

Jumping Mouse



A classic fable

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JUMPING MOUSE
Core Knowledge ® Foundation



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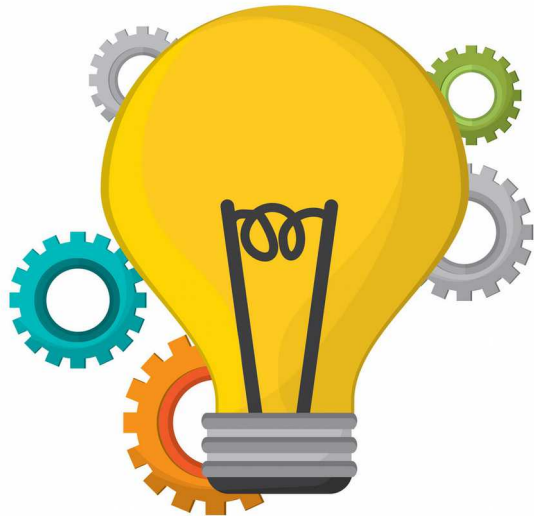
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Jumping Mouse

Once there was a small mouse with a big dream. The small mouse had grown up listening to the elders tell wonderful stories about the far-off land. Now the small mouse lived in the **brush** near the sparkling river. On the other side of the sparkling river was the dry desert. The small mouse had been told that the far-off land was on the other side of the dry desert.

Although the mouse was small, he was brave. He intended to go to the far-off land. One day he said goodbye to his family and friends and set off.

His first challenge was to find a way to cross the beautiful sparkling river. As he stared at the lapping water, a frog appeared beside him.



“You’ll have to swim,” said the frog.

“I don’t know what you mean,” replied the small mouse, for he had never swum before.

“Watch me,” said the frog. And with that the frog jumped into the sparkling river and began to swim.

The small mouse watched the frog for several seconds before announcing, “I am afraid I cannot do that. I will have to find another way to cross the sparkling river.”

The frog returned to the edge of the river.

“Why are you so determined to cross the sparkling river? Where are you going?” asked the frog.

“I am going to the far-off land,” replied the small mouse.

“If you don’t mind my saying, you are a very small mouse to cross such a big river and travel such a long distance to the far-off land.” The frog stared at the small mouse for a short time, and seeing that he could not be **swayed** from following his plan, decided to help the small mouse.



“This is your lucky day,” exclaimed the frog. “I am a magic frog and I will help you. I name you Jumping Mouse. You will soon discover that you can jump higher than you have ever jumped before. Follow me, Jumping Mouse, and I will take you across the sparkling river.”

With that said, the frog and Jumping Mouse jumped very high and landed on a leaf in the middle of the sparkling river. They floated on the leaf to the other side of the sparkling river.

“Goodbye my friend,” said the frog. “Be brave and hopeful and you will surely reach the far-off land.”

“Thank you,” replied Jumping Mouse. “I will never forget your kindness.”

Jumping Mouse set off across the dry desert. He jumped across stones and twigs on his strong legs. As the frog had promised, Jumping Mouse jumped higher than ever before. He traveled by day and by night, stopping only to eat berries wherever he found them.



Eventually Jumping Mouse came to a stream. The stream gave life to this part of the dry desert. Beside the stream grew many bushes. Underneath one of the bushes there lived a very fat mouse.

“Good day to you,” the fat mouse said to Jumping Mouse.

“Good day,” replied Jumping Mouse.

“Where are you going?” asked the fat mouse.

“To the far-off land,” explained Jumping Mouse. “However, I would like to rest a while and eat some of the juicy berries that grow on the bushes beside the stream.”



“Be my guest,” said the fat mouse.

Jumping Mouse stayed with the fat mouse for several days. He ate berries and drank from the cool stream. Before long, he felt rested and ready to continue his journey.

“It is time for me to continue my **journey**,” said Jumping Mouse one day.

“Why would you want to travel to a place you are not sure even exists? Stay here with me, where you can eat berries and drink from the stream to your heart’s content! But, if you must go, be very careful for the journey will be **perilous** indeed for such a small mouse,” warned the fat mouse.

“I will be careful. And I will find a way to pay forward the kindness you and the frog have shown me. Thank you for your generosity,” replied Jumping Mouse, as his powerful legs carried him away.

With hope in his heart, Jumping Mouse continued on his way.



Some time later, Jumping Mouse arrived at the great grassy plain. There he found a bison lying forlornly in the grass.

“Hello bison,” said Jumping Mouse. “I am Jumping Mouse.”

“Hello Jumping Mouse. Please tell me how beautiful the sky looks today,” said the bison sadly. “Have you lost your sight?”

asked Jumping Mouse with

compassion. “Yes! I am blind now,” replied the bison. “I do not know what I

will do now that I cannot see.”

“I am just an ordinary mouse,” replied Jumping Mouse, “but before I reached the great grassy plain, a magic frog gave me a new name. The frog named me Jumping Mouse. The name gave me extra strength in my legs. I will name you ‘Eyes-of-a-Mouse’ in the hope that your eyes will regain their strength.”

No sooner had Jumping Mouse finished speaking, when the bison exclaimed, “I can see!”



At that very moment Jumping Mouse realised he could no longer see.

“And I cannot see!” said Jumping Mouse.

“Dear Jumping Mouse,” said the bison. “You have given me your eyes. I am so thankful! Let me do something for you.”

“I am on my way to the far-off land,” explained Jumping Mouse.

“Though, how I will get there now, I do not know.”

“Come, jump beneath my enormous hooves, and I will guide you across the grassy plain to the high mountain,” said the bison gently. And with that they set off.



When they reached the high mountain, the bison bid farewell to Jumping Mouse. Jumping Mouse rested for a while and then began to climb the mountain. It was difficult, as Jumping Mouse could not easily tell which way to go. He sniffed the air and followed the scent of pine.

Jumping Mouse trod along on grass and rocks. But then he trod on something that felt alarmingly like fur. Jumping Mouse sniffed the air again.

“Wolf!” he said in a frightened voice.

“Do not fear me,” replied the wolf, “for I am a very sad wolf. I have lost my sense of smell. I do not know how I will find food without it.”



“My dear wolf,” said Jumping Mouse, “it may seem strange, but I gave the bison my sight. I will call you ‘Nose-of-a-Mouse’ and we shall see what will happen.”

No sooner had Jumping Mouse spoken these words than the wolf sniffed the air and cried, “I can smell you Jumping Mouse, and other wonderful **fragrances** as well. Thank you! I am so grateful.

How can I repay you?”

“I am on my way to the far-off land. I am brave and I still have hope that I will get there even though I can no longer see nor smell. Perhaps you can help me.”

“I will help you Jumping Mouse. Walk beneath my body and I will lead you onward,” said the wolf.



Onward they went until at last the wolf exclaimed, “I can go no farther. We are on the top of the high mountain. I must bid you goodbye, my friend.” And with that, the wolf retreated back down the mountainside.

For the first time, Jumping Mouse felt fear. How would he ever get to the far-off land now that he could no longer see nor smell?

A tiny tear drop fell to the ground. At that very moment, Jumping Mouse heard a familiar voice.



“Do not be fearful,” said the magic frog, for it was he. “You could have **misused** my gift, but you did not. Instead, you showed kindness and helped others on your journey. Jump high into the sky, my friend.”

Jumping Mouse hesitated for just a second, and then he jumped high into the sky. Immediately he felt the air lift him up into the clouds. He felt the warmth of the sun on his back. He looked down and saw the beauty of the land beneath him.



“Jumping Mouse,” said the magic frog, “I am giving you a new name. It is Eagle. Fly away, my friend, and soar on to your new home in the far-off land.” And that is exactly what Jumping Mouse did.

-THE END-



Core Vocabulary

brush, n. A bunch of bushes, shrubs, and other plants growing close together

Example: Micah had a hard time making his way through the brush to get to the campsite. *Variation(s):* none

journey, n. A long trip or voyage from one place to another *Example:* Rebecca made the journey home after her vacation ended. *Variation(s):* journeys

perilous, adj. Dangerous *Example:* It would be perilous to cross the rickety bridge. *Variation(s):* none

swayed, v. Changed an idea or an opinion *Example:* John swayed his older brother to share his favourite toy. *Variation(s):* sway, sways, swaying

compassion, n. Deep awareness of the suffering of another, as well as a desire to stop it *Example:* Greg felt compassion for his friend, who fell off her bike. *Variation(s):* none

enormous, adj. Very large *Example:* The trucks driving down the highway are enormous. *Variation(s):* none

fragrances, n. Sweet or pleasant odours *Example:* My mother's garden is full of flowers with different fragrances. *Variation(s):* fragrance

misused, v. Used incorrectly *Example:* Liliana misused her pencil by digging a hole in the ground with it. *Variation(s):* misuse, misuses, misusing

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. Who are the characters in the story?
2. Why does Jumping Mouse decide to leave his home and travel across the desert?
3. What gift does the magic frog give to Jumping Mouse?
4. How does this gift help Jumping Mouse get across the river?
5. What does Jumping Mouse promise the fat mouse?
6. What gift does Jumping Mouse give to the bison?
7. What gift does Jumping Mouse give to the wolf?
8. What do these gifts tell you about Jumping Mouse? Is he kind, or is he mean?
9. What does the magic frog turn Jumping Mouse into at the end of the story?

Think - Share

1. Have you ever wanted to know what it is like outside of your city or community? If you could take an epic journey, where would you want to go?
2. What lesson can we learn from this story?
3. Can you think of a time when you showed kindness to others without thought of a reward?

Questions About Mice

1. What sound does a mouse make?
2. What do mice eat?
3. Where do mice live?
4. What does a mouse feel like when you touch it?
5. Have you ever seen a real mouse? If so, where?





About the Creators of this eBook:

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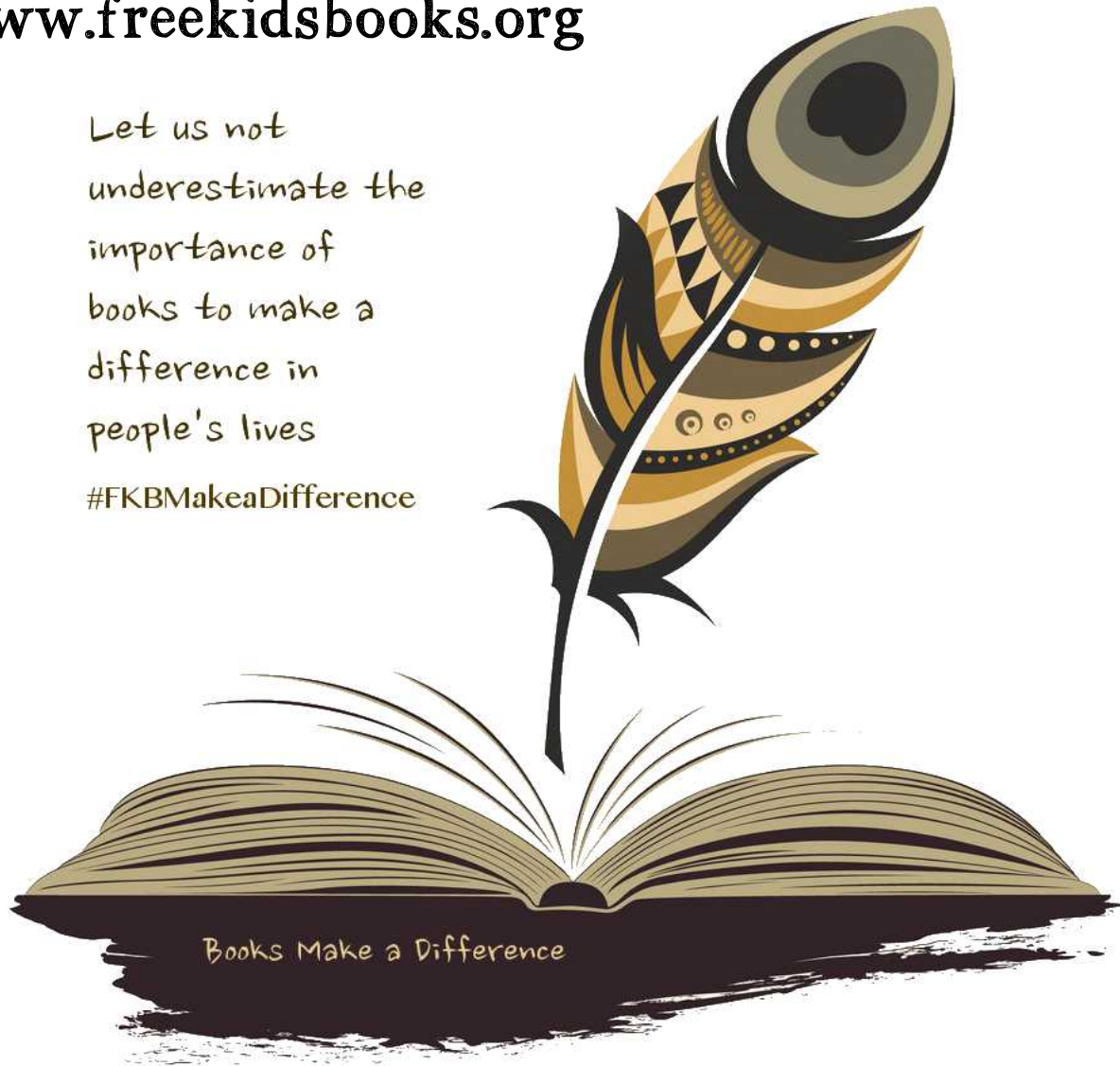
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