

【國小朗讀組】

1. Cat and Mouse Go Boating (貓和老鼠划船)

Once upon a time, Cat and Mouse were great friends. They lived in the rainforest together and were perfectly happy. Cat mainly ate small birds. Mouse mostly enjoyed a kind of sweet potato called taro. One day, Cat became restless.

“Mouse,” said Cat, “I think we should leave the forest and find a village to live in. There will be lots of houses there. We'll find plenty of food. Our lives will be much easier.”

“But,” said Mouse, “we live on an island. There are no villages. How are we going to reach the mainland?”

“We could hollow out a boat from a big taro. What do you think of that?” said Cat.

“I think I'd enjoy making that boat!” laughed Mouse. And so he did.

A week later, Cat and Mouse began their sail.

Their boat was heavy to paddle. Before long, Cat and Mouse were very tired. They were very far from land. Of course, they were getting hungry, too.

One night, while Cat was sleeping, Mouse started to nibble the taro boat. Just a little nibble couldn't hurt. But one little nibble turned into a lot of big nibbles, and before Mouse knew it, the boat began to leak. At once, Cat woke up.

“Mouse, I know what you did. When we reach land, I'm going to eat you!” he cried.

Mouse and Cat were thrown into the sea and had to swim to land.

Once on shore, Cat looked hungrily at Mouse, but Mouse told him to wait. “I'm very dirty and salty,” he said. “Let me just give myself a wash before you eat me. Here's a little hole where I can do it.”

Mouse disappeared ... and did not reappear. He dug a little tunnel and escaped.

So, you can understand why Cat and Mouse are no longer such great friends!

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2. The Leopard and the Jackal (獵豹與豺狼)

One day, Leopard and Jackal went out hunting. Leopard caught a goat. Jackal brought home a cow.

When the cow and the goat were safely tied, Leopard and Jackal went to bed. But Leopard could not sleep. He was jealous of Jackal's cow. When he went out in the night, he found that the cow had given birth to a calf. He was even more annoyed. He stole the calf and put it with his goat.

In the morning, Jackal found that. Jackal said, "Only cows have calves. That is definitely my calf."

"Nonsense," said the Leopard. Let's go and ask Gazelle."

Now Gazelle was afraid of Leopard, so she said, "Calves used to come from cows. It's true, but I believe they can come from goats, too, these days."

When Jackal appealed to Hyena. She was too afraid of Leopard to tell the truth.

Jackal was desperate. "Let's go and ask Baboon," he said.

But Baboon refused to answer. He just plucked at a large stone. The animals waited respectfully. Eventually, Leopard could bear it no longer.

"What on earth are you doing?" he asked.

"Why, I'm playing music from this stone," said Baboon. "Can't you see?"

"You can't get music from an ordinary stone," said Leopard.

Baboon smiled and said, "Music used to come from instruments. It's true. But these days I believe it can come from ordinary stones, too."

Then the animals all laughed.

"He's joking," they said. "Of course, you can't get music from a stone. And you can't get a calf from a goat, either!"

Leopard knew he was wrong. Then the calf was returned to Jackal.