



CHARACTER BUILDING LESSONS

SOMMER-TIME STORIES

CHICKEN LITTLE



Story Description

Chicken Little lives in a world of fear, in spite of her big sister and loving parents' advice. She trembles at a mouse, cowers during a wind storm, and panics when the tricky fox tries to fool her with superstitions. When an acorn hits her on the head, she is convinced that the sky is falling. Frightened, Chicken Little starts a panic among all the animals until they take the problem to the wise King Leo.

King Leo's simple explanation makes Chicken Little and her friends realize they shouldn't be gullible, but should check things out before believing them. When Chicken Little stops listening to superstitions and unfounded fears, she becomes a very happy and peaceful hen. This expansion of the Chicken Little story demonstrates the dangers of being too gullible.

Main Character Traits

Listening/Respect for Leaders/Self-Discipline

Other Character Traits

Assertiveness, Courage, Citizenship, Obedience, Safety, Trust, Trustworthiness

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Courage

One day Chicken Little saw a mouse peeking from behind a nest in the chicken coop. "Help!" screamed Chicken Little. "A mouse is going to attack me!"

...One day while eating, Chicken Little saw dark clouds coming. "Something very bad is going to happen," she said to her friends. Suddenly a strong gust of wind roared through the trees. Branches snapped and crashed to the ground. Chicken Little dashed to her mama, shaking and crying, "The world is falling apart! The world is falling apart!"

...Chicken Little dashed back to her house. "Why are you so fearful?" asked Papa.

"I walked under a ladder and now I'll have bad luck. The sky will fall on me."

...The acorn hit Chicken Little hard on the head. Chicken Little shot out from under the tree screaming, "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!"

Chicken Little did not have any courage. She was afraid of everything—a friendly mouse, a storm, superstitions, and an acorn falling. She let her fear control her life instead of controlling her fear.

Assertiveness

"Are you so foolish?" scolded Freddy Fox. "Don't you know that walking under a ladder gives you bad luck?"

"What will happen to me?" asked Chicken Little, trembling.

Chicken Little needed to be assertive and stand up to the fox and tell him that superstitions are not true.

Listening and Obedience

"I walked under a ladder and now I'll have bad luck. The sky will fall on me," said Chicken Little.

"That's a superstition," Papa said as he patted Chicken Little. "Superstitions are never true."

But Chicken Little did not listen. She kept worrying. "Something bad is going to happen to me."

Superstitions began a long time ago when people did not understand the scientific reasons for events, so they made up a reason. If a black cat crossed their path and then they had an accident, then they thought that all black cats were bad luck. Chicken Little needed to listen to her dad about superstitions not being true. Before you can obey your parents, you must first listen to what your parents tell you to do.

Citizenship and Safety

Chicken Little met Tom Turkey on his way to play soccer. "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" she yelled.

...Chicken Little and Tom Turkey met Daisy Duck coming home from shopping. "The sky is falling!" they yelled. "The sky is falling!"

...Chicken Little, Tom Turkey, and Daisy Duck met Gabby Goose and Randy

Rooster. "The sky is falling!" they yelled. "The sky is falling!"

...As they ran down the road, they met Freddy Fox. "The sky is falling!" they yelled. "The sky is falling!"

...They met Chippy Chipmunk sitting on a fence. "The sky is falling!" they yelled. "The sky is falling!"

Although Chicken Little was wrong in her belief that the sky was falling, she did want her friends to be safe, and so she showed good citizenship by spreading the word about the disaster. If you know something that could affect others in a bad way, you should let the authorities know about it. For example, if you heard that another student was planning to do something that would harm others, you should let your teacher or parents know about it.

Trust and Respect for Leaders

When they came to King Leo, he asked, "What brings you here?"

..."Oh, my!" exclaimed Chicken Little. "That's exactly how it happened!"

..."King Leo, does walking under a ladder bring you bad luck?" asked Chicken Little.

"No, Chicken Little," said King Leo. "That's a superstition. Superstitions are never true."

"Thank you," said Chicken Little.

Chicken Little showed that she trusted King Leo by going to him for advice. She listened to him and accepted his advice. This showed that she respected him. Children need to trust and respect their parents and teachers.

Trustworthiness

With a trembling voice, Chicken Little said, "I was walking in the forest when it became very dark and windy. I was scared and ran under an oak tree. Suddenly, there was a bright light and a loud noise that shook the earth. Then the sky came down and hit me hard on my head."

King Leo said, "Let me tell you what happened. The bright light that lit up the sky was lightning. The loud noise that shook the earth was thunder. The thing hitting you on the head was an acorn the strong wind blew from the oak tree."

If Chicken Little had continued to make false claims, soon no one would believe her about anything. In order to be trustworthy, you must build a reputation by always telling the truth. Although she did not realize that what she was saying was false, she should have checked the facts before spreading the wrong information.

Self-Discipline

The animals felt ashamed for being so easily fooled. Then King Leo warned, "Don't always follow the crowd, for the crowd sometimes is wrong. Also, never be gullible; always check things out."

The other animals needed self-discipline to help them not follow the crowd. Sometimes everybody else is wrong and you must stand alone for what is right.

Questions

1. What was Chicken Little's first fear in the story?
She thought that the mouse was going to attack her.
2. What did Big Sister say that the mouse was really trying to do?
She said that the mouse was trying to be friendly to Chicken Little.
3. What scared Chicken Little next and what did she think about it?
A storm scared Chicken Little, and she thought that the world was falling apart.
4. How did Freddy Fox scare Chicken Little?
When she went to get the food that he put under the ladder, he told her she would have bad luck due to walking under a ladder and that the sky would fall on her.
5. What happened when Chicken Little tried to get the other chicks to stop eating under the ladder, and why did she do it?
They didn't believe the superstition, so they kept eating. She tried to stop them because she thought that if she got them to stop, then she wouldn't have bad luck.
6. What did Papa tell her when Chicken Little told him that the sky would fall on her because she was going to have bad luck for walking under a ladder?
He told her that walking under a ladder was just a superstition and that superstitions are not true so she should not worry.
7. Did Chicken Little accept Papa's advice?
No, she kept on worrying.
8. What happened to make Chicken Little believe that the sky was falling?
Lightning flashed, thunder clapped, and an acorn hit her on the head.
9. What made Tom Turkey believe Chicken Little?
She said that she heard it and saw it and felt it.
10. Who did Chicken Little and Tom Turkey convince next that the sky was falling?
They convinced Daisy Duck that the sky was falling.
11. Who was convinced next?
Randy Rooster and Gabby Goose were convinced that the sky was falling.
12. What did Chicken Little say that convinced Freddy Fox that the sky was falling?
She said that they couldn't all be wrong.
13. Is it true that a lot of people cannot be wrong?

No, at times many people have been convinced of very foolish things. For example, a long time ago people believed that the earth was flat.

14. What did Chippy Chipmunk advise the animals to do?
He told them to go see King Leo and ask him if it were true that the sky was falling.
15. After hearing the problem, what was the first thing that King Leo asked?
He asked, "Which of you saw it with your eyes, heard it with your ears, and felt it on your heads?"
16. After Chicken Little described what had happened, what did King Leo say had really happened?
He said that lightning had flashed, thunder had made a loud noise and had shaken the earth, and that an acorn had hit Chicken Little on the head.
17. How did the animals feel about being so easily fooled?
They felt ashamed.
18. Had Chicken Little meant to trick the animals?
No, she really believed that the sky was falling.
19. What advice did King Leo give the animals for the future?
He said, "Don't always follow the crowd, for the crowd sometimes is wrong. Also, never be gullible; always check things out."
20. What should Chicken Little have done to avoid giving everyone false information?
She should have checked things out to see what really happened.
21. What was the final thing that Chicken Little asked King Leo and what was his reply?
She asked if walking under a ladder would bring bad luck, and he said that it would not because superstitions are never true.
22. How did the events in this story change Chicken Little?
From then on she learned to examine her fears. She discovered that by obeying and trusting her dad and mom she had little to fear. She became so happy and peaceful that everyone called her Little Happy Hen.
23. What happened the next time Freddy Fox put corn under a ladder and why did this happen?
Chicken Little was the first to eat it because she knew that walking under a ladder would not hurt her.