



3

Stay Home Reader

Stories for Fun and Skills



VIVA EDUCATION

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HOW THIS BOOK WILL HELP YOU

Staying home and practising social distancing are simple yet decisive ways in which we all contribute to the epic battle against the Covid-19 pandemic. School closure is indeed the heavy price students and teachers have to pay as a result. However, this is no reason for learning to stop. As a committed provider of educational content, Viva Education has taken extraordinary steps to make learning accessible to every student via online means. We have released the vast range of online learning material on VivaDigital.in to learners and educators for unrestricted use.

Continuing this effort, we are proud to present our *Stay Home Readers* for classes 1 to 8, which have been specially compiled for home learning and remote teaching. Engagement is the key to better home learning, and this series adopts the route of stories to effective language-skill building. The content is enjoyable, stimulating and requires hardly any teacher supervision. We wish you safety and good health as you enjoy learning with these readers.

1

The Fairy Cave

Many years ago there lived two brothers named Liu Ch'en and Yuan Chao.

One day they went into the hills to get water. It was in the middle of spring. The hills were full of red and green flowers. The boys were excited by the beauty of the scene. They put down their pails by the stream and set off for a walk. The country became more and more lovely as they wandered from hill to hill. Finally the path came to an end and they found themselves at the entrance to a cave. There was an enormous stone on each side of the cave. Two fairies were seated on stones and playing chess.



The two boys stood at the mouth of the cave and watched the game silently. At the feet of the fairies a white hare was springing up and down. They were excited to see that each time it sprang up the flowers bloomed at the entrance to the cave. Each time it lay down the flowers faded.

When the game was finished, the fairies looked around and saw the boys. They asked when the boys had arrived. "A few hours ago," they both answered, and turned to leave. But the fairies said to them, "Stay here in our cave and don't go home. No one will recognize you." But they did not understand what the fairies meant, and said firmly, "No! No! We must go home." Then, the fairies gave them each a piece of reed, saying, "If you find everything changed at home, come back here and point the reed at the cave, and it will open."

They took the reeds and returned to the stream by which they had left their poles and buckets. All they found was decayed earth and tall pines growing on each side of the stream. Earlier there had been open ground.

With great confusion they entered the village, but there they could find no trace of their homes. They saw two old white-haired men sitting in a meadow. They asked the old men where the house of Liu Ch'en and Yuan Chao was. The two old men replied, "Liu Ch'en and Yuan Chao were our ancestors. We

are their descendants in the seventh generation. Why do you young fellows talk about them in this casual way?”

This was still more confusing, because how could two young men have descendants in the seventh generation? Perhaps the white hare jumping about in the fairy cave represented the seasons, and the afternoon they had spent in the cave had lasted for four or five hundred years. When the two children heard the words of the old men, they said, “But we are Liu Ch’en and Yuan Chao!” This made the old men so annoyed that their beards waggled to and fro. They called out to other people, who came up and beat the two boys.

“You young rascals,” they cried, “How dare you come and bother old men!”



The boys fled back to the cave, but the doors were closed tight. Then they remembered their reeds. They could not recall where they had left them. They did not dare to go back and look for them for fear the people would beat them again. They knocked and knocked, but there was no answer. In their grief they banged their heads against the wall and died.

The ruler of heaven took pity on their sad fate, and appointed Liu Ch'en the god of good luck and Yuan Chao the god of ill luck.

A Chinese folk tale

▣ Do You Remember?

1. What were the names of the two brothers?
2. Why did they go into the hills?
3. Whom did the two brothers see at the cave?
4. What were they doing?
5. What happened when the white hare sprang up and down?
6. What did the fairies tell the two brothers?
7. What did they give them?
8. What did the boys see when they returned to the village?
9. What did the white-haired men tell the boys?
10. What is possibly the reason for the confusion?

11. What did the people of the village do to the boys?
12. What happened after the boys went back to the cave?
13. What were the two boys finally appointed as?

▣ Can You Tell?

1. A hill is a raised area or mound of land. What is (a) a mountain (b) a lake (c) a plain?
2. A fairy is a magical creature described in stories. Name three other such creatures.
3. *Spring* means to jump. The word *spring* is also the name of a season that occurs between winter and summer. Write two different meanings of the following words.
(a) right (b) left
(c) nail (d) fan
4. A cave has a mouth. Complete the following.
(a) A table has _____.
(b) A clock has a _____ and three _____.
(c) A chair has _____.
5. The words *reeds* and *reads* sound the same but are spelt differently. Complete the following pairs.
(a) weight _____ (b) grate _____

- (c) quiet _____ (d) write _____
(e) see _____ (f) hare _____

6. Write the opposites of these words.

- (a) entrance _____
(b) finished _____
(c) tall _____
(d) ancestor _____
(e) remember _____

7. The folk tale you read comes from China.
Find out the following information about that
country.

Capital _____

Main cities _____

Prime Minister _____

President _____

Neighbouring countries _____

Tourist attractions _____

2

Brer Rabbit Goes Fishing

Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox were just like some boys and girls. They were always playing jokes and tricks on each other.

One day in summer, Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox and Brer Bear were digging a patch of ground so that they could plant some corn. The sun was very hot and Brer Rabbit soon felt tired. He did not tell the others because he was afraid that they would say he was lazy.

Suddenly Brer Rabbit had an idea. He carried off a bundle of grass, and piled it on a rubbish heap which was some distance away. While the others were still digging, he took the chance to slip away and try to find a cool resting-place.



A few minutes later he spied a well with a bucket hanging in it.

“That bucket looks fine and cool,” said Brer Rabbit to himself. “I’ll jump into it and take a nice short nap.”

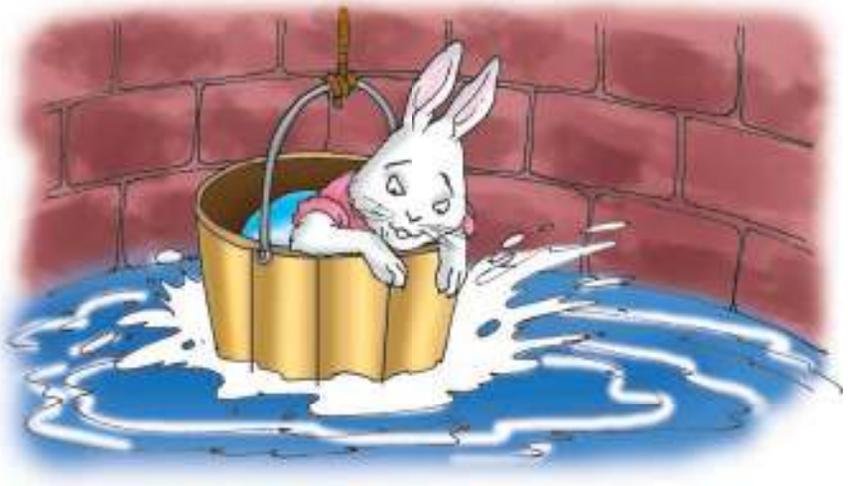
He jumped from the wall of the well into the bucket. At once the bucket went down the well at great speed. Brer Rabbit was frightened. He did not know where he was going.

Suddenly he felt the bucket hit the water with a loud splash. Brer Rabbit almost drowned but, lucky for him, the bucket kept afloat.

Another thing had frightened him. While he was coming down he had seen another bucket fly past him on its way to the top of the well.

Poor Brer Rabbit! He just lay in the bucket and shook and shivered.



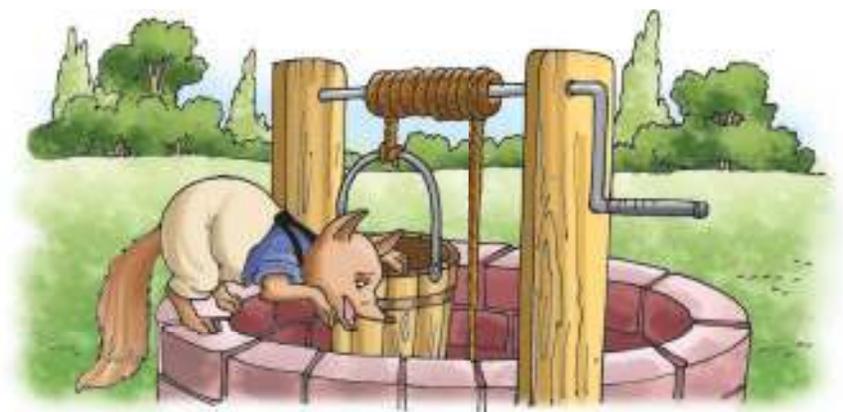


Now Brer Fox, who always kept an eye on Brer Rabbit, had watched him sneak away from the rubbish heap. He thought that Brer Rabbit was up to another of his pranks, so he made up his mind to follow him. Brer Fox saw Brer Rabbit jump into the bucket and disappear down the well.

“My goodness!” said Brer Fox in surprise. “Where has he gone? It must be a secret hiding-place. I wonder if he keeps his money down there? Perhaps it is a gold mine and Brer Rabbit does not want anyone to know about it. I’ve caught him this time. I will find out why he has gone down the well.”

Brer Fox crept up to the well and listened, but he could hear no sound. He jumped to the top of the wall and peeped down. He could see nothing as it was very dark at the bottom.

“Hullo, Brer Rabbit! What are you doing down there?” he called.



Brer Rabbit, who was afraid to move in case he would upset the bucket, shouted back, “What am I doing? I’m fishing, of course. I wanted to catch some fish for dinner and give you all a great surprise.”

“Have you caught any?” asked Brer Fox.

“Yes, I have caught so many fish that my bucket is already full. I will need your help to carry them home.”

“What kind of fish have you caught?” said Brer Fox in wonder.

“All kinds. This place is full of them. I’ve kept only the big ones. I threw the little ones back into the water.”

“How can I get down, Brer Rabbit?”

“Quite easily,” replied the other. “Jump into the bucket beside you and it will take you down safely.”

Brer Rabbit talked on happily about his wonderful catch. Brer Fox soon became very jealous and jumped into the bucket. As he went down the well, the rope

pulled up the other bucket containing Brer Rabbit. They passed each other half-way and Brer Rabbit sang out:

“Goodbye, Brer Fox,
take care of your clothes,
For this is the way the
old world goes,
Some go up and some go
down!
You’ll get to the bottom
safe and sound.”

At the top of the well Brer Rabbit hopped out and called, “Cheerio! Now you will need to wait until some silly creature comes along to take your place.”

Poor Brer Fox saw that he had been cleverly tricked. He was very sad as he sat in the bucket at the bottom of the well. There seemed to be no hope of rescue.

But Brer Rabbit did not mean to leave Brer Fox down the well for ever. He told the farmer that Brer Fox was splashing about in the well, and that the water was all muddy.



Half-an-hour later Brer Fox heard a loud noise at the top of the well. It was the farmer who had come to shoot him. Brer Fox made no sound and kept perfectly still.

Suddenly there was a jerk and Brer Fox felt himself being slowly pulled upwards. When he reached the top he gave one great leap from the bucket and ran off as fast as he could. The farmer shot at him but missed.

When Brer Fox reached the safety of the woods he lay down to rest.

“I must be more careful after this,” he said to himself. “Brer Rabbit tricked me that time. I was very lucky to escape.”

(Adapted)

❑ Do You Remember?

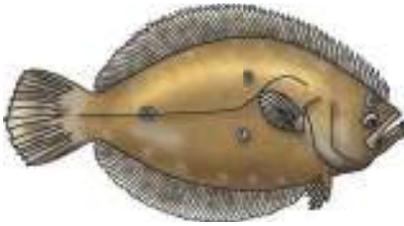
1. What was the name of the story?
2. What were Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox and Brer Bear doing?
3. What kind of day was it?
4. How did Brer Rabbit get away from the others?
5. Where did he try to sleep?
6. What happened when he jumped into the bucket?

7. Who watched Brer Rabbit disappear down the well?
8. Where did Brer Fox think he had gone?
9. What did Brer Fox shout down the well?
10. What was Brer Rabbit's answer?
11. What did Brer Fox do?
12. What did Brer Rabbit say as they passed each other?
13. Why was Brer Fox very sad?
14. Why did the farmer come to the well?
15. How did Brer Fox escape?

Can You Tell?

1. Brer Rabbit was digging with a spade.
Find the missing words.
 - (a) Mother cut the loaf of bread with a _____.
 - (b) The barber cut his hair with a pair of _____.
 - (c) The teacher wrote on the board with a piece of _____.
 - (d) The joiner struck the nail with a _____.
 - (e) The grocer weighed the cheese on his _____.

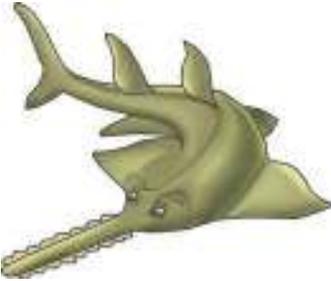
Strange Fish



Flounder



Shark



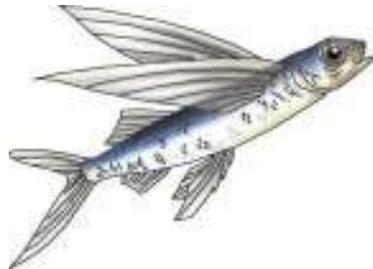
Sawfish



Swordfish



Eel



Flying fish



Seahorse



Lung fish

2. These fish are of different sizes. Place them in order (smallest first): guppy, shark, goldfish, swordfish, red snapper.
3. A bucket is used to hold water.
Which of these are used to hold water: bag, kettle, basket, bath, basin, tumbler, envelope, box, cupboard, boiler?
4. Name different kinds of fish which are sold in fish shops.
5. The farmer got his water from the well.
 - (a) How do you get water at home?
 - (b) Where does it come from?
6. It was summer and the sun was very hot.
 - (a) Name the seasons we experience.
 - (b) Which season do you like best? Tell why.
 - (c) Which time of day do you like best? Tell why.

3

Pinocchio the Puppet



In days of long ago, people used to go to puppet shows as today they go to cinemas. The plays were acted out by dressed-up wooden dolls, which were made to move by pulling on wires.

One day, a man called Geppetto visited his friend Mr Cherry, the joiner, and asked him for a piece of wood to make a puppet.

“I am not going to make a common puppet like Punch or Judy,” said Geppetto. “This one will be a very clever puppet who will be able to dance and sing.”

“Here is a fine hard piece of wood,” replied Mr Cherry. “I will take off the bark with my axe.”

Just as he was about to strike it, he heard a little voice say, “Please do not hit me hard.”

Mr Cherry dropped the wood in astonishment. He looked at Geppetto and asked him if he had spoken. Geppetto shook his head to show that he hadn't.



Mr Cherry lifted the piece of wood and struck it a sharp blow with his axe.

“Oh! You’ve hurt me! You’ve hurt me!” cried the same little voice sadly.

The joiner dropped the wood again, but this time it struck Geppetto on the leg and made him jump



with pain. “You villain!” cried Geppetto. “I did not think that you would strike an old friend.” Then he picked up the piece of wood, and set off limping for home.

Geppetto lived in a little room at the top of a long flight of stairs. As soon as he arrived, he took up his tools and set to work. First he wedged the piece of wood firmly, so that it could not move. “You’re hurting me!” cried a little voice.

Geppetto stared at the piece of wood in surprise. “You can speak, can you?” he said. “Just wait for an hour or two, and I’ll make you into a little man.”

He took his plane, and started to smoothen the bit of wood. While he was running the plane up and down, he heard the same little voice say, “Stop it! You’re tickling me!”

Geppetto next took a knife and began to carve the puppet’s head, his hair, his ears and his eyes. Then



a very strange thing happened. As soon as he had carved the puppet's nose, it began to grow. It grew and grew and grew, until it was twice as long as his ears. Geppetto tried to cut it down, but it always grew to the same size again.

When the mouth was finished, the puppet began to laugh and make fun of him. "Stop laughing!" cried Geppetto crossly. The puppet stopped laughing, but poked out its tongue at him. Geppetto pretended not to notice, and kept on working until he had finished the chin, the neck, the shoulders, the body, the arms and the hands.

Geppetto had just finished the hands, when his wig was snatched from his head. He turned round quickly, and saw his wig in the puppet's hand.

"Now, my little man!" he cried. "Give me back my wig at once!" Instead of handing it back, the puppet tried it on his own head, but it nearly smothered him.



“You rogue!” shouted Geppetto. “You have started to disobey me already! You must learn to do as you are told!”

The puppet was sorry, and tried to put the wig back on his master’s head. “That’s better,” said Geppetto. “Now, be a good little man.”

When Geppetto had finished the feet, he took the puppet and stood him on the floor. At first the puppet’s legs would not move, but Geppetto showed him how to walk.

“Now, see if you can do it by yourself,” said Geppetto. Suddenly the puppet ran across the room. The door was open, and off he went down the stairs. Geppetto could not stop him, and the puppet was soon out on the street.

“Stop him! Stop him!” shouted Geppetto as he ran after him. The people were astonished at the





sight of a wooden puppet running on its own, and they stepped quickly out of its way.

Luckily, there was a policeman at the end of the street. The puppet tried to pass between his legs, but the policeman cleverly caught him by his long nose.

“Naughty little man, home you come!” cried Geppetto, after he had thanked the policeman.

Back went the puppet and his master along the street. Many of the crowd, who had seen the strange race, filled Geppetto’s hat with several coins because he had made such a clever puppet.

▣ Do You Remember?

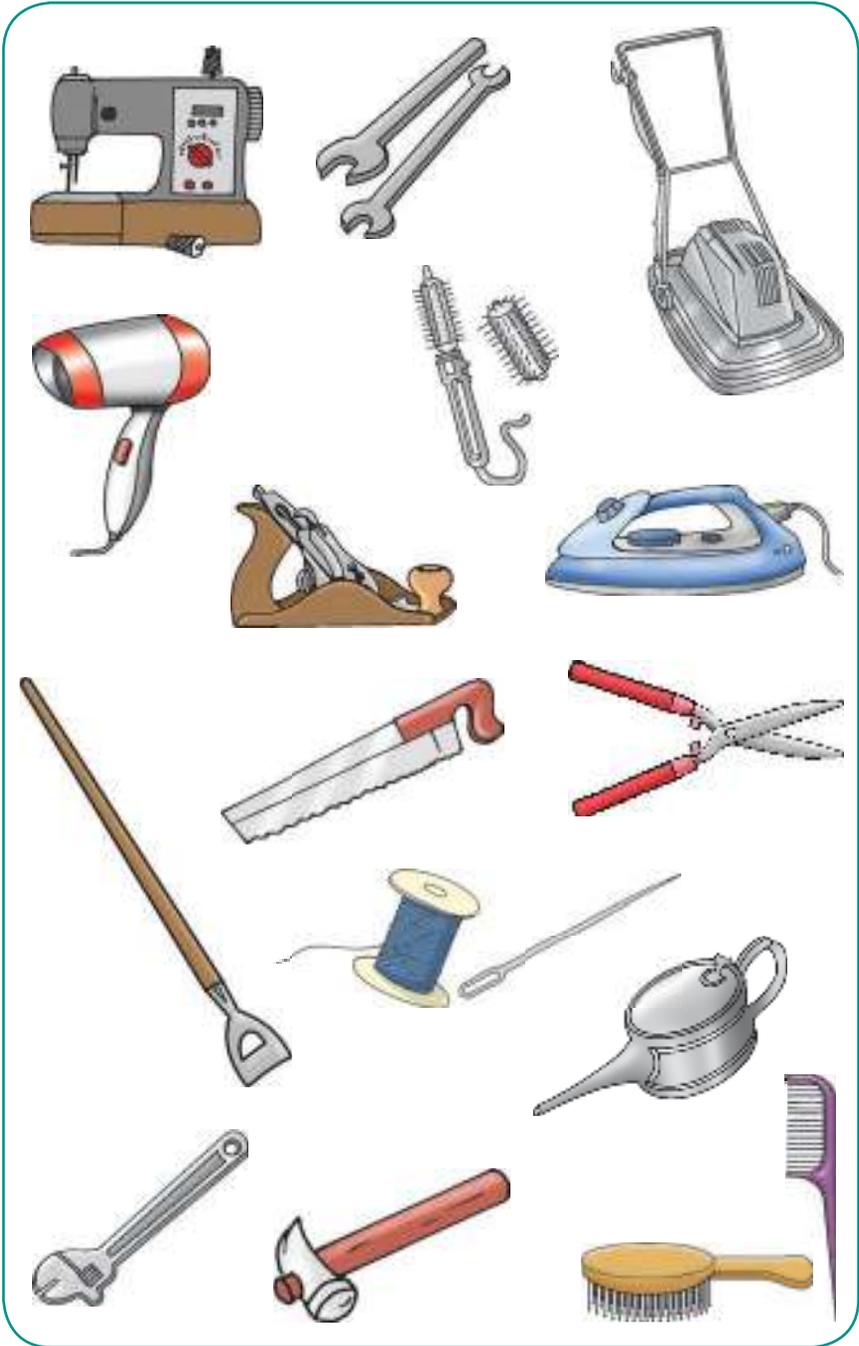
1. What was the title of the story?
2. What was the name of the joiner?
3. Who asked him for a bit of wood?
4. Why did he want the piece of wood?
5. What happened when Mr Cherry struck the wood with the axe?
6. Why did Geppetto become very angry?
7. Where did Geppetto live?
8. What happened when he started to smoothen the piece of wood?
9. What did Geppetto use to carve the puppet?
10. What was strange about the puppet's nose?
11. What happened when Geppetto finished the hands?
12. What happened when he finished the feet?
13. Where did the puppet go?
14. Who caught him?
15. Why did the people put coins in Geppetto's hat?

Tools

dressmaker, engineer, gardener, hairdresser, joiner

- (a) Which of the above people use, at their work, the tools shown below?

(b) Here is a much harder question. Can you name each tool?



□ Can You Tell?

1. Point to these parts of the body: hair, eyes, ears, nose, cheeks, mouth, chin, neck, shoulders, arms, elbows, wrists, hands, fingers, back, chest, waist, legs, knees, ankles, feet, toes.
2. Which of these words should always start with a capital letter?

table, james, chair, mary, garden, basket,
ladder, thursday, feathers, forest, barrel, july,
floor, france, sugar

3. One More than one

shelf _____

lady _____

goose _____

foot _____

sheep _____

4. On which parts of the body are these worn?

hat, collar, gloves, beads, ring, wig, bangle,
ribbon, scarf, shoes, belt

5. What would you use to do the following?

(a) cut bread (b) sweep the floor

(c) clean shoes (d) dry the dishes

(e) polish the table (f) stir the tea

(g) eat meat (h) clean your teeth

(i) tidy your hair (j) darn your socks

6. Which is the right word in each sentence?

- (a) The boy (threw/through) a stone.
- (b) Mother uses (flower/flour) for baking.
- (c) The girl bought (to/too/two) books.
- (d) The farmer has to (sow/so/sew) the seed in spring.
- (e) The sailor (rode/rowed/road) the boat across the river.

7. What?

- (a) The cow gives us _____.
- (b) Windows are made of _____.

When?

- (c) We can see the stars _____.
- (d) We go to temple _____.

Where?

- (e) We saw four little eggs _____.
- (f) The bees live _____.

How?

- (g) He dug the garden _____.
- (h) She sharpened her pencil _____.

8. Describe a puppet show you have seen.

Some Things To Do

- Draw a puppet man and woman. Give them names.
- Imagine you are walking past a fruit tree and it speaks to you. Write a story about this.
- Make a model puppet.

4

The Wooden Horse of Troy



Many, many years ago, the people of Greece and the people of Troy were at war with each other. The Greeks were so angry that they set off in their ships to attack Troy. They wanted to capture the city and burn it to the ground.

When the Greeks reached Troy, they found that it was not going to be easy to destroy it. There was a great high wall all round the city, and the gates were closed and defended by many brave men.

For ten long years, the Greeks tried hard to beat the Trojans. Time and again they attacked the gates and tried to climb the walls, but they were always driven back. Many heroes on both sides died in the fighting that took place.

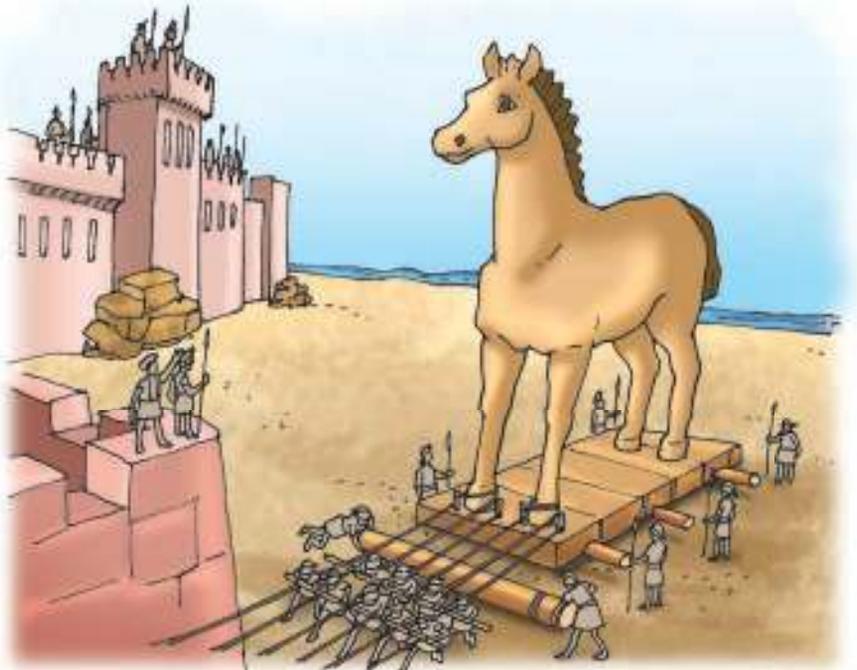
At last one of the Greek leaders thought of a very clever plan. He knew that Troy could only be

captured if some of his soldiers could manage to get inside the city.

This leader told his men to build a great wooden horse. The horse was to be hollow, and big enough to hold some soldiers inside it. The men set to work with a will, and before long, the great horse was finished.

When all was ready, some of the Greek soldiers climbed inside it and shut the door. It was so well made that no one would know that there was a door. The Greeks then pulled and pushed the wooden horse up to one of the gates and left it there.

When this was done, the Greek army went to their ships and sailed away. They left one man behind, who





remained hidden for some time. For the first time in ten years, no Greek soldiers were to be seen near the city.

The people of Troy could not believe their eyes when they saw the Greek ships sail away. They jumped and danced for joy. The Trojans thought that their foes had given up the fight and were going home. Little did they know that this was a part of the Greek plan. The ships sailed away from Troy but, as soon as they were out of sight, they stopped and waited.

The Trojans saw the great wooden horse in front of one of the gates, and they wondered why the Greeks had left it there. Soon after, they opened the gate, and ran out to look at it more closely.

“What a wonderful horse!” they cried. “Look how big it is! Why did the Greeks leave it here?”

Suddenly there was a shout. Someone had seen and caught the man who had been left behind.

“A Greek!” cried the people. “He must be a spy! Kill him!”

“Do not harm him!” shouted the Trojan leader. “Bring him to me at once! Perhaps he can tell us about the wooden horse.”

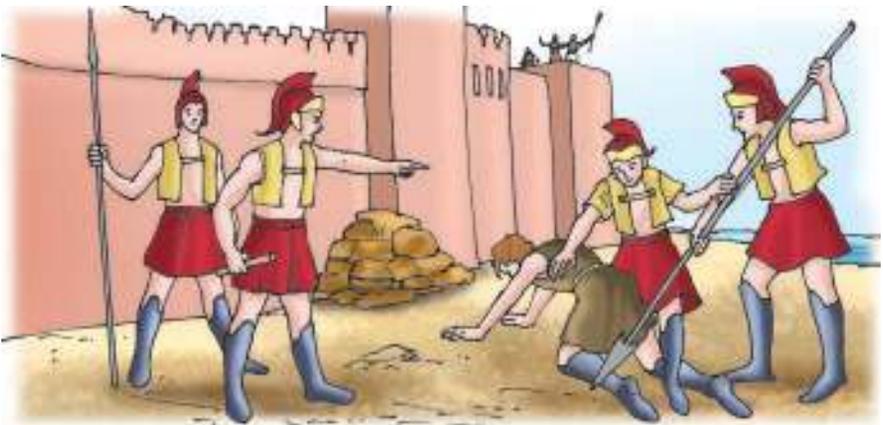
The poor man was brought before him. “You are a Greek spy and you deserve to die,” said the Trojan leader. “However, we shall spare your life, if you tell us why this great wooden horse was left here.”

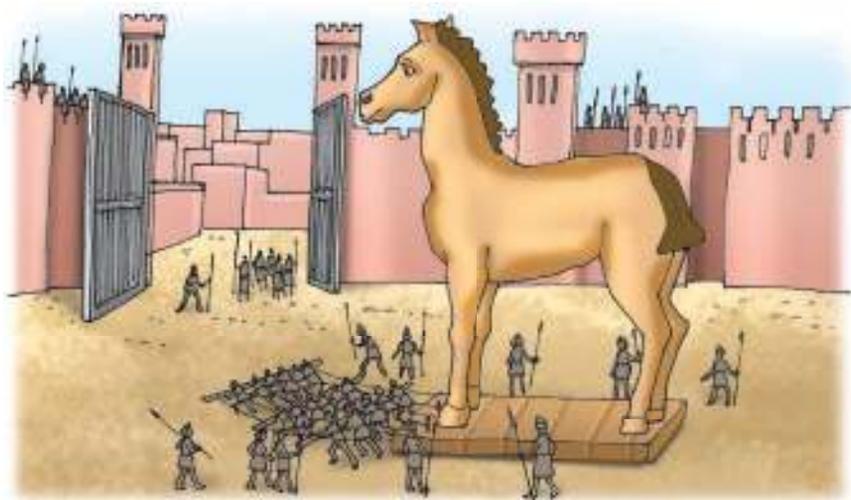
“That is an easy question to answer,” replied the Greek. “The horse was made as a gift to the gods. The gods will protect whoever owns it.”

“If that is so, why did the Greeks not take it away with them?” asked the Trojan leader.

“It was far too big,” said the Greek. “It could not be carried away on a ship.”

“Good!” cried the Trojan leader. “We will take it into Troy, and the gods will now be on our side.”



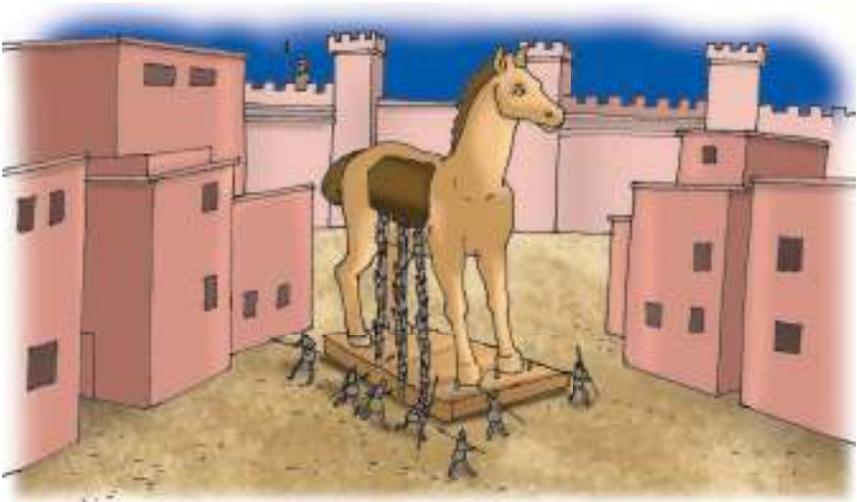


The great wooden horse was dragged into the city. Once it was inside the gate, the Trojans began to feast and make merry. The Greeks had gone home, and everybody was happy. There was no need to defend the gates, or keep watch from the walls.

Late that night, when the people of Troy were fast asleep, strange things began to happen.

The Greek soldiers, who were inside the horse, quietly opened the door and climbed down ropes to the ground. It was dark and no one saw them. One soldier went down to the shore and lit a signal fire. The others opened all the city gates. Quickly the Greek ships returned to Troy, and the soldiers rushed into the city through the open gates.

The people of Troy were taken by surprise. They woke to find the Greek soldiers setting fire to their houses. The Trojans fought bravely, but soon the



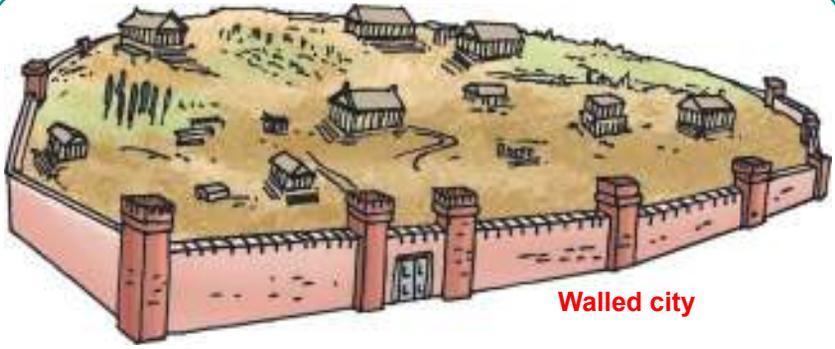
whole city was in flames. When Troy had been burnt to the ground, the Greeks sailed away once more. They had won their victory by a clever trick and the long war was ended.

(Adapted)

▣ Do You Remember?

1. What was the title of the story?
2. Who were at war with each other?
3. How did the Greeks reach Troy?
4. What was round the city?
5. How long did the Greeks try to beat the Trojans?
6. Who thought of a very clever plan?
7. What did he tell his men to do?
8. Why was the horse made hollow and big?

9. Where did they put it?
10. What did the Greek army do?
11. Why did the Trojans jump and dance for joy?
12. Why did they wonder at the great wooden horse?
13. Who told them why it was made?
14. What did the Trojans do with the horse?
15. Tell what happened late that night.



Walled city



Ballista



Battering ram



Tortoise



Archer



Spearman



Swordsman