew the answer to the question. Finally, Camel asked Spider.

"Spider, why are we running?"

Spider looked back and smiled. "I don't know why you are running, but I am late for dinner!"

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why was Fox running?
  - a. He saw his friends were running.
  - b. He was late for a football game.
  - c. He needed exercise.
  - d. He wanted to get to school on time.
2. What technology did the animals use to communicate with each other?
  - a. computers and cell phones
  - b. a BlackBerry<sup>®</sup> and e-mail
  - c. cell phones and walkie-talkies
  - d. TVs and cell phones
3. Why was Hedgehog tired of running?
  - a. He would rather be swimming.
  - b. He was having trouble breathing and couldn't keep up with the rest of the animals.
  - c. He wanted to do a relay race instead.
  - d. His legs were shorter than the rest of the animals' legs.
4. What lesson can we learn from these animals?
  - a. Don't just follow the crowd, understand why you are doing something.
  - b. Always get your parents' permission before you go to a friend's house.
  - c. Always call your parents if your plans change.
  - d. Never talk to strangers.





Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PRINCE AND THE PEBBLE

Once upon a time there was a princess who wanted to marry a prince. She only wanted to marry a real prince. She traveled all over the world to find one. But it was always too difficult to tell which ones were really real.

Finally, she returned home exhausted. The weather was stormy, and she was worn out from all the traveling. She sat down in front of the warm fire. Next to her were her mother, the queen, and her father, the king. They talked with sadness about the difficulty in finding a real prince.

Suddenly, the doorbell on the castle startled them. "Who could be out on such a terrible night?" thought the princess.

The princess rushed to the door. Without thinking, she threw open the door and discovered a soggy, wet traveler.

He asked if she might be the princess who was searching for a prince. She admitted she was. "Your prince has arrived," he said simply. He brought a box of chocolates from underneath his soggy cloak.

The king, queen, and princess were not convinced, although the stranger was definitely charming. They decided to give him a test to see if what he said were true.

The queen went to the guestroom and put a small pebble underneath twenty mattresses and forty quilts. She showed the prince to the room and told him he could spend the night there.

In the morning, they asked how he slept.

"Horribly," he said. "There was something under my mattresses. I feel as if I have bumps and bruises all over."

"Congratulations. You are truly a prince," said the queen. "Now, where are those chocolates?"

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Why was the princess so sad?
  - She had just finished a long race around the world.
  - She couldn't find a real prince to marry.
  - She had been out in the rain for hours.
  - She was tired of hearing ringing doorbells.
- Whose idea was it to put the pebble under the mattresses?
 

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| a. the maid     | c. the king  |
| b. the princess | d. the queen |
- In what order are we introduced to the characters?
 

|                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. princess, queen, king, prince | c. queen, king, prince, princess |
| b. prince, queen, princess, king | d. prince, king, queen, princess |
- This fairy tale is most like . . .
 

|                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. "Little Red Riding Hood." | c. "The Princess and the Pea." |
| b. "The Frog Princess."      | d. "Humpty Dumpty."            |