

Best of Reading Comprehension: 15 Worksheets

Comprehension is a critical skill to build a lifelong love of reading. Help your kid get excited about reading (and fall in love with stories) with this collection of reading comprehension worksheets.

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READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE

Read the paragraphs. Draw a circle around the correct answer to each question.



My family went to the first baseball game of the season. We sat near the field and the action was very close. Suddenly, the ball came towards us. Luckily, my sister and I brought our gloves.

What most likely happened next?

- The caught the ball.
- The ballgame ended.
- They went to go buy popcorn.



Rob loves his dog Dougie very much. Every morning he fills up his food bowl. Then he gives him a bath. In the afternoon, he takes Dougie for a walk in the park. Dougie is a very happy and well-loved dog!

What is the first thing Rob does for his dog every morning?

- He walks Dougie.
- He buys him treats.
- He fills up his food bowl.

The countryside is very calm. The water flows gently. Birds happily chirp as the calm breeze cools the air. A man quietly naps in his row boat.

What is the main idea?

- The countryside is crowded
- The countryside is peaceful.
- The man is lazy.



Name: _____

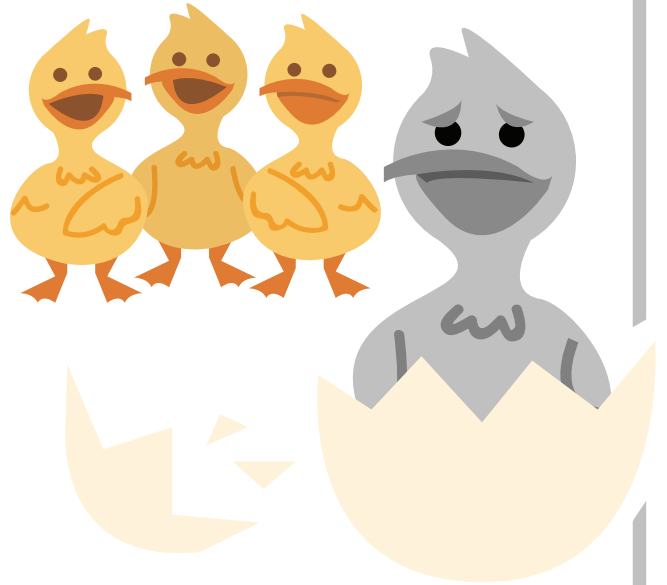
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THE UGLY DUCKLING

by Hans Christian Andersen

It was a beautiful spring morning on a small farm near the woods. In a cool, shaded corner, a duck built a warm nest to sit on her four precious eggs. Strangely, one of the eggs was much larger than the rest.

To her excitement, the eggs started to rumble and crack. One, two, three eggs popped open, and three little ducklings poked their heads into the world. At the same time, the biggest egg began to crack as well. To the mother's surprise, a big, gray duckling stumbled out of the egg! Although he was different, and not as cute as the other ducklings, she loved him nonetheless.



The next day, the duck introduced her family to the other animals on the farm. Seeing the strange gray duckling, the pig, mallard and mouse all burst out laughing. The poor duckling bowed his head in shame. He felt like he didn't belong. That night, as his family slept near the barn, the gray duckling decided to leave to find people that liked him for who he was.

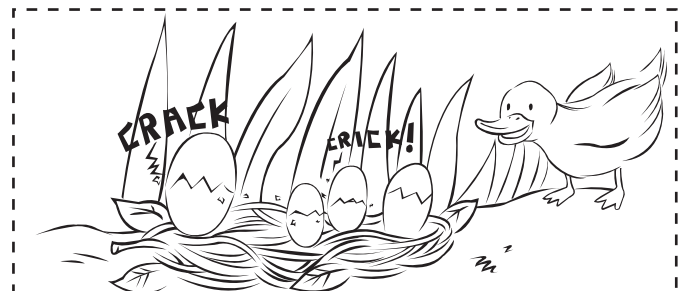
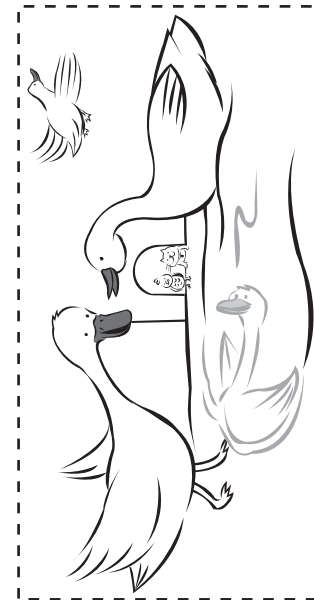
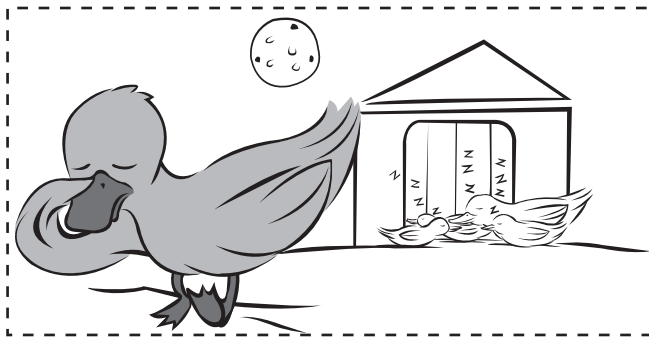
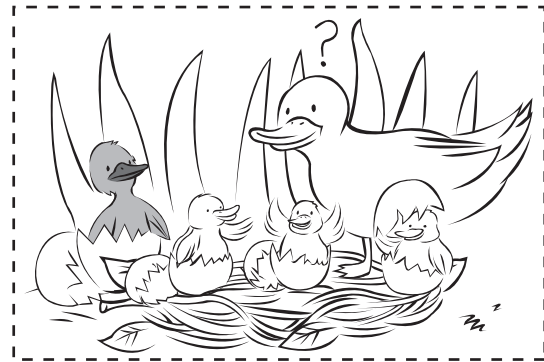
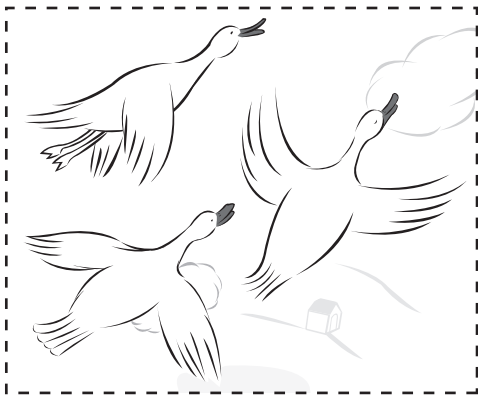
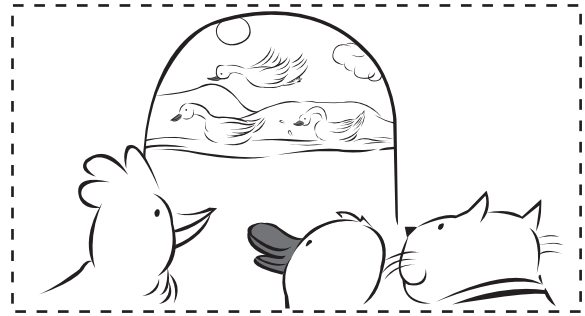
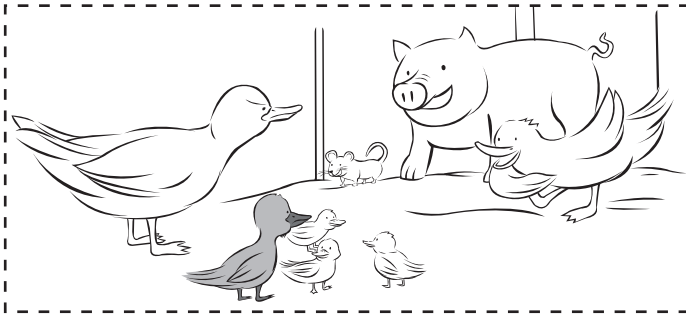
Before long, he ran into a kind old woman, her rooster and her cat. She invited him into her home, and they all treated him like family. Over time, the little gray duckling began to grow. Although he was happy, he always felt something was missing.

One day, as he stared out on the pond, he saw a family of beautiful swans wading in the cool breeze. He wanted to go swimming with them. As he approached the pond, he saw his reflection for the first time. The ugly duckling had grown into a beautiful swan! From below, the cat and rooster happily watched their friend fly high in the sky. Finally, the little gray duckling had found himself.

THE UGLY DUCKLING

Oh no, the story has been all jumbled up! It's up to you to cut out the images and make the story make sense again.

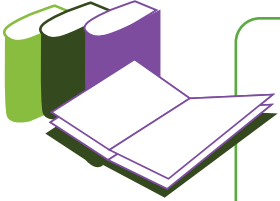
Bonus Activity: Color in the images with your favorite colors.



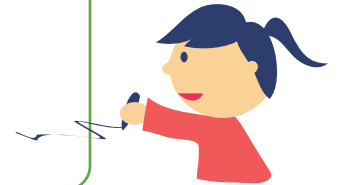
Drawing the Story

#1

Ask an adult to read this story aloud to you. Then draw 3 pictures from the story in the correct order.



Tyler goes to karate class on Saturday afternoons. He likes learning karate moves and practicing with his friends during class. After class, Tyler and his dad go to the mall for ice cream. Tyler orders an ice cream sundae with sprinkles and a cherry on top. In the evening, Tyler's mom prepares dinner for the family. After dinner, Tyler helps clean up. Today is his turn to wash the dishes.



First

Next

Last

CHOOSE THE ENDING

Read each story beginning. Then, circle the sentence ending that makes the most sense.



Ben was walking home from school when he found a wallet full of money. His parents had always taught him to be honest. Ben picked up the wallet and...

- kept on walking.
- tried to find the owner.

Sammy woke up to a giant snow storm. She checked the temperature gauge on the wall and it was 10 degrees Fahrenheit. Sammy decided to wear...

- her heavy coat and boots.
- a light jacket and sneakers.



Chris has been practicing all year for the big game. His pitching has really improved over the season. On the first pitch of the game, he...

- threw a nice curveball.
- kicked the ball to the batter.

Story Map

ONCE UPON A TIME

Title

Author

Supporting Characters

Main Characters

The Setting

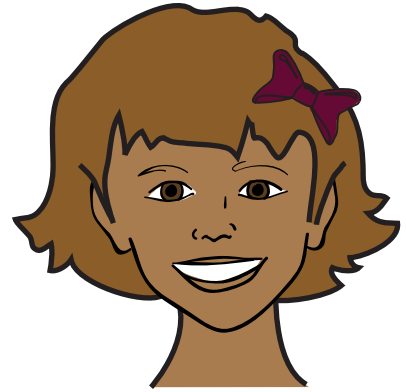
Beginning

End

What's in a Story?

Read the story, then write the main idea in the middle box. Write one detail in each of the other boxes.

It's the first day of school! Ellie is very excited. She takes her new backpack and lunchbox to school. She is happy to see her friends in the classroom. The students like their teacher. Everyone has a good first day of school.



Detail:

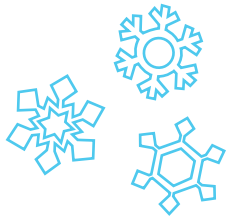
Detail:

Main idea:

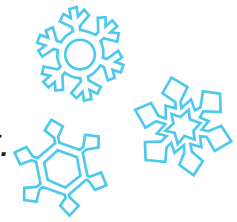
Detail:

Detail:





Cause and Effect



A cause is why something happens. An effect is what happens.

Example: *Anna skipped breakfast, so she was hungry all morning.*

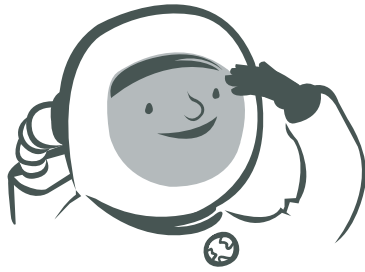
cause

effect

Circle the best effect for each cause.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Jim did not study... | so he made an A+ on the test.
so he did poorly on the test. |
| <hr/> | |
| 2. The soccer team practiced everyday... | and won the game.
and lost the game. |
| <hr/> | |
| 3. There was a blizzard outside... | so everyone went outside to play.
so school was cancelled. |
| <hr/> | |
| 4. Ava felt sick... | so Mom took her to the doctor.
so I gave her some ice cream. |
| <hr/> | |
| 5. The girl tripped... | and checked her messages.
and skinned her knees. |
| <hr/> | |
| 6. I ate too much candy... | and got a stomach ache.
and felt great. |
| <hr/> | |
| 7. The team won... | and the coach was sad.
and they celebrated with a party. |
| <hr/> | |
| 8. The baby cried... | so Dad held her.
and she made Dad cry. |
| <hr/> | |
| 9. Tony took good care of his dog... | and his dog was very happy.
and his dog ran away. |
| <hr/> | |
| 10. Mary's hands were dirty after painting... | so she washed them with soap and water.
so she sat down to eat dinner. |

BLAST OFF



Greetings, Astronaut!

You've been chosen to carry out an important mission: based on the report log, can you guess which picture comes last in the sequence below?

Space craft report log:

10am - Houston, we have takeoff!

11:30 am - Houston, the spacecraft is traveling smoothly through space.

3 days later - Houston, we are having communic-85 iss-es. We've landed s@fely on the m--!@0-

takeoff



traveling



?



Where is the spacecraft now?

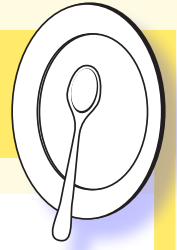


Bonus Question: Who was the first man to walk on the moon?

Circle the correct answer. Neil Armstrong
Lance Armstrong
Buzz Armstrong



Make a Storyboard



This is a fun poem! Draw the story of the poem in the boxes below.

Hey diddle diddle,
The Cat and the fiddle,
The Cow jumped over the moon,
The little Dog laughed to see such sport,
And the Dish ran away with the Spoon.



FACTS & OPINIONS

Frank and Opie are two friends who tend to speak in different manners. Frank is objective and just states the facts. Opie is subjective and speaks his opinion. Read the following statements carefully and determine whether Frank or Opie said them. Write an "F" or an "O" for fact or opinion on the lines next to each statement.

► On page 2, practice writing some of your own facts and opinions.

Frank



Opie



____ "Mystery novels are the most exciting books to read!"

____ "My new backpack cost me only \$35.29."

____ "Montana is the most beautiful state to visit during the summer."

____ "Jellyfish don't have brains, bones, or a heart."

____ "The Giant Panda is on the endangered species list."

____ "Surfing is the most difficult sport to learn."

____ "The Wildcats are going to win the championship this year."

____ "The temperature on the surface of the sun is approximately 11,000 degrees Fahrenheit."

____ "Van Gogh is the most talented artist who ever lived."

____ "The Empire State Building is over 1,200 feet tall!"

WRITING
COMPOSITION



◀ Look at the subject in each speech bubble and write a fact or opinion depending on who is saying it.

Frank



Hot weather _____

Space Exploration _____

Monkey Bars _____

The Eiffel Tower _____

Fishing _____

Spiders _____

Rock 'n' Roll Music _____

Chocolate _____

Opie



THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD

By Rudyard Kipling



Long, long ago, the mighty Elephant had no trunk. His nose was short, and only as big as a boot! But the Elephant's child, just a baby Elephant, was very curious and always asked silly questions: "Aunt Ostrich, why do your tail feathers grow so tall? ... Uncle Giraffe, what makes your skin so spotty? ... Miss Hippo, how does your mouth open so wide?"

One fine morning the curious baby Elephant asked, "What does the Crocodile have for dinner?" All together everybody yelled, "HUSH!" in a dreadful tone, and they shushed and shooed him away angrily. But the baby Elephant did not understand why. He was still curious!

Then the baby Elephant came upon the magnificent Kolokolo bird and he sighed, "My family has shushed and shooed me away, but I still want to know what the Crocodile eats for dinner!" The Kolokolo Bird answered, sadly, "Go to the banks of the great green river if you want to find out." After a long and tiresome search, the baby Elephant found the Crocodile by the river bank. "I have been looking for you, Mr. Crocodile!" he said with excitement, "Will you please tell me what you have for dinner?" The Crocodile grinned wide, and he said, "Come closer, baby Elephant, I'll whisper it to you." The baby Elephant bent his head down to the Crocodile's large, toothy mouth. "I think," growled the Crocodile, "Today I will begin with a baby Elephant!" And suddenly the Crocodile caught him by his little nose. The baby Elephant cried out through his pinched nose, "Led go! You're hurdig be!" Stubbornly, he sat back and began to pull as hard as he could. As he pulled, and leaned back, his nose began to stretch! They both pulled and pulled until the baby Elephant's nose was almost five feet long. Finally the Crocodile let go of his nose with a plop. The poor baby Elephant was left with a very sore and very long nose! At first, all the animals made fun of his great, ugly nose. But then he found many uses for it. He could pick fruit from high treetops, brush away flies, and even breathe when he was underwater!

And that is how the Elephant got his trunk.

READING COMPREHENSION

Circle the word that has a similar meaning to a word from "The Elephant's Child."

Mighty

"Long, long ago, the mighty Elephant had no trunk."

- A. baby
- B. tall
- C. gentle
- D. powerful

Fine:

"One fine morning the curious baby Elephant asked, "What does the Crocodile have for dinner?"

- A. nice
- B. snowy
- C. early
- D. ugly

Tiresome

"After a long and tiresome search, the baby Elephant found the Crocodile by the river bank."

- A. lazy
- B. hard
- C. funny
- D. easy

Stubbornly

"Stubbornly, he sat back and began to pull as hard as he could."

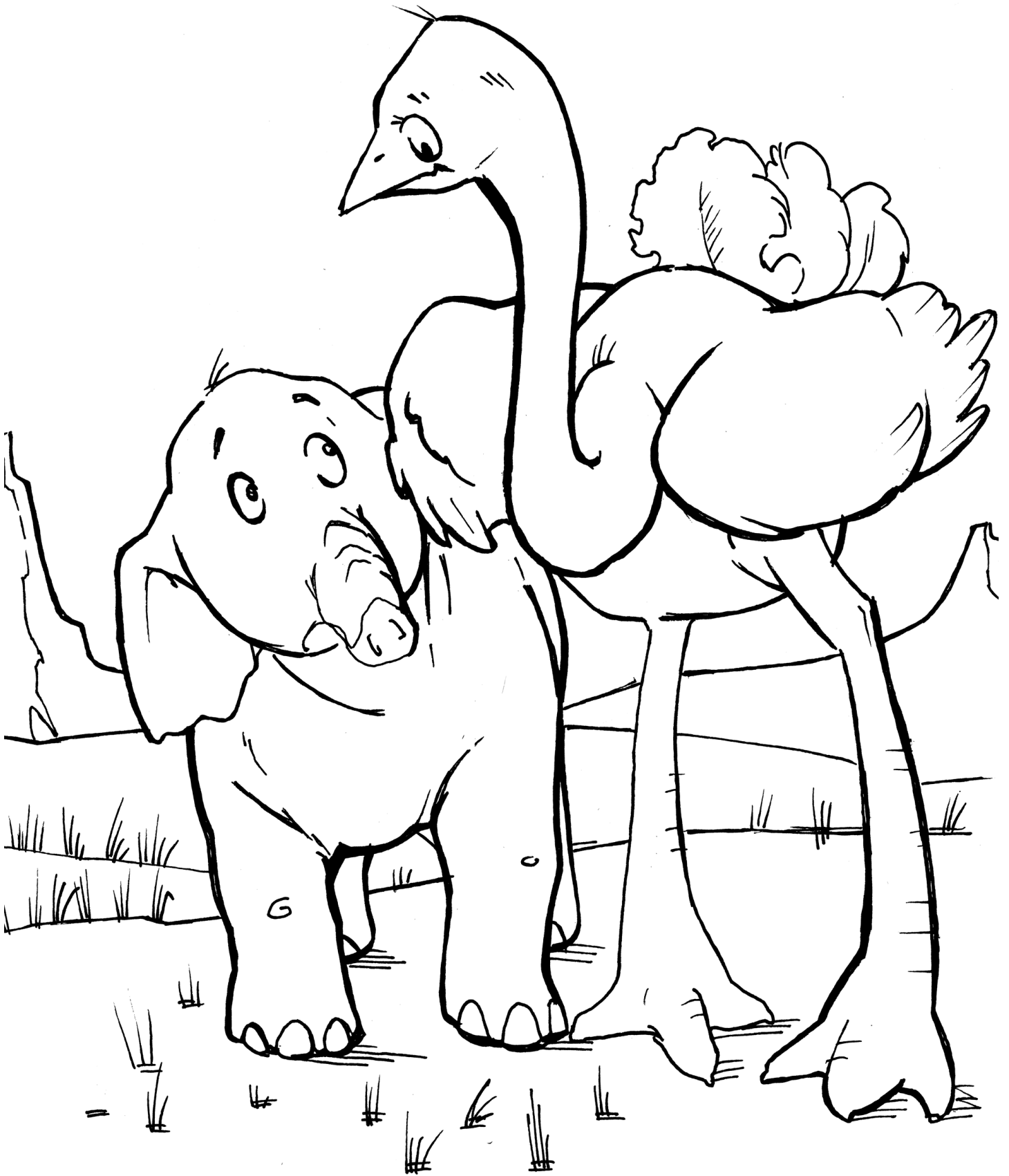
- A. Angrily
- B. Firmly
- C. Suddenly
- D. Happily

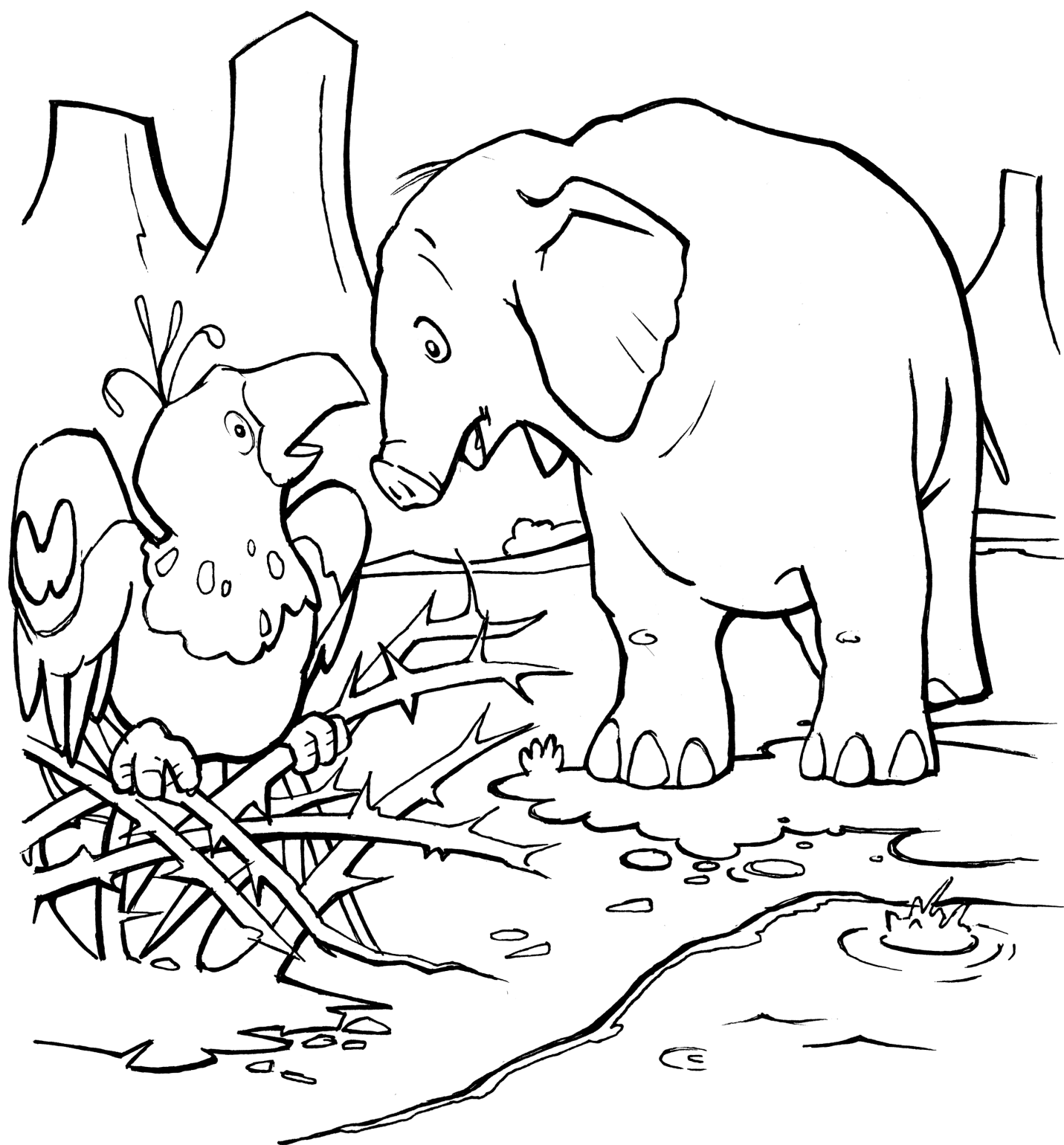
WORD SEARCH

K	T	Z	C	K	T	E	R	K	A	M	J	L	Q	E
Z	E	I	U	J	F	N	U	H	A	S	U	S	S	L
A	P	Y	R	T	X	I	E	G	H	F	C	H	Q	I
M	A	A	I	E	C	F	N	M	D	U	U	J	E	D
Z	E	H	O	P	S	I	Q	A	E	S	U	Z	A	O
B	N	R	U	J	F	O	E	V	H	T	A	H	O	C
Q	A	L	S	I	E	R	M	E	S	W	I	S	C	O
D	N	F	C	M	D	L	D	E	K	I	W	C	M	R
Z	R	E	K	O	L	O	K	O	L	O	W	S	X	C
R	N	Y	L	N	R	O	B	B	U	T	S	C	L	E
T	E	M	I	Y	W	N	Y	T	H	G	I	M	G	C
A	K	V	R	W	W	Y	L	V	I	P	J	S	D	B
T	M	G	I	U	N	O	D	B	E	N	W	D	E	W
U	T	T	E	R	B	T	Q	G	X	B	F	Y	T	A
A	T	U	Q	H	C	S	J	V	M	T	C	H	D	W

Word List

Crocodile
Curious
Dreadful
Excitement
Fine
Kolokolo
Magnificent
Mighty
River
Shushed
Stubbornly
Tiresome







Heroes and Villains



Think about it: if the **hero**, or main character in a story, didn't have a **villain**, or bad guy, to go up against, you'd have a pretty boring story! Most of the time, the villain is someone who does bad or mean things that the main character must try to overcome.

Draw a picture of the hero of your story below.

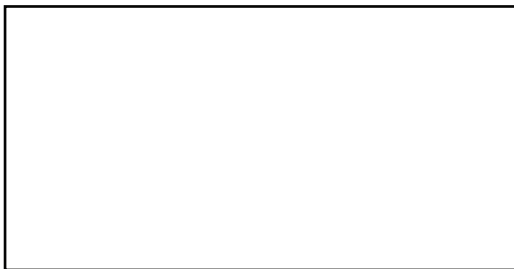


Hero's name:

How do you know this character is the hero? Write one thing he or she has **said** that shows that he/she is the hero.

Write down one thing he/she has **done** that shows that he/she is the hero.

Draw a picture of the villain in your story below.



Villain's name:

How do you know this character is the villain? Write one thing he/she has **said** that shows that he/she is the villain.

Write down one thing he/she has **done** that shows that he/she is the villain.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff

make your own mini book

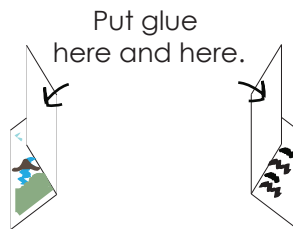
How to Make the Mini Book

What You Need:

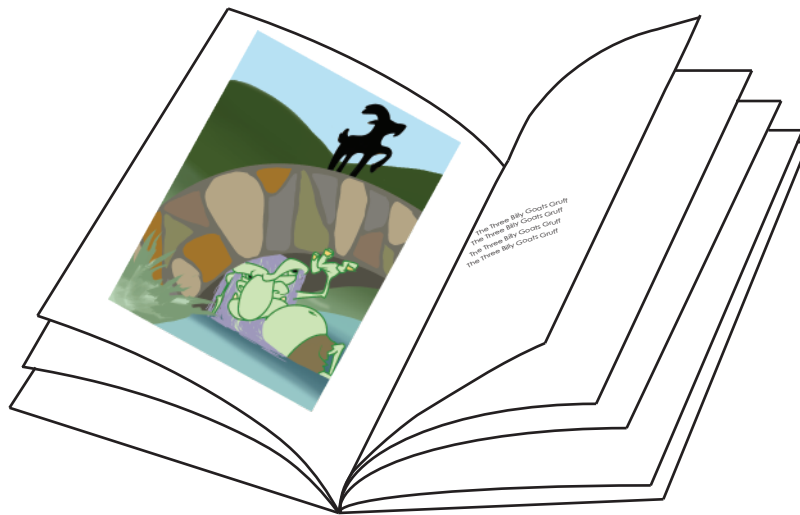
The story pages

Paste or a glue stick

1. Print out the story pages and fold each in half on the dotted line.
2. Fold page one so that the image is on the outside. This will be the book cover.
3. Fold page two the opposite way of page one, so that the image and text face each other.
4. You'll want to fold the rest of the pages the same as page two.
5. Time to glue! Take page two and page three and put a thin layer of paste on the backsides of the paper. Make sure to get the edge.



6. Line up the papers corner to corner and press the two halves together. You'll be gluing the backside of all the pages to each other so that when you flip through the book the picture is on the left and the story is on the right.
7. Wrap the cover page around the book and glue it in place.



Your finished book should look something like this.
Happy reading!



The Three Billy Goats Gruff



Once upon a time there were three billy goats, all named Gruff.





Goats eat a lot, you know, and one day they found that their grassy hill was becoming bare. There was more grass to eat on the other side of the river.

The smallest Gruff decided to go first. To get there he had to cross a bridge. Under the bridge lived a great big troll.





Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap went the bridge.

“Who comes crossing my bridge?” said the troll.

“It is only I, Little Billy Goat Gruff,” said the billy goat, with a tiny voice.

“I will eat you up!” said the troll.





“Oh you do not want to do that. I am too little,” said the billy goat. “Wait, and my big brother will come along. He’s bigger than me. He will make a much better meal.”

“Be gone then! I will wait for a bigger, better meal,” said the troll.

And with that the little billy goat quickly crossed to the other side.





After a little while the bridge shook.

Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap.

“Who comes crossing my bridge?”
yelled the troll.



"It is I, Medium Billy Goat Gruff."

"I will eat you up!" cried the troll, coming closer.

"If you wait just a little my big brother will come along. Don't eat me. He is much bigger."

"Be gone then," said the troll.



And then TRIP, TRAP, TRIP, TRAP, TRIP, TRAP. The bridge groaned under a very heavy goat.

“Now who comes crossing my bridge?” demanded the troll, now very angry indeed.





"It is I! Big Billy Goat Gruff."

"Now I'm coming to gobble you up!" yelled the troll.

"Well, come along," said the biggest billy goat Gruff.





The troll ran at him. Big Billy Goat Gruff thumped the troll hard in the chest with his big antlers.

The troll went right off the bridge and into the water, where he hurt his foot. He had wanted the biggest mouthful for himself and ended up all wet instead.





The three billy goats had their fill of grass from the hills on that side of the river.

The End

Name _____

Date _____

Sugar and Spice

**Read the story below.
Then, answer the questions on the next page.**



It was Saturday, and Mindy was getting ready for her birthday party. In just three hours, all of her friends would arrive with presents and excitement. Every year, Mindy and her mom made a cinnamon cake fresh on the day of her birthday party, and Mindy thought this year would be no different. Excited, she waited for her mom in the kitchen.

Mindy's mother came into the kitchen and took her apron from a hook on the wall. Instead of putting it on, though, she lifted it over Mindy's head. Surprised, Mindy stood as her mom tied the strings of the apron behind her.

"Mindy, I think you're old enough to mix the batter yourself this year. I'm sure you can do it. Remember what we say?"

"Yes... Baking is just a little sugar and a little spice."

"That's right," said Mindy's mom. "Now, go ahead and start. I'm going to go blow up the balloons." With that, she preheated the oven and left Mindy alone in the kitchen.

Maybe her mom was right; maybe there wasn't much to it. Carefully, Mindy measured out the ingredients and poured them into a big bowl. Carefully, she mixed the batter until it was perfectly smooth. Carefully, she poured the batter into the cake pan. Then, she called to her mom.

"It's ready to go into the oven," Mindy said. Her mom put on oven mitts and popped the pan into the oven. Mindy had actually done it!

When the cake came out, though, something seemed wrong. Mindy tried to poke it with a toothpick, just as her mother always did. The toothpick wouldn't go through. The cake was almost as hard as a rock!

"I did exactly what I was supposed to," Mindy moaned. "I was so careful! I didn't put the eggs in until last, and I measured the baking soda exactly."

"Baking soda? Oh, dear. That's the problem. You were supposed to use baking powder." Mindy began to cry. "I'm sorry, mom. I tried so hard."

Mindy's mom gave her a big hug. "I'm the one who's sorry. I expected too much, and I was hard on you. I guess you could say I used too little sugar and too much spice!"

Mindy laughed, and her mom laughed, too.

"Now, let's try again," said Mindy's mom. "This time, we'll do it together!"

Name _____

Date _____

Sugar and Spice

Comprehension Questions

1. Why do you think Mindy was nervous about mixing the batter by herself?

2. Why do you think Mindy's mom thought Mindy could do it herself?

3. What did Mindy's mom mean when she said she used "too little sugar and too much spice"?

4. How would you feel if you had to do a big project alone, like Mindy did?

Answer Sheets

Best of Reading Comprehension: 15 Worksheets

Reading Comprehension Practice Test

The Ugly Duckling Story

Story Comprehension: What's in a Story?

Identifying Cause and Effect

Fact & Opinion Worksheet

The Elephant's Child

Reading for Understanding: Sugar and Spice

ANSWERS

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE

Read the paragraphs. Draw a circle around the correct answer to each question.



My family went to the first baseball game of the season. We sat near the field and the action was very close. Suddenly, the ball came towards us. Luckily, my sister and I brought our gloves.

What most likely happened next?

They caught the ball.

The ballgame ended.

They went to go buy popcorn.



Rob loves his dog Dougie very much. Every morning he fills up his food bowl. Then he gives him a bath. In the afternoon, he takes Dougie for a walk in the park. Dougie is a very happy and well-loved dog!

What is the first thing Rob does for his dog every morning?

He walks Dougie.

He buys him treats.

He fills up his food bowl.

The countryside is very calm. The water flows gently. Birds happily chirp as the calm breeze cools the air. A man quietly naps in his row boat.

What is the main idea?

The countryside is crowded.

The countryside is peaceful.

The man is lazy.

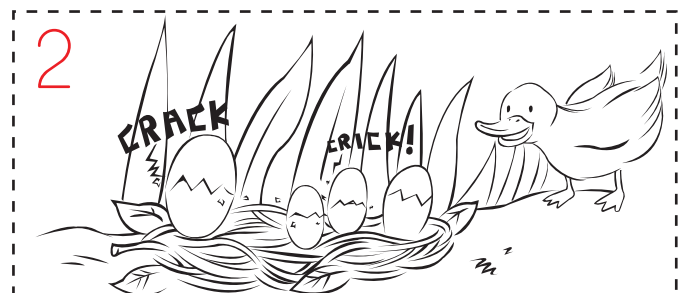
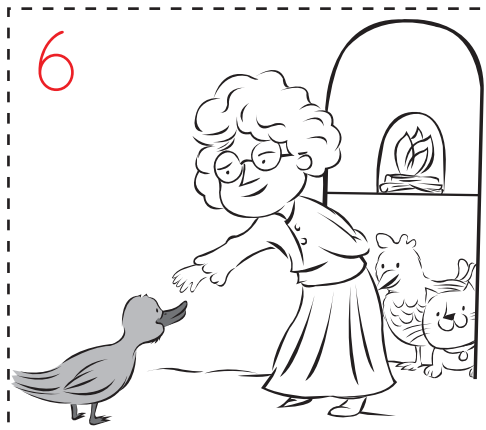
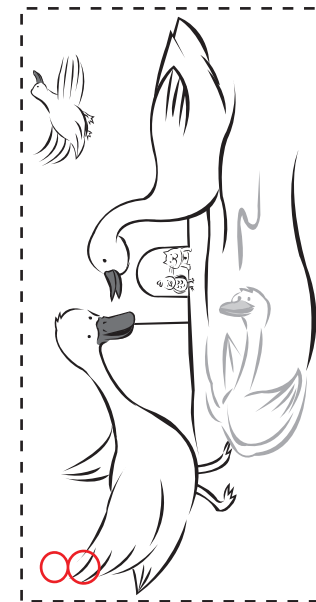
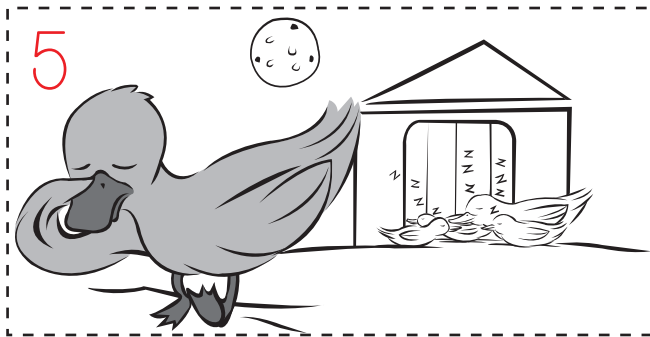
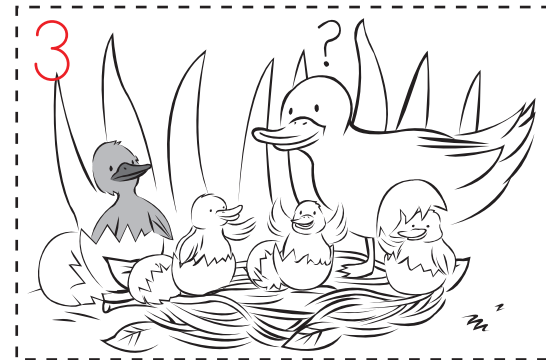
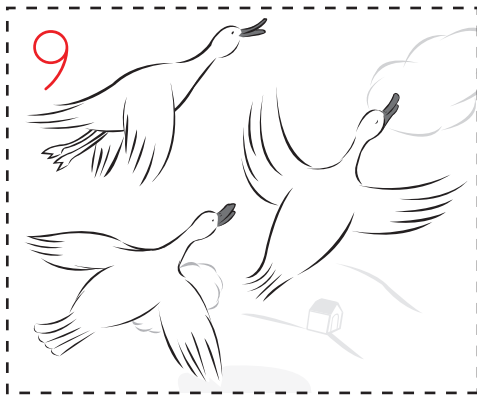
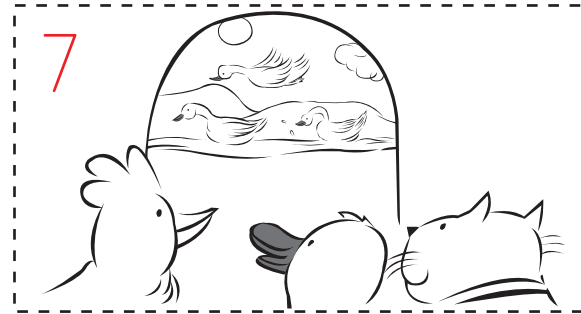
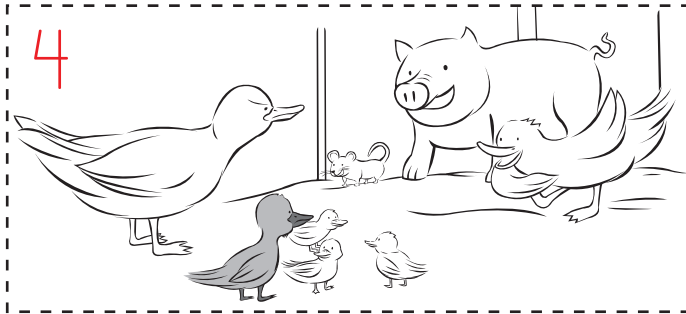


THE UGLY DUCKLING

Answers

Oh no, the story has been all jumbled up! It's up to you to cut out the images and make the story make sense again.

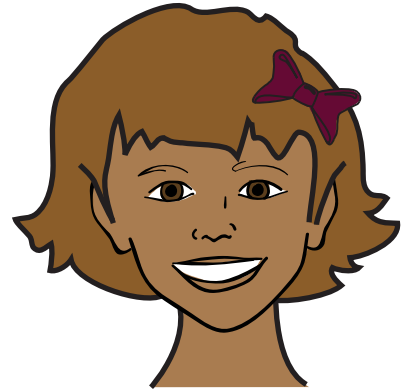
Bonus Activity: Color in the images with your favorite colors.



What's in a Story?

Read the story, then write the main idea in the middle box. Write one detail in each of the other boxes.

It's the first day of school! Ellie is very excited. She takes her new backpack and lunchbox to school. She is happy to see her friends in the classroom. The students like their teacher. Everyone has a good first day of school.



Detail: She takes her new backpack to school.

Detail: She is happy to see her friends in the classroom.

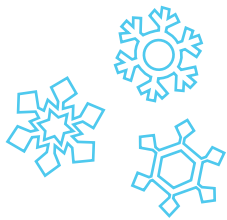
Main idea:

Ellie is excited about the first day of school.

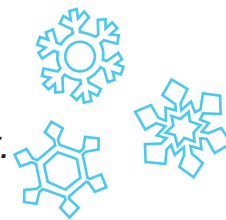
Detail: The students like their teacher.

Detail: Everyone has a good first day of school.





Cause and Effect



A cause is why something happens. An effect is what happens.

Example: *Anna skipped breakfast, so she was hungry all morning.*

cause

effect

Circle the best effect for each cause.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Jim did not study... | so he made an A+ on the test.
so he did poorly on the test. |
| 2. The soccer team practiced everyday... | and won the game.
and lost the game. |
| 3. There was a blizzard outside... | so everyone went outside to play.
so school was cancelled. |
| 4. Ava felt sick... | so Mom took her to the doctor.
so I gave her some ice cream. |
| 5. The girl tripped... | and checked her messages.
and skinned her knees. |
| 6. I ate too much candy... | and got a stomach ache.
and felt great. |
| 7. The team won... | and the coach was sad.
and they celebrated with a party. |
| 8. The baby cried... | so Dad held her.
and she made Dad cry. |
| 9. Tony took good care of his dog... | and his dog was very happy.
and his dog ran away. |
| 10. Mary's hands were dirty after painting... | so she washed them with soap and water.
so she sat down to eat dinner. |



FACTS & OPINIONS

Frank and Opie are two friends who tend to speak in different manners. Frank is objective and just states the facts. Opie is subjective and speaks his opinion. Read the following statements carefully and determine whether Frank or Opie said them. Write an "F" or an "O" for fact or opinion on the lines next to each statement.

► On page 2, practice writing some of your own facts and opinions.

Frank



Opie



 O

"Mystery novels are the most exciting books to read!"

 F

"My new backpack cost me only \$35.29."

 O

"Montana is the most beautiful state to visit during the summer."

 F

"Jellyfish don't have brains, bones, or a heart."

 F

"The Giant Panda is on the endangered species list."

 O

"Surfing is the most difficult sport to learn."

 O

"The Wildcats are going to win the championship this year."

 F

"The temperature on the surface of the sun is approximately 11,000 degrees Fahrenheit."

 O

"Van Gogh is the most talented artist who ever lived."

 F

"The Empire State Building is over 1,200 feet tall!"

THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD

By Rudyard Kipling



Long, long ago, the mighty Elephant had no trunk. His nose was short, and only as big as a boot! But the Elephant's child, just a baby Elephant, was very curious and always asked silly questions: "Aunt Ostrich, why do your tail feathers grow so tall? ... Uncle Giraffe, what makes your skin so spotty? ... Miss Hippo, how does your mouth open so wide?"

One fine morning the curious baby Elephant asked, "What does the Crocodile have for dinner?" All together everybody yelled, "HUSH!" in a dreadful tone, and they shushed and shooed him away angrily. But the baby Elephant did not understand why. He was still curious!

Then the baby Elephant came upon the magnificent Kolokolo bird and he sighed, "My family has shushed and shooed me away, but I still want to know what the Crocodile eats for dinner!" The Kolokolo Bird answered, sadly, "Go to the banks of the great green river if you want to find out." After a long and tiresome search, the baby Elephant found the Crocodile by the river bank. "I have been looking for you, Mr. Crocodile!" he said with excitement, "Will you please tell me what you have for dinner?" The Crocodile grinned wide, and he said, "Come closer, baby Elephant, I'll whisper it to you." The baby Elephant bent his head down to the Crocodile's large, toothy mouth. "I think," growled the Crocodile, "Today I will begin with a baby Elephant!" And suddenly the Crocodile caught him by his little nose. The baby Elephant cried out through his pinched nose, "Led go! You're hurdig be!" Stubbornly, he sat back and began to pull as hard as he could. As he pulled, and leaned back, his nose began to stretch! They both pulled and pulled until the baby Elephant's nose was almost five feet long. Finally the Crocodile let go of his nose with a plop. The poor baby Elephant was left with a very sore and very long nose! At first, all the animals made fun of his great, ugly nose. But then he found many uses for it. He could pick fruit from high treetops, brush away flies, and even breathe when he was underwater!

And that is how the Elephant got his trunk.

READING COMPREHENSION

Circle the word that has a similar meaning to a word from "The Elephant's Child."

Mighty

"Long, long ago, the mighty Elephant had no trunk."

- A. baby
- B. tall
- C. gentle
- D. powerful**

Fine:

"One fine morning the curious baby Elephant asked, "What does the Crocodile have for dinner?"

- A. nice**
- B. snowy
- C. early
- D. ugly

Tiresome

"After a long and tiresome search, the baby Elephant found the Crocodile by the river bank."

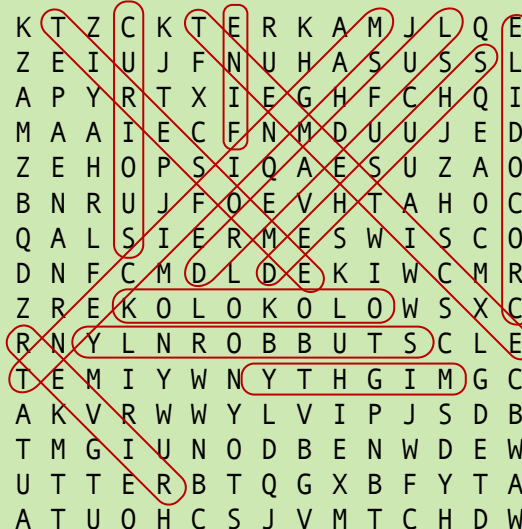
- A. lazy
- B. hard**
- C. funny
- D. easy

Stubbornly

"Stubbornly, he sat back and began to pull as hard as he could."

- A. Angrily
- B. Firmly**
- C. Suddenly
- D. Happily

WORD SEARCH



Word List

Crocodile
Curious
Dreadful
Excitement
Fine
Kolokolo
Magnificent
Mighty
River
Shushed
Stubbornly
Tiresome

Name _____

Date _____

Answers Sugar and Spice



Read the story below.

Then, answer the questions on the next page.

It was Saturday, and Mindy was getting ready for her birthday party. In just three hours, all of her friends would arrive with presents and excitement. Every year, Mindy and her mom made a cinnamon cake fresh on the day of her birthday party, and Mindy thought this year would be no different. Excited, she waited for her mom in the kitchen.

Mindy's mother came into the kitchen and took her apron from a hook on the wall. Instead of putting it on, though, she lifted it over Mindy's head. Surprised, Mindy stood as her mom tied the strings of the apron behind her.

"Mindy, I think you're old enough to mix the batter yourself this year. I'm sure you can do it. Remember what we say?"

"Yes... Baking is just a little sugar and a little spice."

"That's right," said Mindy's mom. "Now, go ahead and start. I'm going to go blow up the balloons." With that, she preheated the oven and left Mindy alone in the kitchen.

Maybe her mom was right; maybe there wasn't much to it. Carefully, Mindy measured out the ingredients and poured them into a big bowl. Carefully, she mixed the batter until it was perfectly smooth. Carefully, she poured the batter into the cake pan. Then, she called to her mom.

"It's ready to go into the oven," Mindy said. Her mom put on oven mitts and popped the pan into the oven. Mindy had actually done it!

When the cake came out, though, something seemed wrong. Mindy tried to poke it with a toothpick, just as her mother always did. The toothpick wouldn't go through. The cake was almost as hard as a rock!

"I did exactly what I was supposed to," Mindy moaned. "I was so careful! I didn't put the eggs in until last, and I measured the baking soda exactly."

"Baking soda? Oh, dear. That's the problem. You were supposed to use baking powder." Mindy began to cry. "I'm sorry, mom. I tried so hard."

Mindy's mom gave her a big hug. "I'm the one who's sorry. I expected too much, and I was hard on you. I guess you could say I used too little sugar and too much spice!"

Mindy laughed, and her mom laughed, too.

"Now, let's try again," said Mindy's mom. "This time, we'll do it together!"

Name _____

Date _____

Sugar and Spice

Comprehension Questions

1. Why do you think Mindy was nervous about mixing the batter by herself?

Mindy was nervous because she had never baked a cake by herself before.

2. Why do you think Mindy's mom thought Mindy could do it herself?

Mindy's mother thought she was old enough to bake a cake by herself.

3. What did Mindy's mom mean when she said she used "too little sugar and too much spice"?

Mindy's mom meant that she had given Mindy too much responsibility.

4. How would you feel if you had to do a big project alone, like Mindy did?

Answers will vary.