

Teachers' Notes

THE VALUE OF READING

Much research has been done on the importance of reading and all studies show the same results. Students who read fluently, frequently and with pleasure consistently gain higher test scores at school as well as in their further studies, not only in English, but across the whole curriculum. Reading and enjoying the stories on this website will help your students to learn to love reading, and this will benefit every aspect of their education.

Learning to read is important, but learning to love reading is even more important.

Here are ten reasons for encouraging your students to love reading:

- Reading improves language skills, vocabulary and grammar
- Reading strengthens brain connections
- Reading increases depth of knowledge
- Reading improves memory
- Reading helps develop a creative imagination
- Reading improves concentration
- Reading encourages self-discipline
- Reading increases confidence
- Reading relaxes the body and calms the mind
- Reading improves critical thinking

HOW TO USE THE EXERCISES

1. The pre-reading questions

Prediction is an important element in comprehension. Use the pre-reading questions to help the reader to grasp the theme of the story and understand its progression. The pre-reading questions will help the reader to guess correctly the meanings of words that they may not know.

- Before reading, make sure the students have any background information they may need.
- Encourage discussion around the topic of the story, presented in the pre-reading questions.
- Make sure they know key items of vocabulary.

2. Reading the story

Allow the students time to read the story themselves in silence. Be ready to help if they stumble over unfamiliar words.

3. The exercises

The exercises follow a progression. The first exercise, entitled **How much did you understand?**, encourages students to check their overall grasp of the story and its structure. This exercise may take the form of putting sentences in the correct order, or offering true/false choices, or filling in key words. Students may have to read the story through again quickly before they can complete this exercise.

The next exercise (or exercises) focuses in more detail. There are more specific questions about time, place, person, or types of sentence. Please note that the purpose of these questions is not to teach grammar or vocabulary. They are all aimed at helping students to increase their reading comprehension skills. Some concentrate on the comprehension of individual words. Some encourage open-ended replies.

In the **What were they feeling?** exercises, the reader focuses on the personal impact of the events in the story. These questions encourage empathy with the characters.

The next type of exercise (often entitled **What do you think?**) aims to help the student think more widely, to talk about their own ideas and responses to the story, and increase their confidence in expressing their own opinions.

Where it's appropriate, further activities are suggested, for example enacting the story as a play, thinking of a new title, looking at similar stories on this website, or retelling the story to friends.

One final word. We hope that you and the students will enjoy the stories.

Stories from Beni Shangul-Gumuz

□



□

□

□ [Small version of map with Beni Shangul-Gumuz highlighted]

□

□ The Beni Shangul-

Gumuz region is in the far west of Ethiopia. It runs along the border between Ethiopia and Sudan. There are many different groups of people in this region, and they speak different languages and have their own special cultures.

-
- In this collection, there are stories from the Shinasha, Gumuz and Berta peoples of Beni Shangul-Gumuz.
-
- To read the stories, click on the titles below.

Gumuz Stories

Originally told by

- 1. The Honey Hunter

Belay Makonnen

- 2. The Baboon Child

Belay Makonnen

- 3. The Elephant's Head

Belay Makonnen

- 4. The People of the Sea

Egassi Reta

□

- **Berta Stories**

□

- 5. The Ungrateful Snake

Abdurahim

Ibrahim

- 6. The Lion's Whiskers

Fatuma Ali

- 7. The Two Travellers

Fatuma Ali

-
- **Shinasha Stories**
-
- 8. The Pot of Honey

Yirpa Kebede

- 9. The Story of Jahiti

Demelew Beyene

- 10. Adiberga and her
Brothers

Demelew Beyene

*Translations by Captain
Hamis Balla, Habasha
Feyisa and Mesfin
Habtemariam*

With grateful acknowledgement to Dires Gebremeskel and other members of the Beni Shangul-Gumuz Education and Culture Bureau for their invaluable help in the collection of these stories.

- © **These versions of the stories retold by Elizabeth Laird**
- © **Exercises written by Jacek Opienski**
- © **Illustrations by Eric Robson**
-

The Honey Hunter A Gumuz Story



Before you read the story

In the old days, before people learned how to be farmers and look after cattle, they found their food in the forests, mountains and deserts. They collected leaves and fruit and hunted wild animals.

- What kind of food did your ancestors find in the area where you live?
- How did they know where to look for their food?
- Was it easy or hard for them to find their food?

T'ala is a kind of beer.

Now read the story

In the old days, there was a honey hunter. He went to the forest and looked in the trees. He went to the mountains and looked in the caves. When he found honey, he collected it. Then he took it to the market and sold it.

A little bird helped the honey hunter. He flew about in the forest and looked for honey. When he found honey, he called to the hunter, and the hunter came.

One day, the bird called the honey hunter to a big tree. Bees were flying round the tree.

"There's honey in this tree," the honey hunter thought. "I will make a fire, and the smoke will drive the bees away. Then I can take the honey."

So the hunter made a fire. The smoke rose up into the tree. The bees did not like the smoke. They flew away. Now the hunter could easily take the honey.

Soon, there was a big pile of honey under the tree. The hunter looked at it.

"I can't carry all this honey in my hands," he thought. "I need my goatskin sack. I will go home and fetch it."

So the hunter went home to find his sack.

There was a porcupine in the forest. She came to the tree and saw the honey.

"Honey!" thought the porcupine. "That's very good to eat. I will hide it, and call my friends. We'll enjoy it together."

So the porcupine took the honey, and hid it. Then she went to find her friends.

Soon, the hunter came back with his goatskin sack. But the honey was not there.

"Where is my honey?" the hunter thought angrily. "A thief has taken it. Who is this thief?"

He looked carefully at the ground. He saw the marks of the porcupine's feet.

"The thief is not a man," he thought. "It's a porcupine. I'm going to find her, and get my honey."

The hunter began to look for the porcupine. He looked in the forest. The porcupine wasn't there. At last he came to a cave. He heard a noise inside it.

"Someone is hiding in the cave," thought the hunter. "Perhaps it's the porcupine. Perhaps she has hidden my honey in the cave."

The hunter went into the cave. He saw an old woman. She was baking barley, and making t'ala.

Now, the old woman was not a real woman. She was a wicked witch.

"What do you want?" the witch asked the hunter. "Why have you come to my cave?"

"I was hunting for honey," the hunter said. "I found some in a tree. I went to find my goatskin sack, and I left the honey in the forest. When I came back, the honey wasn't there. I saw the marks of a porcupine under the tree. She took my honey, and I want to find her."

The witch said, "The porcupines are mine. Human people have sheep and goats, but we witches keep porcupines. We eat them. Don't touch my porcupines. Don't hunt them. If you do, trouble will come to you."

The hunter was angry.

"Your porcupine is a thief," he said. "She took my honey, and I want to find her."

"Then take this piece of bread," the witch said, and she put some bread into the hunter's hand.

The hunter ran out of the cave. At once, he changed into a porcupine. There was no hair on his head now, but sharp quills grew all over his body. He had no arms and hands. He had four legs, and four feet, and he ran along the ground.

The porcupine man wanted to go home.

"My relatives will help me," he thought. "My family will know me."

He began to run through the forest.

On the way home, he passed the honey tree. The fire was still burning there. The porcupine man went too close to the fire. It caught him, and set fire to his quills. They began to burn.

Quickly, the porcupine man ran to the river, and jumped into the water. The fire went out. He came out of the water again, and stood on the land. There were no

quills on his body now. He was a man again. He had two arms and two hands. He walked on two legs.

But the man still had half the soul of a porcupine. He lived in the forest, and he ate fruits and leaves from the trees. He did not speak like a man, or like a porcupine. He did not live like a man, or like a porcupine.

The porcupine man is still in the forest. And he is still hunting for his honey.

[Click here to listen to the story]

Exercises

A. How much did you understand?

The honey hunter looked for honey in the forest and in the mountains.

Put sentences 1, 2 and 3 in the right order.

1. So the hunter made a fire.
2. When he found honey, he collected it.
3. So the hunter went home to find his sack.

There was a porcupine in the forest. She came to the tree and saw the honey that the hunter had left.

Put sentences 4, 5 and 6 in the right order.

4. The hunter began to look for the porcupine. He looked in the forest.
5. So the porcupine took the honey, and hid it.
6. He looked carefully at the ground. He saw the marks of the porcupine's feet.

The hunter heard a noise inside the cave. He went into the cave. He saw an old woman.

Put sentences 7, 8 and 9 in the right order.

7. "Your porcupine is a thief," he said. "She took my honey, and I want to find her."
8. "Don't touch my porcupines. Don't hunt them. If you do, trouble will come to you."
9. "I saw the marks of a porcupine under the tree."

B. Mixed sentences

The witch put some bread into the hunter's hand. He ran out of the cave. At once, he changed into a porcupine.

Now complete sentences 1, 2, 3, with the best endings from a, b, and c.

1. There was no hair on his head now,
 2. Quickly, the porcupine man ran to the river,
 3. He lived in the forest,
- a) and he ate fruits and leaves from the trees.
b) but sharp quills grew all over his body.
c) and jumped into the water.

C. Missing words

Fill in the missing words from the story.

1. In the old days, there was a honey hunter. He went to the forest and looked in the

2. One day, the bird called the honey hunter to a big tree. were flying round the tree.
3. "There's honey in this tree," the honey hunter thought. "I will make a"
4. Soon, there was a big of honey under the tree.
5. "I can't carry all this honey in my hands," he thought. "I need my sack."
6. "Where is my honey?" the hunter thought angrily. "A has taken it."
7. "The thief is not a man," he thought. "It's a"
8. At last he came to a He heard a noise inside it.
9. The hunter went into the cave. He saw an old woman. She was baking
10. The witch said, "The porcupines are mine. Human people have sheep and goats, but we witches keep porcupines. We them."

D. What do *you* think?

How did the little bird help the honey hunter?

Was the porcupine really a thief?

Why did the witch tell the honey hunter not to touch her porcupines?

Do you think that the porcupine man still hunts in the forest?

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

[Click here to return to the exercises]

[Click here to return to the story]

A. How much did you understand?

The right order of the sentences is 2, 1, 3

When he found honey, he collected it.

So the hunter made a fire.

So the hunter went home to find his sack.

The right order of the sentences is 5, 6, 4

So the porcupine took the honey, and hid it.

He looked carefully at the ground. He saw the marks of the porcupine's feet.

The hunter began to look for the porcupine. He looked in the forest.

The right order of the sentences is 9, 8, 7

"I saw the marks of a porcupine under the tree."

"Don't touch my porcupines. Don't hunt them. If you do, trouble will come to you."

"Your porcupine is a thief," he said. "She took my honey, and I want to find her."

B. Mixed sentences

1/b There was no hair on his head now, **but sharp quills grew all over his body.**

2/c Quickly, the porcupine man ran to the river, **and jumped into the water.**

3/a He lived in the forest, **and he ate fruits and leaves from the trees.**

C. Missing words

1. In the old days, there was a honey hunter. He went to the forest and looked in the **trees.**
2. One day, the bird called the honey hunter to a big tree. **Bees** were flying round the tree.
3. "There's honey in this tree," the honey hunter thought. "I will make a **fire.**"
4. Soon, there was a big **pile** of honey under the tree.
5. "I can't carry all this honey in my hands," he thought. "I need my **goatskin** sack."
6. "Where is my honey?" the hunter thought angrily. "A **thief** has taken it."
7. "The thief is not a man," he thought. "It's a **porcupine.**"
8. At last he came to a **cave.** He heard a noise inside it.
9. The hunter went into the cave. He saw an old woman. She was baking **barley.**
10. The witch said, "The porcupines are mine. Human people have sheep and goats, but we witches keep porcupines. We **eat** them."

▫ **The Baboon Child**

▫ **A Gumuz story**



▫
▫

▫ **Before you read the story**

- Have you learned a new way of doing something?
- Have you prepared for study in a different way?
- Have you helped to prepare food for cooking in a different way?
- Have you found a better way to get to school or work?

▫

▫ **Now read the story**

- The first man in the world was very poor. He had nothing to eat.
- "I will grow food for myself," he said.
- He planted pumpkins and corn for his food.

- Near the man's field was a troop of baboons. They watched the man. They wanted to eat his food. Every day, they waited. When the man left his field and went away, the baboons came and ate the man's food.
- One day, the man saw the baboons in his field. They were eating his ripe pumpkins. He ran after them.
- "Go away!" he shouted. "Don't steal my food! Leave my field alone!"
- The baboons ran away. But one little baboon child could not run fast. She stayed in the field.
- The man picked her up. The little baboon put her arms round his neck. He liked her.
- "You can stay with me," he said.
- The man took the baboon child to his hut. He looked after her. He gave her food to eat and water to drink.

- One day, when the baboon child was big enough, the man took her to the field with him. He began to sow his seed in the earth. The baboon child followed him. She picked up the seeds, and ate them. The man sat down beside the baboon child. She climbed onto his knees.
- "No," the man said gently. "Don't pick up the seeds. Don't eat them. Leave them in the earth. They will grow and we will have food to eat. The plants will make new seeds too. We can sow them in the earth next year."
- The baboon child understood the man's words. She stopped picking up the seeds and eating them.
- "Watch me," the man said to her. "Put the seeds in the earth, like this."
- The baboon child watched him. She took seeds from his hands, and put them in the earth.
- The plants grew. The baboon child helped the man. She weeded the field and brought in the harvest with him.

- 2. He planted pumpkins and corn for his food.
- 3. "Go away!" he shouted, "Don't steal my food! Leave my field alone!"
-
- *The man took the baboon child to his hut. He showed her how to plant seeds. He told her three things.*
- *Put sentences 4, 5 and 6 in the right order.*
- 4. "Watch me," the man said to her. "Put the seeds in the earth, like this."
- 5. "They will grow and we will have food to eat."
- 6. "Don't pick up the seeds. Don't eat them."
-
- *The man and the baboon child married and their children lived as men and women.*
- *Put sentences 7, 8 and 9 in the right order.*
- 7. They planted more fields, and moved to many new places.
- 8. The baboon child helped the man. She weeded the field and brought in the harvest with him.
- 9. They worked in the field. The family could grow more food now.
-
- **B. When...**
-

- *Now complete these sentences 1, 2, and 3 with the best endings a, b and c.*

- 1. When the man left his field and went away,

- 2. One day, when the baboon child was big enough,

- 3. When the son and the daughter grew up.....

- a)they married each other.

- b)the baboons came and ate the man's food.

- c)the man took her to the field with him.

-

-

- **C. Who was watching?**

-

- *In the story animals and the man watch each other.*

- 1. Who were the baboons watching?

- 2. Who was the man watching?

- 3. Who was the baboon child watching?

-

- **D. Now you tell a part of the story...**

-

- There are two important characters in the story - the first man and the baboon child. Retell the story. You can choose to be either the man or the baboon child.

-
- If you choose to be the first man you can start your story like this:
 - *I am the first man in the world. I plant food for myself.*

If you choose to be the baboon child you can start your story like this:
I am the baboon child. One day I went with other baboons to the first man's field.

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

The right order of the sentences is 2, 1, 3

The right order of the sentences is 6, 5, 4

-
- **Answers to the Exercises**
-
- **[Click here to return to the exercises]**
- **[Click here to return to the story]**
-
- **A. How much did you understand?**
-
- He planted pumpkins and corn for his food.
- "Go away!" he shouted, "Don't steal my food! Leave my field alone!"
- One day, the man saw the baboons in his field.
-
- "Don't pick up the seeds. Don't eat them."
- "They will grow and we will have food to eat."
- "Watch me," the man said to her. "Put the seeds in the earth, like this."
-
- *The right order of the sentences is 8, 9, 7*
- The baboon child helped the man. She weeded the field and brought in the harvest with him.
- They worked in the field. The family could grow more food now.
- They planted more fields, and moved to many new places.
-

□ **B. When...**

□

□ 1/b. When the man left his field and went away, **the baboons came and ate the man's food.**

□ 2/c. One day when the baboon child was big enough, **the man took her to the field with him.**

□ 3/a. When the son and the daughter grew up, **they married each other.**

□

□ **C. Who was watching?**

□

□ 1. Who were the baboons watching?

□ *They were watching the man.*

□ 2. Who was the man watching?

□ *He was watching the baboon child.*

□ 3. Who was the baboon child watching?

□ *She was watching the man.*

□

□

□

□

- **The Elephant's Head**
- **A Gumuz story**
-



-
-
-
- **Before you read the story**
-
- Do you believe in good luck and bad luck? Some people believe that wearing a special piece of jewellery called an "amulet" around your neck will protect you from bad things.
-

- Do you wear any good luck charms?
- Do you avoid some places because they are unlucky?

- Are there any animals or birds who bring bad luck?
- What do you do to keep bad luck away?

□

□ **Now read the story**

□

□ A long time ago, some hunters were walking along the road to Sudan. Suddenly, they met an elephant. An old hunter talked to the younger ones.

□ "Look," he said.

"The elephant is going to the river. We must kill him before he goes into the water. After an elephant drinks water, the bullets cannot enter him."

□ So the hunters took their rifles, and they killed the elephant on the road. They cut up the meat and took it to their hut. Then they sliced the meat and hung it on ropes to dry.

□ They cut all the meat from the elephant's head. Now, only the skull was left. The hunters hung the dry skull on the wall of their hut.

□ The men feasted on the elephant meat. It tasted good. They began talking about the hunt.

- "We are good hunters," they said. "The elephant was big, but he was foolish. He was bigger and stronger than us. Why didn't he run away from us? We were too clever for him!"
- And the men began to laugh at the elephant.
- One of the men heard something strange. He put up his hand.
- "Did you hear that noise, my brothers?" he said.
- "What noise?" said his friends.
- "Someone was laughing," the man said.
- "All of us were laughing!" said the others, and they began to laugh again.
- The strange noise came again. Now all the men could hear it. They stopped laughing, and looked at the elephant's skull.
- "The elephant is laughing," they said.
- They were afraid.
- Then the elephant's skull spoke.
- "Are you laughing at me?" it said.
- The oldest hunter looked at his friends.

□ "What kind of animal did we kill today?" he said. "It is dead, but it speaks to us. Take the skull outside. Don't leave the bones of this animal inside our house."

□ So the hunters carried the elephant's skull outside the house. But on the way, the skull began to sing:

□ "You laughed at me, you hunters!

□ I heard the words you said.

□ You are my killers, but who is alive?

□ You killed me, but who is dead?

□ You ate my meat, you stole my tusks,

□ You took my eyes, and I am blind,

□ But one day, I will eat you.

□ One day, you will be mine!"

[Click here to listen to the story]

□

□ Exercises

□

□ A. How much did you understand?

□

□ *The old hunter has a belief about shooting elephants.*

□ *Read sentences 1, 2 and 3. Now put them in the right order.*

- 1. So the hunters took their rifles, and they killed the elephant on the road.
- 2. "After an elephant drinks water, the bullets cannot enter him."
- 3. An old hunter talked to the younger ones.
-
- *Then the hunters prepared the meat and talked about the hunt.*
- *Now put sentences 4, 5 and 6 in the right order.*
- 4. The men feasted on the elephant meat. It tasted good.
- 5. They cut up the meat and took it to their hut.
- 6. "The elephant was big, but he was foolish."
-
- *Then one of the men heard something strange.*
- *Now put sentences 7, 8 and 9 in the right order.*
- 7. Then the elephant's skull spoke. "Are you laughing at me?" it said.
- 8. The strange noise came again. Now all the men could hear it.
- 9. "Did you hear that noise, my brothers?" he said.
-
- **B. But...**
-

- *Complete sentences 1, 2 and 3 by choosing the best of the three endings: a, b or c.*
- 1. "The elephant was big,
- 2. "You took my eyes, and I am blind,
- 3. "It is dead,
-
- a) but one day, I will eat you."
- b) but it speaks to us."
- c) but he was foolish."
-

▫ **Missing words**

- *The hunters prepared the elephant meat for cooking. Fill in the missing words.*
- 1. Then they the meat and hung it on ropes to dry.
- 2. They all the meat from the elephant's head.
- 3. The hunters the dry skull on the wall of their hut.
-

▫ **D. The elephant's song**

- *The elephant heard the hunters laughing at him. He sang a song for them.*
- *Here are three sentences. One of them is not in the song. Which one?*
- "You killed me."
- "You took my eyes."
- "I will eat you tomorrow."
-

▫ **E. What do you think?**

▫

- The elephant did not run away. Was the elephant foolish to do this?
- Were the men too clever for the elephant?
- Why were the men laughing at the elephant?
- Why did the hunters carry the elephant's skull outside the house?

What is the elephant skull telling the hunters in the song?

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

- **Answers to the Exercises**
-
- **[Click here to return to the exercises]**
- **[Click here to return to the story]**
-
- **A. How much did you understand?**
-
- *The right order of the sentences is 3, 2, 1.*
- An old hunter talked to the younger ones.
- "After an elephant drinks water, the bullets cannot enter him."
- So the hunters took their rifles, and the killed the elephant on the road.
-
- *The right order of the sentences is 5, 4, 6.*
- They cut up the meat and took it to their hut.
- The men feasted on the elephant meat. It tasted good.
- "The elephant was big, but he was foolish."
-
- *The right order of the sentences is 9, 8, 7.*
- "Did you hear that noise, my brothers?" he said.
- The strange noise came again. Now all the men could hear it.
- Then the elephant's skull spoke. "Are you laughing at me?" it said.
-
- **B. But...**

-
- 1/c. "The elephant was big, **but he was foolish.**"
- 2/a. "You took away my eyes, and I am blind, **but one day I will eat you.**"
- 3/b. "It is dead, **but it speaks to us.**"

-
- **Missing words**
-

- *The hunters prepared the elephant meat for cooking. Fill in the missing words.*

- 1. Then they **sliced** the meat and hung it on ropes to dry.
- 2. They **cut** all the meat from the elephant's head.
- 3. The hunters **hung** the dry skull on the wall of their hut.

-
- **D. The elephant's song**
-

- The elephant does not sing, "*I will eat you tomorrow.*"
- He sings, "*But one day I will eat you.*"

- **The People of the**
Sea
- **A Gumuz story**
-



-
-
- **Before you read the story**
-

- Have you ever collected leaves and berries from trees?
- Do you know which leaves and berries are good to eat?
- Do you know which leaves and berries are bad to eat?
- Do you know how to make medicine from the leaves and berries?

-
- **Now read the story**
-
- In the old days, people were good hunters and good fishermen. They understood the animals and the fish. They knew about the trees and plants.

- People used to go to the river and collect fruit from the birabira tree. They put the fruit in the river. The fruit confused the fish. The fish came up out of the deep water, and the people could catch them easily.
- One day, many people were near the river. They were putting birabira fruit into the water. They were waiting to catch the fish.
- "Look!" they said. "The water is rising!"
- The water was rising faster and faster. It was coming up, over the edge of the river. The people were frightened. They wanted to run away. The river was not a river now. It was a great sea.
- Then, in front of their eyes, the water divided into two. There was water to the left, and water to the right. But in the middle was a path.
- The people could not stop themselves. They walked down on to the path between the water on the left, and the water on the right. Then the waters came together again, over the heads of the people.

- Now the people changed. Some of them became elephants. Some became crocodiles. And some of them grew long tails. They were monkeys.

- The animals stayed in the water. They built houses there. And they live there still, under the sea.

-

- **[Click here to listen to the story]**

-

- **Exercises**

-

- **A. How much did you understand?**

-

- *In the old days the people knew about the trees and plants. They understood the animals and the fish.*

- *Put sentences 1, 2 and 3 in the right order.*

- 1. They were waiting to catch the fish.

- 2. People used to go to the river and collect fruit from the birabira tree.

- 3. They were putting birabira fruit into the water.

-

- *The water was rising faster and faster. It was coming up, over the edge of the river.*

- *Put sentences 4, 5 and 6 in the right order.*

- 4. Now the people changed. Some of them became elephants. Some became crocodiles.
- 5. Then the waters came together again, over the heads of the people.
- 6. The river was not a river now. It was a great sea.

▫ **B. The fruit from the birabira tree.**

- *In the story the people used to go to the river and collect fruit from the birabira tree.*
- *Now match sentences 1, 2, and 3 with sentences a, b and c.*
- 1. They put the fruit in the river.
- 2. The people were frightened.
- 3. And some of them grew long tails.
- a) They wanted to run away.
- b) The fruit confused the fish.
- c) They were monkeys.

▫ **C. Missing words**

- 1. There was water to the left, and water to the right. But in the middle was a
- 2. Then the waters came together again, over the of the people.

Fill in the missing words in these sentences.

- 3. Now the people changed. Some of them became Some became
- 4. The animals stayed in the water. They built there.
-
- **D. What do you think?**
-
- What do you think of the ending to this story?
- Do you think that the animals are still there, under the sea?

[\[Click here for the answers to the exercises\]](#)

-
- **Answers to the Exercises**
-
- **A. How much did you understand?**

[\[Click here to return to the exercises\]](#)
[\[Click here to return to the story\]](#)

-
- *The right order of these sentences is 2, 3, 1.*
- People used to go to the river and collect fruit from the birabira tree.
- They were putting birabira fruit into the water.
- They were waiting to catch the fish.

The right order of these sentences is 6, 5, 4.

- The river was not a river now. It was a great sea.
- Then the waters came together again, over the heads of the people.

- Now the people changed. Some of them became elephants. Some became crocodiles.

□

- **B. The fruit from the birabira tree.**

□

- 1/b. They put the fruit in the river. **The fruit confused the fish.**

- 2/a. The people were frightened. **They wanted to run away.**

- 3/c. And some of them grew long tails. **They were monkeys.**

- **C. Missing words**

- 1. There was water to the left, and water to the right. But in the middle was a **path**.

- 2. Then the waters came together again, over the **heads** of the people.

- 3. Now the people changed. Some of them became **elephants**. Some became **crocodiles**.

- 4. The animals stayed in the water. They built **houses** there.

□

□

□

A Berta story



Before you read the story

- Have you ever helped a stranger who is in pain?
- Did that person thank you?
- Has a stranger ever helped you when you were in trouble?
- Did you feel grateful to them?

*A **shamma** is a white shawl worn by Ethiopian men and women*

Now read the story

In the old days, people and animals lived together. Animals could speak to people, and people could speak to animals. Their languages were the same.

One day, a man was going on a journey. On the road he met a snake. The snake looked up at the man and said to him, "You are lucky, my brother. You have legs, and it is easy for you to walk. You can go fast along the road. But I don't have legs. I can only lie on the ground and crawl on my stomach. The stones hurt me, and I am very tired."

The man was sorry for the snake.

"You're right," he said. "It's not easy for you. I will carry you on my head."

So the man picked up the snake and put him on his head. He walked a long way with the snake on his head, but at last he was tired.

"Please," he said to the snake. "Get off my head now. I have carried you a long way. I'm tired, and I can't carry you any more."

The snake was angry.

"No," he said. "I didn't ask you to put me on your head. It was your idea. I want to stay here. Don't try to take me off. If you do, I will bite you, and my bite is very poisonous."

The snake's head was near the man's face. The man could see the snake's small angry eyes, and the snake's long tongue. He was frightened.

"No!" he said. "Please don't bite me. Let's go and find a judge. We will tell him about our quarrel. He can decide between us, and give us his judgment."

The snake agreed, and they went to find a judge. First, they met an elephant.

"The snake was tired and I wanted to help him," said the man. "I put him on my head, and I carried him for a long time. But the snake didn't thank me for it. He is ungrateful. I want to put him down, but he wants to stay on my head. If I take him off, he will bite me. Am I right, or is the snake right?"

The elephant looked at the snake.

"I know this animal," he thought. "His bite is very poisonous. It could kill even me, an elephant. But the man is small and weak. He cannot hurt me."

"The snake is right," the elephant said at last. "He did not ask for help. You invited him to sit on your head. You cannot ask him to go. Let the snake stay."

The snake was happy.

"You see?" he said to the man. "I was right, and you were wrong."

"Let's ask another animal," the man said. "The elephant is foolish. Look, here is the lion. Let's ask him."

So the man and the snake told their story to the lion. The lion listened carefully.

"The snake is very dangerous," he thought. "I don't want to be his enemy. He will come and bite me when I am asleep. But the man is small and weak. I am not afraid of him."

"The snake is right," the lion said. "Let him stay on your head."

"Now," the snake said to the man. "Is that enough for you? Do you agree with me now?"

"No," said the man. "I don't agree with you. Look, there is the leopard. We'll ask him."

So the man and the snake told their story to the leopard, and to the hyena, to the baboon and to the buffalo. All of them were frightened of the snake.

"The snake is right," they all said. "The man is wrong."

"We have asked all the animals now," said the snake, "and they all agree with me."

He was very happy.

"But there is one more animal," the man said. "We haven't asked the fox. Look, here he comes."

The fox was running through the forest towards them.

"Fox!" cried the man. "Stop! Please listen to us. We have quarrelled, and we want you to give your judgment."

"Why have you quarrelled?" asked the fox.

"I was sorry for the snake," said the man. "I picked him up and carried him on my head. I walked for a long way. I'm tired now, and I want to rest. But this ungrateful animal refuses to come down."

"I see," said the fox. "Now then, tell me your story again. I didn't understand it all. Begin it all again."

"Well," began the man. "I was walking along the road, and...."

"Stop!" cried the fox. "I can't hear you. You can't talk easily with the snake on your head. His tail is round your neck. It stops your voice from coming out. Come down, Snake, and sit beside the man. Then I can hear your story, and give my judgment."

So the snake came down from the man's head, and sat on the ground beside him.

The fox said:

"Oh foolish man,
Why don't you take
Your big strong stick
And kill the snake?"

So the man picked up his stick, and he hit the snake and killed him.

"Thank you, Fox!" he said. "You have saved my life. What can I give you? Do you want a sheep? Please, wait here, and I will bring you one from my flock."

The fox was happy. He lay down, and waited for his gift.

The man went to his flock to fetch a sheep.

On the way, he thought, "A sheep is a big gift, and I am a poor man. No, it's too much. I can't give the fox a sheep."

He called his dog. His dog ran up to him, and the man picked up the dog and hid him in his shamma. Then he went back to the fox.

When the dog saw the fox, he jumped out of his master's shamma. He ran to the fox and bit his neck.

The fox looked up to heaven, and said, "All animals are ungrateful, but man is the most ungrateful of all."

And so he died.

[Click here to listen to the story]

Exercises

A. How much did you understand?

A man met a snake on the road. They talked to each other.

Put sentences 1, 2 and 3 in the right order.

1. "Get off my head now. I have carried you a long way."
2. "You can go fast along the road. But I don't have legs."
3. "It's not easy for you. I will carry you on my head."

The snake wanted to stay on the man's head. They quarrelled.

Put sentences 4, 5 and 6 in the right order.

4. "But the snake didn't thank me for it. He is ungrateful."
5. "Please don't bite me. Let's go and find a judge."
6. "Don't try to take me off. If you do, I will bite you."

The man asked for advice from other animals.

Put sentences 7, 8 and 9 in the right order.

7. "You invited him to sit on your head. You cannot ask him to go."
8. "I don't agree with you. Look, there is the leopard. We'll ask him."

9. "I don't want to be his enemy. He will come and bite me when I am asleep."

The man asked the fox for his advice.

Put sentences 10, 11 and 12 in the right order.

10. "I can't hear you. You can't talk easily with the snake on your head."

11. "You have saved my life. What can I give you? Do you want a sheep?"

12. "I was sorry for the snake. I picked him up and carried him on my head."

B. Who is speaking?

In sentences 1, 2 and 3 there are two speakers. Who are they?

In sentences 4, 5 and 6 there are two speakers. Who are they?

In sentences 7, 8 and 9 there are three speakers. Who are they?

In sentences 10, 11 and 12 there are two speakers. Who are they?

C. What were they feeling?

Fill the gaps in these sentences with words from the story to show what the man and the animals were feeling.

1. The snake looked up at the man and said to him, "The stones hurt me, and I am very"

2. The man said, "I can't carry you any more." The snake was

3. The man could see the snake's small angry eyes, and the snake's long tongue. He was

4. "The snake is right," the elephant said at last. The snake was

5. So the man and the snake told their story to the leopard, and to the hyena, to the baboon and to the buffalo. All of them were of the snake.

6. "I was for the snake," said the man. "I picked him up and carried him on my head.

7. The man said, "What can I give you. Do you want a sheep?" The fox was

D. What do you think?

Was the man right to feel sorry for the snake?

Was the snake right to be angry when the man was tired?

Was the elephant's advice to the man foolish?

Were the other animals right to be afraid of the snake?

Was the man wrong to break his promise?

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

Answers to the Exercises

[[Click here to return to the exercises](#)]

[[Click here to return to the story](#)]

A. How much did you understand?

The right order of these sentences is 2, 3, 1

"You can go fast along the road. But I don't have legs."

"It's not easy for you. I will carry you on my head."

"Get off my head now. I have carried you a long way."

The right order of these sentences is 6, 5, 4

"Don't try to take me off. If you do, I will bite you."

"Please don't bite me. Let's go and find a judge."

"But the snake did not thank me for it. He is ungrateful."

The right order of these sentences is 7, 9, 8

"You invited him to sit on your head. You cannot ask him to go."

"I don't want to be his enemy. He will come and bite me when I am asleep."

"I don't agree with you. Look, there is the leopard. We'll ask him."

The right order of these sentences is 12, 10, 11

"I was sorry for the snake. I picked him up and carried him on my head."

"I can't hear you. You can't talk easily with the snake on your head."

"You have saved my life. What can I give you? Do you want a sheep?"

B. Who is speaking?

The two speakers in sentences 1, 2 and 3 are **the man and the snake**.

The two speakers in sentences 4, 5, and 6 are **the man and the snake**.

The three speakers in sentences 7, 8 and 9 are **the man, the elephant and the lion**.

The two speakers in sentences 10, 11 and 12 are **the fox and the man**.

C. What were they feeling?

Fill the gaps in these sentences with words from the story to show what the man and the animals were feeling.

1. The snake looked up at the man and said to him, "The stones hurt me, and I am very **tired**."

2. The man said, "I can't carry you any more." The snake was **angry**.

3. The man could see the snake's small angry eyes, and the snake's long tongue. He was **frightened**.

4. "The snake is right," the elephant said at last. The snake was **happy**.

5. So the man and the snake told their story to the leopard, and to the hyena, to the baboon and to the buffalo. All of them were **frightened** of the snake.

6. "I was **sorry** for the snake," said the man. "I picked him up and carried him on my head."

7. The man said, "What can I give you. Do you want a sheep?" The fox was **happy**.

The Lion's Whiskers

A Berta story



Before you read the story

When do you ask for help?
Who do you ask to help you?
Do you ask your family or your friends?
Do you ask more than one person?
Do they give you different answers?

Injera is a kind of flat bread made from the cereal tef.

Wot is a thick stew, served on injera.

Now read the story

A woman had a cruel husband. He shouted at her, and he beat her. He never spoke kindly to her.

"What can I do?" the woman thought. "I'm a good wife. I make injera and wot for my husband. I work hard in my house. I am never angry with my husband. But he always beats me. Why? What have I done?"

She went to see her family.

"My husband beats me," she told them. "What can I do? How can I stop him?"

She went to see her neighbours.

"My husband is always angry," she told them. "Why is he so cruel to me?"

Everyone gave the woman advice.

"Give him more food to eat," one person said.

"Don't give him so much food," said another.

"Talk to him more," a third person said.

"Don't say anything to him," said someone else.

At last, another woman said to her, "Go to see the wise man. He has good medicines. Ask him to give you some medicine for your husband."

So the woman went to see the wise man.

"Please sir, help me," she said. "My husband beats me. I need to give him some medicine. Then, perhaps, he will be kinder to me."

The wise man shook his head.

"I can't give you any medicine yet," he said. "First, you must go and steal the whiskers of a lion. Bring them to me. Then I can help you."

The woman was very frightened.

"Steal a lion's whiskers?" she thought. "How can I do that?"

She went home slowly. She was thinking.

The next day, her husband went off to work in his field. The woman chose a big goat from the flock and killed it. Then she carried some of the meat away from her house, and climbed a tree.

Soon, a lion came and lay down under the tree. The woman cut off a piece of meat, and threw it to the lion. The lion roared when he saw the woman, but he took the meat, and ate it hungrily. The woman threw more meat to the lion. It ate that, too.

The next day, the woman came back to the tree with more meat for the lion. The lion roared again, but his roar was quieter now. This time, the woman didn't climb very high. She gave the lion one piece of meat after another, and the lion ate them all.

Every day, for seven days, the woman returned to the tree, and every day, for seven days, she gave the lion pieces of meat to eat. Now the lion did not roar at all when he saw the woman. He waited quietly for his meat.

On the seventh day the lion finished eating, then he lay down on the ground and went to sleep. The woman waited in the tree. Then she threw a stick at the lion. The lion did not move.

Very quietly, the woman climbed down from the tree. She went to the lion, and pulled the whiskers from his face. Then she ran all the way home.

The next day, she took the lion's whiskers to the wise man.

"Look," she said. "Here are the whiskers of a lion. Now will you give me some medicine for my husband?"

The wise man took the whiskers in his hand.

"How did you get these?" he asked the woman.

"Well," she said. "I waited quietly in a tree, and every day I threw the lion pieces of meat. At first, he roared at me, but then he began to trust me. At last, he fell asleep, and I took the whiskers from his face."

The wise man smiled.

"You're a clever woman," he said. "You have tamed a lion. Now you can tame your husband. Be clever with him, like you were with the lion. Soon you will tame him, too."

[Click here to listen to the story]

Exercises

A. How much did you understand?

In this story the woman had a cruel husband. He shouted at her, and he beat her. She asked several people for help.

Put sentences 1, 2 and 3 in the right order.

1. So the woman went to see the wise man.
2. She went to see her family.
3. She went to see her neighbours.

The woman decided to feed the lion. She threw meat to the lion.

Put sentences 4, 5 and 6 in the right order.

4. On the seventh day, the lion finished eating, then he lay down on the ground and went to sleep.
5. The lion roared again, but his roar was quieter now.
6. The lion roared when he saw the woman, but he took the meat, and ate it hungrily.

The woman took the lion's whiskers to the wise man.

Put sentences 7, 8 and 9 in the right order.

7. "Now you can tame your husband. Be clever with him, like you were with the lion."
8. "Now will you give me some medicine for my husband?"
9. "At first, he roared at me, but then he began to trust me."

B. What? How? Why?

The woman asks herself several questions.

*Complete sentences 1, 2, and 3 with **How? What? or Why?***

1. "I am never angry with my husband. But he always beats me. Why? have I done?"
2. "My husband beats me," she told them. "What can I do? can I stop him?"
3. "My husband is always angry," she told them. "..... is he so cruel to me?"

C. Missing words

The woman went home slowly. She was thinking. "Steal a lion's whiskers? How can I do that?"

Fill in the missing words.

1. The woman chose a big from the flock and killed it.
2. The woman cut off a piece of, and threw it to the lion.
3. The next day, the woman came back to the with more meat for the lion.
4. Now the lion did not at all when he saw the woman.
5. The woman waited in the tree. Then she threw a at the lion.
6. She went to the lion, and pulled the from his face.
7. The next day, she took the lion's whiskers to the man.
8. "Now will you give me some for my husband?"

D. What do you think?

How did the woman get the trust of the lion?

Do you think she was clever?

Do you think that she will get her husband's trust?

Do you think that she will tame her husband?

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

Answers to the Exercises

[[Click here to return to the exercises](#)]

[[Click here to return to the story](#)]

A. How much did you understand?

The right order of the sentences is 2, 3, 1.

She went to see her family.

She went to see her neighbours.

The woman went to see the wise man.

The right order of the sentences is 6, 5, 4.

The lion roared when he saw the woman, but he took the meat, and ate it hungrily.

The lion roared again, but his roar was quieter now.

On the seventh day, the lion finished eating, then he lay down on the ground and went to sleep.

The right order of the sentences is 8, 9, 7.

“Now will you give me some medicine for my husband?”

“At first, he roared at me, but then he began to trust me.”

“Now you can tame your husband. Be clever with him, like you were with the lion.”

B. What? How? Why?

*Complete sentences 1, 2, and 3 with **How?** **What?** or **Why?***

1. “I am never angry with my husband. But he always beats me. **Why?** **What** have I done?”

2. “My husband beats me,” she told them. “What can I do? **How** can I stop him?”

3. “My husband is always angry,” she told them. “**Why** is he so cruel to me?”

C. Missing words

1. The woman chose a big **goat** from the flock and killed it.

2. The woman cut off a piece of **meat**, and threw it to the lion.

3. The next day, the woman came back to the **tree** with more meat for the lion.

4. Now the lion did not **roar** at all when he saw the woman.

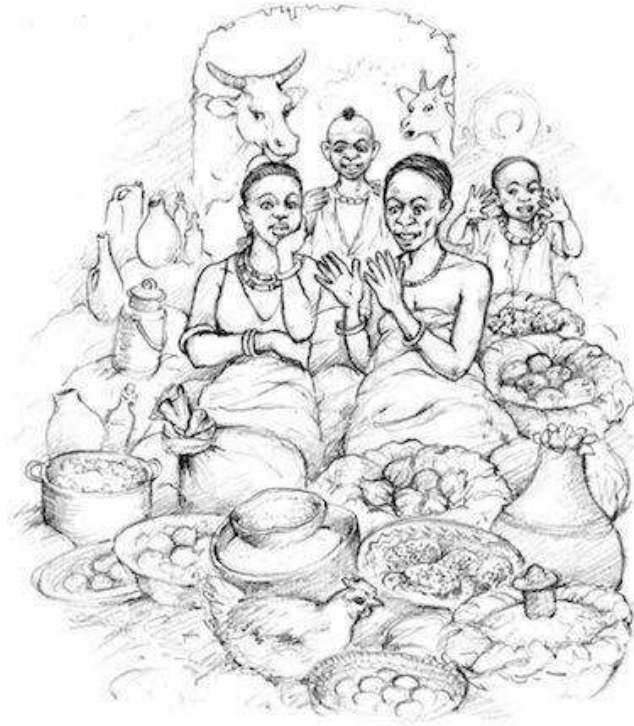
5. The woman waited in the tree. Then she threw a **stick** at the lion.

6. She went to the lion, and pulled the **whiskers** from his face.

7. The next day, she took the lion's whiskers to the **wise** man.

8. “Now will you give me some **medicine** for my husband?”

The Two Travellers
A Berta story



Before you read the story

- Do you share with others when you have plenty?
- Do you share with others when you have just enough?
- Do you know someone who does not like to share?
- Why doesn't that person want to share?

Tef is a cereal that grows in Ethiopia

A shamma is a white shawl worn by Ethiopian men and women

Now read the story

Once, there were two brothers. One of them was rich, but the other was poor. The rich brother liked money. He did not like to give it to people. And he never gave money to his poor brother.

Sometimes his poor brother's wife and children were hungry, but the rich brother never helped them.

"They are your children, not mine," the rich brother said. "You must feed them yourself."

Sometimes, travellers came to the rich brother's house.

"Go away," he said to them. "I am a poor man. There is nothing for you in my house."

His poor brother was always kind to travellers.

"Come in, my friends," he said to them. "Our house is poor, and we have very little food, but please, take it. Eat. You are welcome."

One evening, the sun was going down. The rich brother was sitting in his house. His wife was cooking his favourite dinner.

"It's chicken," the rich man thought. "Good. I like chicken."

Someone knocked at the door. The man went to open it. Two strangers stood outside.

"We are poor travellers," they said. "We are tired, and it will soon be dark. Please, sir, can we come in, and stay the night with you?"

The rich brother thought about his chicken.

"I don't want to share my dinner," he thought. "I want to eat it all myself."

"No," he said rudely. "You can't come in here. Go and find my brother. He's a fool. He always gives things to beggars."

And he shut the door.

On the same evening, the poor brother and his wife were sitting sadly beside an empty pot.

"There's no dinner for us tonight," the poor man's wife said to him. "We must go hungry to bed."

They heard a knock on the door. The poor brother opened it. Two strangers stood outside.

"We are travellers," they said. "We are tired and ..."

They were still talking when the poor man cried, "Come in! You are welcome! Sit beside the fire. But my friends, I'm sorry. We have no food tonight. I can't give you anything to eat. And there's only water to drink. Wife, give some water to our guests!"

The strangers smiled at the poor man.

"We don't need your food," they said. "Look, here is food for all of us."

They took food out of their shammias and shared it.

"Stay here with us tonight," the poor man said. "You cannot go now. It's dark already."

The travellers looked round the hut. It was very small.

"We will sleep outside, beside your door," they said. "We will go on our journey early in the morning. We will not see you again. Thank you for your goodness to us. You welcomed us kindly. You had very little, but you wanted to share it with us."

The two strangers went outside to sleep. The poor man and his wife slept too.
In the morning, the poor man's wife opened her eyes.

"Husband! Wake up!" she cried. "Look!"

Her husband sat up and looked round. His small hut was full of good things!
There were sacks of tef and barley, and pots of oil and honey. A bag of money was
beside his bed. Outside, he could hear the noise of sheep and goats, cows and bulls.

"Those good men, our guests, have made us rich!" the poor man said.

"They were not men," his wife said. "Didn't you look at their faces, dear
husband? They were good spirits. God sent them to us. I know they came from God."

[Click here to listen to the story]

Exercises

A. How much did you understand?

*In the story there were two brothers. One of them was rich, and the other was poor.
Put sentences 1, 2 and 3 in the right order.*

1. "They are your children, not mine."
2. "Good. I like chicken."
3. "I am a poor man. There is nothing for you in my house."

*Then the travellers went to the poor man's house. They were tired and wanted to stay
the night.*

Put sentences 4, 5, and 6 in the right order.

4. "Look, here is food for all of us."
5. "We are tired and..."
6. "We have no food tonight."

The travellers spent the night at the poor man's house.

Put sentences 7, 8, and 9 in the right order.

7. "You had very little, but you wanted to share it with us."
8. "Those good men, our guests, have made us rich!"
9. "They were good spirits. God sent them to us."

B. Who says?

Look at sentences 1, 2 and 3 in Exercise A

Who says sentence 1?

Who says sentence 2?

Who says sentence 3?

Look at sentences 4, 5 and 6 in Exercise A

Who says sentence 4?

Who says sentence 5?

Who says sentence 6?

Look at sentences 7, 8 and 9 in Exercise A

Who says sentence 7?

Who says sentence 8?

Who says sentence 9?

C. Missing words

The travellers stay at the poor man's house.

Fill in the missing words from the story.

1. "We don't need your,," they said.
2. They took food out of their shammās and it.
3. "We will sleep, beside your door," they said.
4. "We will not you again."
5. "Thank you for your to us."
6. "You had very, but you wanted to share it with us."

D. What is your opinion?

Was it right for the rich brother to say to his brother, "You must feed your children yourself"?

Was it right for the poor brother to welcome travellers when he had no food?

Was the poor man foolish?

Were the travellers men or spirits?

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

Answers to the Exercises

[[Click here to return to the exercises](#)]

[[Click here to return to the story](#)]

A. How much did you understand?

The right order of these sentences is 1, 3, 2.

"They are your children, not mine."

"I am a poor man. There is nothing for you in my house."

"Good. I like chicken."

The right order of these sentences is 5, 6, 4.

"We are tired and..."

"We have no food tonight."

"Look, here is food for all of us."

The right order of these sentences is 7, 9, 8.

"You had very little, but you wanted to share it with us."

"Those good men, our guests, have made us rich!"

"They were good spirits. God sent them to us."

B. Who says?

Who says sentence 1? **The rich man**

Who says sentence 2? **The rich man**

Who says sentence 3? **The rich man**

Who says sentence 4? **The travellers**

Who says sentence 5? **The travellers**

Who says sentence 6? **The poor man**

Who says sentence 7? **The travellers**

Who says sentence 8? **The poor man's wife**

Who says sentence 9? **The poor man**

C. Missing words

1. "We don't need your **food**," they said.

2. They took food out of their shammass and **shared** it.

3. "We will sleep **outside**, beside your door," they said.

4. "We will not **see** you again."

5. "Thank you for your **goodness** to us."

6. "You had very **little**, but you wanted to share it with us."

The Pot of Honey
A Shinasha story



Before you read the story

- What do you do if you find some money?
- Do you give it back to the person who lost it?
- Or do you keep it for yourself?

Tef is a cereal that grows in Ethiopia.

Now read the story

Once upon a time, a lion was going on a journey. On the way, he found a pot of honey.

"This looks good to eat," the lion thought. "I'll take it with me."

So he picked up the honey and tried to carry it.

A monkey saw him. She liked honey.

"Hello, Lion," she called out. "What are you carrying?"

"My honey," the lion answered.

"It's difficult for you," said the monkey. "You don't have any hands. I have an idea. Let me ride on your back, and give the honey to me. I will hold it for you."

The lion was happy.

"That is a good idea," he said. "Jump on my back, Monkey, and hold the honey for me. But don't eat any of it! If you do, I will be very angry."

And the lion opened his mouth, and showed the monkey his long teeth.

The monkey climbed on to the lion's back, and the lion walked on. The monkey looked at the honey in her hands. It looked delicious. It smelled good. She

put her finger into the pot, and licked it. The honey tasted wonderful. She put her finger into the honey again.

"What are you doing?" asked the lion. "Are you eating my honey?"

"Oh no, no," said the monkey. "I am holding it very carefully."

The monkey took her finger out of the honey. A drop fell on the lion's head. The lion stopped walking.

"What was that?" he said. "Was that my honey? Are you eating it?"

"No, oh no," said the monkey. "It was a tear. I am crying, and my tears fell on your head."

"Your tears? Why are you crying?" asked the lion. "Are you sad?"

"Yes," said the monkey. "I'm very sad, because my mother is dead."

"Your mother? When did she die?"

"Many years ago."

"Then don't be sad, Monkey. Don't cry. All animals must die. You and I will die one day."

And the lion walked on.

Soon, the monkey finished all the honey. The pot was empty now. The monkey was worried.

"The lion will be angry," she thought.

"Lion!" she called out. "I must go now. My relatives live near here. Take your honey!"

She jumped off the lion's back and threw the pot at him. Then she began to run away.

The lion looked at his pot. It was empty.

"You have eaten all my honey!" he roared. "Come here, you thief! I will punish you!"

The monkey jumped up into a tree. The lion jumped up too. He caught her tail in his mouth and bit it off. But he couldn't catch the monkey. She ran away from him, into the forest.

The monkey was angry with the lion now.

"My poor tail," she thought. "I have lost my beautiful tail!"

She looked down at the ground. The lion was still there. He was watching her. She jumped into another tree. The lion followed her.

"I'll catch you, you wicked monkey!" roared the lion.

"I will find you easily. You are the monkey with no tail!"

"Hmm," thought the monkey. "The lion is right. It will be easy for him to find me, because I have no tail."

She ran on, through the trees.

"I must find my family," she thought.

Soon, she came to a big group of her relatives. They were sitting in the trees, eating fruit.

"What happened to you?" they all said. "Where is your tail?"

"My tail?" the monkey said. "I cut it off. It was a long, ugly thing. It was always dirty. It's much better without a tail. Look at me. I'm beautiful now! I'm very happy without my tail."

"It's true," all the other monkeys said. "Tails are long and ugly. You are beautiful now. Cut off our tails, too."

So the monkey cut the tails off all her relatives.

Just then, they heard a roaring noise in the forest. They were frightened.

"The lion is coming," they said.

The lion came out of the trees. He stood on a hill, and he called to the monkeys.

"Monkeys! Listen to me!" he called out. "I am looking for a monkey who has no tail. Where is she? Give her to me! If you don't, I will chase you and eat you all."

"A monkey with no tail?" all the monkeys said. "But we have all cut off our tails! There are no tails here."

The lion was very angry.

"The monkey has tricked me," he thought.

"Come down from the trees," he called out to the monkeys. "I will find the one who ate my honey!"

The monkeys were frightened of the lion. They came down from the trees and sat on the ground.

"Walk in front of me, one by one," the lion said.

The first monkey walked in front of the lion.

"Open your mouth," he said. "Vomit up the food from your stomach."

The monkey opened her mouth, and vomited up her food. There were only seeds in her stomach.

The next monkey walked in front of the lion. She vomited up her food, too. There were only fruit in her stomach.

All the monkeys walked in front of the lion. None of them had any honey in their stomachs.

At last, the first monkey stood in front of the lion.

"Vomit up your food," he said.

She vomited up her food, and the honey came out of her mouth.

"Aha!" said the lion. "You are the thief!"

The monkey was very frightened.

"Oh please, please, dear Lion," she said. "It's true. I ate your honey, but I'm very sorry. I'll never do it again."

"No," said the lion. "You will not do it again, because now I'm going to punish you. I'm going to make a big fire and burn you in it."

He caught the monkey and carried her under his arm. He went out of the forest to a big field. There was tef straw in the field. He picked up the straw, and put it on top of the monkey.

"Stay here," he said. "I'm going to look for fire."

And he went away to find fire.

At once, the monkey ran out from under the straw. There was a tree above her head. She climbed up the tree, and hid in it.

The tree was full of fruits. The monkey picked the fruits, and threw them down on to the straw. Then she sat in the tree and waited.

Soon, the lion came back. He was carrying a burning stick. He touched the straw with his stick. At once, it began to burn.

"You foolish monkey! I'm punishing you now," cried the lion. "You'll never steal my honey again!"

The fire grew hotter and hotter. The fruit on the straw began to cook. Suddenly, one fruit exploded with a loud noise.

"That was the monkey's eye!" the lion said. He was very happy.

Bang! Another fruit exploded.

"That was the monkey's other eye!" cried the lion.

Bang! Bang! Two more fruits exploded.

"Those were the monkey's heart, and her stomach!" roared the lion.

The monkey was watching the lion from the tree. She was laughing and laughing. The lion heard her. He looked up, and saw her.

"What?" he cried. "Is that you? What are you doing there? You were in the fire! I heard your eyes and your heart and your stomach. They were exploding in the heat!"

"I *was* in the fire," the monkey said, "but now I'm up here, in the tree."

"How did you get there?" said the lion. "I don't understand."

"It was easy," the monkey answered. "You set fire to the straw, and the smoke rose up. The smoke lifted me, and it carried me up here, into the tree."

"Is that true? I didn't know smoke could carry people," said the lion.

The monkey laughed again.

"You didn't know? But you are the lion, the greatest, the cleverest, the strongest of all the animals," she said. "I'm only a poor little monkey, but even I know about riding on the smoke."

"Of course I know about riding on the smoke!" roared the lion. "Do you think, you stupid monkey, that you are cleverer than me? Watch me. I'm going to ride on the smoke too. The smoke will carry me up into the tree, and then I'll catch you. And you won't run away from me again!"

So the lion jumped into the fire. But the smoke didn't carry him up into the tree. The fire burned him and he died.

The monkey was happy.

"My enemy is dead," she said.

She came down from the tree, and went to find her relatives in the forest.

[Click here to listen to the story]

Exercises

A. How much did you understand?

The monkey offered to carry the pot of honey for the lion, because the lion did not have any hands. The monkey sat on the lion's back, and started to eat the honey.

The lion asked three questions. Put them in the right order.

1. "Why are you crying?" asked the lion. "Are you sad?"
2. "Your mother? When did she die?"
3. "What was that?" he said. "Was that my honey? Are you eating it?"

The lion was angry with the monkey because the monkey had eaten all the honey. Put the lion's angry sentences in the right order.

4. "I'll catch you, you wicked monkey!" roared the lion.
5. "Come here, you thief! I will punish you!"
6. "I will find you easily. You are the monkey with no tail!"

The lion talked to all the monkeys. He wanted to find out who had eaten his honey. Put his commands in the right order.

7. "Open your mouth," he said. "Vomit up the food from your stomach."
8. "Walk in front of me, one by one," the lion said.
9. "Come down from the trees," he called out to the monkeys. "I will find the one who ate my honey!"

B. Who is stupid? Who is cleverer? Who is the cleverest?

Fill the gaps in these sentences with the right words from the list below.

1. The monkey laughed again. "You didn't know? But you are the lion, the greatest,, the strongest of all the animals," she said.
2. "Of course I know about riding on the smoke!" roared the lion. "Do you think, you monkey, that you are than me?"

cleverer, stupid, the cleverest

C. What do you think?

Was the lion right to take the pot of honey for himself?

Was the monkey right to eat the honey while sitting on the lion's back?

Was the monkey clever to trick the lion?

Was the lion right to bite off the monkey's tail?

Was the lion foolish to say that he knew about riding the smoke?

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

[\[Click here to return to the exercises\]](#)

[\[Click here to return to the story\]](#)

A. How much did you understand?

The right order of these sentences is 3, 1, 2

"What was that?" he said. "Was that my honey? Are you eating it?"

"Why are you crying?" asked the lion. "Are you sad?"

"Your mother? When did she die?"

The right order of these sentences is 5, 4, 6

"Come here, you thief! I will punish you!"

"I'll catch you, you wicked monkey!" roared the lion.

"I will find you easily. You are the monkey with no tail!"

The right order of the lion's commands is 9, 8, 7

"Come down from the trees," he called out to the monkeys. "I will find the one who ate my honey!"

"Walk in front of me, one by one," the lion said.

"Open your mouth," he said. "Vomit up the food from your stomach."

B. Who is stupid? Who is cleverer? Who is the cleverest?

1. The monkey laughed again. "But you are the lion, the greatest, **the cleverest**, the strongest of all the animals," she said.

2. "Of course I know about riding on the smoke!" roared the lion. "Do you think, you **stupid** monkey, that you are **cleverer** than me?"

The Story of Jahiti A Shinasha story



Before you read the story

- Sometimes, parents love one of their children more than the others. What kinds of problems does this make in a family?
- What happens when stepmothers or stepfathers don't love their stepchildren?
- Can stepbrothers and stepsisters be happy together?

Tef is a cereal that grows in Ethiopia.

Now read the story

Once upon a time, there was a merchant and his wife. They had a baby daughter called Jahiti. The man's wife died, and he married another woman. Soon, she had a baby daughter too.

The two sisters grew up together. Jahiti was a beautiful girl. She was good and kind. But Jahiti's stepmother did not love her.

Jahiti worked hard in the house, but her stepmother never gave her new clothes. Jahiti always fetched the water, and carried things home from the market, but her stepmother never gave her good food to eat.

Jahiti's sister was an ugly, lazy girl, but her mother loved her. She gave her daughter beautiful white clothes, and gold jewellery. Jahiti's sister did not help in the house, or fetch the water, or carry things home from the market. But her mother always gave her the best food to eat.

One day, Jahiti's stepmother said to her daughter, "My darling, you are a big girl now. Soon we must find a husband for you. Put on your best dress today, and your gold necklace. Go to the market. The young men will be there. They will see

you, and they will fall in love with you. We will choose the best one to be your husband."

Jahiti's father heard his wife. He called his oldest daughter.

"Jahiti, you must go with your sister," he said. "You must find a husband, too."

His wife heard her husband.

"That stupid Jahiti!" she thought. "I don't want to find a husband for her. I want to find one for my own dear daughter."

Jahiti went to her stepmother.

"Please, Stepmother," she said. "My father wants me to go to the market with my sister. He wants me to find a husband, too. But my dress is old and dirty. Will you give me a new one?"

"A new dress? For you?" her stepmother laughed. "Do you think I am rich? No, you stupid girl. I have no new dress for you. Go now. Your sister is waiting."

Jahiti and her sister walked to the market. Jahiti was sad.

"No one will talk to me," she thought. "My dress is old and dirty. The young men will not look at me."

There were many people in the market. Farmers were selling their tef. Women were selling vegetables. Merchants were selling cloth, and pots, and shoes.

There was a handsome young man at the market, too. He was with his friends. He saw Jahiti, and fell in love with her. The young man and his friends came up to the girls, and they began to sing:

"Who do we like? Who is the best?

Here's an ugly girl in a new white dress.

We say 'no' to her, but we say 'yes'

To the beautiful girl in the ugly dress!"

The young man wanted to talk to Jahiti, but her sister was angry.

"No," she said. "Our mother is waiting for us. Come, Jahiti, we must go home."

The two girls went home.

"Well?" said Jahiti's stepmother. "What happened at the market?"

"Oh, Mother," Jahiti's sister said. "The young men were so foolish. They sang,

'Who do we like? Who is best?

Here's a girl in a new white dress

We say 'no' to her, but we say 'yes'

To her sister in the ugly dress!'"

"What?" said her mother. "That is very strange. Don't worry, my dear. Next week you will go to the market again, and you will wear Jahiti's dress, and she will wear yours."

So the next week, the two sisters went to the market again. Now Jahiti was wearing her sister's beautiful white dress, and she wore her sister's gold necklace round her neck. But her sister was wearing Jahiti's dirty old clothes.

The handsome young man and his friends were there waiting for them. They sang:

"Here comes the girl that we like best,

Not the ugly girl, in the dirty dress!

We say 'no' to her, but we say 'yes'

To the beautiful girl in the new white dress!"

The handsome young man came to Jahiti and said, "Beautiful girl, who is your father? Who is your mother? I want to come to your house and make you my bride."

The two girls went home.

"Well?" said Jahiti's stepmother. "What happened today?"

"Mother," said Jahiti's sister. "The young men looked only at Jahiti, and the most handsome of them all wants to marry her. I am angry with my sister. I want that young man for myself."

Her mother was very angry.

"That girl, Jahiti, will always bring us trouble," she said. "I don't want her here in my house any more. Listen, daughter. Take your sister to the forest. Cut branches from the trees to make a place for a bride. Tell your sister to climb up into the tree. While she is in the tree, put some laga bark near the river. In the evening, she will go to the river to fetch water. She will slip on the bark and fall into the water. And that will be the end of her!"

So the sisters went to the forest. Jahiti climbed up a tree. She was happy.

"My bridegroom will come for me," she thought. "He is handsome and strong, and he loves me."

She began to cut branches to make the place for the bride.

Her sister picked up some laga bark and ran to the river. She put the bark down by the water. Then she went back to the forest.

"Jahiti!" she called. "Come down from the tree, you lazy girl! My mother is calling you. She wants water. You must go to the river and fill your pot."

Jahiti came down from the tree. She left the branches in the forest and ran home. She picked up her pot and hurried to the river. But her feet slipped on the laga bark, and she fell into the water.

Now, a wicked demon lived in the river. He jumped up and caught Jahiti. She could not escape from him.

"You are mine, now," the demon said, "and I will never let you go."

Jahiti's father, the merchant, was travelling far away from home.

The next day, when he returned, he said to his wife, "Where is my daughter? Where is my dear Jahiti?"

"I don't know," his wife said. "She ran away, and she didn't come back."

Then the bridegroom came to the merchant's house, with all his friends.

"Where is Jahiti?" he said. "Where is my beautiful bride?"

"I don't know," said Jahiti's stepmother. "She went out, and she didn't come home."

Jahiti's father was very sad. He did not eat. He did not drink. He could not sleep at night.

His wife said,

"Eat, husband. Drink, my dear.

Jahiti will come. She will soon be here."

But her husband answered,

"I will not drink, I will not eat.

I want my child, my daughter sweet."

Then he said to his wife, "Go and call my daughter. Call Jahiti. Tell her to come home to her father."

So Jahiti's stepmother went down to the river.

She stood by the water, and she called out,

"Jahiti, your father will not eat.

He will not drink, he sits at home.

Why are you hiding? Why do you wait?

Your mother is calling. Come, child, come!"

She did not see Jahiti, but she heard her voice.

"My mother is dead, but I know you.

You wanted to kill me, and drown me too.

Tell my father to drink and eat.

He has lost Jahiti, his daughter sweet!"

Jahiti's stepmother went home to her husband.

"Well, wife?" he said. "Where is my daughter?"

"She will not come," his wife said. "She is a wicked girl. She does not respect you. She said,

"Tell my father to drink and eat.

Jahiti has friends that she wants to meet!"

Her husband did not believe her.

"What have you done to my daughter?" he said. "Go and find her, and bring her to me.

I will not drink, I will not eat!

I want Jahiti, my daughter sweet."

The girls from the village heard the merchant's words. They all went to the river.

"Jahiti, your father calls you again.

He will not rest. He waits at home.

We are your sisters. We are your friends.

Come home with us. Jahiti, come!"

But Jahiti called out from the middle of the river,

"I have no mother. My father's wife

Brought me here to take my life.

Tell my father he must forget

His poor Jahiti, his daughter sweet!"

The village girls went back to Jahiti's father.

"Your daughter cannot come home," they told him. "You must forget her."

Jahiti's bridegroom could not forget his bride. He thought about her every day.

"She was my bride, my darling, and I have lost her," he thought sadly.

One day, he was taking his father's cattle to the river. Suddenly, he saw a girl in the water. She was thin and sad. She was crying.

"Jahiti! My love! Is that you?" the young man called out. "Why are you there, in the river? Why don't you come out?"

"I can't come out," answered Jahiti. "A demon has caught me. His magic holds me here."

"How can I help you?" asked her bridegroom. "What can I do?"

"I am growing weak and thin here in the river," said Jahiti. "Bring me some food."

"I have food with me here," cried her bridegroom. "I will throw it to you. Catch it, Jahiti!"

He threw her some food. Jahiti caught it, and ate it.

"I will come again tomorrow," said her bridegroom. "I will save my food and give it to you."



So the next day, the bridegroom did not eat his food. He kept it, and took it to Jahiti. He gave her his food again on the third day, and on the fourth.

Now Jahiti was growing stronger and fatter, but her bridegroom was becoming thin and weak.

"What is wrong with you?" his father asked him. "Are you sick?"

"No, Father, I am not sick," Jahiti's bridegroom said.

"Then why don't you eat?" asked his father. "What are you doing with your food?"

"I can't tell you," Jahiti's bridegroom said.

"My son," said his father. "I am your father. If you have a problem you must tell me. Perhaps I can help you."

At last, Jahiti's bridegroom said, "A demon took my bride, my dear Jahiti. Now she is in the river, and she can't come out. Every day I take her my food. She eats it, and she is growing stronger, but now I am thin and weak."

"My poor boy," said his father. "You must save Jahiti. Go to the river again today. Say to her, 'Jahiti, I want to save you. How can I do it?'"

So the bridegroom went back to the river.

He called to Jahiti, "Jahiti, are you there?"

At once, she came out of the water.

"Jahiti, I want to save you," the bridegroom said. "How can I do it?"

She answered, "My master, the demon, is always hungry. Kill a bull and cut up the meat. Bring a big piece to the river and throw it in. The demon will see the meat. He will jump up to catch it. Then he will let me go, and I will run out of the water."

The bridegroom went back to his father. He told him everything.

"Take my biggest bull," his father said. "Kill it, and throw the meat to the demon."

So the bridegroom killed the bull, and he took the meat to the river. He threw it into the water. At once, the demon jumped up to catch the meat. Hungrily, he began to eat it.

"Come, Jahiti, come!" her bridegroom shouted.

Jahiti began to run out of the water. But another demon was waiting near the edge of the river. This demon was blind.

"Meat! I can smell meat!" he shouted. He heard Jahiti, and he jumped on her. She pushed him away. His hand caught her breast, and tore it off, but Jahiti ran out of the river, into the arms of her bridegroom.

"My beautiful girl!" he cried. "You are safe at last!"

"I am safe, but I am not beautiful now," Jahiti said. "Look at me. I have only one breast."

"You are beautiful to me," said her bridegroom.

So Jahiti and her bridegroom were married, and they had many children, and lived happily ever after.

[Click here to listen to the story]

Exercises

A. How much did you understand?

In this story, Jahiti had a stepsister. Her mother sent her own daughter to market to find a husband, and Jahiti went too.

Put sentences 1, 2 and 3 in the right order.

1. "That stupid Jahiti!" she thought. "I don't want to find a husband for her."
2. "Jahiti, you must go with your sister," he said. "You must find a husband, too."
3. "My darling, you are a big girl now. Soon we must find a husband for you."

The two sisters went together to the market.

Put sentences 4, 5 and 6 in the right order.

4. The young man wanted to talk to Jahiti, but her sister was angry.
5. Jahiti was sad. "No one will talk to me," she thought. "My dress is old and dirty."
6. There was a handsome young man at the market, too. He was with his friends. He saw Jahiti, and he fell in love with her.

A week later, Jahiti's stepmother sent the two sisters to the market again.

Put sentences 7, 8 and 9 in the right order.

7. They sang, "Here comes the girl that we like best, not the ugly girl, in the dirty dress!"
8. Now Jahiti was wearing her sister's beautiful white dress, and she wore her sister's gold necklace round her neck.
9. "I want to come to your house and make you my bride."

Jahiti's stepmother made a plan with her daughter.

Put sentences 10, 11 and 12 in the right order.

10. She picked up her pot and hurried to the river. But her feet slipped on the laga bark, and she fell into the water.
11. "Listen, daughter. Take your sister to the forest. Cut branches from the trees to make a place for a bride."
12. "Jahiti!" she called out. "Come down from the tree, you lazy girl! My mother is calling you!"

B. Who said these sentences, and who were they speaking to?

Jahiti's father returned from travelling far from home.

Who said each of these sentences, and who were they speaking to?

1. "Where is my daughter? Where is my dear Jahiti?"
2. "Eat, husband. Drink, my dear. Jahiti will come. She will soon be here."
3. "Tell my father to drink and eat. He has lost Jahiti, his daughter sweet."
4. "I will not drink, I will not eat! I want Jahiti, my daughter sweet."
5. "Your daughter cannot come home," they told him. "You must forget her."

C. Weak, thin, stronger, fatter

Jahiti's bridegroom wanted to help Jahiti escape from the wicked demon.

Use the words "weak", "thin", "stronger" or "fatter" in these sentences.

1. "I am growing and here in the river," said Jahiti. "Bring me some food."
2. Now Jahiti was growing and
3. "Every day I take her my food. She eats it, and she is growing but now I am and"

D. Instructions

Jahiti tells her bridegroom how he can save her.

Fill in the missing instructions.

1. "..... a bull."
2. "..... the meat."
3. "..... a big piece to the river."
4. "..... it in."

E. What do you think?

Why did the handsome young man at the market choose Jahiti?

Why did the stepmother make her own daughter put on old, dirty clothes the second time she went to the market?

Why did the stepmother tell her husband that Jahiti had run away?

Do you think that Jahiti's bridegroom really loved Jahiti?

F. More stories to enjoy

If you liked this story, try reading another one like it. Click on the link below.

[Irit and Nurit]

[Ngap and Nyakwi]

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

[Click here to return to the exercises]

[Click here to return to the story]

A. How much did you understand?

The right order of these sentences is 3, 2, 1

"My darling, you are a big girl now. Soon we must find a husband for you."

"Jahiti, you must go with your sister," he said. "You must find a husband, too."

"That stupid Jahiti!" she thought. "I don't want to find a husband for her."

The right order of these sentences is 5, 6, 4

Jahiti was sad. "No one will talk to me," she thought. "My dress is old and dirty."

There was a handsome young man at the market, too. He was with his friends. He saw Jahiti, and he fell in love with her.

The young man wanted to talk to Jahiti, but her sister was angry.

The right order of these sentences is 8, 7, 9

Now Jahiti was wearing her sister's beautiful white dress, and she wore her sister's gold necklace round her neck.

They sang, "Here comes the girl that we like best, not the ugly girl, in the dirty dress!"

"I want to come your house and make you my bride."

The right order of these sentences is 11, 12, 10

11. "Listen, daughter. Take your sister to the forest. Cut branches from the trees to make a place for a bride."

12. "Jahiti!" she called out. "Come down from the tree, you lazy girl! My mother is calling you!"

10. She picked up her pot and hurried to the river. But her feet slipped on the laga bark, and she fell into the water.

B. Who said these sentences, and who were they speaking to?

1. "Where is my daughter? Where is my dear Jahiti?"

Jahiti's father is speaking to his wife.

2. "Eat, husband. Drink, my dear. Jahiti will come. She will soon be here."

Jahiti's stepmother is speaking to her husband.

3. "Tell my father to drink and eat. He has lost Jahiti, his daughter sweet."

Jahiti is speaking to her stepmother.

4. "I will not drink, I will not eat! I want Jahiti, my daughter sweet."

Jahiti's father is speaking to his wife.

5. "Your daughter cannot come home," they told him. "You must forget her."

The village girls are speaking to Jahiti's father.

C. Weak, thin, stronger, fatter

1. "I am growing **weak** and **thin** here in the river," said Jahiti. "Bring me some food."

2. Now Jahiti was growing **stronger** and **fatter**.

3. "Every day I take her my food. She eats it, and she is growing **stronger** but now I am **thin** and **weak**."

D. Instructions

1. "**Kill** a bull."
2. "**Cut up** the meat."
3. "**Bring** a big piece to the river."
4. "**Throw** it in."

Adiberga and her Brothers
A Shinasha story



Before you read the story

This is a long story in three parts. Answer the questions at the end of each part before you read the next one. Think about these questions before you begin.

- Is it right for parents to choose a wife or husband for their son or daughter?
- Should the son or daughter accept their parents' choice?
- Is it right for the son or daughter to choose someone that they like?

Tej is an alcoholic drink made from honey.

Now read Part One of the story

Once upon a time, there was a girl called Adiberga. She was very beautiful, and everybody loved her.

Adiberga's father was dead, and she lived with her mother and her four older brothers. She worked hard in the house. She fetched the water, cooked the food and cleaned the compound.

One day, Adiberga's mother said to her oldest son, "You are a man now. You must find a wife, and marry her."

"I don't want a wife," the oldest son said. "My sister, Adiberga, looks after me."

The next day, Adiberga's mother said, "Please, my son. Don't wait any longer. Go out and look for a wife."

"Where can I find a wife?" her son answered her. "My sister, Adiberga, is the most beautiful girl in the world. Where can I find a girl like her?"

A week later, his mother said to him, "Have you looked for a wife yet? Have you found a girl?"

"I have looked for a wife," her son answered, "but I have not found one. I love my sister, Adiberga, and I want to marry her. Then she will stay at home with us for ever."

His mother was angry.

"You can't marry Adiberga!" she said. "She is your sister! How can a man marry his own sister?"

Her son was angry too.

"Mother," he said. "I will never marry another woman. I want my sister, and I will have her."

He spoke to his mother every day. At first, she was angry, but then she began to listen to him.

At last she said, "Yes, my son. You can marry Adiberga. I will help you."

The oldest son was very happy. The second and third sons were happy too.

"Adiberga will stay at home with us now," they thought. "We will never lose her."

That evening, Adiberga went to the river to fetch water. Her mother and her brothers stayed in the house. Adiberga filled her pot with water and walked home. She went to the door of the hut. She wanted to go inside. But her oldest brother put his leg across the door.

"Brother," she said. "Please put your leg down. I want to come in."

Her oldest brother smiled at her.

"I am not your brother," he said. "I am your husband."

And he put down his leg.

Adiberga tried to go in again, but her second brother held his leg across the door.

"Please, brother," she said. "Let me come in."

"I'm not your brother," her second brother said. "I am your brother-in-law."

And he put down his leg.

Adiberga waited. Her third brother's leg was across the door now.

"What are you doing?" she said. "Please, brother. Put your leg down. Let me come in."

"I am not your brother," the third brother said. "I am your brother-in-law."

And he put down his leg.

Now, Adiberga's mother sat beside the door. She put her leg up. Adiberga couldn't go inside.

"Mother," she said. "Please let me come in. Please put your leg down."

"I am not your mother," her mother answered. "I'm your mother-in-law."

And she put down her leg.

Adiberga's fourth brother sat beside the door now. He was disabled. His legs were weak and he couldn't walk. He lifted one leg with his hands.

"Brother," Adiberga said. "Why are you doing this to me? Please, let me come in."

Her fourth brother put down his leg.

"Yes, dear sister, you can come in," he said.

The next evening, Adiberga went to the river again. When she came home, her family was together in the hut. Again, they lifted their legs against her. Again, her fourth brother let her come in.

They did this every day, week after week.

Exercises

A. How much did you understand?

In the story Adiberga's mother wanted her oldest son to find a wife and marry.

Put sentences 1, 2 and 3 in the right order.

1. "Mother," he said. "I will never marry another woman. I want my sister, and I will have her."
2. One day, Adiberga's mother said to her oldest son, "You are a man now. You must find a wife, and marry her."
3. "My sister, Adiberga, is the most beautiful girl in the world. Where can I find a girl like her?"

The mother agreed to help her oldest son marry Adiberga. That evening, Adiberga fetched water from the river. When she came home she wanted to go inside. But her family stopped her.

Put sentences 4, 5 and 6 in the right order.

4. Her fourth brother put down his leg. "Yes, dear sister, you can come in," he said.
5. "I am not your mother," her mother answered. "I'm your mother-in-law." And she put down her leg.
6. "I'm not your brother," her second brother said. "I am your brother-in-law." And he put down his leg.

[Click here for the answers to the exercises in Part One]

[Click here to read Part Two]

Answers to the Exercises in Part One

[Click here to return to the exercises]

[Click here to return to the story]

A. How much did you understand?

The right order of these sentences is 2, 3, 1.

One day, Adiberga's mother said to her oldest son, "You are a man now. You must find a wife, and marry her."

"My sister, Adiberga, is the most beautiful girl in the world. Where can I find a girl like her?"

"Mother," he said. "I will never marry another woman. I want my sister, and I will have her."

The right order of these sentences is 6, 5, 4.

"I am not your brother," her second brother said. "I am your brother-in-law." And he put down his leg.

"I am not your mother," her mother answered. "I am your mother-in-law." And she put down her leg.

Her fourth brother put down his leg. "Yes, dear sister, you can come in," he said.

Part Two

Tef is a cereal that grows in Ethiopia

One day, Adiberga's fourth brother said to her, "Dear Adiberga, I want to go to the toilet. Please carry me outside."

So Adiberga picked up her brother and carried him out to the fields.

She stopped beside a field of tef.

"Don't stop here," her brother said. "I can't use this place. The tef will become dirty."

So Adiberga carried him on. They came to a field of sorghum.

"Not here," said her brother. "The sorghum is for our food. I don't want to make it dirty."

Adiberga carried him far away, to a place full of trees.

"Put me down here," her brother said, "and sit beside me. Listen. I don't need to go to the toilet. I brought you here because I want to talk to you. Our mother and brothers have a plan for you. Tomorrow, they are going to give you to our oldest brother. They want you to marry him."

Adiberga was very unhappy.

"What?" she cried. "My brother wants to marry me? But I can't marry my own brother! It's a wicked thing to do."

"I agree," her youngest brother said. "But they will try to force you. My dear sister, you must run away. Go now."

"But where can I go?" Adiberga said. There were tears in her eyes now. "Who will help me?"

"God will help you," her brother said. "Be strong. Go."

So Adiberga ran away. She ran and ran, over the fields, up the mountains and down into the valleys. At last, she came to a big river.

"I can't cross this river," she thought. "It's too deep. I must stay here."

There was a big tree near the river.

"I'll climb the tree," Adiberga thought. "I will be safe there from the wild animals."

So Adiberga began to live in the tree. She collected fruits and leaves for her food, and she drank the water of the river.

Now a rich man lived not far away. Every day, his servant girl came down to the river to fetch water. One day, the girl walked under Adiberga's tree to the edge of the river. She put her pot down, and began to fill it.

Adiberga was sitting in the tree above the girl's head. When the girl filled her pot, she looked down at the water, and she saw Adiberga's face.

"That's my face," the girl thought. "Oh, how beautiful I am!"

She looked at the face in the water again and again.

"That is not the face of a servant girl," she thought. "It's the face of a princess. I'm not going to be a servant any more. I'm going to find a rich man to marry me!"

She dropped her pot on the ground, and it broke.

"It doesn't matter," the girl said. "It was just an old water pot. I don't need it now. I'm beautiful! I'm going to be a princess!"

She ran back to the rich man's house. But before she reached it, she began to think.

"I broke my master's pot," she thought, "and he is waiting for his bath. He will be angry with me. I must take another pot and go to the river again."

So the servant girl fetched another pot, and went back to the river. But again she saw Adiberga's face in the water.

"It's true!" she cried. "I am the most beautiful girl in the world!"

She dropped the second pot, and it broke too.

Then Adiberga spat on the girl from the tree. The girl looked up and saw her. "Oh," she said. "I am not beautiful at all. The face in the water was not mine. It belongs to the girl in the tree. I will tell my master. I have broken two of his pots, but when he sees this girl, he will not be angry with me."

So the servant girl ran home to her master.

"Master!" she said. "I saw a girl in a tree beside the river today. She was as beautiful as St Mary. She is the most beautiful girl in the world. I was very surprised and I - I broke your water pots."

"Don't worry about the water pots," the rich man said. "Where is this girl? I want to see her."

"Come to the river with me," the girl said. "I will show you."

So the rich man followed the girl to the river. He stood under the tree, and looked up. He saw Adiberga.

"My servant was right," he thought. "This is the most beautiful girl in the world, and I want to marry her."

"Beautiful girl," he said. "Why are you hiding in the tree? Have you done something wicked? Does your family want to punish you?"

Adiberga didn't answer. She said nothing.

The rich man turned to his servant.

"Go back to my house," he said. "Bring me my spear, and two carpets."

The girl ran home. She came back again quickly with the carpets and the spear. The rich man stood the spear in the ground. The sharp point of it was below Adiberga. He put one carpet on one side of the spear, and the other carpet on the other side. Then he spoke to Adiberga.

"Jump down from the tree," he said. "Perhaps you are a bad girl. Perhaps you did something wrong, and your family is angry with you. Is that why you ran away? Is that why you are hiding up there in the tree? If that is the reason, you will fall on the spear. But perhaps you are a good girl. Perhaps someone tried to hurt you, and you ran away to save your life. Is that why you are hiding in the tree? If that is the reason, you will fall on the carpet."

So Adiberga jumped down from the tree. She fell on the carpet, and the rich man picked her up.

"Marry me," he said.

So Adiberga married him.

Exercises

A. How much did you understand?

Adiberga's youngest brother urged her to run away.

Put sentences 7, 8 and 9 in the right order.

7. "God will help you," her brother said. "Be strong. Go."

8. "I'll climb the tree," Adiberga thought. "I will be safe there from the wild animals."

9. So Adiberga ran away. She ran and ran, over the fields, up the mountains and down into the valleys.

The servant girl of a rich man saw the beautiful face of Adiberga and ran home to tell her master.

Put sentences 10, 11 and 12 in the right order.

10. "My servant was right," he thought. "This is the most beautiful girl in the world."

11. "Why are you hiding in the tree? Have you done something wicked?"

12. "Master!" she said. "I saw a girl in a tree beside the river today."

The rich man wanted to test Adiberga.

Put sentences 13, 14 and 15 in the right order.

13. So Adiberga jumped down from the tree. She fell on the carpet.

14. "Go back to my house," he said. "Bring me my spear, and two carpets."

15. "Perhaps someone tried to hurt you, and you ran away to save your life."

[Click here for the answers to the exercises in Part Two]

[Click here to read Part Three]

Answers to the Exercise in Part Two

[Click here to return to the exercises]

[Click here to return to the story]

The right order of these sentences is 7, 9, 8.

"God will help you," her brother said. "Be strong. Go."

So Adiberga ran away. She ran and ran, over the fields, up the mountains and down into the valleys.

"I'll climb the tree," Adiberga thought. "I will be safe there from the wild animals."

The right order of these sentences is 12, 10, 11.

"Master!" she said. "I saw a girl in a tree beside the river today."

"My servant was right," he thought. "This is the most beautiful girl in the world."

"Why are you hiding in the tree? Have you done something wicked?"

The right order of these sentences is 14, 15, 13.

"Go back to my house," he said. "Bring me my spear, and two carpets."

"Perhaps someone tried to hurt you, and you ran away to save your life."

So Adiberga jumped down from the tree. She fell on the carpet.

Part Three

Now a new life began for Adiberga. She was the wife of a rich man. She lived in a big house, and she had many servants. She forgot about her mother and her brothers. She was happy.

But Adiberga's fourth brother did not forget his sister. He left his mother's house, and he began to travel everywhere. He was looking for Adiberga.

It was very hard for Adiberga's brother. He could not use his legs, but only his arms. He needed other people to help him.

One day, he came to the rich man's house. He sat outside, under a tree. Adiberga's servants saw him. They ran to Adiberga.

"There is a man outside your house, under the tree," they said. "His face is like your face. His eyes and his nose, his mouth and his hair, they are all like yours. Is he a relative? Does he come from your family?"

"I have no relatives," Adiberga said. "I have only one brother, and he is disabled. Go and look at the man again. If he is disabled and cannot walk, come and tell me."

The servants hurried out to the tree again. Soon they came back to Adiberga.

"He looks like you!" they all said. "His hair, his eyes, his teeth..."

"But is he disabled?" Adiberga said. "Can he walk?"

Her servants looked at each other.

"We don't know," they said at last. "He was sitting on the ground. We didn't see his legs."

"I will see him myself," Adiberga said.

Her servants put carpets down on the ground for her, and Adiberga walked outside. She went to the tree, and saw her brother.

She was very happy. She ran to him, and kissed him.

"Oh, my dear, dear brother!" she said. "Come into the house. You are tired, and hungry. You must rest, and I will make a delicious meal for you to eat."

She took her brother inside. She washed his feet and gave him the finest food to eat, and tej to drink.

Her brother finished his meal at last.

"Now," said Adiberga. "You must listen to me. My husband is not here tonight, but he will come home tomorrow. He is a good man, but he likes to trick people. Ask if you can help him. He will say something strange. Perhaps he will say, 'Kill my cattle.' Don't do it. Look after the cattle for him. Or perhaps he will say, 'Take my cattle to the desert. Don't let them drink water.' Then you must take them to the river, and let them eat and drink. Listen carefully to his words, and do the opposite."

The next day, Adiberga's husband came home.

"My brother is here," Adiberga said. "He wants to help you."

"Ah," said her husband. "That is good. He can take the cattle up to the mountain and push them over the cliff."

Adiberga's brother smiled at her.

"Good," he said. "I will do that."

The next morning, he went out with the rich man's herdsmen. He took the cattle to the valley, and they ate the good green grass.

That evening, the rich man was happy with his brother-in-law. He went to his box and took out some hairs from a sheep, some hairs from a goat, some hairs from a cow, a mule and a horse. He put them in a sack and gave them to Adiberga's brother. He gave him a stick, too.

"Go home," he said. "Take this sack with you. When you reach your house, beat the sack with the stick."

"Goodbye, dear brother. May God go with you," Adiberga said.

So Adiberga's brother went home. When he arrived, he stood outside the hut. He took out the sack and beat it with the stick. At once, hundreds of sheep and goats, cows, mules and horses ran out of it.

He looked at them and laughed. He was very happy.

"I am a rich man now," he thought. "Thank you, dear brother-in-law!"

His brothers heard the noise of all the animals. They came out of their hut.

"What happened to you?" they said to the fourth brother. "Where did you go? And where did you get all these animals?"

"I went to find our sister," the fourth brother said. "She has married a rich man. He gave all these animals to me."

The oldest brother was not happy.

"My youngest brother is rich, and I am poor," he thought. "I will go to my brother-in-law. He will give me sheep and goats, cows, mules and horses, and I will be rich too."

So the eldest brother went off to find Adiberga. He came at last to her house, and sat down under the tree. He called to her servants.

"Find your mistress," he said to them. "Say to her, 'Your brother is here.'"

The servants went to Adiberga.

"Another of your brothers is here," they said to her. "He is sitting outside the house, under a tree."

"Another brother?" Adiberga said angrily. "I don't have another brother. I only have one."

But she went out to the tree. Her oldest brother jumped up.

"Dear Adiberga!" he cried. "My lovely sister!"

Adiberga did not smile at him. She didn't kiss her brother. She didn't talk to him.

That night, Adiberga's husband came home. Adiberga's brother was very polite to him.

"Please," he said, "let me help you. Let me take your cattle out tomorrow."

"Very well," said his brother-in-law. "Take them to the desert, and kill them all."

Adiberga's brother was surprised. He looked at Adiberga but she didn't look at him. She didn't speak to him.

The next day, Adiberga's brother took his brother-in-law's cows to the desert, and he killed them all.

That evening, he said to his brother-in-law, "I obeyed you, brother. I took your cows to the desert, and they are all dead. Where is my reward?"

His brother-in-law went to his box. He took out some hairs from a lion, and a leopard, and some hairs from a hyena, an elephant and a buffalo. He put them in a sack, and gave them to Adiberga's brother. He gave him a stick, too.

"Go home," he said. "Take this sack with you. When you reach your house, beat it with the stick."

"Thank you!" said Adiberga's brother. He was happy.

"I will be a rich man soon," he thought.

He hurried home. When he arrived, he stood outside the hut. He took out the sack, and beat it with the stick. At once, hundreds of lions, leopards, hyenas, elephants and buffaloes ran out of the sack. They turned on Adiberga's brother and ate him. Then they ran away.

Adiberga and her husband lived happily for many years, and had many fine children. And Adiberga's fourth brother was rich and happy too, for the rest of his long life.

[Click here to listen to the whole story]

Exercises for Part Three of the story

A. How much did you understand?

Adiberga married the rich man but Adiberga's fourth brother did not forget his sister. He was looking for Adiberga far and wide.

Put sentences 16, 17 and 18 in the right order.

16. "But is he disabled?" Adiberga said. "Can he walk?"

17. One day, he came to the rich man's house.

18. "I have no relatives," Adiberga said. "I have only one brother, and he is disabled."

B. Words beginning with t...

Adiberga welcomed her young brother to her house and warned him about her rich husband.

Fill in the missing words. They all begin with the letter "t".

1. "Come into the house. You are t and hungry.

2. She washed his feet and gave him the finest food to eat and t to drink.

3. "My husband is not here t, but he will come home tomorrow."

4. "He is a good man, but he likes to t people.

5. "Or perhaps he will say, 'T..... my cattle to the desert. Don't let them drink water.'"

These exercises are for the whole story. You might need to read the story again before you do them.

A. When...

Here are three sentences starting with 'When'. The endings have been mixed up.

Complete sentences 1, 2 and 3 by choosing the best of the three endings: a, b or c.

1. When she came home,

2. When the girl filled her pot, she looked down at the water,

3. When he arrived,

a) and she saw Adiberga's face.

b) he stood outside the hut.

c) her family was together in the hut.

D. Showing how you feel

Adiberga talked in different ways to her oldest brother and to her youngest brother. Read these six sentences. Three of them show that she loved her youngest brother and three of them show that she did not like her oldest brother. Which are which?

1. "Oh, my dear, dear brother!" she said. "Come into the house."
2. He looked at Adiberga but she didn't look at him.
3. "You must rest, and I will make a delicious meal for you to eat."
4. She didn't kiss her brother.
5. Adiberga did not smile at him.
6. "Listen carefully to his words, and do the opposite."

E. What do you think?

Did Adiberga's youngest brother give her good advice about running away?

Was the rich man wise to test Adiberga with his spears and his carpet?

Was Adiberga right to help her youngest brother over the trick question?

Was Adiberga right not to help her oldest brother with the trick question?

[Click here for the answers to the exercises]

Answers to the Exercises in Part Three

[[Click here to return to the exercises](#)]

[[Click here to return to the story](#)]

A. How much did you understand?

The right order of these sentences is 17, 18, 16.

17. One day, he came to the rich man's house.

18. "I have no relatives," Adiberga said. "I have only one brother, and he is disabled."

16. "But is he disabled?" Adiberga said. "Can he walk?"

B. Words beginning with t...

1. "Come into the house. You are **tired**, and hungry."

2. She washed his feet and gave him the finest food to eat, and **tej** to drink.

3. "My husband is not here **tonight**, but he will come home tomorrow."

4. "He is a good man, but he likes to **trick** people."

5. "Or perhaps he will say, '**Take** my cattle to the desert. Don't let them drink water.'"

C. When...

1/c. When she came home, **her family was together in the hut.**

2/a. When the girl filled her pot, she looked down at the water, **and she saw Adiberga's face.**

3/b. When he arrived, **he stood outside the hut.**

D. Showing how you feel

Her youngest brother:

1. "Oh, my dear, dear brother!" she said. "Come into the house."

3. "You must rest, and I will make a delicious meal for you to eat."

6. "Listen carefully to his words, and do the opposite."

Her oldest brother:

2. He looked at Adiberga but she didn't look at him.

4. She didn't kiss her brother.

5. Adiberga did not smile at him.