

The Little Red Hen

CCSSR1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Includes questions you can ask about any story.

Story Source: Public Domain, adapted by Center for Urban Education

Once upon a time, there was a little Red Hen, who lived on a farm all by herself. An old Fox, crafty and sly, had a den in the rocks, on a hill near her house. Many nights the Fox lay awake and thought how good that little Red Hen would taste. But he could not catch the little Red Hen. She was too wise for him. Every time she went out, she locked the door behind her. When she came in again, she locked the door behind her and put the key in her pocket, where she kept her scissors.

At last, the old Fox thought up a way to catch the little Red Hen. Early in the morning, he said to his old mother, "I'll be bringing the little Red Hen for supper." Then he took a big bag and walked to the little Red Hen's house. The little Red Hen was just coming out of her door to pick up a few sticks for kindling wood. The old Fox hid behind the woodpile. As soon as she bent down to get a stick, into the house he slipped, and scurried behind the door.

In a minute, the little Red Hen came quickly in, and shut the door and locked it. "I'm glad I'm safely in," she said. Just as she said it, she turned round, and there stood the ugly old Fox, with his big bag over his shoulder. How scared the little Red Hen was! She dropped her apron full of sticks and flew up to the big beam across the ceiling. There she perched, and she said to the old Fox, down below, "You may as well go home, for you can't get me."

"Can't I, though!" said the Fox. So, what do you think he did? He stood on the floor underneath the little Red Hen and twirled round in a circle after his own tail. And as he spun, and spun, and spun, faster, and faster, and faster, the poor little Red Hen got so dizzy watching him that she couldn't hold on to the perch. She dropped off, and the old Fox picked her up and put her in his bag and started for home.

He had a very long way to go, up hill, and the little Red Hen was still so dizzy that she did not know where she was. When the dizziness began to go off, she whisked her little scissors out of her apron pocket, and snip, snip! She cut a little hole in the bag. Then she poked her head out and saw where she was, and as soon as they came to a good spot, she cut the hole bigger and jumped out herself. There was a great big stone lying there, and the little Red Hen picked it up and put it in the bag as quick as a wink. Then she ran as fast as she could till she came to her own little farmhouse. She went in and locked the door with the big key. She laughed.

The Fox went on carrying the stone and never knew the difference. He was excited when he got home. "Let's cook the Hen!" he said to his mother. "When I open the bag, hold the cover off the pot and I'll shake the bag so that the Hen will fall in. Then pop the cover on, before she can jump out."

The Fox lifted the big, heavy bag up until it was over the open pot, and gave it a shake. Splash! Thump! Splash! In went the stone and out came hot water.

The little Red Hen lived happily ever after, in her own little farmhouse.

Write your answers to these questions on another page.

1. Sequence: Which event happened first? Which happened last?
2. Character Traits: Name one character. What is one trait you infer that character has? Explain why you think that.
3. Motive: What is something that person does? Why do you think that person does that?
4. Summarize: Summarize the story in four sentences. Tell about the characters and what they do.
5. Main Idea: What do you think is the main idea of the story? Why?