

UNIT 9

The Man, His Son, and the Donkey

An old man and his youngest son were taking their donkey to the market one day. Soon they came upon some people and the people said, “It is really stupid for the two to walk when they have a donkey.”

The old man heard this and thought that those people were right. So he put his son on the donkey’s back. But very soon they met some other men. This time these men said, “Nowadays people have no respect for the old.”

On hearing this, the old man told his son to get down. Then he mounted the donkey himself. But soon there were other people who said that the old man did not take care of his son. So they decided to ride the donkey together. But then some other people said that both the father and the son were cruel, for the donkey did not seem to be able to carry them. Finally, they decided to carry the donkey. But this time everyone they met laughed at them. “It is really hard to please everybody,” said the old man to himself.

UNIT 20

The Fish-Shop

One day a man went to a fish-shop to buy some fish for his dinner. He picked up a fish, and after looking closely at it for a while, he held it up to his nose and smelled it.

“Hey! What are you doing?” cried the owner of the shop. “Why do you smell that fish? Do you think it has gone bad?”

“I don’t smell it,” answered the man.

“Then what were you doing with your face so close to the fish?” asked the owner of the shop.

“I wasn’t smelling the fish; I was only talking to it,” answered the man.

“Talking to it!” said the shopkeeper, “Why, what on earth did you say to it?”

“I asked him if there was any news from the sea; that’s all,” replied the man.

“Well, and what did the fish say to that?” asked the shopkeeper.

“He said he didn’t know the latest news, because he had been away from the sea for more than three weeks.”

UNIT5

Why and Because

A monkey and a dog wanted to eat the apples on the apple-tree. The monkey climbed up the tree but he dropped an apple and it hit the dog. The dog began to cry.

A man came by and asked, "Why are you crying?"

The dog said, "I am crying because the monkey hit me with an apple."

Then the man asked the monkey, "Why did you do that?"

The monkey said, "I dropped the apple because the tree shook violently,"

The man then asked the tree, "Why did you shake violently?"

The tree replied, "Because the cow ate my bark."

So the man asked the cow, "Why did you eat the bark of the apple-tree?"

The cow said, "Because the farmer did not take good care of me."

So the man asked the farmer, "Why didn't you take good care of your cow?"

The farmer said, "Because the fox stole my chickens."

The man found the fox and asked, "Why did you steal the farmer's chickens?"

The fox replied. "Because I was hungry and I am still hungry."

The man was afraid and he ran away as fast as he could.

UNIT 17

Trousers or a Shirt?

Hsiao Hua went to a big department store. He wanted to buy some clothes, so he went to the men's clothes department on the third floor.

"I would like to buy a pair of trousers, please," he said.

"Here are some nice ones. They only cost \$500," said the salesperson.

Hsiao Hua picked them up and looked at them for a while. Then he returned them to the salesperson. "No," he said. "I don't like them. I think I will buy a shirt instead. "

"Yes, sir," said the salesperson. "Here is a very nice one. It is made of silk and it is imported. It only costs \$500."

Then Hsiao Hua put the shirt on and said, "Well, it does look nice on me. I think I'll take it." Then he began to leave the clothes department. The salesperson ran after him and said that he had not yet paid for the shirt.

But Hsiao Hua said, "Of course I haven't. I gave you the trousers for the shirt, didn't I? And they both cost \$500"

UNIT22

Belling the Cat

Once upon a time, a group of mice gathered to talk about the cat which had eaten many of their friends and relatives.

One mouse said, “We must do something. The cat has eaten too many of us. It is so quiet that we can hardly know that it is approaching until it is too late. Perhaps some day none of us will be left.”

“But what shall we do?” said another mouse.

Then they began a long and serious discussion. Finally one mouse thought of a good way and said, “The cat walks very quietly. When it moves about, it is very difficult for us to hear anything. So, if we tie a bell around its neck, then we will always know when it is coming near us. And, we can run away in time.”

All the mice felt happy about this plan. But just then an old mouse said, “Well, it is a good plan. But who will tie the bell on the cat?”

The mice looked at one another, but no one said anything.