



# The Barking Mouse— A Story from Cuba

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers

### Math

- How high could the fence have been? Research how high cats can jump.
- Could the cat have eaten all four mice? Research how much a cat's stomach can hold and compare that area to the amount of space four mice take up.

### Reading

- Read "The Big Meow" by Elizabeth Spire. Compare it to this story.
- Read other cat and mouse stories.
- Read other stories of bravery.

### Writing

- How would Señor Gato tell this story? Write it from his perspective.
- Make a list of other cat and mouse stories.
- Write a story using some of the Spanish words you learned.

### Science

- Study cats or mice.
- Cook something Cuban. Visit [www.icuban.com/3guys/food.html](http://www.icuban.com/3guys/food.html) for recipes.

### Geography

- Find Cuba on a map.
- Decide where you would want to live in Cuba if you were moving there. Why?

### Music

- Listen to Cuban music.
- Watch a video with salsa/merengue dancing. Try to dance along!

### Art

- Make maracas or tropical birds (directions at [www.nccusa.org/onlinebooks/achildsglimpseofcuba/act4.html](http://www.nccusa.org/onlinebooks/achildsglimpseofcuba/act4.html) or [act5.html](http://www.nccusa.org/onlinebooks/achildsglimpseofcuba/act5.html)).
- Study Cuban artists Alberto Godoy ([www.albertogodoy.com](http://www.albertogodoy.com)) or Dania Sierra ([www.sierrafineart.com](http://www.sierrafineart.com)) and try art in their styles.
- Make a yarn doll. Many Cuban children enjoy homemade toys like yarn dolls.

### Culture

- Try a Cuban meal.
- Play "The Hawk and the Chickens" (directions at [www.nccusa.org/onlinebooks/achildsglimpseofcuba/act7.html](http://www.nccusa.org/onlinebooks/achildsglimpseofcuba/act7.html)).

### Treasure Bearer

- Practice your courage by choosing not to worry about something out of your control.
- Be bold enough to not do something that is wrong, even if your friends do it.
- Practice your courage by trying something new.



# The Apple Dumpling— A Story from England

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers

### Math

- Research current costs of items in this story to see how many of one would be need for fair exchanges.
- Weigh different items in this story. Which basket load was heaviest? Lightest?

### Reading

- Read other English folk tales. Visit [www.mainlesson.com/display.php?author=steel&book=english&story=\\_contents](http://www.mainlesson.com/display.php?author=steel&book=english&story=_contents) for links to folk tales online.
- Read Beatrix Potter, J.K. Rowling, C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkein, A.A. Milne, and other English authors.

### Writing

- If you were the woman in this story, which exchange would you have kept and why? Write about it.
- Write your own sequential story of sharing something you have...and ending up with something you need.

### Science

- Experiment with different baskets to see which would hold all the loads in this story.
- Make apple dumplings, using scientific tasks of measuring, observing chemical changes, and using senses.

### Geography

- Research England to find where this story could have taken place (plum and apple trees, etc.)

### Music

- Learn about British anthems by visiting links at [www.know-britain.com](http://www.know-britain.com) (in General Index section).

### Art

- Paint prints with plums, feathers, flowers, a chain, and an apple.
- Make a clay teapot.
- Make Christmas crackers. See a link for instructions at [www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/xmas/Christmas\\_crackers.htm](http://www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/xmas/Christmas_crackers.htm).

### Culture

- "Take tea" together. Drink tea and eat "biscuits" — cookies.
- Try a game of conkers. See a link for instructions at <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/conker/archive/conkers.htm>.
- [www.britainexpress.com](http://www.britainexpress.com) has lots of information. Click on Culture under Heritage on the sidebar.
- [www.know-britain.com](http://www.know-britain.com) offers information about different aspects of British life. Click on General Index.

### Treasure Bearer

- Give something of yours to a sibling or friend.
- Be generous with smiles, hugs, or greetings to others.
- Instead of throwing away toys or clothes, find someone to give them to, or take them to a shelter.



# Roly-Poly Rice Ball— A Story from Japan

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers

### Math

- Graph different types of rice by size, length of cooking, and class preferences.
- Estimate the distance a ball will roll. Roll it and measure. Find the difference between your estimate and the actual difference. Try this with different balls.
- Figure out how many ants, jewels, coins, or scorpions could fit into boxes of two different sizes.

### Reading

- Read other stories from Japan. Visit [www.jinjapan.org/kidsweb/folk.html](http://www.jinjapan.org/kidsweb/folk.html) for translated stories with music and illustrations.

### Writing

- What would you roll into the mouse's hole? What would he offer you? Write yourself into the story.
- Re-write the ending. If the greedy man had picked the small box, what would be inside? How would it affect him?
- Re-write this story in your neighborhood.

### Science

- How old was the greedy man's rice ball? How long does it take for sticky rice to mold? Become slimy? Make sticky rice. Store some in a bag, some in a plastic resealable container, and some in the open air. Watch and record data.
- Do mice eat rice? Guess and test with different kinds of rice.

### Geography

- Study the islands of Japan. Which would you like to live on, and why?

### Music

- Listen to Japanese music.

### Art

- Try your hand at origami.
- Make a Japanese folding screen. Use a piece of posterboard, accordion folded into four parts. Trace around the four rectangles with a black marker. Within each rectangle, put a picture of your family or friends at the top and paint the bottom with Japanese-style flowers, birds, or buildings.

### Culture

- Visit [www.jinjapan.org/kidsweb/virtual.html](http://www.jinjapan.org/kidsweb/virtual.html) for information and ideas of what it's like to be a child in Japan.
- Play "Hana, Hana, Hana, Kuchi" (Nose, Nose, Nose, Mouth). The leader repeats these words and taps the body part named. Sometimes the leader will touch a different body part than what he or she says. Players must do what the leader says, not does.

### Treasure Bearer

- Practice random acts of kindness. Do someone else's chores. Bake for a neighbor. Make a card for a parent or someone who has been helpful to you.
- Think of one specific person to be kind to. See how many kind things you can do for that person before they notice.



# Old Joe and the Carpenter— A Story from Appalachia USA

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers

### Math

- How many 1/2" x 6" boards would it take to build a fence along one edge of a square acre? To build a bridge 6' wide and x 12' across? (Sketch ideas for a bridge—can you use all the wood intended for the fence?)
- If the trench was 6' deep and 6' wide, and one edge of a square acre long, how much dirt did Jess have to move? What do you think he did with it? What would you do with it?

### Writing

- What if Jess didn't come across the bridge to ask for forgiveness? Write what could have happened.
- Where did the carpenter go next? Write about it.
- Write what you can do to "build bridges" in the lives of those around you.

### Science

- Make recipes from [www.apprtrav.com/recipes](http://www.apprtrav.com/recipes).
- Research the animals that live along the Appalachian Trail. Hike part of the trail and look for wildlife. Document your findings.

### Geography

- Map the Appalachian Trail on a map.
- On a map of mainland USA, color the states that contain parts of the Appalachian mountains.

### Music

- Listen to Dulcimer music.
- Watch a video that features clogging.
- Try clogging or square dancing.

### Art

- Make a quilt square.
- Carve and paint a piece of wood.
- Make a button "hummer" with a button and a piece of string.

### Culture

- For a directory of informational sites, visit [www.usaorg.com/Regions/Appalachia](http://www.usaorg.com/Regions/Appalachia)
- Try a simple Appalachian game. Place a jar on the floor. From waist height, drop clothes pins one at a time into the jar. See who can drop in the most.

### Treasure Bearer

- Dare to be the first one to extend forgiveness the next time you and a friend argue.
- Was there a time when you offered forgiveness? Talk or write about how you felt.
- Was there a time when you were forgiven? Talk or write about it.



# Chardae's Thousand and One Nights— A Story from Iraq

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers

### Math

- If each story took 10 minutes to tell, how many minutes/hours/days did Chardae speak? What if each took 15 minutes? 30 minutes?
- How many weeks is 1001 nights? How many months? Years? How many times could Chardae have told all her stories in your lifetime?

### Reading

- Read some of Chardae's 1001 stories. See [www.mercycorps.org/pdfs/1063133775.pdf](http://www.mercycorps.org/pdfs/1063133775.pdf) for related curriculum ideas.
- Read other stories about love/creative thinking/kindness at [www.storiestogrowby.com](http://www.storiestogrowby.com).

### Writing

- Did Chardae know that her plan would work? Do you think she had a backup plan? What backup plan would you have had if you were her?
- Write about who you would like to be/not like to be in this story. Tell why.
- If you were Chardae, would you have volunteered to marry the Sultan? Why/why not?

### Science

- Study the "Hanging Gardens" found in Iraq. See [www.mercycorps.org/pdfs/1063133622.pdf](http://www.mercycorps.org/pdfs/1063133622.pdf) for more information. How do these plants grow? See if you can grow plants that way.

### Geography

- Where in Iraq could this story have taken place?
- What countries are near Iraq? Where might Chardae have travelled to learn her tales?

### Music

- Listen and move or draw to Iraqi music. Visit [www.iraqiart.com](http://www.iraqiart.com).
- Listen to a recording of "Sheherazade" by Nikkolai Rimsky-Korsakov. It can be found online at [www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/classical/listen/proms\\_rimsky.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/classical/listen/proms_rimsky.shtml). Can you identify parts of the story? Sheherazade (Chardae)'s voice is played by a solo violin.

### Art

- Make paper mosaic pictures in the "Kashee Karbala'ee" (Karbala tile) style and colors.
- Visit [www.SadradeenAmeen.com](http://www.SadradeenAmeen.com) to see art by an Iraqi artist.

### Culture

- Make and taste "Dates Halva" (Iraq has 22 million date trees!), or Kubbeh, kebabs, baklava, or samoons. *The Cooking of the Eastern Mediterranean* by Wolfert can help!
- Visit [www.al-iraq.org/culture.htm](http://www.al-iraq.org/culture.htm) for quick facts and cultural links.
- Visit [www.geocities.com/iraqinfo](http://www.geocities.com/iraqinfo) for basic information about different aspects of Iraq.
- Visit [www.mercycorps.org/items/1615/](http://www.mercycorps.org/items/1615/) to find information and lesson plans on Iraq.

### Treasure Bearer

- Make a card and/or write a letter for someone you love, telling them so and why.
- Plan a "Just because I love you" surprise for someone on a day other than Valentine's Day.



# Gecko—A Story from East Africa

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers

### Math

- Chart lengths and weights of different geckos.
- Compare the sizes of the animals in the story—lion, rhino, elephant, python, monkey, lemur, and gecko.
- Find items in the classroom/school that weigh the same as the animals in the story.

### Reading

- Check out the picture book “Water Hole Waiting” by Kurtz, Kurtz, and Christiansen.
- Read other Lango/Acholi/East African tales.
- Read other stories of perseverance and determination.

### Writing

- Write about a time when someone made fun of you.
- Write what would have happened if the gecko didn't keep trying.
- Write about what you think the gecko did with the treasure.

### Science

- Study the animals in the story (see Math above).

### Geography

- Geographically speaking, could this story have happened in Sudan? Uganda? Why or why not?
- Where in Sudan and Uganda could this story have taken place?

### Music

- Listen to Sudanese music. Click on the music link at <http://sudan.net> (not www).
- Identify and make instruments to play your own East African music.

### Art

- Make wood block stamps of African animals and stamp fabric or paper.

### Culture

- Visit [www.pbskids.org/africa/myworld/index.html](http://www.pbskids.org/africa/myworld/index.html) and click on Uganda for pictures and information from a child's perspective.
- Watch the video “Worlds Together—East Africa” about East African children.
- Research the Lango and Acholi people groups. How are they different? How are they alike? Check out <http://sudan.net> (not www) which has lots of information about the country.
- Visit [www.myuganda.co.ug](http://www.myuganda.co.ug) which has information about Uganda.
- Play “Getting the Bride Home.” One player is the bride and the other players are on teams, either protecting the bride or trying to tag her as she goes “home.” Players must hop on one foot, grasping the other foot with the opposite hand.

### Treasure Bearer

- Practice determination by keeping on trying to do something new, or something you struggle with.
- Encourage others around you who are trying something hard to keep trying!



# Clever Katya— A Story from Russia

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers

### Math

- Research how much a dappled foal costs. Was it worth the arguing?
- Learn about Russian currency. Learn the exchange rate and convert familiar prices (such as candy and stickers) to Russian prices.

### Reading

- Read other Russian folktales at [www.geocities.com/Athens/Agora/5873](http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Agora/5873)
- Find and read other folktales of wit and wisdom.

### Writing

- Read the book up to the Tsar's first riddle. Stop and write your own answers to the riddle. Repeat with the second riddle. Read the story to see how Katya answered the riddles.
- Write about a time you were clever or wise.

### Science

- Test for the fastest, fattest, softest, most precious things (not people) in your classroom or house.
- Would it have been possible for the foal to walk into town the day it was born?
- Are there hares in the river? Fish in trees? Study unusual animals. Visit [www.factmonster.com/spot/unusualanimals1.html](http://www.factmonster.com/spot/unusualanimals1.html).

### Geography

- Study Russia's varied geography. Where would you live in Russia if you would move there? Why?
- Where in Russia do you think this story would have happened?

### Music

- Listen to Russian children's music. Visit [www.rbcmp3.com/store/default.asp](http://www.rbcmp3.com/store/default.asp)? From the sidebar, click "audio" then click on "music and fairytales for children." The listings are in Russian. Click any, and at the bottom of the page, select "click here to listen to this album."

### Art

- Paint blown-out eggshells in Russian style (click on the Easter Eggs link at [www.moscow-guide.ru/culture](http://www.moscow-guide.ru/culture)).
- Look at and study Russian Christian Orthodox icons.
- Visit [www.hermitagemuseum.org](http://www.hermitagemuseum.org) for a tour of an art museum in St. Petersburg.

### Culture

- Visit [www.moscow-guide.ru/culture](http://www.moscow-guide.ru/culture) for information and links.

### Treasure Bearer

- Role play situations in which a choice for good/bad must be made. Discuss how a wise person would respond and why.
- Keep a running log of wise characters—call it "Wise Cracks"—met in life or in reading, and why they are wise.
- Remind each other to "be wise" as they face decisions (even small ones).



# The Singing Snake— A Story from Australia

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers, page 1 of 2

### Math

- What geometrical shape is a didgeridoo? List items in your room that are that shape.
- After making Walpiri paintings (see Art), estimate the number of dots on each one. Count and compare actual to your estimate.
- Didgeridoos are usually 4'-6' long. How many didgeridoos would fit around the outside edge of your room? Use didgeridoo lengths to measure other things, too.

### Reading

- Read books by famous Australian author Mem Fox.
- Visit [www.nsc.ru/folk/australia/australia.htm](http://www.nsc.ru/folk/australia/australia.htm) to read other Australian folktales. These have been retold and illustrated by Australian children!

### Writing

- Learn to write using Australian words: "Aussie" means Australian, "bloke" means person, "g'day" means hello, "mate" means friend, "tucker" means food, "nipper" means young child, "bonza" means good/terrific, "dinki-di" means the real thing. Use some of these words in a story of your own!
- Retell and illustrate a folktale you know.
- Australia is the Latin word for "southern land." Write about why you think this island has that name.

### Science

- Visit <http://australian-animals.net/> to study the animals unique to Australia
- Australian people are very active. They participate in a variety of sports and enjoy a good "bushwalk" (hike). Take a bushwalk of your own. What do you see that is not visible in Australia?
- How big would Snake have had to be to keep Lark in the back of his throat? Research to see if this would have been possible.

### Geography

- Compare Australia's position on Earth to yours. How is the difference reflected in the seasons? What season is it there now? At Christmastime? In mid-July?
- Study Australian Aboriginies and immigrants. Where have today's Aussies come from?
- Study "Table Rock" and its makeup.

### Music

- Play a homemade didgeridoo, or listen to a recording of didgeridoo music.
- Listen to "Waltzing Matilda" by A.B. Paterson. There is a book by the same name, illustrated by Desmond Digby. Read it and then sing the song.





# The Singing Snake— A Story from Australia

## CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers, page 2 of 2

### Art

- Make a didgeridoo with a wrapping paper tube or rolled brown paper. Draw colorful creatures on it and dot with a cotton swab dipped in light-colored paint.
- Make "bark paintings." Aboriginies have painted on dried eucalyptus bark for centuries. Tear a piece of "bark" from a paper bag. Paint it with red and yellow (made from ochre found in Australian dirt), white (made from chalk), or black (made from charcoal). When it's dry, crumple it a bit to make it look authentic.
- Study Walpiri Aboriginies' paintings: bright dots, zigzags and circles that tell a story and are painted collaboratively. In small groups, paint your own!

### Culture

- Visit [www.library.thinkquest.org/289994/](http://www.library.thinkquest.org/289994/) to find information about Australia
- Study the Australian flag and anthem found at [www.dltk-kids.com/world/Australia/index.html](http://www.dltk-kids.com/world/Australia/index.html).
- Play "Bounce Eye," a marble game. 3 or 4 players with 3 marbles each place two of their marbles inside a chalk circle on the ground. They take turns dropping the third marble from eye level. Each marble they knock out of the circle becomes theirs. Find directions at [www.kulturekids.org/fun/games/index.html](http://www.kulturekids.org/fun/games/index.html)
- Cook "Outback Damper," "Lamingtons," "Anzacs," or "Fairy Bread."

### Treasure Bearer

- Talk about what it means to be "dinkum" (honest/genuine). Can you trust a dinkum mate? Why or why not?
- Share a treat with the class, specifying how many each will get. Secretly give more to some, and later talk about how they handled this opportunity to be honest.
- Roleplay situations in which honesty is challenged. Have characters respond both honestly and dishonestly. Talk together about which quality students would want to exhibit or wish their friends would practice.