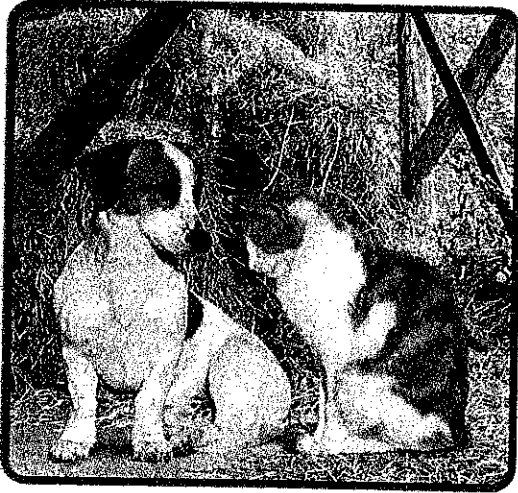


Upper
KS2



Reading Booklet

Year 5 Autumn Term



The Cat and the Dog

The Song of Mr Toad

The Amazon Rainforest



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This traditional tale is based on a Nigerian story about the strained relationship between cats and dogs.

The Cat and the Dog

'Cats are far more important than dogs,' said Cat.

'Nonsense!' said Dog. 'Dogs are far more important than cats.'

This was how it had been for as long as cats and dogs had existed. They squabbled and fought over everything. Their arguments ranged from who could run the fastest, to who could jump the highest or who was the most intelligent. If you could think of it, Cat and Dog had probably already argued about it.

The only thing that Cat and Dog could agree on was how the argument of who was the most important should be settled. The plan was straightforward. Cat and Dog decided that they would each keep watch over a sack of beans at different times. Whoever guarded the beans the most effectively would be declared the most important.

Cat and Dog spent a long time arguing over who would keep watch over the beans first. Finally, Dog agreed that Cat could take the first watch. It would make his victory so much sweeter if Cat had already failed to protect the beans.

Throughout the night, Cat sat upright and alert, determined to prove once and for all that cats are superior to dogs. His efforts had been successful so far. Many cunning rats had tried to steal the beans and had spectacularly failed to avoid the steely, watchful eyes of the cat. Cat had even managed to snack on a couple of rats during his watch. He was ever vigilant and felt confident that not a single bean would be missing in the morning.

All of a sudden, under the cloak of night, Cat heard a sound. Heavy human footsteps were drawing closer to the barn. If there was one thing Cat was scared of, it was humans. Humans were cruel, pulling cats' tails and tugging at their fur. Cat stood as still as a statue, with his little cat heart thumping painfully in his chest. The footsteps drew closer and closer. The barn door creaked open and a stocky shadow appeared. Cat could stand it no longer. With a piercing yelp, he leapt into the air and shot off through the open barn door. This gave the thief a momentary scare, before he grabbed the beans and disappeared into the night.

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Cat was dismayed by his failure. He reported it to Dog the next morning, who gave a knowing smile in reply. It was Dog's turn to prove that he, and all the other dogs, were much more important than cats. With only human thieves to come up against, there was no way he could fail.

A new night arrived, with a new sack of beans to keep safe. Dog settled down in the warm barn with pricked ears and a wealth of determination. Throughout the night, Dog's confidence grew. A couple of thieves tried to steal the beans and he chased them away easily with a snarl and a flash of his teeth. The night was almost over and victory seemed certain.

Just when the light of morning began to seep across the sky, Dog heard something squeaking. A plague of rats swarmed the barn floor and headed straight for the sack of beans. If there was one thing Dog was scared of, it was rats. They had deadly, gnawing teeth and scuttling feet. Dog curled up, making himself as small as possible. He could hear the rats' claws clicking on the wooden floor of the barn. The squeaks grew so loud that Dog couldn't bear it any more. With a piercing yelp, he leapt into the air and shot off through the open barn door. The black tide of squeaking rats chewed through the sacking and ate all of the beans. Soon, they crept away with swollen stomachs.

Dog had failed. Disappointment rested like a heavy stone in his chest and he was anxious about what Cat would say.

Instead of taunting him, Cat made a suggestion. If they both kept watch at the same time, they might be more successful.

That night, they did a wonderful job of guarding the sack of beans. Cat took great pleasure in chasing away the rats and Dog easily kept the human thieves at bay. In the morning, they shook each other's paws on a job well done. Cat and Dog realised that they had worked well together, as they had only completed the task by using each other's skills. They agreed that neither the cat nor the dog was more important than the other. However, they would certainly find plenty of other subjects to argue about in the future.



This poem is from the novel *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame, which was first published in 1908. Mr Toad sings this song loudly after he has escaped from prison. He made up the song himself.

The Song of Mr Toad

The world has held great Heroes,
As history-books have showed;
But never a name to go down to fame
Compared to that of Toad!

The clever men at Oxford
Know all there is to be knowed.
But they none of them know one half as much
As intelligent Mr Toad!

The animals sat in the ark and cried,
Their tears in torrents flowed.
Who was it said, 'There's land ahead'?
Encouraging Mr Toad!

The Army all saluted
As they marched along the road.
Was it the King? Or Kitchener?
No. It was Mr Toad.

The Queen and her ladies-in-waiting
Sat at the window and sewed.
She cried, 'Look! Who's that handsome man?'
They answered, 'Mr Toad.'

The motor-car went Poop-poop-poop
As it raced along the road.
Who was it steered it into a pond?
Ingenious Mr Toad!



This text is about how vitally important the Amazon Rainforest is and the dangers to our survival if we fail to protect it.

The Amazon Rainforest

Rainforests received their name because of the high levels of rain that fall there every year. The Amazon Rainforest provides homes for many creatures and is vital to human survival. However, the Rainforest is also under threat of destruction.

Where in the world is the Amazon Rainforest?

The Amazon Rainforest covers much of Brazil and extends into Peru, Columbia and other South American countries.

At the last count, the Amazon Rainforest covered 5.5 million square kilometres. However, the area the rainforest covers is diminishing every day.

It is estimated that there are 390 billion trees. The trees grow in such a dense formation that no sunlight ever reaches the forest floor. When rain falls, it takes ten minutes for the water to reach the ground.

How does the Rainforest benefit us?

Sometimes rainforests are referred to as 'the lungs of the Earth'. It is estimated that 20% of the world's oxygen is produced there. All trees have the capacity to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and replace it with oxygen. The less trees there are, the less oxygen there will be. Human and animal life on Earth relies on oxygen for survival.

What dangers face the Rainforest?

It is estimated that the area of 36 football pitches of rainforest are cut down every minute. Deforestation is undertaken so that the land and its resources can be used for other things: cattle ranches, mining, logging and building dams. However, this amount of deforestation will have devastating effects in the coming years. Deforestation on such a scale is already causing river pollution, an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and losses of animals' natural habitats. This is in addition to the reduced amounts of oxygen produced by the rainforest each year. A lot of scientists argue that the benefits of deforestation are not worth the damage to the environment.

Who lives in the Rainforest?

The Amazon Rainforest is home to 40,000 species of plants, 1300 species of birds, 3000 types of fish, 430 different mammals and 2.5 million species of insects. Flesh-eating piranha fish and poison dart frogs inhabit the Amazon Rainforest, as do jaguars, cougars, sloths and body-crushing anaconda snakes. Some of these fierce and incredible creatures can only survive in the Rainforest.

There are also people who live in the Amazon Rainforest. They know better than anyone about the devastating effects of deforestation. These tribes are isolated from the outside world and have always lived in that way. They are uncontactable and enjoy their life among the trees and the animals.

Some members of these tribes are hunter-gatherers, which means they gather food that grows or hunt animals to eat. Some tribe members' roles are to defend their communities from outside threats. Most of these tribes see 'outsiders' as trouble, blaming them for the destruction of their home in the forest.

If outsiders come into their space without prior warning, the tribes will fight to kill. For tribal people, most visitors are enemies who are going to attack. They fight to defend their way of life, their language, their customs and their very existence against deforestation.

How can we save the Rainforest?

There are, thankfully, ways in which everyone can help to reduce the rate of deforestation in the Amazon Rainforest.

These include:

Recycling

- Every ton of paper which is recycled is the equivalent of saving 17 trees.
- Buying products which are made from recycled materials will reduce the need to cut down more trees.

Reducing and replacing

- There are now restrictions on the number of trees which can be chopped down, and companies who do chop down trees are required by law to plant replacement trees.
- Chopping down selected trees of a certain height or age will minimise the impact on the surrounding environment.

Education

- Education is also vital to make sure that those who exploit the resources of the rainforest are aware of the consequences of deforestation.
- New generations of children learn at school how the rainforests can be protected, as it is them who will be affected in the future.

The Amazon Rainforest is not only beautiful and exotic, providing a home for many creatures and humans. It is also vital for the world's survival and future existence.

