

# 500 Basic Words

Essential English Words  
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This booklet Includes

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[Englishvid.org](http://Englishvid.org)



1 associate, environment, factory, feature, instance, involve, medicine, mix, organize, period, populate, produce, range, recognize, regular, sign, tip, tradition, trash, wide

2 allow, announce, beside, challenge, claim, condition, contribute, difference, divide, expert, famous, force, harm, lay, peace, prince, protect, sense, sudden, therefore

3 accept, arrange, attend, balance, contrast, encourage, familiar, grab, hang, huge, necessary, pattern, propose, purpose, release, require, single, success, tear, theory

4 against, beach, damage, discover, emotion, fix, frank, identify, island, ocean, perhaps, pleasant, prevent, rock, save, step, still, taste, throw, wave

5 benefit, certain, chance, effect, essential, far, focus, function, grass, guard, image, immediate, primary, proud, remain, rest, separate, site, tail, trouble

6 anymore, asleep, berry, collect, compete, conversation,  
creature, decision, either,  
forest, ground, introduce, marry, prepare, sail, serious, spend,  
strange, truth, wake

7 advantage, cause, choice, community, dead, distance, escape,  
face, follow,  
fright, ghost, individual, pet, reach, return, survive, upset, voice,  
weather, wise

8 blood, burn, cell, contain, correct, crop, demand, equal, feed,  
hole, increase,  
lord, owe, position, raise, responsible, sight, spot, structure,  
whole

9 coach, control, description, direct, exam, example, limit, local,  
magical, mail,  
novel, outline, poet, print, scene, sheet, silly, store, suffer,  
technology

10 across, breathe, characteristic, consume, excite, extreme, fear,  
fortunate, happen,  
length, mistake, observe, opportunity, prize, race, realize,  
respond, risk, wonder, yet

11 academy, ancient, board, century, clue, concert, county,  
dictionary, exist, flat,  
gentleman, hidden, maybe, officer, original, pound, process,  
publish, theater, wealth

12 appreciate, available, beat, bright, celebrate, determine,  
disappear, else, fair, flow,  
forward, hill, level, lone, puddle, response, season, solution,  
waste, whether

13 argue, communicate, crowd, depend, dish, empty, exact,  
fresh, gather, indicate,  
item, offer, price, product, property, purchase, recommend,  
select, tool, treat

14 alive, bone, bother, captain, conclusion, doubt, explore,  
foreign, glad, however,  
injustice, international, lawyer, mention, policy, social, speech,  
staff, toward, wood

15 achieve, advise, already, basic, bit, consider, destroy,  
entertain, extra, goal,  
lie, meat, opinion, real, reflect, regard, serve, vegetable, war,  
worth

16 appear, base, brain, career, clerk, effort, enter, excellent, hero, hurry, inform, later, leave, locate, nurse, operation, pain, refuse, though, various

17 actual, amaze, charge, comfort, contact, customer, deliver, earn, gate, include, manage, mystery, occur, opposite, plate, receive, reward, set, steal, thief

18 advance, athlete, average, behavior, behind, course, lower, match, member, mental, passenger, personality, poem, pole, remove, safety, shoot, sound, swim, web

19 block, cheer, complex, critic, event, exercise, fit, friendship, guide, lack, passage, perform, pressure, probable, public, strike, support, task, term, unite

20 alone, apartment, article, artist, attitude, compare, judge, magazine, material, meal, method, neighbor, professional, profit, quality, shape, space, stair, symbol, thin

21 advice, along, attention, attract, climb, drop, final, further, imply, maintain, neither, otherwise, physical, prove, react, ride, situated, society, standard, suggest

22 actually, bite, coast, deal, desert, earthquake, effective, examine, false, gift, hunger, imagine, journey, puzzle, quite, rather, specific, tour, trip, value

23 band, barely, boring, cancel, driveway, garbage, instrument, list, magic, message, notice, own, predict, professor, rush, schedule, share, stage, storm, within

24 advertise, assign, audience, breakfast, competition, cool, gain, importance, knowledge, major, mean, prefer, president, progress, respect, rich, skill, somehow, strength, vote

25 above, ahead, amount, belief, center, common, cost, demonstrate, different, evidence, honesty, idiom, independent, inside, master, memory, proper, scan, section, surface

## Story Number 1

# Joe's Pond

Joe made the world a better place. He got the idea to do that at school. He watched a video there. It was about a factory. This factory produced a lot of trash and put it in a river. The trash and water were a bad mix. People populated the area by the river and drank its water. This made them sick. Many of them needed medicine and made regular visits to doctors.

But the video wasn't all bad news. It showed ways to pick up trash and why it's important to do this. It said people can make a difference to their environment. The video's important features made Joe associate trash with hurting people.

One day Joe walked through a park. He recognized some of the problems from the video. One instance of these problems was the trash in the pond. It was full of plastic cups. There was too much trash. Joe didn't want it to hurt anyone. He told his grandfather about the park. His grandfather said, "You know, it's a tradition in our family to help people. That's why we give food to poor people. Maybe you can help people by cleaning the park."

Cleaning the park would involve hard work. Joe decided to organize a group to help him. He chose a wide area of the park. It had the most trash. He asked his family and friends to come. On Saturday, he gave everyone a sharp stick. They wondered why. He said, "You use the stick's tip to pick up trash. This makes it easier." They worked for six weeks. Different people helped each time, but Joe was always there.

In that period of time, Joe saw a range of results. There was no trash in the water. People could swim in it. Joe knew that was a good sign. He was happy because he helped his environment.

## Story Number 2

# The Best Prince

King Minos was very sick. His condition was getting worse. He had three sons. He loved them all. He had to announce who would become king.

Two of the princes stood waiting outside the king's room. Theseus was the oldest and strongest. He thought his father would make him king. Pelias, the second son, thought differently. He was an expert with weapons. He thought the king would choose him.

"When I'm king," Theseus told Pelias, "I'll let you contribute to the defense of our country. You can lead the army."

Pelias became angry. "Father knows I'm famous for my sword skills. He'll make me king."

"You?" Theseus yelled. "He won't choose you!"

"The kingdom is mine!" Pelias claimed. "Father will give it to me—or I'll use force to take it!"

Theseus made a sudden move to take out his sword. Then Pelias did the same.

"Beating me will be a challenge," Theseus said. "Fight me now. The winner gets the kingdom!"

Pelias agreed.

King Minos could hear his sons fighting. The youngest son, Jason, stood beside him. He sensed his father's sadness. The king laid his hand flat on Jason's arm.

"Your brothers fight too much," the king told him. "I must protect my kingdom from all harm. They'll divide it between them. The people won't know what to do. There'll be war. I can't allow either of them to be king. Therefore, I'm making you king. Your kindness has always made you special. It's the difference between you and your brothers. You can bring peace. They can't."

Then the king died. Theseus and Pelias heard that their youngest brother was king. They were surprised. They realized that their fighting was wrong. It had kept them from saying goodbye to their father. They agreed to have Jason as their king. He was the best choice.



## Story Number 3

# How the Sun and the Moon Were Made

Do you ever wonder where the moon and the sun came from? The Inuit people of Alaska have a theory.

They tell a story about a beautiful girl. She was very nice. In contrast, her brother was a mean little boy. One day he proposed something. "We should go to a party," he said. The girl accepted. First, it was necessary for her to prepare. She arranged her hair and put on nice clothes. This required a lot of time. But the girl worked hard, and soon she had success. She looked perfect.

They attended the party together. The girl was having fun. Later, she walked into the bathroom. Suddenly, the lights were turned off! Someone grabbed her hair and tore her clothes. She ran out of the bathroom. She wanted to know who did this to her.

Then she had an idea. She fixed her hair again. This time it was even more beautiful. She even balanced beautiful jewels in it. She wanted to encourage the person to grab it again. She put black dirt in her hair. The purpose of this was to catch the person.

She went to the bathroom again, and it was the same pattern. The lights went off, and someone grabbed her hair.

When he released it, his hand was black. The girl returned to the party. She knew there was only a single person with a black hand.

When she saw that person, he was very familiar. It was her brother!

He ran into the woods.

The girl ran after him. They both carried fire so they could see in the dark. The smoke went into the air. As they ran, they grew. They became huge.

Then they went into space. When the girl's fire went out, she hung in the sky. She became the moon, and her brother became the sun. They chase each other forever.

# The Starfish

Last summer I took a trip to an island. I had a lot of fun. I sat and watched the waves and listened to the ocean. I learned to identify birds. I discovered pretty things and enjoyed the taste of new foods. It was a very nice time.

One evening I took a pleasant walk by the ocean. When the waves came in, many starfish\* fell on the beach. Some starfish went back into the water, and they were safe. But other starfish were still on the sand. They would die if they did not get into the water. There were many starfish on the beach that night. It made me sad, but I knew I could not fix the problem. I stepped very carefully so I did not damage them.

Then I saw a little girl. She was also sad about the starfish. She wanted to prevent all of them from dying. She asked me if I could perhaps help her.

“To be frank, I don’t think we can do anything,” I said.

The little girl started to cry. She sat back against a rock and thought for a while. Finally, the emotion was gone. She stopped crying and stood up. Then she picked up a starfish and threw it into the water.

“What are you doing?” I asked her. But she did not answer me. She just threw as many starfish as she could. “You cannot save all of them!” I said.

She stopped to look at me. “No, I cannot save them all,” she replied. Then she picked up a very big starfish and said, “But I can save this one.” And then she smiled and threw the starfish as far as she could into the ocean.

## Story Number 5

# The First Peacock

Argos lived in Ancient Greece. He was a husband and a proud father. He worked hard and did well at his job. But one thing about him wasn't normal. He was born with 100 eyes. Having many eyes was usually a benefit to him. He had a chance to see many things.

Also, since he had so many eyes, he was very good at guarding things. While sleeping, he only rested a few eyes at a time. The others stayed awake. He worked for Hera, a great goddess. His primary function was to guard a special cow. The cow was very important to Hera. It was her favorite pet. The most essential part of his job was to keep the cow alone. It had to be kept separate from all the other cows and far away from people.

This was an easy job for Argos. The cow just ate grass all day. But the god Zeus wanted the cow. He wanted to take it away from Hera. He had a plan. He found a great music player. He asked the man to play a beautiful song for Argos. Zeus was certain Argos would go to sleep.

The song had an immediate effect. Argos couldn't focus on his job. He fell asleep. Zeus saw this, and he took the cow.

Hera was very angry with Argos. She turned him into a peacock. She put his many eyes on his tail. Argos was very sad.

Zeus saw how much trouble he had caused Argos. He made another plan. He turned Argos into a group of stars. He wanted Argos to remain in the sky forever. Even today, Argos' image remains there, above the site where all his problems began.

We can still see him in the night sky.

## Story Number 6

# Princess Rose and the Creature

There was once a beautiful princess named Rose. Her mother, the queen, however, was not as beautiful as the princess. The queen felt bad that she was not the most beautiful woman in the kingdom anymore. She was tired of competing with her daughter. She made a decision. She prepared a drink for the princess. After the princess drank it, she fell asleep. Then the queen took the princess to the forest. She left the princess there. It was a very serious thing to do. “Either she will be killed by animals or she will get lost in the forest,” the queen thought. The princess had a dream. She dreamed about a man with brown hair and brown eyes. It was the man she would wed.

The princess woke up. She saw a strange creature on the ground. It looked like a man, but he was hairy and green. He had horns on his head and a pig’s nose. The creature said, “Did I scare you? I hope not. Let me introduce myself. I am Henry.”

“I am not scared. To tell you the truth, I think you are cute,” said Rose.

Rose and Henry spent the day together. They collected berries, caught fish, and had lunch. They had a very good day filled with nice conversations.

“Rose, I have to go home,” said Henry. “My ship will sail home soon. I can’t leave you here in the forest alone. Will you come with me?”

Rose was very happy. She gave Henry a kiss right on his pig nose. As soon as she kissed Henry, he began to change. His pig nose turned into a man’s nose. His horns and green hair went away. Standing in front of her was the man Rose had dreamt about.

Rose and Henry were married, and they lived happily.

## Story Number 7

# The Friendly Ghost

A nice woman lived by a large river. She loved children. She wanted to help them in any way. She loved her community, and everyone in the community loved her. She lived a very long time and became very wise.

When she died, she became a ghost. She was dead, but every night she returned to her community. She wanted to help children and not to cause them fright. But she had a scary voice. Children were afraid of her, but the ghost was a good one. She only scared them to help them.

One night, some children and a dog were playing by the river. They were having fun with their pet. But they were far from home. Then the weather became bad. It rained and rained. The river was rising. It was very dark. The children knew they were lost. They needed to go north, but they didn't know which direction it was. When the moon came out, they saw a ghost by the river. The ghost said, "Go away!"

The children felt great fright. They knew it was a ghost. Then the ghost moved closer. She yelled again, "Go away!" The children became very upset. Some of them began to cry. The children knew they had a choice: they could escape, or they could stay and face this scary individual in the dark.

The children ran a long distance away. The ghost followed them all the way.

Finally, the children reached home. The ghost was very happy. Soon the river rose higher and higher. It

was very dangerous. The ghost had helped the children survive! She had saved them from the rising water. She also used her power to

lead them home. Sometimes, meeting a ghost

has advantages. A ghost can save

your

## Story Number 8

# The Farmer and the Cats

Arthur was a responsible farmer, and Maria was a nice lady. But they were poor. They owed the town lord money for their land. One summer, their farm burned. One structure caught fire, and most of the animals ran away. Only the cats stayed.

So Arthur and Maria had to bring in their crops without an animal's help.

On a fall day, the lord demanded his money. Arthur asked if the lord could wait until he brought in his crops.

The lord was angry. He raised his hands high and yelled, "Pay me by the end of the week. If you don't, I will increase the money you have to pay. I might put you in a jail cell."

So Arthur and Maria worked until there was blood on their hands. They finished four lines of corn and went to bed.

But the next morning, eight lines were finished! "Maria, didn't we stop in this spot here?" Arthur asked.

"Yes, that is correct. And the tools were in a different position, too," Maria said. They were surprised and happy. That day, they worked hard and finished five lines.

But in the morning, ten lines were done! Each day they did a lot of work. Each night, someone else did an equal amount of work. In a week, the whole field was finished. "Tomorrow I will sell the crops and pay the lord," Arthur said. But that morning, the crops were gone. A bag was in the middle of the field. It contained money.

"Maria, let's see who has helped us work." Through a hole in the wall, they saw a funny sight. The cats were dancing in the field and eating corn! Now Arthur

knew what had happened. The cats had worked at night! After that, Arthur was very nice to his cats and fed them lots of corn.

## Story Number 9

# A Magical Book

Sarah loved to read. She read novels and poems. She loved the beautiful descriptions and phrases. She loved reading work from poets and novelists. She didn't like video games or technology. She was on the basketball team, but she didn't like sports. Her parents made her play basketball. In fact, Sarah's parents made her do many things. But she didn't want to do those things. She just wanted to sit and read all day.

One day, a small book came in the mail. It was for Sarah. The book looked very special. It was printed on sheets of gold. Sarah began to read. The outline of the story was simple. It was about a magical place. Strange things happened there. One example from the book was about a boy who could control people. In one scene, he made his friends tell funny jokes.

Sarah loved the book. She read it all the time. Then something strange happened. The book gave Sarah a special power. She could control other people. She was like the boy in the book. During one exam, she made her friend tell silly jokes. Her friend got in trouble.

After school, Sarah did not make a direct trip home. On the way, she went to the local store. She wanted to play more tricks on people. She caused problems. She made people fall down. She laughed and had fun.

Finally she left and started to walk home. Then she saw something. Her basketball coach was about to walk in front of a bus. He was looking the other way. She had to stop him! She used her power. She controlled him. She made him stop walking.

Sarah learned something that day.

It was better to help people than make them suffer. So, she put a limit on how she used her power. She did not want to do bad things with it anymore. She only wanted to do good.

## Story Number 10

# The Big Race

A dog saw a group of animals across the road. He walked over to meet them. “What are you doing?” he asked them.

“ I just sold them tickets to a race between the rabbit and the turtle,” the duck responded.

This news excited the dog. He felt fortunate that he happened to be there. “ I don’t have anything to do today,” the dog said. “ I want to buy a ticket, too.” The dog sat down to observe the race. The race would be extreme. It would be many kilometers in length. The rabbit and the turtle stood next to each other. They waited for the race to start. The dog wondered why the turtle agreed to run against the rabbit. Being fast was not a characteristic of turtles. The rabbit was going to win easily.

Suddenly, the race began. The rabbit ran extremely quickly. The turtle walked slowly. After a minute, the rabbit looked back. He saw that the turtle was far behind him and was breathing quickly because he was so tired. The rabbit smiled and slowed to a walk.

A minute later, the rabbit said, “ I’m winning, so I’ll take a rest.” He sat and began to consume some grass. Then, he let his eyes close. He wasn’t the winner yet. But there was no risk of him losing the race. He went to sleep.

Hours later, a loud sound woke him. All of the animals were yelling and looking at the field. He felt fear for the first time. The turtle was almost at the finish line. Now, the rabbit realized his mistake. But the race was over. He gave the turtle an opportunity to win, and the turtle took it. The duck handed the turtle his prize. It was the happiest day of the turtle’s life.

The dog was happy for the turtle. “He isn’t fast,” the dog thought. “ But he tried his best and did something great.”



## Story Number 11

# Adams County's Gold

Adams Academy was a good school. Boys lived there and took classes. Tom worked hard all week. On a spring Saturday, he wanted to do something fun! He asked his friend Jeff to go to the movie theater. "Sorry," Jeff answered. "I'm going to a concert."

So Tom asked Joe to go to the movies. But Joe's soccer team had a game. Next, Tom went down the hall to Brad's room. Brad was reading a very large old book. "Hi, Brad," Tom said. "Are you reading a dictionary? It looks ancient." "No. This is called *The Wealth of Adams County*. It's about hidden gold in Adams County. It's more than a century old. It was published in 1870! Look, it even has the original cover on it."

Tom asked, "Where did you get it?"

"It's from my dad's friend. He is a nice gentleman, an officer in the army," answered Brad.

"The gold doesn't really exist, does it?" Tom asked.

"I don't know, but maybe! There are clues to it in this book. Let's find it!"

Looking for gold sounded like fun.

The first clue was to find a flat tree underground. "It must be in the forest," Tom said.

Brad said, "The flat tree could be a board under the dirt. It could cover the gold."

Tom and Brad dug in the dirt all morning.

The process of looking for gold made them hungry. They were ready to stop for lunch.

But then Brad hit something hard. It was a board!

Brad pounded on the board until it broke.

There was a small hole under it. "Look!" He held up a gold coin.

Tom saw a piece of paper in the hole. "Brad, there's more. It's a map to the rest of the gold!"

Brad smiled. "Let's go!" And they hurried to find the wealth of Adams County.

## Story Number 12

# The Race for Water

There was a town next to a river. The people there had a lot of water. But they wasted it. That made the Sky angry. It said, “If you waste water, I will take it away from you.” But the people didn’t listen.

When the season changed from spring to summer, the clouds disappeared. The bright sun was hot and made the river dry. There was no water available. People asked, “When will the rain fall?”

The Sky’s response was, “You don’t appreciate water. You waste it, and now I will never make rain again.”

A boy determined that this wasn’t fair. He thought of a solution. He asked the Sky to race him. He said, “If I get to the top of that hill before your rain can form puddles, you must fill our river.”

The Sky laughed. “Little boy, I am the Sky. I am above everything else. You cannot beat me.” But the boy knew he would win.

When the race began, the boy ran forward. The Sky started raining on the hill. But puddles did not form there. When it rained on the hill, the water went down. The Sky kept raining. The water flowed down into the river. When the boy reached the top of the hill, the river was full. The people began to celebrate. It was the highest level the river had ever been at before.

The Sky was angry. “A boy can’t beat me! I won’t fill your river,” it said.

Now the boy laughed. “It doesn’t matter whether you want to fill it or not,” he said. “You already did.” The Sky looked at the full river.

“You tricked me,” it said. It asked the people, “Do you appreciate water now?”

“Yes,” they said. “We won’t waste it.”

That is how a lone boy saved his town and won the race for water.

## Story Number 13

# The Little Red Chicken

A little red chicken had a store in a small town. She sold many different items to people in the town. The people loved her products.

One day, a cat came to her property. He saw the sign that indicated where the chicken's store was located. He wanted to purchase bread, but the chicken's store was almost empty. She had only a bag of wheat.\*

"You can use the wheat to make bread," the chicken said.

"No, I don't want to work," the cat said. "I just want to buy bread." The cat became angry and left the store.

Later, the little red chicken saw the cat in a crowd.

"I will help you make the bread," she said.

But the cat treated her badly. He did not even communicate with her.

He did not want to do any work.

So the chicken decided to make the bread. She selected the exact amount of wheat to make fresh bread. She used a stone to pound the wheat to get it ready.

Soon, her bread was ready.

The cat came and saw the bread on a dish.

"Give me some of your bread," he said.

"No," said the little red chicken. "You did not help me make the bread. So you shall not have any to eat."

The cat argued with the chicken. He tried to offer a price for it.

But the little red chicken did not want to \*\*  
sell her bread.

"Don't depend on others  
to do work for you," said  
the little red chicken.

"Then how will I get bread?" the cat asked.

"I recommend doing some work," said the little red  
chicken. "Use a tool to plant your own wheat. When it  
grows big, you can gather it and make your own bread.  
You need to learn to do work for what you want."

## Story Number 14

# Shipwrecked

.Simon Yates was a lawyer. He helped many people. However, he was not a nice man. His policy was to help only rich people. He didn't bother about social injustice. He made a lot of money, but many people didn't like him. Even people on his staff didn't like him. They wanted bad things to happen to him. In fact, they were glad when he got into trouble.

Simon had a very bad day. He did many things wrong and lost his job. Soon, he didn't have any money. His wife, Mrs. Yates, began to have doubts about him. Simon wanted to start a new life. He planned to leave the country.

He mentioned his plan to the captain of a ship. The captain was exploring the world. The captain felt bad for Simon and said, "I will take you to foreign countries." They left the next day.

Near the conclusion of their international trip, the weather turned bad. A wave pushed Simon off the boat. But he was alive. He swam toward an island. After a long time he got there.

At first he was upset. He was lost and alone. "I'll never go home again," he thought. He had a lot of problems, but he survived. He built a house in a tree. He lived on a diet of fish. He made tools from wood and bones. He made a cup to drink rainwater.

Slowly he learned to be happy on the island. He swam every day. He had trouble sometimes, but he always found a way to fix the problem. Life was simple. He liked it.

Finally, people on a ship saw Simon on the island. They wanted to take him home. But Simon was happy. He gave them a long speech about life. He said he wanted to stay. He liked his new, simple life more than his old life.

## Story Number 15

# The Seven Cities of Gold

Many years ago, a Spanish officer named Coronado heard the story of seven great cities. "The walls of these cities are made of gold," his friends told him. "The people eat meat from golden plates and dress in nice clothes," they said. They called these cities the Seven Cities of Gold. Were the cities real? Coronado never considered asking his friends.

Coronado thought to himself, "The things in these cities must be worth a lot of money." So he went to find the Seven Cities of Gold. He took along three hundred men, many horses, and extra food. They headed west. Coronado wanted to achieve his goal very badly.

Coronado and his men rode for many days. Then they saw some cities. "We found the Seven Cities of Gold!" his men yelled, but Coronado wasn't happy. He had a different opinion. "These can't be the Seven Cities of Gold," he said. "Look, they're made of dirt!"

Coronado was right. The cities weren't bright and golden. They were dirty and brown. The people didn't eat meat from golden plates. They ate vegetables from regular bowls. They wore the most basic clothes.

Coronado regarded the cities as ugly places.

"What happened to the cities of gold?" he thought.

"Did someone destroy them? Was there a war? Did someone already come and take the gold?"

That night, the people of the cities entertained Coronado and his men and served them food.

They advised Coronado to go home. "There is no gold here," they told him. Coronado was  
id his friends lie to him?

ft the next morning. He looked back at  
s one more time. The sun reflected light  
dirt houses. Coronado thought he saw a  
of gold. Were his friends right after all? "No,"  
he told himself. "It's just the  
sun." Then he turned away  
and went home.

## Story Number 16

### Katy

I first met 8-year-old Katy on a rainy afternoon. I was a nurse at a hospital. The clerk at the desk told me about Katy. She was there because she felt a lot of pain. The doctors located a problem at the base of her brain. I knew she was special, even before she got better. I'll always remember Katy as a hero.

When I entered Katy's room, she was not in her bed. She was in a chair next to Tommy, a little boy. Though Katy did not feel well, she was playing with Tommy and his toys. It took a lot of effort for her just to sit in the chair. But she played with Tommy because it made him happy.

Katy was always smiling and never appeared to be in pain. She refused to just lie in bed. One day I found her painting a picture. Later, she gave it to one of the older patients. Another day she went outside to get flowers for another sick little girl. Katy made everyone smile.

The doctors hurried to fix the problem in Katy's brain. The operation was successful! The doctors informed the hospital staff of the good news. Katy was fine. She soon felt excellent. She got better and was able to leave the hospital a month later.

I have had a long career as a nurse. I have met many patients.

However, I have never met another girl like Katy. Even after she got well, she still came to the hospital. She played various games with the young patients. She read many books to the older patients. Katy's kind heart helped her get better so quickly. She is a hero to me and everyone else at the hospital.

## Story Number 17

# A Better Reward

Jenny delivered food for a restaurant. She read the newspaper and said, “Uh oh.” There was a story about a thief. He stole food, and no one had seen him. Even the police couldn’t catch him. Jenny was a little scared. She worked close to that area.

The newspaper included a message from the police: “If anything strange occurs, call us. If you help us catch the thief, you’ll earn a reward.”

Jenny talked to Jim. He managed the restaurant. “Do you know about the thief?”

“Yes,” he said. “But he steals more than one person can eat. And why haven’t the police stopped him yet? It’s a mystery. If you see him, contact the police. Don’t run after him.”

Jenny drove to a customer’s house. She left her car and opened the gate to the house. But then she heard a noise by her car. She yelled, “Thief!” She wasn’t scared. She wanted the reward! She did the opposite of what Jim told her to do.

“Hey,” she yelled. “Get back here!” She set the food on the ground and ran to her car.

But the thief had already left with the food. Jenny followed a noise around the corner. She was amazed.

She saw a dog and some puppies.

They were eating her food! They looked thin and scared. “The actual thief is just a dog. She’s feeding her puppies,” she said. “That’s why she steals so much food.”

Jenny felt bad. She tried to comfort the dogs with another plate of food. Then she took them back to the store. Everyone there took a puppy home. Jenny called the police. She told them there was no real thief.

Jenny didn’t do it to receive the reward anymore. She said, “It was just a dog. But there’s no charge for catching this ‘thief,’” she said. “My new dog is a better reward.”

## Story Number 18

# The Camp

Stacie wanted to stay at a nice hotel for vacation. But her parents sent her to a terrible camp instead. For breakfast, Stacie liked fresh juice and chocolate milk, but she got water at the camp. In the afternoon she wanted to write poems, but she had to swim. The camp was near an airport with loud planes. Spiderwebs hung over her bed. To her, the kids' average behavior was very bad. No girl

matched her personality. She hated it.

One day, they had a class. Mental exercise sounded good to Stacie. But it was a course on water safety. They learned how to be safe passengers on a boat. Stacie didn't ever plan to go on a boat.

The next day, they played a game. There were a red team and a blue team. Stacie was on the blue team. Each team had to try to remove the other team's flag from a pole. They also had to use water guns. "I'm not much of an athlete," she said. But she still had to play.

Stacie took a water gun and looked for somewhere to hide. A boy said, "Stacie, you advance to the middle. I will go right. Those two will go left."

Stacie still didn't want to play. She walked into the forest and saw a red team player coming. Stacie hid behind a tree and then jumped out and shot the other player. "This is fun!" Stacie thought.

Several minutes after advancing further, Stacie saw the red flag. A red team member was watching over it. She shot him with her water gun. Then she lowered the flag and ran back to her team. "I got it!" she yelled. The blue team won! Stacie was the hero.

For the rest of the week, Stacie had fun. She even made new friends



## Story Number 19

# A Strong Friendship

Tim was the strongest man in the town. When he played sports, he always won. He performed and exercised in the public park. He did this to show everyone how strong he was. Most people liked him, but one man didn't. His name was Jack.

Jack hated Tim. Jack was a movie critic and the smartest man in town. He could solve complex math problems. But no one cared. Jack wanted to be famous like Tim.

One day, there was an unusual event. A big storm came suddenly. Snow covered the town. No one could get out. They needed food. The people said, "This is a task for a strong man." Tim was under pressure to save them. But Jack wanted to be the hero, so they both went. Tim said, "You can't help because of your lack of strength."

But Jack found some small passages under the snow. One of them led toward another town. That town had food. Because Tim was so big and strong, he almost couldn't fit inside. They walked until there was a block of ice in their way. Jack said, "We can't get past it. But if you strike it, it might break." Tim knew that was probable.

He broke it. When there were more ice blocks, Tim broke them. That made him tired. He couldn't walk anymore.

Jack said, "Let's unite and support each other. I'll get the food alone. You rest here."

Jack came back with food. Tim couldn't remember which passage led home. He needed Jack to be his guide. The men became friends by working together.

In town, people saw Jack with the food and cheered.

They called Jack a hero. But Jack didn't care. He was thinking of something else. He said to Tim, "I thought I was smart, but I learned a new term today: friendship."

# The Crazy Artist

Frenhofer was the best artist in the world. Everyone loved him. The quality of his paintings was very high. He always used the best materials. He made a big profit from his paintings. He had delicious meals with his rich neighbors. He taught art classes. Life was good.

Then his attitude changed. He stopped selling paintings and teaching. He tried a new method of painting. He stayed alone in his apartment all day. He worked all day and all night, rarely eating. Soon Frenhofer became very thin. But he kept working on the same painting for many years. He worked as hard as he could. Finally, he finished the painting. He was very happy and invited other artists to see it. "I want your professional opinion," he said. He wanted them to judge it and compare it to other paintings. Everyone was very excited as they went up the stairs to his apartment. Frenhofer was excited to show his painting, and the artists were excited to see it. "They'll love it," he thought. But they did not. They were surprised by his painting. There was no white anywhere. Frenhofer filled the whole painting with lines and colors. There was no space for a normal picture. It was full of strange shapes. It looked bad to the other artists. He used symbols, and they didn't understand them. They thought it was terrible. "Why did you paint this strange picture?" someone asked. They didn't understand its beauty.

But after some time, many people began to like his painting. People wrote articles about it in magazines. They said it was his best work. They loved his strange symbols. They loved his strange colors.

Frenhofer's painting reminded everyone that just because something was new didn't mean that it was bad. He also helped them to realize that sometimes it takes people a little time to understand great things.

## Story Number 21

# Archie and His Donkey

Old Archie needed some money. He decided to sell his donkey. So he and his son Tom went to town. It was situated many miles away.

Soon, they met a woman. "Where are you going?" she asked.

"To town," said Archie.

"Any smart person would ride the donkey," she said.

"What are you implying?" Archie asked. "I'm very smart!" Archie wanted to look smart. So he climbed onto the donkey. Then they continued in the direction of the town.

Further along the road, they met a farmer.

"Hello," said Archie. "We want to sell this donkey. Do you want to buy it?"

"I don't need a donkey," said the farmer. "But if you want my advice, don't ride it. The donkey needs to be in good physical condition."

"Good idea," said Archie. "Tom, I want you to ride it. You're lighter."

"Neither you nor your son should ride it. It looks very tired. You should carry the donkey," suggested the farmer.

"You're right," said Archie. "Come on, Tom! We'll carry it for the final few miles!"

The donkey was very heavy, and they couldn't maintain a good speed. They didn't arrive until late in the evening. At last, they walked into the town. But there they attracted the attention of some teenage boys. They laughed at Tom and Archie. They started to throw stones at them. The donkey reacted by kicking. Tom and Archie dropped the donkey. It fell on the ground and then ran away. Archie lost his donkey. He went home with no money.

What does this story teach us? We cannot please everyone in our society. Don't take everyone's advice, but set your own standards. Prove to everyone

## Story Number 22

# The Spider and the Bird

There was once a very big spider. If a bug got into his web, he would examine it. However, he didn't eat the bug right away. He asked the bug a question first. It was always quite a difficult puzzle. If the bug's answer was correct, he let it go. If not, he ate it.

One day, a small bird on a journey flew into the spider's web. The spider couldn't imagine eating a bird. It was so big! But his hunger was too great. He said to the bird, "If you cannot give me a specific answer, I will eat you." The bird laughed. "I could eat you!" But the bird was actually scared. She had used all her energy trying to get out of the web. And a spider's bite can be very effective in killing animals.

"Please don't eat me," the bird said. "I would rather make a deal with you."

"OK," the spider said. "If your answer is right, I will let you go. If not, you must give me a gift. It must be something of great value."

The bird said, "You can pick anything you want to eat. I will find it for you." The spider agreed.

"Where can you take a trip to the coast, the desert, and the mountains at the same time?" the spider asked.

The bird asked, "Does this place have earthquakes?" But the spider did not say anything. "I can see those places when I fly. Is the 'sky' the right answer?"

"False!" said the spider. "The answer is Hawaii! Now you must find some bugs for me."

The spider climbed on the bird's back.

They flew and ate bugs together. They

took a tour

of the

forest.

the bird took

the spider home.

From that day on,

they were friends.

And they never

tried to eat each other

again.

## Story Number 23

# The Party

Cody's family moved to a new house. His dad got a new job as a professor. Cody liked his new town, but he missed his grandparents. For his birthday, Cody wanted to have a party. His dad said, "Yes, we could even have a band play!" On the day of the party, Cody woke up and rushed to get ready. He started to check his list of things to do. He was so excited! But then he noticed something terrible. There was snow on the ground and lots of it! "Dad!" he yelled. "How can the band play their instruments outside?"

Dad said, "We'll move the stage inside." It barely fit within the garage because there were some boxes and garbage there. But when they finished, they got a call from the band. They did not want to come in the snow storm.

Dad said, "Let's get someone to perform magic." But no one would come because of the snow.

Finally, Dad said, "Cody, there's too much snow. We need to cancel the party."

"Yes, sir," Cody said sadly. "It's going to be a boring birthday," he predicted.

Cody wanted to share his birthday with someone. He wanted to be at his old home. He wanted to see his grandparents.

But then something got his attention. He noticed a car in the driveway. His grandparents owned a car like that!

Cody was right. His grandparents came for his birthday! "Happy birthday, Cody! We're sorry we are late. But there was so much snow. It made us go off schedule. We tried to leave a message to tell you."

Cody told them what happened. "I'm sorry," said Grandpa.

"I was sad," Cody said. "But I'm not anymore. I'm so happy to see you." Dad brought out Cody's birthday treat. It was his favorite type, a sundae with whipped cream on top. Then Cody told his grandparents about the new town. It was his best birthday ever.

# How the World Got Light

The president of Darkland was a pig—a very bad pig. He was a pig of major importance. He was rich, and he had a lot of strength. But he was mean to all the animals in Darkland. He kept all of the world’s light in a bag. He preferred to keep the world cool and dark. He wanted to stop the progress of the city. The animals couldn’t work in the dark. He didn’t have any respect for them. “Light is too good for them,” he said. “Only I should have light.”

But the animals needed light. So they decided to hold a competition. They wanted to find the smartest animal in Darkland. That animal had to steal light from the president. They advertised the competition everywhere. All the animals came. The animals all showed off their skills. The audience watched and then voted for the animal with the most knowledge. The winner was a tall bird named Raven.

They assigned him the job of getting light.

The next morning, Raven ate breakfast and then left his home. “How will I gain light from the president?” thought Raven. He needed to trick the president somehow. Then, Raven had an idea. Raven could make his voice sound like anything!

Raven walked up to the president’s door. He made the sound of a crying baby. He cried very loudly. Soon, the president opened the door.

“Be quiet!” the president yelled. Right then, Raven quickly made his move. He flew by the pig and found the soft bag. He took it outside. The sun was inside the bag

## Story Number 25

# Cats and Secrets

In English, there is a common idiom “let the cat out of the bag.” It means to tell a secret. But where did this idiom start?

It came from a section of England. Long ago, people there went from town to town to sell things like vegetables, clothes, and pigs. They had strong beliefs about honesty. They didn't like lying. One day, a man went to the section's center to sell things.

“I have a baby pig for sale! It won't cost much,” he said. He held the animal above his head. His style was different from honest people's style. He was a master of tricking people and lying.

A woman named Beth scanned his pig. He offered her the pig for one gold coin. That was a very small amount. Beth gave him the coin. He put it in his pocket. He walked ahead of Beth to get the pig.

He gave her a closed bag and said, “Here's your pig.” He then left very quickly.

Beth looked at the bag's surface. It was moving. She opened it to let the pig out. A cat was inside! “He tricked me! That isn't proper,” she said.

Later, the man returned to trick more people. Beth saw him and the memory of the cat came back. She told her friends. They stopped him. But no one knew what to do next.

Someone said, “We need an independent and fair person to decide that.” They went to the judge. Beth told him about the cat in the bag.

The judge asked, “Is there evidence? Can you demonstrate how he did it?”

“Look in his bag,” said Beth. She opened it and let a cat out of the bag. They learned the man's secret, and he went to jail.

That's how the idiom “let the cat out of the bag” came to mean to tell a secret.

Englishvid