



# STORYCOMP PROJECT

**STORY COLLECTION**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



ERASMUS+

KA220-ADU - COOPERATION PARTNERSHIPS  
IN ADULT EDUCATION FIELD

PROJECT ID:  
2020-1-DE01-KA204-A007574

01/11/2020 to 31/10/2022

*This project is funded with the support of the European Commission. The information and views set out in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. Neither the European Union institutions nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use, which may be made of the information contained therein.*



pistes solidaires



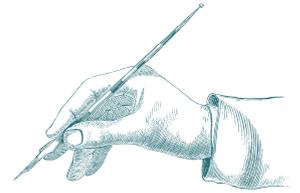


# The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse



Ancient Greece

Aesopus



Purpose(s)



Critical Thinking



Identity & Recognition

**Now you must know** that a town mouse once upon a time went on a visit to his cousin in the country. He was rough and ready, this cousin, but he loved his town friend and made him heartily welcome. Beans and bacon, cheese and bread, were all he had to offer, but he offered them freely. The town mouse rather turned up his long nose at this country fare, and said, "I cannot understand, cousin, how you can put up with such poor food as this, but of course you cannot expect anything better in the country; come you with me and I will show you how to live. When you have been in town a week you will wonder how you could ever have stood a country life." No sooner said than done: The two mice set off for the town and arrived at the town mouse's residence late at night.

"You will want some refreshment after our long journey," said the polite town mouse, and took his friend into the grand dining room.



There they found the remains of a fine feast, and soon the two mice were eating up jellies and cakes and all that was nice. Suddenly they heard growling and barking.

"What is that?" said the country mouse.

"It is only the dogs of the house," answered the other.

"Only," said the country mouse, "I do not like that music at my dinner!" Just at that moment the door flew open; in came two huge mastiffs; and the two mice had to scamper down and run off.

"Good-bye, cousin," said the country mouse.

"What! Going so soon?" said the other.

"Yes," he replied. "Better beans and bacon in peace than cakes and ale in fear."



In many versions of this tale there is a cat instead of a dog in the house of the town mouse.

Source/Link:

<https://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0112.html#aesop> (Aesop's version)

<https://books.google.be/books?>

[id=AwlvAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA48&redir\\_esc=y&hl=nl#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.be/books?id=AwlvAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA48&redir_esc=y&hl=nl#v=onepage&q&f=false)

(version of Jean de la Fontaine in French)



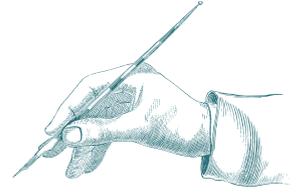


# The useless tree



China

Chuang TZU



Purpose(s)



Processing  
Knowledge



Identity &  
Recognition

**Once upon the time**, a great grove of trees stood on the hill where just one gnarled tree now stands. "We will never cut a good straight board from that twisted tree." So they let it be and cut another and another.

Then the loggers came after logs to sell and said, "The twisted tree will burn with a foul smell." So hey let it be and cut another and another.

Then the carvers came after soft-grained wood and said, "This twisted tree won't do us any good. It is a knotty old tree." So they, too, let it be and cut another and another.

In time, the large, gnarled tree stood alone on the hill. Now during the day, the children come and play in its shade. In the evening, the old men gather about its huge trunk. They sigh and talk about their lives.



“Oh, what is the use of being useless?” one elderly man said. Another pointed up and replied, “Just look above your head! An entire grove of trees once stood on this hill. Now only one crooked tree still stands, thick with greenery. Had this useless old tree been useful, my friend, it would not have grown ancient with fine spreading limbs.”

Source/Link:

Heather Forest, *Wisdom Tales from Around the World Fifty Gems of Story and Wisdom from Such Diverse Traditions as Sufi, Zen, Taoist, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, African and Native American*, August House, page 34, 1996.



# Hodja's fine coat



Turkey

Purpose(s)



Belonging-  
ness



Identity &  
Recognition

**Once upon the time**, Nasreddin Hodja, the famous preacher, was beloved by everyone in Turkey, especially the people of Akshehir. Everyone spoke of his wisdom and kindness. Whenever the people held a feast or festival, they invited Hodja.

One day the muhtar, the most important man in Akshehir, invited Hodja to a banquet. Hodja looked forward to the marvelous food he would feast upon and the good conversation he would have at the muhtar's home.

On the morning of the feast, he set out to work in his vineyard. It was a fine summer day, and Hodja enjoyed his work. Alas, he misjudged the time. As the sun sank lower in the sky, Hodja realized he would have no time to change his clothes.

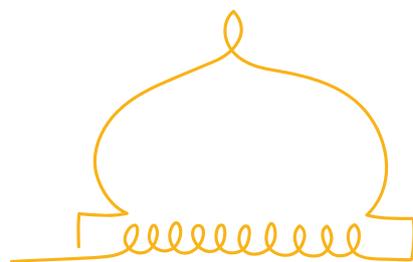


“What shall I do?” he asked himself. “If I take the time to wash and dress, I will be late for the feast.” Hodja did not like to keep people waiting, and so he hurried off to the muhtar’s home dressed in his working clothes, his hands and face still soiled from the day’s labors.

When he arrived, the servants turned away from him. Hodja made his own way into the house. The other guests were gathered, and he saw them laughing and talking enthusiastically with each other. But when Hodja walked into the room, the others ignored him. Whenever Hodja approached and spoke, they looked away, ignoring his words. Usually, people came to Hodja to ask his advice and opinions, but this evening no one spoke to him at all. Even the muhtar ignored his guest.

When the time came for the guests to be seated for supper, the muhtar placed Hodja in the farthest corner of the room, as far from him as possible.

After several minutes, Hodja excused himself and hurried out of the house. He walked as quickly as he could back home.



Once at home, he took off his work clothes and soaped and scrubbed himself until he seemed to shine. Then he dressed in the finest clothes he owned. He wore his flowing trousers and his most elegant silk shirt and wrapped his most exquisite turban around his head. Then he wrapped his new fur coat around his shoulders, for though it was a warm evening, he knew the coat was dazzling and would be the talk of the town.

He looked down at himself and smiled, for he knew he looked handsome than all the other men in Akshehir.

Now he walked calmly and with an air of importance back down the road to the muhtar's door. When he walked inside, the servants bowed and led him to his host.

When the muhtar saw Hodja, he rose at once and greeted his guest. He led him straight to the place of honor at the table, right beside his own place. Throughout the meal, the muhtar asked one question after another of the learned Hodja.

"You are the wisest man I know," the muhtar said, and all the others agreed and began to ask Hodja's advice and opinions on every subject under the sun. The servants rushed to bring Hodja the finest foods.

And then, to everyone's astonishment, Hodja began to stuff his pockets with food. Each time he tucked a piece of fruit or bread into his pocket, he would look down at the coat, rub his hand along its sleeve and say, "Eat, eat, my fine coat."

The muhtar stared. Everyone else stared. At last, the muhtar could not contain his curiosity. "Hodja, tell us," he said, "what are you doing?"

Hodja leaned back in his seat and smiled. "Ahh, that should be obvious," he said to the muhtar. "When I came earlier this evening, dressed in my work clothes, no one noticed me at all, but when I returned, you treated me as an honored guest. I have not changed. I am and always have been Nasreddin Hodja. And so I know it is my coat that you honor and adore. Since my coat is your guest of honor, I thought it only fair that it receives the largest portion of your feast."

Source/Link:

<https://www.assignmentpoint.com/arts/literature/hodjas-fine-coat.html>





# Ali Thumb



Turkey

Purpose(s)



Empowerment



Multiple Perspectives

**Once upon the time**, a couple had a baby boy whom they called Ali. The baby came as a surprise to his parents no bigger than a thumb! The mother and father were both very upset at first, but then they thought to themselves, 'This is what God has given us, and one day our son will grow up to be a big, strong boy.'

But the years passed and Ali did not grow at all. He remained as little as a thumb. Every evening at dinner, the mother would set a place at the table for her son. She would place a tiny plate in front of him and fill it with a teaspoon full of soup. Ali also had a tiny cup which his mother filled with a single drop of water.

Everything was fine when the family were at home, but the mother and father were ashamed of their son, thinking that if anybody saw him they would tease the young boy. So they always kept him indoors.



Many more years passed, and eventually Ali celebrated his twentieth birthday. He was still as little as a thumb, but his voice had grown very deep and very loud. In fact, it was like the voice of a giant man. Ali was a very sad young man because he had no friends and had to spend all of his time at home.

One day, Ali's father was getting ready to go to the market in the next town. He planned on spending the night in a caravanserai because he would not be able to make the journey there and back before nightfall.

Ali asked his father to take him to the journey too, but his father looked very anxious at the idea. 'We never took you out until this day and I am not sure that I can do it now,' he said. 'How can I protect you and hide you from other people?'

'It will be easy,' answered Ali in his deep voice. 'You can keep me in your pocket and nobody will ever know I am there. You can make a little hole in the pocket so I can breathe and see what is going on and enjoy all the new sites of the world.'

Ali's father realised how excited Ali was at the idea of leaving the house, and because of this he couldn't say no to his only son. The old man made a very small hole in his shirt pocket and helped Ali to climb inside. The mother handed over the bags for the journey and wished them good luck. Then Ali and his father set off towards the market in the neighbouring town.

After travelling all day, Ali and his father came to the caravanserai. 'We will get ourselves a room here for the night,' said the father, 'and tomorrow we will go to the market early in the morning.'

'I cannot believe I will stay in a caravanserai!' said Ali. He was very excited because he had already seen so much on his journey and he had never slept anywhere apart from his home.

Ali's father paid for a room and took his bags up to the room. After the old man had unpacked and washed, and with Ali still hidden in his pocket, he went down to the dining room.

Then something quite unexpected happened. Just as all of guests had seated themselves for dinner, a group of thieves entered the caravanserai. They pointed guns and gave orders that every man and woman should give their money and any valuables they had. All of the guests were very scared but they did as they were told and began reaching for their wallets and jewellery, placing them on the tables to be collected by the thieves.



Suddenly, there was a very loud and very deep voice from out of nowhere. 'Drop your guns!' commanded the voice. 'I am coming in there and I am going to catch you and give you over to the police.' Nobody knew where the voice was coming from. The thieves looked all around the dining room but could not see anyone. Then the voice came again, even louder this time. 'I will make sure that you spend many years in prison.'

Because the thieves could not tell where the voice was coming from, they convinced themselves that it must belong to a ghost. And if there was one thing the thieves were scared of even more than the police, it was ghosts.

All of a sudden, the thieves dropped their guns and ran from the caravanserai and disappeared into the night. Even though the guests were happy that the robbers had fled, they too were afraid of ghosts and wanted to run away to their rooms and hide.

'Do not worry,' said Ali's father. 'It is not a ghost that is talking. It is my son.' And the old man reached into his pocket so that Ali could climb into his hand. Then he placed Ali gently down on the table so that all of the guests might say hello.





'I am sure the robbers will not return,' said Ali in his deep, booming voice, a big smile on his face. The guests were very surprised and very curious to meet a boy who was no bigger than a thumb. But they were all very grateful to Ali for saving them from the thieves, and they thanked him and shook his hand and said to his father how proud he must be to have such a brave son.

In the morning, as they left the caravanserai for the market, Ali's father took his little son out of his pocket and placed him up on his shoulder. All morning at the market, and then on the way home, the old man had to stop many times to introduce Ali to people. And he was very proud and told them all how his son had saved everybody from the three thieves.

When father and son arrived home that evening, Ali's mother looked very worried that Ali was sitting up on her husband's shoulder. 'What if somebody should see him?' she asked. But the old man smiled and explained to his wife what adventures they had experienced at the caravanserai, and how Ali had saved the day and scared off the thieves.

'It has been a great mistake to be ashamed of our son. We should not have kept him hidden in the house for all these years. We should be proud of Ali and all of the things that he is capable of doing.'

Ali's mother was indeed very proud when she heard the story of her son's bravery, and promised never to hide him away or be ashamed ever again.

Ever since that day, Ali Thumb has always travelled on his parents' shoulders wherever they go, and he has seen and done many things and had many adventures.



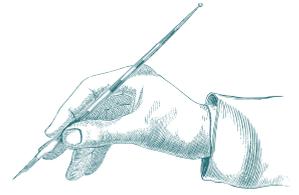


# The Weather Makers in Leipzig



Germany

Regional Legend,  
rewritten by Jürgen Friedel



Purpose(s)



Motivation  
& Awareness



Processing  
Knowledge

**Once upon the time,** Students from a noble family once dared this experiment in Leipzig. Their famulus [scientific assistant] owned a book of black art. They took it with them on a walk to Connewitzer Holz. In an open field near there they read it. They found that by means of certain words, incantations and movements, by performing strange acts, one was able to order the weather and thunder as one wished.

As there was not a single cloud in the sky, one of them thought that they should try to conjure up a weather of their choice. The majority liked the idea and were ready to help. One drew a circle, the next dug a small pit, a third fetched water and poured it in, the fourth had to stir it, the fifth drew figures, and the last read the prescribed words from the book while walking in circles. As they performed all this so faithfully, the sky, which had just been bright, darkened. And the more they continued with their magic, the blacker a thunderstorm appeared.



This so overwhelmed them that they fell to their knees and prayed to God with their hands up. They solemnly vowed never to do such a thing again for the rest of their lives and to advise everyone else against it. They had only tasted the devil's power out of foolishness and asked for forgiveness for Christ's sake.

Then the storm passed away and the sky became as beautiful and bright as it had been before. But the students, after they had opened the book and tied stones to the corners, threw it into the nearby river, the Pleiße, where it was soon spoiled by the water.

Source/Link:

[https://www.leipzig-lese.de/index.php?article\\_id=541](https://www.leipzig-lese.de/index.php?article_id=541)

Original:

Dr. Johann Georg Theodor Gräße (1874): Der Sagenschatz des Königreichs Sachsen

[https://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Der\\_Sagenschatz\\_des\\_K%C3%B6nigreichs\\_Sachsen](https://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Der_Sagenschatz_des_K%C3%B6nigreichs_Sachsen)





# The Donkey, the Father and the Son



Turkey

Purpose(s)



Critical Thinking



Creativity & Expression

Once upon the time, on a hot summer day, in the blazing midday heat, a father, his son and a donkey were walking through the dusty alleys of a small town in the Orient.

The father sat on the donkey and the boy walked beside it. Then a veiled woman passed by, shook her head uncomprehendingly and said:

"The poor boy. He can hardly keep up the pace of the donkey with his short legs. How can a father be so heartless and sit lazily on the donkey while his boy is all exhausted from walking."

The father felt ashamed when he heard these words, dismounted and put his son on the donkey.

Soon after, an elderly man came along the way. When he saw the travelers, he shouted angrily:

"What an impertinence! There the boy sits on the donkey while his poor old father walks beside it."

This pained the boy, who loved his father, and he immediately asked him to sit behind him on the donkey.

The next thing he knew, a hiker came by and became indignant at the top of his voice:

"Has anyone ever seen anything like this? What a cruelty to animals! The poor donkey's back is already sagging completely and these two lazy bums are resting on it."

These words also hit them both hard. And so father and son got down from the donkey, took the animal in the middle and walked beside it on the right and left.

It was not long before a stranger made fun of them:

"What a waste! What's the use of taking the donkey for a walk if it's good for nothing and won't even carry one of you?"



Thereupon the father shook his head, gave the donkey a handful of straw and said to his son:

"No matter what we do, there is always someone who doesn't like it. I guess we have to decide for ourselves what is right for us."





# Two Pebbles



Italy

Purpose(s)



Critical  
Thinking



Creativity &  
Expression

**In a small Italian town**, hundreds of years ago, a small business owner owed a large sum of money to a loan-shark. The loan-shark was a very old, unattractive looking guy that just so happened to fancy the business owner's daughter.

He decided to offer the businessman a deal that would completely wipe out the debt he owed him. However, the catch was that we would only wipe out the debt if he could marry the businessman's daughter. Needless to say, this proposal was met with a look of disgust.

The loan-shark said that he would place two pebbles into a bag, one white and one black. The daughter would then have to reach into the bag and pick out a pebble. If it was black, the debt would be wiped, but the loan-shark would then marry her. If it was white, the debt would also be wiped, but the daughter wouldn't have to marry the loan-shark.

Standing on a pebble-strewn path in the businessman's garden, the loan-shark bent over and picked up two pebbles. Whilst he was picking them up, the daughter noticed that he'd picked up two black pebbles and placed them both into the bag.

He then asked the daughter to reach into the bag and pick one. The daughter naturally had three choices as to what she could have done:

Refuse to pick a pebble from the bag.

Take both pebbles out of the bag and expose the loan-shark for cheating.



Pick a pebble from the bag fully well knowing it was black and sacrifice herself for her father's freedom.

She drew out a pebble from the bag, and before looking at it 'accidentally' dropped it into the midst of the other pebbles. She said to the loan-shark: "Oh, how clumsy of me. Never mind, if you look into the bag for the one that is left, you will be able to tell which pebble I picked."

The pebble left in the bag is obviously black, and seeing as the loan-shark didn't want to be exposed, he had to play along as if the pebble the daughter dropped was white, and clear her father's debt.

Source/Link:

<https://wealthygorilla.com/10-most-inspirational-short-stories/>

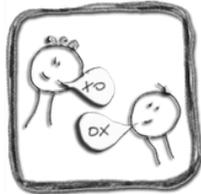


# The Lamina and the old woman



France (Basque legend)

Purpose(s)



Language  
Acquisition



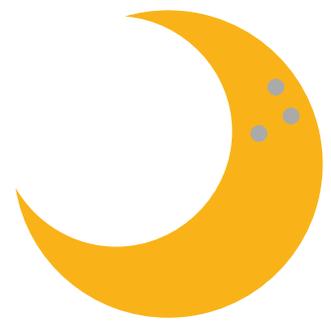
Processing  
Knowledge

**Once upon the time**, there was a man and a woman in a house, both of whom had reached a certain age. The man went to bed early, while the woman stayed every evening, spinning phiru-phiru. But every evening, and always at the same time, it happened to the poor spinner that an unknown woman came down the chimney and did not leave until she had obtained a few crumbs of supper. The spinner had hardly begun to fry her ham when she heard the same noise and the same request:

"Chichi'ta papa, papa buchtia?"  
(Meat and bread, soaked bread?)

This had been happening for several weeks already, and the poor woman, frightened, did not dare to say anything to her man, in the hope that the lamiña would not come back.

One evening, however, as if in a dream, the man thought he perceived that his companion was talking to someone...



When the poor woman had gone to bed, her husband asked her:  
"Tell me, a moment ago, were you talking with someone?"

"Yes ."

"Who was it?"

"I don't know who it is myself, but the same monster has been appearing to me for several weeks now, and it's always at the same time, as soon as my supper starts. And, inevitably, he asks me: Chichi'ta papa, papa buchtia?"

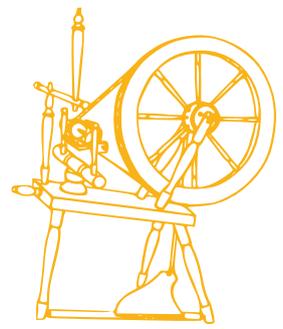
"And you give it to him?"

"I have to. What to do?"

"Tomorrow night I'll be staying in your place. Someone who arrives at this hour isn't a good sign! A sorcerer? A lamiña? We'll see tomorrow. I will put on your shawl and your handkerchief, as you do every night."

The next day, as agreed, the woman goes to bed, while the man, who remains by the fire, is already pretending to spine... Soon he perceives a loud noise: the usual stranger, who has come down firrindan along the chimney, sits down very close to him and immediately asks:

"Chichi'ta papa, papa buchtia?"



Our man acts as if he had not heard, and, phiru, phiru, begins to spin frantically.

Then the lamiña asks him:

"How furiously you work tonight!

"Yes, yesterday, frin, frin, firun, firun, today fran, fran, furdulu, furdulu..."

And the spinner continues spinning, watching the stranger from the corner of his eye. He had immediately recognized a lamiña, and he had also immediately thought that he had to get him out of there as quickly as possible. For his part, the lamiña, becoming suspicious of something, asked:

"You are not your usual self this evening. You seem to me to be hard... What is your name?"

"Nehorknereburu". (Myself, my person)

"Nehorknereburu?... And chichi'ta papa, papa buchtia?."

Our man had his frying pan in the corner of the fireplace; he put it on the fire, all loaded with fat, and left it there until it was well reddened. The lamiña was already very happy and kept rubbing his hands together:

"Chichi'ta papa, papa buchtia!"

Suddenly, calculating that the pan must be reddened to perfection, the spinner seized it and, pla, threw the grease at the lamiña, right in the middle of his face... Immediately, screaming, the lamiña goes up the chimney. Once outside, with a high-pitched clamor, he gathers all his lamiñak companions. With his hands on his burnt face, he laments without stopping, and his companions could not understand his words:

“What’s happening? What’s happening? Who damaged you in this way?”

“Nehorknereburuk! (myself, my person!...)”

“Since you, yourself have damaged your person, whose fault is that? And what do you want from us?”

And, in the dark night, the lamiñak immediately vanished in all directions.



*Lamina or lamiña is the Basque term for a fantastic being in Basque mythology, a spirit of nature or genie in human form.*

Source/Link:

<http://abarka.free.fr/index.php?page=LaminaVieille&lang=Fr>





# The Bird of Truth



France

Purpose(s)



Motivation  
& Awareness



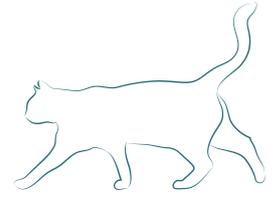
Critical  
Thinking

**Once upon the time**, three young ladies were talking quietly to each other as they were walking along a path and picking blackberries.

"If I get married," said one of them, "I will have three children. The first will be a handsome boy, the second a pretty girl with a star on her forehead and the third another handsome boy."

The king's son heard this while he was hiding behind the bush. He followed the girls to their house. He asked the one who had spoken of getting married to repeat the sentence and asked her to marry him, saying that he wanted the same thing as her.

The girl protested. Wasn't she poor? She would now have all the king's gold, he replied. Didn't she want to stay with her sisters? She would have the king's own sisters in the castle. There was no negotiation possible. He took her to the castle and married her.



Sometime later, the prince, now king, had to go to war. His wife was about to have her first child. He entrusted her to his own sisters and asked them to help him and protect the child.

When the birth day came, the king's sisters, who did not like the queen, put a little dog in the place of the beautiful boy. When the king was told that his wife had given birth to a dog, he was very upset, but he loved his wife so much that he said nothing when he returned.

Sometime later, the queen was expecting her second child. The king had to go back to war and entrusted her to his sisters. When the queen gave birth, they put a little cat in the pretty girl's place. When the king was informed that the queen had given birth to a cat, he was very unhappy but said nothing when he returned.

Sometime later the war called again just as the queen was about to give birth to her third child. When he learned that it was another dog he became furious. When he returned, he locked the queen in a cage where she became a laughing stock.



At the same time, an old couple was living in a small house in the forest nearby, raising two beautiful boys and a pretty girl with a star on her forehead.

When the children were twenty, nineteen and eighteen, he called them together and said: "You call me father, and it is true that I love you very much. But you have to know that you were entrusted to me when you were just babies. You must belong to a big family. Despite all my searching, I have not found it. It is your turn to go out into the world to find out. Perhaps you will be luckier than I was."

The eldest, having thought about it, decided to go and consult the bird that tells the truth. The other two cried out:

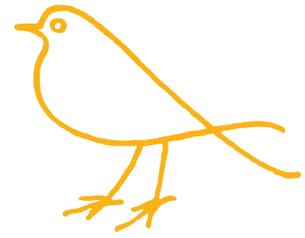
"What will happen to us if you don't come back? Better to stay together!"

"No, I have to leave. Take this rosary, if tomorrow there is blood on it, I will be dead."

The young man left without further ado. On the road he met an old woman dressed in black and bent over.

"Where are you going? To consult the bird that tells the truth, right?"

"Yes," said the boy.



"Then take this ball and throw it, then it will roll by itself, follow it until it stops. It will be in a field of stones. In the middle there is a gigantic oak tree. At the top of this oak the bird is in a cage. But above all, don't turn around. That would be fatal for you, as it was for so many others!"

The boy took the ball and threw it. He arrived in the stone field not far from the oak tree.

"Today, there's a nice boy," said a mocking voice. "He's coming for the bird that tells the truth. I don't think he can take it down."

He couldn't resist seeing where the voices were coming from and turned around. He was immediately turned to stone.

The next day the rosary became stained with blood.

The other boy decided to leave despite his sister's pleas. Unfortunately, he was no happier than his brother. He was turned into stone at the foot of the tree.

So, it was the girl's turn. She met the old woman who saw her coming towards her with a smile. She took the ball in her hands and threw it. She was greeted by a terrible noise when she reached the stone field. She resisted the urge to turn around, climbed the tree and put her hand up to the cage.

The noise was deafening, but as soon as she unhooked the cage, there was silence.

Then she heard the bird say to her:

“Go to the little wood nearby and pick a branch of the singing laurel tree. Then take some water from the fountain in the wood in a bottle: it is dancing water. Put a drop of it on each of the stones at the foot of the tree.”

The girl did exactly as the bird told her and each stone turned into a human. Soon there was a crowd of men, women, knights and kings under the tree. All had come to consult the bird and had been taken by the enchantment.

The king was also there because he had come to know why he had had animals instead of children. Anyway, he invited his liberator to the castle with her two brothers. There was a big meal. The queen attended, still locked in her cage. The king's sisters were also there.

At the end of the meal the singing laurel and the dancing water were placed on the table. All the guests were astonished. Finally, the bird was placed in front of the young girl.

“King,” said the bird, “these two boys and this girl are your children. At the time of their birth, when you were at war, they were taken from their mother by your sisters and replaced by two dogs and a cat...”

And the bird flew out the window.



The king asked the queen for forgiveness and took her out of her cage. But the emotion was so strong that she got a heart attack and died.

In revenge, the king locked his sisters in the cage and decided to burn them.

It is also known that the bird that tells the truth still exists.



Source/Link:

<https://www.bibliotheques-clermontmetropole.eu/s/search.php?>

[action=Record&id=clerco\\_CF420833&num=1&total=1&searchid=60c77fa331ffd](https://www.bibliotheques-clermontmetropole.eu/s/search.php?action=Record&id=clerco_CF420833&num=1&total=1&searchid=60c77fa331ffd)

<http://eprimaire.free.fr/contes/tradi/ctp132.html>





# The Legend of Pyrene



France

Purpose(s)



Identity &  
Recognition



Processing  
Knowledge

**Nothing** is more pleasant than the beginning of summer. The air is fresh, and the storms are still far away, the forests deep and secret, the streams alive.

Pyrene, a pretty blond girl, was sitting on the threshold of her house, peacefully spinning her distaff. She was dreaming like all the other girls of her age. Her dream was at that moment of a young man with gentle features and a brave look. "Where are you?" she whispered.

But only the farmyard animals and her parents could hear her. "You mustn't talk to yourself," said her father grumpily, "it attracts spirits".

Pyrene wanted to smile. It was just what she wanted. But she didn't have the time. She let out a cry of surprise. There was a young man in front of her, with gentle yet brave features, bright eyes and abundant brown hair.

"Who are you?" whispered the girl at last.

"I am Hercules," said the man.

Hercules...



But she couldn't say more. Her father was standing in the doorway.

"I am only passing through," said Hercules. "I am very thirsty. I have gone to capture the Golden Horned Oxen and I am going back home." Pyrene offered him a drink and listened to the young man speak. He had simply returned from the end of the known world. He had been walking for a long time towards the east, where his country was.

Pyrene looked at Hercules with shining eyes. The young man understood this language and returned to the house at dusk. There, the young people spoke to each other longly and in low voices.

"I wish you would stay here," said Pyrene. "That you become a shepherd. We would have the most beautiful herd in the country."

"Yes," said Hercules sincerely. "In the evening you will hear my call when I gather the herd. Then you will know that I won't be late."

She saw herself spinning wool under the old elm tree or by the fountain. He saw himself as a shepherd watching over his sheep and protecting them from bears and wolves.

All summer long, they met in this way in the most secret part of the forest. Sometimes, when it was too hot, they went to bathe in the stream. No one knew of their love, satisfied with their long and tender encounters. Hercules no longer went out on the roads and Pyrene returned every evening with baskets full of strawberries, blackberries or blueberries.

But the time of these loves was about to end. The increasingly violent storms were announcing the autumn.

"I will talk to your parents," said Hercules, "and we will get married".

There seemed to be no doubt about it.

Autumn came and so did the last day in the forest. Hercules was waiting for Pyrene, sitting on a rock and breathing in the thousand smells of grass and leaves. Pyrene would be back soon. They would then leave the forest and go to the village. Hercules was happy. He who had been a wanderer was now going to settle down.

And this country - he had seen so much of it - really pleased him.

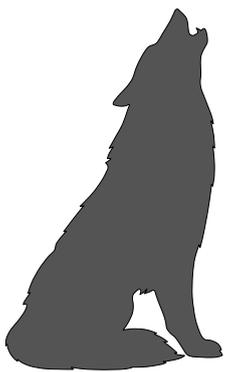


Suddenly, Hercules heard the call of wild geese in the sky. He immediately recognized their deep cries. He knew that they were returning to his country. Everything inside him was shaken. This is an omen, he thought. I must go.

He got up and set off eastwards at once, suddenly caught up in the migration. First, he walked very fast, then he ran quickly moving away from the forest and Pyrene.

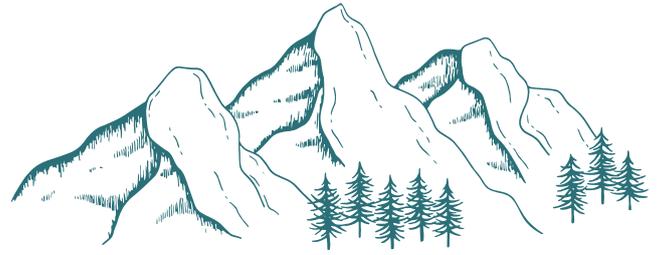
As usual, Pyrene, with a light heart, went to the rocks to meet Hercules. When she arrived, she called Hercules but no one answered. The birds themselves were silent around her. Then she understood everything: Hercules had gone.

The most terrible sadness fell upon the girl. She ran eastwards, convinced that he had returned to his country. She climbed hillsides, crossed swamps and stopped only to drink and cry. Realizing that she would never catch up with him, she ended up lying on the grass. Exhausted by the cold and hunger, she finally dropped the stick that kept the wolves away and gave a final cry of sadness.



Hercules heard her cry. He did not hesitate. He returned, running even faster knowing that Pyrene was in danger. But when he arrived, there were only a few bleached bones on the ground.

Mad with rage and pain, he laid the body of the one he loved on a bed of flowers and leaves and decided to build her a tomb worthy of their love.



He piled up blocks of stone for as long as his sadness lasted until he created mountains. Before returning to his country, Hercules said these words of farewell:

"So that your name, my dear Pyrene,  
may be preserved forever by the people  
who will populate this land,  
these mountains in which you sleep  
for eternity will be called  
**The Pyrenees**".

Source/Link:

<http://eprimaire.free.fr/contes/tradi/ctp160.html>





# The Twins Jean & Pierre



France (Pyrenean legend)

Purpose(s)



Identity &  
Recognition



Processing  
Knowledge

**A long time ago**, in the high pastures of Peyreget, there lived two shepherds. Jean, the little one, and Pierre, the colossus, were twin brothers. Of great strength and courage, their mission was also to prevent the barbarian troops coming from the south from invading the beautiful valley of Ossau.

One night, while Pierre was tending his sheep in a meadow north of Lake Pombie, he heard a dreadful rumbling coming from the depths of the earth. Fearing evil beings, Pierre asked Jean to come and watch the area with him. Then a black goat attacked Jean, chased him, bit him and knocked him down. Pierre flew to his brother's aid, but just as they overcame the terrible animal, a sorcerer from the depth of the earth managed to drag the two shepherds into the underworld, abandoning their post of guard.

While the twins fought with the sorcerer, the barbarians, who had signed a pact with the Devil, took advantage of the ruse to attack the valley and kill its inhabitants, men, women and animals. The waters of the Gaves became stained with blood.

After a relentless fight that lasted three days and three nights, Pierre and Jean managed to kill the sorcerer and escape by stealing two swords forged in the fire of the underworld. Equipped with their evil weapons, the two brothers skewered the bloodthirsty barbarians to death.



Freezing their victory for eternity, the brouches (good witches) petrify the twins, who have since become the indissociable Grand pic and Petit pic du Midi d'Ossau, guardians of the valley, and affectionately nicknamed Jean-Pierre by the mountain people.

Source/Link:

1000 lieux légendaires et mystérieux des Pyrénées, vol.2 (Francis Baro / Rando Editions)





# The Old Carpenter



Unknown

Purpose(s)



Motivation  
& Awareness

**Once upon the time**, a carpenter with years of experience, was ready to retire. He communicated his contractor about his plans to leave the house building business to live a more leisurely retired life with his wife and family. The contractor felt a little upset that his good and experienced carpenter was leaving the job, but he requested the carpenter to build just one more house for him.

The carpenter agreed with contractor but his heart was not in his work like it used to be. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials for building the last house of his career. It was an unfortunate way to end his career. When the carpenter completed the house and the employer came to inspect the house.



He looked around the house and just before he exited the house he handed the front-door key to the carpenter. “This is your house,” he said, “my gift to you.” This was a huge surprise to the carpenter. Although it was supposed to be a good surprise, he wasn’t feeling good as he felt a deep shame inside him. If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently. Now he had to live in the home that wasn’t built that well.

*Moral:* Like the carpenter, we build our lives in a distracted way, reacting rather than acting, willing to put up with less rather than the best. Give your best. Your attitudes and the choices you make today will be your life tomorrow, build it wisely!

Source/Link:

<https://alltimeshortstories.com/short-stories-about-life/>



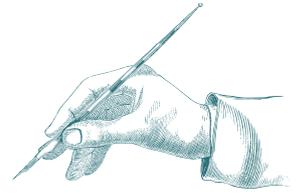


# The Fox and the Raven



Ancient Greece

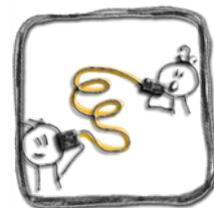
Aesopus



Purpose(s)



Empowerment



Communication Skills

**Once upon the time**, the raven seized a piece of cheese and carried his spoils up to his perch high in a tree. A fox came up and walked in circles around the raven, planning a trick. 'What is this?' cried the fox. 'O raven, the elegant proportions of your body are remarkable, and you have a complexion that is worthy of the king of the birds! If only you had a voice to match, then you would be first among the fowl!' The fox said these things to trick the raven and the raven fell for it: he let out a great squawk and dropped his cheese. By thus showing off his voice, the raven let go of his spoils. The fox then grabbed the cheese and said, 'O raven, you do have a voice, but no brains to go with it!'

*If you follow your enemies' advice, you will get hurt.*

Source/Link:

<http://www.mythfolklore.net/aesopica/perry/124.htm>



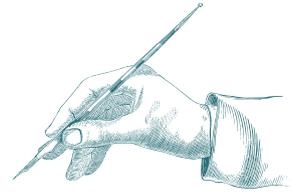


# The Brave Mouse



Slovenia

Katarina Bertoncelj



Purpose(s)



Multiple Perspectives



Identity & Recognition

**Mouse Pika** plays with her sisters every day. Yesterday the oldest one among them, Misha, went alone for the first time, through the dark corridor in the pantry to grab some cheese.

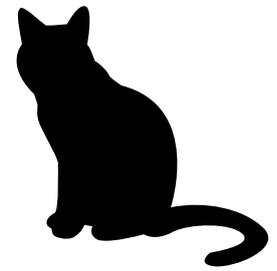
You should have seen with what admiration Pika was looking at Misha. In her eyes, she was the bravest mouse in the world. Fearless!

In the evening when she went to sleep, she decided to dream about her own trip to the pantry...

"I'll go alone! Because I am not afraid of anyone!", she said to herself.

In her dreams, she is wearing the most beautiful purple dress, because the day when she goes to pantry alone is not an ordinary day. She see herself walking down a long dark corridor. Then she flinches.

"Wait. This is a home of a big black cat!"



Pika suddenly loses the courage. She imagines a cat that is waiting for her behind a large flowerpot, stalking for small mices, especially those in beautiful purple dresses. The cat let everyone else pass, but those mice that wear nice purple clothes, he eats immediately. Just like that- he opens his mouth and the mouse is gone!

Fear wakes Pika up. When she falls back to sleep, she dreams of walking down the long hallway again, and the moment that big black cat appears in front of her, she stays buried.

He cannot move her legs clung to the floor!

Behind the black cat, Pika sees another cat with sharp big white teeth, followed by two equally horrible ones, drooling with all their might.

Mouse Pika screams and wakes up.

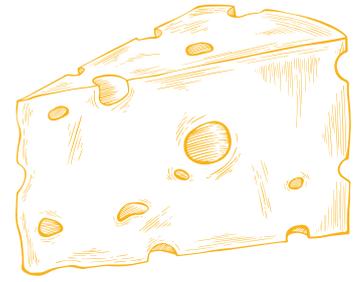
He crawls into mother bed. As soon as Mom Mouse is awake, Pika starts:

"Ammm, you know, Mom, that pantry at the end of the first hallway? The big one where they store jams potatoes and apples?" she hurries to ask.

Mom still not fully awake : "Yes. I know. What about it?"

"Well, there are also big loaves of cheese inside. Very good cheese. The last time Misha went to pick up some, do you remember?"

"Yes, I remember" Mom said.



"Would you be so nice and go to pantry and bring me some cheese? I would go by myself, but the pantry is guarded by so many big cats, with big white teeth, waiting to get a mouse in a purple suit into their claws. They are terrible! Their saliva is dripping everywhere and they are so huge!"

Mom smiled: "My dear Pika. Sometimes we see things that are not really there. And when we really want something, we have to work hard to achieve it. Alone. You are big enough to get the cheese yourself. You are fast, you are smart. Even if some cat really guards the pantry, you would easily trick him and get to the cheese. There are no cats with big white teeth like you described. Believe me."

Pika was thinking.

She is scared, but she wants cheese. But she is also fast, that's true. She is so fast that the sisters cannot catch her. And if the black cat hasn't caught Misha, who is slower, neither will her.

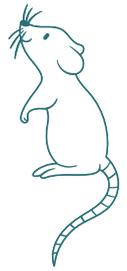
She waits for evening, puts on his favorite purple dress, and heads down the dark hall. She is careful and walks along the edge. Suddenly she sees a large black shadow on the wall. Determined to persevere, she continues her way along the hallway as quickly as possible. In a blink of the eye, she is in front of the pantry door.

Frightened, she turns and sees that no one is following her. Surprised, she finds that there is there is no sign of the big black cat monster and that the shadow on the wall belongs to the potted plant.

Hrrrskkkk... she shreds the cheese and confidently slowly walks down the hall. She does not run.

Proud about herself, in the home yard starts yelling:

"I did it! I diiiiid it !!!"





# The Secret to Success



Greece

Purpose(s)



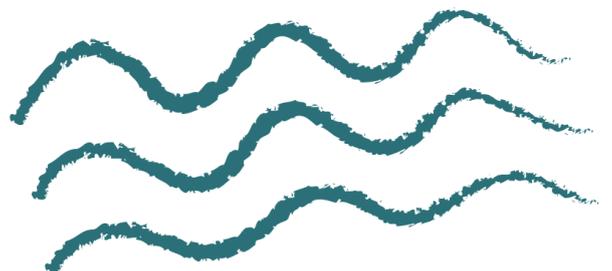
Empowerment



Motivation & Awareness

**Once upon the time**, a young man asked the wise man, Socrates, about the secret to success. Socrates patiently listened to the man's question and told him to meet him near the river the next morning for the answer. The next morning Socrates asked the young man to walk with him towards the river. As they went in the river the water got up to their neck. But to the young man's surprise Socrates ducked him into the water.

The young man struggled to get out of the water, but Socrates was strong and kept him there until the boy started turning blue. Socrates pulled the man's head out of the water. The young man gasps and took a deep breath of air.



Socrates asked, 'What did you want the most when your head was in the water?' The young man replied, "Air."

Socrates said, "That is the secret to success. When you want success as badly as you wanted the air while you were in the water, then you will get it. There is no other secret."



*Moral of the short story:*

A burning desire is the starting point of all accomplishment. Just like a small fire cannot give much heat, a weak desire cannot produce great results.

Source/Link:

<https://alltimeshortstories.com/short-stories-about-life/>

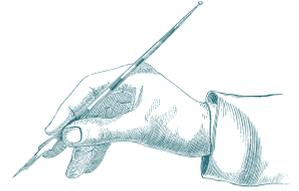


# "She is like a mother to me"

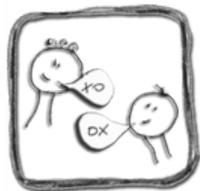


Austria

Sardar



Purpose(s)



Language Acquisition



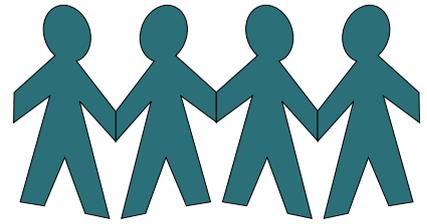
Belongingness

## An autobiographical narrative

I am 23 years old, but I am not sure yet if this is really true, because I don't have a birthdate. I was born in Afghanistan, in the city Daikondi. My mother wasn't able to write my birthdate because she can't read or write at all.

I didn't go to school because it was too boring for me and I also didn't have time as we had lots of goats and sheep and I had to bring them up to the mountains to let them graze. This was far more interesting for me than school. Up to the age of 14 I've been a shepherd, after that I moved to Iran with my uncle.

But in Iran I couldn't work because I was so small. After four months I found work but it was really hard work: on the construction site. I've been six years in Iran and had hundreds of problems, which I can't describe with words.



But now I am in my favourite country, in Austria. I met a lot of new people and I am satisfied with my life. I met a woman. She is like a mother and very sweet to me. She helped me dozens of times, I will never forget it. I would like to become a soccer player and at the moment I am playing in a team.

Source/Link:

"Wir. Hier und Jetzt. Geflüchtete Menschen berichten. Band II, Ängste. Träume. Lagerleben." S. 86. (Hrsg. Ernst Schmiederer/edition Import Export)



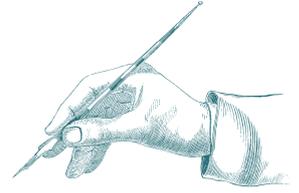


# "Favorite City Vienna"



Austria

Huda



Purpose(s)



Motivation  
& Awareness



Belonging-  
ness

## An autobiographical narrative

I was born and raised in Damascus, but originally I am from Hebron in Palestine. I have lived in Damascus until the age of 18. I graduated there as well but unfortunately without the subject of chemistry, because at this time I fled with my family to Europe and I didn't have the chance to repeat this subject.

I have a sister, she is 19 years old. She's attending high school in Vienna and wants to study information technology. My brother is 16 years old, but unfortunately he doesn't know yet what to study in the future. My parents love each other a lot. We are all like friends. My parents trust and believe in us. We know our limits very well and don't make any mistakes.

Because of the fact that we are Palestinian, we couldn't leave Damascus. Therefore, we were looking for a smuggler and paid a lot in order to travel to Turkey.



He was Kurd and we were 11 persons in the van. We walked by foot to the Turkish border. We were tired and afraid. Our last day in Damascus was September 14th, 2015. I cannot forget this moment.

We needed 11 days to come to Austria. We decided that we need to stay in Austria because we ran out of money. But now Vienna has become my favourite city.

In my future, I will become a fashion designer. I feel very comfortable in this area. I already started to reach my goals, but because of the language I stopped going to school. Nevertheless, I already worked a little bit as a designer. I speak English, Arabic, German and French, but that one I forgot as I started to learn German. I don't have any problems with the culture, because I like getting to know different cultures.

[Source/Link:](#)

"Wir. Hier und Jetzt. Geflüchtete Menschen berichten. Band II, Ängste. Träume. Lagerleben." S. 220. (Hrsg. Ernst Schmiederer/edition Import Export)



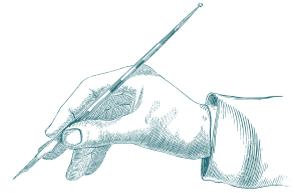


# The Little Ant Going to Jerusalem

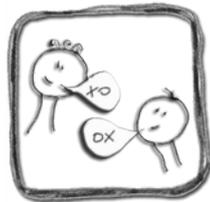


France

George Alexander Kohut



Purpose(s)



Language acquisition



Communication Skills

**Once upon a time**, there was a little ant going to Jerusalem. It was snowing, and the snow grips the leg of the little ant who is going to Jerusalem.

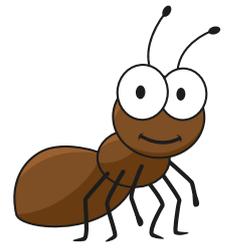
- O snow, how strong you are, you who grip the leg of the little ant going to Jerusalem.

And the snow answers:

- Stronger than me is the sun that melts me.
- O sun, how strong you are, you who melt the snow that grips the leg of the little ant going to Jerusalem!

And the sun answers:

- Stronger than me is the cloud that hides me.
- O cloud, how strong you are, you who hide the sun that melts the snow that grips the leg of the little ant going to Jerusalem!



And the cloud answers:

- Stronger than me is the wind that drives me away.
- O wind, how strong you are, you who chase the cloud that hides the sun that melts the snow that grips the leg of the little ant going to Jerusalem!

And the wind answers:

- Stronger than me is the mountain that stops me.
- O mountain, how strong you are, you who stop the wind that chases away the cloud that hides the sun that melts the snow that grips the leg of the little ant going to Jerusalem!

And the mountain answers:

- Stronger than me is the earth that carries me.
- O earth, how strong you are, you who carry the mountain that stops the wind that chases away the cloud that hides the sun that melts the snow that grips the leg of the little ant going to Jerusalem!



And the earth answers:

- Stronger than me is God who made me.

- O God, how strong you are, you who made the earth that carries the mountain that stops the wind that drives away the cloud that hides the sun that melts the snow that grips the leg of the little ant going to Jerusalem!

And God has mercy on the little ant going to Jerusalem.

He says:

- Earth, shake!

The earth shakes

The mountain collapses.

The wind passes.

The cloud goes away.



The sun shines.

The snow melts.

And the little ant withdraws his paw and goes to Jerusalem.

Source/Link:

Diane Barbara, Actes Sud Junior



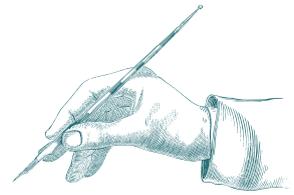


# The Fairies



France

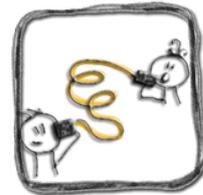
Charles Perrault



Purpose(s)



Identity &  
Recognition



Communi-  
cation Skills

**Once upon a time**, there was a widow who had two daughters: this woman prefers her elder daughter. She resembles her both physically and morally: arrogant, deceitful and ugly. The younger daughter is tender, honest and pretty. Her mother and older sister are so jealous of her that the poor girl becomes their scapegoat. Every day, she has to walk several kilometers to the spring to fetch water.

One day when she is there, she meets a poor woman who asks her for a drink. With kindness, the young girl goes to fetch water from the best place of the fountain, with her most beautiful pot and helps her to drink. The poor woman, who was a fairy, wanted to reward her for her goodness, kindness and honesty. She gave her a gift: "For every word you say, a flower or a precious stone will come out of your mouth."





When she returned home, her mother, noticing this special gift, sent her eldest daughter to fetch water from the spring so that she could meet the fairy and return with the same gift. But the eldest daughter, arrogant, dishonest and deceitful, does not react like her younger sister.

When the fairy, transformed into a pretty woman, asks her for water, instead of going to the fountain to fetch it, the dishonest girl hands her a pot already filled from her house. Seeing such behavior, the fairy gave her the following gift: "For every word you say, either a toad or a snake will come out of your mouth."

Back home, her mother, seeing this, accused the younger daughter of being responsible and chased her out of her house.

In her escape, the young girl met the king's son, who fell in love with her and married her.

As for the elder daughter, so hateful, her own mother finally chased her away and she died alone, isolated from everything and everyone.

Source/Link:

<https://bacdefrancais.net/fees.php>





# The story of a blind man



Slovenia

Purpose(s)



Creativity &  
Expression



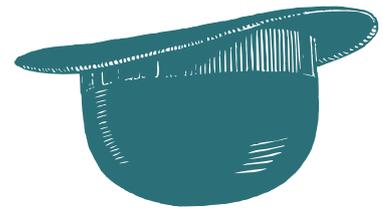
Critical  
Thinking

**This story is about Tom.** Tom is 67 year old man. He is a poor but friendly man, always ready to talk or listen to others.

Every morning Tom goes to the city center and sit on the sidewalk in town square. Next to his feet he puts a hat and a wooden board with a sign: "Please help me, I'm blind."

It seems that people passing by do not actually notice him. Rushing to work or other errands, caught up in their daily routine and thoughts. Here and then somebody stops, read a sign and drop some coin in Toms hat.

One day a creative advertiser walked by. Tom felt that somebody stopped, he could smell the perfume that person was wearing. The advertiser looked at that little change in Tom's hat and without asking for permission, he took a chalk and wrote a new message on the other side of a wooden board. He placed the board back at the poor man's feet and left.



In the afternoon, the advertiser pasted Tom begging for alms, again. He could see that his hat was full of banknotes and change. The blind man was familiar with his steps and perfume, so he asked him: "I like your perfume and I know your steps. Are you the one who wrote something on my wooden board?"

The marketer replied, "I am. "

Tom continued: "I wonder what you wrote. The rattling of coins and the rustling of banknotes have not stopped since. "

The advertiser replied, "The same as you did, but in other words."

He smiled and continued his way. The new inscription had the following content:

"There is a spring out there and I can't see it."

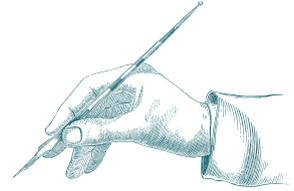


# Language must not be an obstacle for friendship



Slovenia

Katarina Bertoncelj



Purpose(s)



Creativity &  
Expression



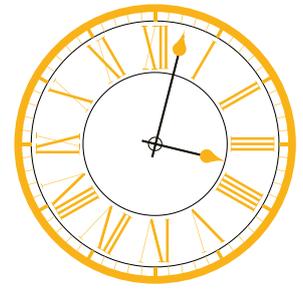
Identity &  
Recognition

**The train journey** was long. My heart was pounding like crazy, as I crossed the state border. I think that was the moment I realized I am entering the unknown zone, not holidays from which I will return in a week.

At the station where I got off, I was waiting for my cousin. He was late. Really late.

And the fact that I waited for him more than an hour reminded me how far away my home village is. This train station was the most strange place I have ever experienced. And despite my age-25 years, for the first time in my life, I felt completely alone. Right at this station.

People spoke a language I didn't understand. I was afraid to have a drink at a nearby bar for several reasons.



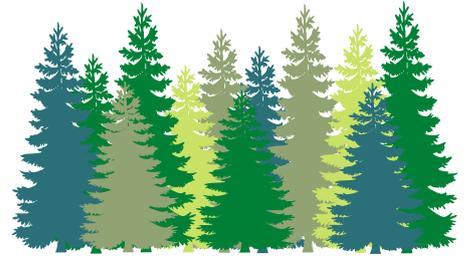
The first was language...how can I order a drink? The second reason was money- I had no euros and with my money, payment certainly wouldn't have been possible. And third... most important. I didn't want to risk to miss my cousin. I had no phone, nor his phone number. Disappointed, I sat down on the bench, tired, thirsty, hungry, and if I wouldn't be ashamed, I could admit that at that moment I would have given everything for my mom's hug.

When my cousin finally arrived, he apologized for the delay due to the extended work at his job, a stone fell from my heart. Probably my cousin noticed that as he sympathetically grabbed my shoulders and said: "You'll get used to it. You'll see. Everything will be okay."

I did not believe him.

I had a hard time getting used to living in a new environment. It became more and more clear to me, how I took for granted all the friendships I found, conversations I had over coffee or just like that... on the street when I meet someone I knew. Here all I had...were strangers. My cousin was away a lot so the best company I had was- me to myself.

As much as possible, I spent time in nature. Also that day, which at the beginning did not promise anything special I went for a long walk.



As always, I walked the circular forest path I knew. I was thinking of going somewhere else, but I was surprised by the rain, so I decided to go home. In front of the apartment building where I lived, I noticed an elderly woman walking up the stairs towards the entrance to the house. She carried heavy bags in her hands. Just below the top she fell on the floor.

Without hesitation, I run and help her on her feet. I rushed to pick up food and other purchased items that were lying all over the stairs. Suddenly the woman started to scream at everyone and swinging towards me. She screamed so loudly that in a few minutes the other neighbors came out of the house. I was standing as if dug in, with her shopping bags in my hands until something or someone knocked me to the ground. Before I had really realized what was going on, blood was actually flowing from my nose. At the moment someone was about to hit me again, an older man stopped him and saw what was happening.

I did not know the language, so I did not know what the shouting was about and what it meant. However, it became clear to me that this was a kind of mistake, because the gentleman who had just tried to hit me, suddenly fell silent and offered me his hand so that I could get up from the ground.

It took me a long time to realize that the woman who fell down the stairs understood my help as a robbery. So she screamed. The neighbors, who hurried out on the scene, saw old woman screaming while I was picking up her things. That was the picture they saw!

Without a word, I entered the house, wiping my bloody nose and wondering what actually happened.

I felt awful and even more alone in that moment.

Early in the morning, the doorbell woke me up. When I opened the door, I was surprised! The lady who shouted at me yesterday was standing in front of me. She was holding a pack of coffee and two cups in her hands. With the gestures, she tried to invite me to have a coffee. At least that is how it seemed to me.

At first I watch the gesture with distrust, tried to understand Slovenian words she was using, but then I followed her anyway.

When we entered her apartment, she offers me her hand and at the same time pointed at herself: "Olga. I'm Olga. "

It becomes clear to me that Olga is her name!

"Arbes!" I said and pointed to myself.



Mrs. Olga pointed to the chair in front of me and I assumed she wants me to sit down. So I did that too. She poured up coffee, pointed at sugar, milk..., all with her hands. And I answered back with mine. When she offers me a cookie, I thank her out loud in Albanian language. Mrs. Olga tried to repeat the word, but she is so funny that we both start laughing.

When she tried the seventh time to pronounce the word correctly, she had enough. She took a sheet of paper and a pencil and tried to write down the word. She wrote it wrong, so I helped her. Looking at the word written she tried to repeat correct pronunciation aloud. She finally succeeds! Oh what a joy!

Suddenly she writes a thank you note in Slovene language. I also have a lot of problems to pronounce Slovene words correctly. The same as Olga with Albanian language. Each attempt provokes new bursts of laughter from both. We liked the game so we repeated the exercise with other words. When it was necessary, we used gesticulation or we drew the meaning of a word.

How fun this neighbor of mine was!

Before we said goodbye we agreed on a new coffee meeting. If Olga did not come at agreed time, or I did not come to her, we knew we misunderstood each other.



No big deal... she came to me and I came to her and sometimes... we also met half way- in the hallway. How much laughter, how much joy!!!

And when I turn back today...

Mrs. Olga and I did not just learn the language. We learned how to understand and accept diversity and how to respect similarities.

It is not always easy.

But you are so much richer when you succeed.





# What the earth said



Sweden

Purpose(s)



Processing  
Knowledge



Motivation  
& Awareness

**Once upon the time,** there was a farmer who had two sons. When he died, he left the farm and some plots of land. The sons tried to divide the inheritance, but had difficulty to agree. One day they were standing in one of the fields arguing. They become so angry.

An old lady come walking on the way. She stopped and asked what they were arguing about. She was famous for being a wise lady, so the brothers both hurried to present their argument and try to win her support.

"I am the oldest of us," said one, "so this field belongs to me."

"But I have a wife and children to support, so the land belongs to me," said the other.

And they continued to get angrier. "Our father loved me the most, so therefore this fields belongs to me!" shouted one.



"I was the one who helped him every year, so therefore the land belongs to me," shouted the other.

The old wise woman said she might be able to help them, as long as they wanted to calm down a bit. To get real justice one should perhaps hear with the earth itself what it had to say. And they agreed. She lay down and pressed her ear to the ground, frowned and listened. When she got up with a humming the brothers were eager to hear the answer:

"What did the earth said?"

"What it said ... well ... that it's you who belong to the earth."

Source/Link:

Swedish folk history





# A cool breeze on hot day



Sweden

Purpose(s)



Communi-  
kation Skills

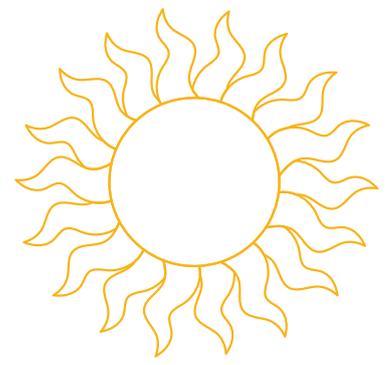


Multiple  
Perspectives

A **woman and a man** had lived together for a long time. The years went by. The man began wonder - does she really love me? Each time he asked, she just said: How can you ask something like that? He became obsessed with his thoughts. He was sure that she did not love him anymore! In the end, he decided to ask her once for all. Finally, she replied: Well, like a cool breeze on a hot day...

The man became desperate. A cool breeze ... She does not really love me! I can not stay here. She must live her life. I have to leaving her.

The next day he packed his bag and left. He started walking along the road. The slopes were steep. It was a summer day; the sun was shining hot. Not a tree nearby. He could barely breathe; it was so hot. He sat himself at the roadside to breathe. He was dying of heat!



Suddenly came a cool breeze that went around his forehead like a cooling hand. Then he remembers: A cool breeze on a hot day - that was what she had said! But it was not so crazy! That was good! Could it really be better? He turned and went the long way back to his wife and home.

The last thing I heard from them was that they live together and take care of each other as good as any couple can do...

Source/Link:  
Swedish folk history





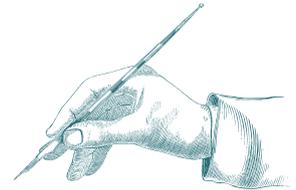
# To Work or Not to Work OR

## The Lazy Fisherman



Austria

Heinrich Böll



Purpose(s)

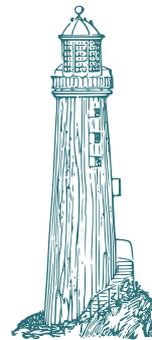


Multiple  
Perspectives



Motivation &  
Awareness

**In a port** on the western coast of Europe, a man, wearing shabby clothes, lies in his fishing boat and dozes. A smartly dressed tourist is just putting a new colour film into his camera to take a picture of the idyllic scene: blue sky, green sea with peaceful, snow-white crests of waves, black boat, the fisherman's red cap. Click. And again: click, and as all good things come in threes, and as it's better to be on the safe side, click, for the third time. The dry and almost hostile sound wakes the dozing fisherman, who sleepily sits up, sleepily reaches for his cigarette-packet; but before he finds what he is looking for, the eager tourist already holds out a packet right under his nose, putting the cigarette not exactly into his mouth but placing it into his hand, and a fourth click, that of the lighter, finishes off the zealous civility.



This hardly measurable, and never verifiable, excess of rash civility produces an irritably embarrassing situation which the tourist, who speaks the language of the country, tries to bridge by starting a conversation.

"You will make a good catch, today."

The fisherman shakes his head.

"But I was told the weather is favourable."

The fisherman nods.

"So you won't put the sea?"

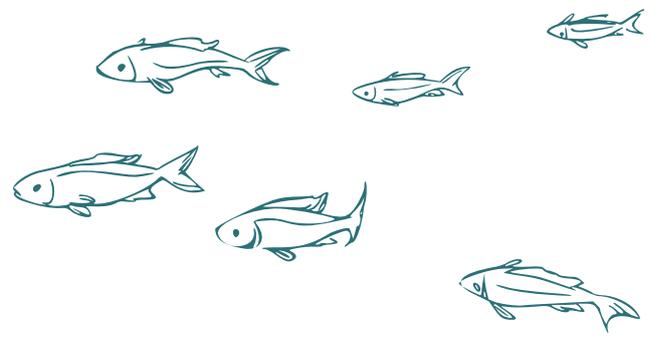
The fisherman shakes his head, the tourist gets increasingly nervous. To be sure, he is deeply concerned about the welfare of the man in shabby clothes, and sadly frets over the missed opportunity.

"Oh, you don't feel well?"

Eventually, the fisherman switches from sign language to actually spoken words. "I fell splendid," he says. "I never felt better." He stands up, has a good stretch, as if he wanted to show off the athletic shape of his body. "I feel great."

The facial expression of the tourist grows more and more unhappy; no longer can he suppress the question which, as it were, threatens to burst his heart: "But why, then, do you not put the sea?"

The answer comes promptly and briefly: "Because I already put to the sea this morning."



“Did you made a good catch?”

“My catch was so good that I need not put to sea for a second time. I had four lobsters in my basket, caught nearly two dozen mackerel ...”

The fisherman, finally awake, is now thawing, and slaps the tourist soothingly on the shoulder. The worried countenance of the latter seems to him an expression of inappropriate, yet touching, anxiety.

“I have enough even for tomorrow and the day after tomorrow,” he says to relieve the stranger’s soul. “Do you want a cigarette?”

“Yes, please.”

Cigarettes are being put into mouths, a fifth click; the stranger, shaking his head, sits down on the rim of the boat, and puts down the camera, for now he needs both hand to give his speech emphasis.

“I do not want to meddle in your personal affairs,” he says, “but just imagine, you put to sea today for a second, a third, or perhaps even a fourth time, and you catch three, four, five, maybe even ten dozen mackerel. Just imagine that!”

The fisherman nods.

“You put to sea,” continues the tourist, “not only today but tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, indeed, on every favourable day two, three, or perhaps four times - do you know what would happen?”

The fisherman shakes his head.

“In one year at the later you would be able to buy a motor, in two years a second boat, in three or four years you may, perhaps, have a small trawler; with two boats or the trawler you would, of course, catch a lot more - one day, you would have two trawlers, you would ...,” for a few moments his enthusiasm leaves him speechless, “you would build a small cold store, perhaps a smoke-house, soon afterwards a marinating factory, fly around with your own helicopter, making out the sholas of fish and giving orders to your trawlers by radio. You could buy fish rights for salmon, open a fish restaurant, export lobster directly to Paris without a middleman - and then ...,” once again his enthusiasm leaves the stranger speechless. Shaking his head, saddened in the depth of his heart, and almost bereft of his holiday delights, he looks on the waters rolling peacefully into the harbor, where the uncaught fish jump merely.

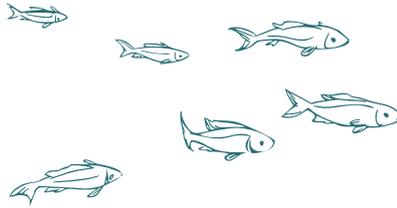
“And then”, says he, but again his excitement leaves him speechless. The fisherman slams him on the back, as one would slap a child choking over his food. “What then?” he asks in a low voice.

“Then,” says the stranger with quiet enthusiasm, “then you may relax here in the harbor with your mind set at ease, doze in the sunshine - and look out on the magnificent sea.”



“But that is what I am doing just now,” says the fisherman, “I relax here in the harbor with my mind set at ease, and doze; only the clicking noise of your camera disturbed me.”

In fact, the tourist, thus put right, became thoughtful and went away, for he used to think he worked in order that, one day, he need not work any more; and there remained in him not a trace of pity for the fisherman in shabby clothes, only a little envy.



Source/Link:

Böll, Heinrich. Kölner Ausgabe. Bd. 12. 1959-1963. Hrsg. von Robert C. Conrad, 2008/2011, Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch GmbH & Co. Köln

Translation by Hansjörg Bittner (1997): Essays in Translation. Edited by Emma Louise Oram and Laura Serratrice. School of Modern Languages and European Studies, University of East Anglia in Norwich. Norwich Papers, 5. [https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/media/\\_migrated/content\\_uploads/Translating\\_Heinrich\\_Boell.pdf](https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/media/_migrated/content_uploads/Translating_Heinrich_Boell.pdf) (last visited April 20, 2022)



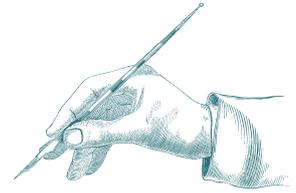


# The Elves



Germany

Grimm Brothers



Purpose(s)



Processing  
Knowledge



Xmas  
Story

**Once upon a Time**, a shoemaker, by no fault of his own, had become so poor that at last he had nothing left but leather for one pair of shoes. So in the evening, he cut out the shoes which he wished to begin to make the next morning, and as he had a good conscience, he lay down quietly in his bed and fell asleep. In the morning, when he just was going to sit down to work, the two shoes stood quite finished on his table. He was astounded, and knew not what to say to it. He took the shoes in his hands to observe them closer, and they were so neatly made that there was not one bad stitch in them, just as if they were intended as a masterpiece. Soon after, a buyer came in, and as the shoes pleased him so well, he paid more for them than was customary.



With the money, the shoemaker was able to purchase leather for two pairs of shoes. He cut them out at night, and next morning was about to set to work with fresh courage; but he had no need to do so, for, when he got up, they were already made. Buyers also were not wanting, who gave him money enough to buy leather for four pairs of shoes. The following morning, too, he found the four pairs made; and so it went on constantly, what he cut out in the evening was finished by the morning, so that he soon had his honest independence again, and at last became a wealthy man.

Now it befell that one evening not long before Christmas, when the man had been cutting out, he said to his wife, before going to bed: "What do you think if we were to stay up to-night to see who it is that lends us this helping hand?" The woman liked the idea, and lighted a candle, and then they hid themselves in a corner of the room, behind some clothes which were hanging up there, and watched. When it was midnight, two pretty little naked men came, sat down by the shoemaker's table, took all the work which was cut out before them and began to stitch, and sew, and hammer so skilfully and so quickly with their little fingers that the shoemaker could not turn away his eyes for astonishment. They did not stop until all was done, and stood finished on the table, and they ran quickly away.

Next morning the woman said: "The little men have made us rich, and we really must show that we are grateful for it. They run about so, and have nothing on, and must be cold. I'll tell thee what I'll do: I will make them little shirts, and coats, and vests, and trousers, and knit both of them a pair of stockings, and do thou, too, make them two little pairs of shoes." The man said, "I shall be very glad to do it;" and one night, when everything was ready, they laid their presents all together on the table instead of the cut-out work, and then concealed themselves to see how the little men would behave. At midnight they came bounding in, and wanted to get to work at once, but as they did not find any leather cut out, but only the pretty little articles of clothing, they were at first astonished, and then they showed intense delight. They dressed themselves with the greatest rapidity, putting the pretty clothes on, and singing,

"Now we are boys so fine to see,  
Why should we longer cobblers be?"

Then they danced and skipped and leapt over chairs and benches. At last they danced out of doors. From that time forth they came no more, but as long as the shoemaker lived all went well with him, and all his undertakings prospered.

And they all lived happily ever after.





# The Story of the Christmas Witch



Austria

Purpose(s)



Processing  
Knowledge



Xmas  
Story

In the dark nights of winter , especially close to Christmas, when you hear the wind and thunder roaring and rumbling through the mountains and woods, do you know who is on its way?

It is the Christmas Witch who carries many names, for now we will call her by the name Frau Perchta. She has a beaked nose made of iron and is all dressed in rags with small pieces of mirrors and bells. The legend says that in cold and dark winter nights she flies through the air surrounded by an army of lost souls, including the Perchten, her army of servants. This is called the Wild Hunt. The Perchten are covered with fur and wear large bells around their hips.



Despite their evil looks it is said that Frau Perchta and her army actually bring luck. With their horned masks they scare away demons and evil creatures, they stomp on the ground and with the bells and their screams they evict the demons of winter and awake and welcome spring.

So when Christmas is getting closer, watch out for Frau Perchta and her army. Maybe you get a glimpse of them. But nevertheless you better not come too close to them, otherwise you might get pierced by their horns, tusks and teeth.





# The Legend of the Fir Tree



France

Purpose(s)



Motivation &  
Awareness



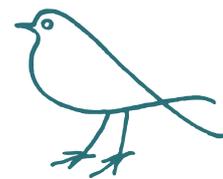
Xmas  
Story

**In the past**, all the trees in the forest kept their leaves as winter approached. Nowadays, only the fir tree remains green in this season. Do you know why?

Around Christmas time, a little bird could not fly to the warmer countries because its wing was broken. How could it withstand the harshness of winter?

Shivering from cold, he took shelter in the foliage of a large oak tree. The oak refused to take him in: "Go away, you'll eat all my acorns" he said.

Despite the snow, he leaves the big tree to take refuge in the branches of the bushy beech. "Don't stay there, you'll eat all my beans" he said.



The terrified little bird escaped to hide in a birch tree, which promptly chased him away: "I don't want you, you'll dirty my branches".

Driven away by all the trees, the little bird lies down in the snow to die. Suddenly, a few steps away, he sees a fir tree beckoning him. With wings frozen by the cold, he drags himself towards the tree. "Here you will be safe, I will protect you", the fir tree says. On Christmas Eve, a terrible wind blew through the forest. All the trees lost their leaves under the force of the wind. Only the fir tree kept its leaves, because it had taken in the sick bird.

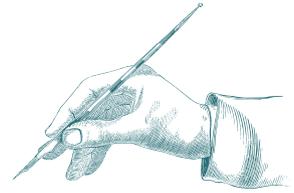


This is why the fir tree is today the generous and protective Christmas tree around which we gather.



# Egg, carrot and coffee beans

Unknown



Purpose(s)



Empowerment

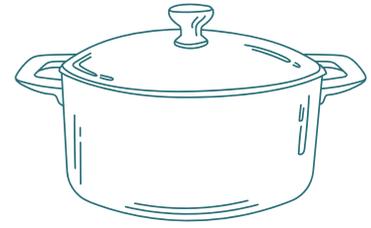


Motivation & Awareness

A young woman struggling with life, went to her mother and told her how her life was miserable and hard for her. She was tired of fighting and struggling with her problems and wanted to give up.

Her mother, without saying much, took the young lady to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water. In the first pot, she placed carrots, in the second one she placed eggs, and the last she placed some ground coffee beans.

She let them sit and boil without saying a word to her daughter. The daughter wondered what her mother was trying to do while she was complaining about her life. After some time the mother turned down the burner, fished the carrots and the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out into a cup. Turning to her daughter, she asked, "Dear, Tell me what do you see?". "A Carrot, egg and coffee," she replied.



“Look closer and feel the carrots” said the mother. The daughter noted that they were soft. The mother then asked her to take an egg and break it. The interior of the egg was hard boiled. Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee. Its rich aroma brought a smile to her face.

The daughter then asked, “What does this mean, mother?”

All the three items, carrot, egg, and coffee went through the same situation, the boiling water. However, each reacted differently. The carrot was strong, hard, and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg was fragile with the thin outer shell and its liquid interior. But after being in the boiling water, it hardened its interior. The ground coffee beans were unique, as it came to the boiling water, it changed the water and gave its incredible aroma.

“What are you?” she asked the daughter. “ How do you respond in difficult situations? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean? ”



Are you a carrot that seems strong at first, but becomes soft and loses strength in adversity?

Are you an egg that starts with a malleable heart, but hardens with the heat? Did you have a fluid spirit, but as you struggled with problems, have you become hardened and stiff? Did the problem harden your free spirit?

Or are you like coffee beans? The beans that change the hot water, the adversity, into an aromatic drink. If you are like the coffee beans, when things are at their worst, you will get better and change the situation around you.



Source/Link:

<https://alltimeshortstories.com/motivational-egg-carrot-coffee-beans/>





CONTACT:

storycomp@wisamar.de

[www.storycomp.eu](http://www.storycomp.eu)



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.