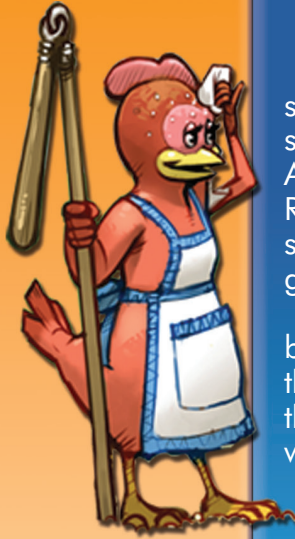




# CHARACTER BUILDING LESSONS

## SOMMER-TIME STORIES

### THE LITTLE RED HEN



#### Story Description

Little Red Hen had a busy summer planting seeds, watering the soil, digging up the weeds, and harvesting the grain. Whenever she asked the dog, cat, and duck to help, they always had excuses. A crisis occurred—a wicked fox captured the goose. When Little Red Hen went to her three friends, they again made excuses, so she went to the next farm, and Brown Dog helped her rescue the goose.

Finally, harvest was over and Little Red Hen baked delicious bread which she shared with Brown Dog and the goose. When the scent of the bread reached her three friends, they asked if they could have some. Little Red Hen refused to share her bread with her lazy friends because they refused to share the work. This retelling of the classic tale demonstrates that you should not expect favors if you refuse to work.

#### Main Character Traits

Courage/Diligence/Fairness

#### Other Character Traits

Appreciation, Cheerfulness, Compassion, Cooperation, Friendship, Loyalty, Perseverance, Proper Work Ethic, Respect for Labor, Responsibility, and Unselfishness

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Cheerfulness	Fairness
Compassion/Friendship/Loyalty	

## Diligence/Perseverance/Proper Work Ethic

One bright, sunny day three friends came and watched Little Red Hen planting wheat. "What are you doing?" the dog asked.

"I'm planting wheat so I can have bread to eat," said Little Red Hen. "If you help me plant the seeds, I'll share the bread with you."

...After Little Red Hen scattered the seeds, she used a hoe to put dirt on the seeds. It was hard work, but Little Red Hen planted all the seeds by herself. The three friends saw Little Red Hen watering the wheat.

...One day the dog, cat, and duck saw Little Red Hen with the hoe again. "What are you doing now?" asked the duck.

"I'm using the hoe to dig out the weeds. Weeds take the nutrients from the soil. I'm removing the weeds so the wheat can grow to become strong and healthy."

...By the end of the summer, the wheat was fully grown and ready for harvest. Little Red Hen took her sickle and began cutting the wheat. ...Little Red Hen cut all the wheat by herself. The next day she began threshing the wheat. When her three friends saw her threshing the wheat, the duck asked, "What are you doing now?"

"I'm sorting the grains of wheat from the stalks," she said wiping the sweat from her face....Little Red Hen threshed the wheat all by herself. Then she got a wheelbarrow and shoveled the wheat into it. When the wheelbarrow was full, Little Red Hen took it to the mill to have the wheat ground into flour. The next day Little Red Hen made dough from the wheat flour and put it into the oven.

*Little Red Hen show her diligence, perseverance, and proper work ethic by planting, watering, weeding, cutting, and threshing the wheat all by herself. To get something we want, we usually must work for it. Very few people in life have everything handed to them without doing anything, and if their circumstances change, they may find that they will have to work and won't know how.*

## Respect for Labor and Responsibility

"It's too nice a day to work," the cat grumbled.

"We're planning to play ball," the dog said.

The duck jumped off the fence and said, "Let's go now and play."

...The cat yawned and said, "I'm too tired."

"It's much too hot to work," the duck said.

"We're on our way to rest under the shade tree," said the dog.

... "Oh, no," the duck said. "That's hard work using a hoe."

"We might get blisters on our hands when we use the hoe," complained the dog.

"If we get blisters," the cat added, "then we can't play ball."

...Little Red Hen exclaimed, "We must try to get the goose back!"

"It's hopeless," moaned the duck. "The fox is fast and much too tricky for us to catch him."

"Foxes are tricky," the cat explained. "Trying to find the goose will be hard work and useless."

"Anyway," the dog said as he rubbed his eyes, "I'm sure by now the fox has eaten the goose."

..."That's way too much work," the cat said.

"Oh, no!" groaned the dog. "It's unsafe work swinging that sickle."

"We might hurt our backs doing that kind of hard work," the duck added. "Then we could not play ball."

..."It's unhealthy working so hard," warned the duck. "You're wearing yourself out. You must learn to rest like us."

"Don't you know you could hurt yourself swinging that stick?" asked the cat.

"Working like that is much too dangerous for us," the dog added. "We may get hurt doing that kind of work."

*The dog, cat, and duck did not have any respect for labor and did not feel any responsibility to help Little Red Hen or the goose. Instead, they made excuses to get out of all work and even to keep from helping the goose. Don't make excuses for not working; instead work hard, and you will feel proud of the job that you did.*

## Cheerfulness

"Come help me with the wheat, and I'll share the bread with you."

*Little Red Hen did not complain about her three friends not working or making excuses. Instead, she just kept working and reminding them that she would share the bread if they would help with the work. She was happy despite their laziness and unwillingness to help.*

## Compassion/Friendship/Loyalty

The next day the duck ran to Little Red Hen crying, "The fox stole the goose! He stuffed her into a sack and ran into the woods."

Little Red Hen always tried to help others. When she heard what had happened, she exclaimed, "We must try to get the goose back!" She dashed to tell the dog and cat. "The wicked fox stole the goose! We must rescue her! Will you help me?"

*Little Red Hen wanted to rescue her friend. She wasn't about to give up without even trying to find her. That would not have been a loyal friend. Loyal friends stick together in hard times and help each other out even when it is hard.*

## Cooperation and Courage

Little Red Hen dashed to the next farm. "The wicked fox stole the goose!" she said to Brown Dog. "Would you please help me try to find her?"

"Yes," said Brown Dog. "I'll be glad to help."

"Thank you! Thank you!" exclaimed Little Red Hen.

They raced into the woods to search for the wicked fox. Suddenly, Brown Dog whispered, "Stop! I smell a fox."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Little Red Hen.

Brown Dog followed the smell as Little Red Hen tagged along. Carrying the heavy goose had made the fox very tired....He put his sack down and sat against a shade tree. He quickly fell asleep.

Brown Dog whispered, "I see the fox. He's sleeping. What shall we do?"

"Stay here," whispered Little Red Hen. She tiptoed to the fox. She tapped on the sack and whispered, "This is Little Red Hen. Don't make any noise."

She took her scissors and cut a hole in the sack. Out came the goose. "Shhhhh!" she whispered. "Go quietly to Brown Dog. He'll protect you." Little Red Hen put a rock into the sack and sewed it shut. Then Little Red Hen, Brown Dog, and the goose

went back to the farm.

*Little Red Hen and Brown Dog worked together to rescue the goose—Brown Dog was able to use his nose to find the fox, and Little Red Hen was able to get the goose out of the sack and trick the fox. If just one of them had tried to rescue the goose, it probably would not have happened, but working together produced success—the goose was rescued. Brown Dog and Little Red Hen also showed a lot of courage in sneaking up on the fox while knowing that he could wake up at any moment and capture them, too.*

## Appreciation

As they walked home, the goose said over and over again to Little Red Hen and Brown Dog, “Thank you! Thank you for saving my life!”

...The goose had made a homemade pie to show her thankfulness to Brown Dog and Little Red Hen for saving her from the wicked fox.

As they ate, Little Red Hen said to Brown Dog, “Thank you so much for saving the goose.”

“I want to say a big ‘thank you!’ to both of you for saving my life,” the goose said. “And because of what you did, the wicked fox is no more and all the farm animals can now live in peace and safety.”

*The goose did not forget to say “Thank you,” to Brown Dog and Little Red Hen. We must always remember to do this small thing—say “Thank you,” when anyone does an act of kindness for us—no matter how big or small the act of kindness is. It is also a good idea to do something special to show appreciation for a big act of kindness. The goose baked the pie to show her appreciation. What can you do to show appreciation?*

## Fairness

“I’m sorry,” Little Red Hen said. “You made all kinds of excuses not to help me when I planted, watered, weeded, harvested, and threshed the wheat. If you had helped, I would have gladly shared my bread with you. But since you made all kinds of excuses not to work, then I think it’s wrong for me to share my bread with you.”

“Ohhhh,” they groaned as they walked away.

“Now we will not get to eat that delicious bread,” the cat said.

The dog moaned, “How foolish we were.”

“Let’s be honest,” said the duck. “We were just too lazy to work.”

*Although we should share with others, in this case it would have been wrong for Little Red Hen to have shared the bread with the three friends who refused to work or help. It is not fair for one person to do all the work and then others expect to reap the benefits. If a group of students is doing a school project, they should all share in the work; one or two students should not do all of the work and then everyone get the same grade.*

## Questions

1. Why was Little Red Hen planting wheat?

*She wanted to get wheat in order to have bread.*

2. What excuses did the cat and dog give for not helping plant the wheat?

*It was too nice of a day, and they were going to play ball.*

3. After Little Red Hen scattered the seeds, what did she do next? And then what?  
*First she covered the seeds with dirt, and then she watered them.*
4. What was the three friends' next excuse?  
*They said that it was too hot to work, and they were too tired.*
5. What did Little Red Hen do next?  
*She hoed the weeds out of the garden.*
6. Why didn't the three friends help with the hoeing?  
*They didn't want to get blisters on their hands because then they wouldn't be able to play ball.*
7. The next day what was the duck crying about?  
*The fox had stolen the goose.*
8. Why wouldn't the duck try to get the goose back?  
*He said that it was too late and that the fox was too tricky and too fast to catch.*
9. Why wouldn't the dog and cat try to get the goose back?  
*They thought that it was too much work, the fox was too tricky, it was useless to try, they would never find her, and the fox had probably already eaten the goose.*
10. Who decided to help Little Red Hen rescue goose?  
*Brown Dog helped Little Red Hen rescue the goose.*
11. What did the fox plan to do when he got home?  
*He planned to feast on the goose.*
12. After Little Red Hen got the goose out of the bag, what did she do?  
*She put a big rock in the bag and sewed it shut.*
13. Why did she put a rock in the sack and sew it shut?  
*She wanted to keep the bag heavy so the fox would not realize that the goose had escaped.*
14. What did the goose say to Little Red Hen about rescuing her?  
*She thanked her again and again.*
15. What happened to the fox?  
*When he got home and emptied the sack into a boiling pot of water, the water splashed on him and killed him.*
16. When the wheat was ready for harvest, what did Little Red Hen do?  
*She cut the wheat with her sickle.*



17. Why didn't the three friends help her?  
*They said it was too much work and too dangerous to swing the sickle. They didn't want to take a chance of hurting their backs because then they couldn't play ball.*
18. Why didn't the three friends help thresh the wheat?  
*They said that it was unhealthy to work so hard, it was too dangerous, and they didn't want to take a chance of hurting themselves.*
19. How do you think Little Red Hen felt when no one would help her?  
*She probably felt disappointed and rejected. (inference)*
20. What did Little Red Hen do once the wheat was threshed?  
*She put it in a wheelbarrow and pushed it to the mill so it could be ground into flour.*
21. The next day what did the dog, cat, and duck smell?  
*They smelled Little Red Hen's bread baking.*
22. What did Little Red Hen say when the three friends asked for some of her bread?  
*She told them that since they had made all kinds of excuses not to help her with the wheat that it would be wrong to share the bread with them.*
23. How do you think the three friends felt when they did not get to eat the bread?  
*They were sad because they really liked bread. (inference)*
24. What did the cat, dog, and duck realize as they left Little Red Hen's house?  
*They realized that they had been foolish and lazy.*
25. If Little Red Hen had shared her bread with the cat, dog, and duck what do you think they would do in the future?  
*They would have continued to be lazy and play ball instead of working. (inference)*
26. What did the goose do to show her appreciation for being rescued?  
*She brought a homemade pie and thanked Little Red Hen and Brown Dog for saving her.*