



CHARACTER BUILDING LESSONS

SOMMER-TIME STORIES

THE LION AND THE MOUSE

Story Description

Bitsie the mouse has a difficult time finding food for her family, so she decides to move by Leo the lion's den. Bitsie gets caught while getting too curious. When Leo discovers her, Bitsie nearly becomes the lion's dinner. She offers to help Leo someday if he will let her live, an idea he finds so funny that he sets her free.

The tables are turned when Leo gets caught in a hunter's trap. Bitsie keeps her word and comes to the rescue. Although Leo can't believe tiny Bitsie can help him, she tries her best. Just as the hunters are about to capture Leo, Bitsie makes one last bite, and Leo bursts forth from his trap. This retelling of Aesop's classic fable illustrates that great things often come in small packages.



Main Character Traits

Appreciation/Honesty/Diligence

Other Character Traits

Assertiveness, Caring, Compassion, Courage, Diligence, Kindness, Loyalty, Perseverance, Proper Work Ethic, Responsibility, and Unselfishness

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Assertiveness

Leo held Bitsie over his open jaws. "Please let me go!" Bitsie begged. "If you let me go, one day I'll return the kindness and help you. I promise."

Bitsie shows assertiveness by speaking up and asking Leo to let her go.

Compassion

Leo said, "You cannot help me. But since you made me laugh, and since you're such a small meal anyway, I'll let you go." Leo put Bitsie down and said, "Go!"

Leo shows compassion to Bitsie by letting her go. We should show compassion to people and animals.

Appreciation

"Thank you! Thank you!" Bitsie exclaimed. "I will never forget your kindness. One day you'll be glad when I help you."

Even though Bitsie is so happy to be let go, she doesn't forget to thank Leo for doing it. Always remember to say, "Thank you."

Honesty and Loyalty

"Who is that yelling for help?" asked the fox.

Bitsie put her hand to her ear and listened. "That's Leo the lion," she said. "I know the sound of his roar. He's in big trouble. I need to help him. I promised."

"What?" asked the surprised fox. "Are you out of your mind? Don't you know that lions are very dangerous?"

"I'm not out of my mind," Bitsie said. "Leo saved my life. I made a promise that I would help him."

"That lion is furious," warned the monkey. "We're running and hiding."

"Let's go!" yelled the fox. The forest animals dashed in all directions.

Bitsie declared, "I promised to help him, so I'm going."

Bitsie had made a promise and she was going to keep it. Keeping a promise shows loyalty and honesty. That is why it is important not to make a promise unless you know that you can keep it. When Bitsie's friends tried to get her to run away with them, she remained loyal to Leo and to her promise.

Perseverance, Diligence, and Proper Work Ethic

"Please!" begged Leo. "You cannot help me. Get someone big and strong."

"All the forest animals are afraid of you," Bitsie explained. "I know they will not come, but I will help you."

"You cannot help me," Leo groaned. "You're just a tiny little mouse. Please! Get someone big and strong!"

Without another word, Bitsie climbed up the tree and jumped onto the net. She

began to chew a cord next to Leo's mouth....Bitsie's jaws hurt from chewing so much, but she was not going to stop.... Now Bitsie could see the hunters coming, but in spite of her hurting jaws, Bitsie chewed even faster.

Bitsie didn't let Leo's words discourage or stop her from doing what she had promised. Even though Bitsie's jaws were hurting, she kept chewing on the net. She was determined not to quit, but to fulfill her promise.

Courage, Responsibility, and Unselfishness

Then Leo heard hunters coming towards him.

"Oh, nooooo!" Leo cried. "The hunters with guns are almost here. They will catch me. It's hopeless. Run away so they don't get you."

"No!" Bitsie said as she kept chewing. "I made a promise to help you, so I'm not giving up."

"It's hopeless," Leo groaned. "Leave so the hunters will not get you."

"I'm going to keep trying," Bitsie said. Now Bitsie could see the hunters coming, but in spite of her hurting jaws, Bitsie chewed even faster. "I will not give up!" Bitsie said to herself. "I must return the kindness as I promised."

When Leo saw the men getting closer and told Bitsie to run away, she kept chewing on the net. This demonstrated her courage and bravery and showed that she had responsibility for doing what she had promised. She also demonstrated unselfishness by putting Leo's best interest ahead of her own. She was trying to get him out of danger which put her own life into danger.

Appreciation

When Leo got to his den, he said, "Thank you! Thank you! I will always thank you for saving my life....From now on I will always be thankful for the small things in life. Besides, I want to thank you because even though you are small, you didn't let your smallness stop you from doing big things."

Bitsie may be small, but Leo thanks her for saving his life. We should all remember to thank those who do something for us.

Caring and Kindness

"Now I would be glad for you and your family to live with me and eat my food."

Leo not only thanked Bitsie for saving his life, but he also showed a kindness to her for doing it. Saying "thank you" is good, but showing someone how thankful you are is even better.

Appreciation

"Thank you," Bitsie said. "We would love to stay in your den and eat with you."

Bitsie thanked Leo for his kind offer of food and a place to stay. Just because she was a hero, didn't mean that she shouldn't say "Thank you," too.

Questions

1. Why did Bitsie move her family into Leo's den?
She wanted to be able to get to the food in Leo's den.
2. What did her friends warn her about?
They warned her that Leo was dangerous and to only get food while he was asleep.
3. How did Bitsie get caught by Leo?
She was curious and wanted to feel his chest and whiskers.
4. What did Bitsie promise Leo if he would let her go?
She would one day return the favor and help him.
5. What did Leo think about Bitsie's promise?
He thought it was funny to think that such a small mouse could help the King of the Forest.
6. Why did Leo let Bitsie go free?
She had made him laugh, and she was such a small meal anyway.
7. How did Leo get trapped?
Hunters hid a net and put out some meat as bait.
8. How did Bitsie know that Leo was in trouble?
She heard Leo bellowing and roaring for help.
9. When Bitsie said that she would go and help Leo, what did the other forest animals tell her?
They warned her not to go because Leo was dangerous.
10. Why did Bitsie go anyway?
She had to keep her promise to help Leo.
11. Why did Leo think Bitsie could not help him?
He thought she was too little to help.
12. What did Leo want her to do instead?
He wanted her to go get someone big and strong to help.
13. Why didn't Bitsie get the other animals to help?
She knew they were afraid and would not come.

14. How did Bitsie get Leo out of the net?

She gnawed on the net which cut it open.

15. While Bitsie was chewing on the net, Leo saw the men coming and urged her to run away. Why didn't she?

She had made a promise to help and would not give up until she had fulfilled her promise.

16. Why was it hard for Bitsie to chew on the net?

It made her jaws ache.

17. When Leo and Bitsie were safe in his den, what did he say to her?

"Thank you! Thank you! I will always thank you for saving my life. And to think that I laughed when you said you were going to help me someday."

18. How did Leo thank Bitsie for saving his life?

He asked her and her family to come and live with him and eat with him.