

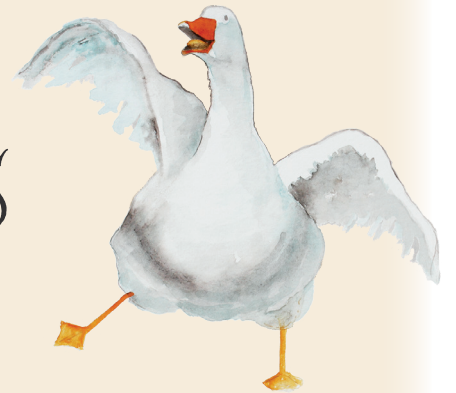


Burrowing Deeper:

A Study Guide for Children



FROG'S RAINY-DAY STORY and OTHER FABLES

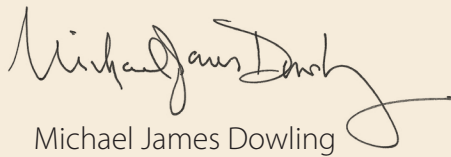


Written by
Michael James Dowling

Illustrated by
Sarah Buell Dowling

This “burrowing deeper” study guide is provided as a free resource for conversations with children about the fables and how they relate to our culture and our lives.

In joy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael James Dowling". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the last word.

Michael James Dowling

For information or suggestions, contact info@FrogsRainyDayStory.com.

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Frog's Rainy-Day Story

Teaching Ideas for Children

*We're made for a much larger story,
which we miss when we seek our own glory.*

What do you like to do on a rainy day? Draw a picture and share it with someone.

Why were the letters upset at the beginning of the fable? What did they do to try to solve their problem? What did they discover in the process?

In the fable, why do you think letter **a** wants all letters to be equal? Do you think **a** is jealous of the capital letters or just trying to be fair? How unfair is it that some letters are capitals and other letters are not? What would happen if all of the letters were exactly equal?

Even though we are all different, God loves us all the same (2 Chronicles 19:7). The Bible says, *"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16). What does this mean? How does it make you feel to know that God loves you this much?

The letters in the fable wanted to be important. What do you think they were looking for? How important is it for you to feel important? How does it feel to know that you are important to God?

Jesus told his followers that the greatest person is the one who serves, and that whoever tries to make himself great will be humbled (Matthew 23:11-12). In your own words, explain what Jesus is saying. How did Jesus serve others?

God made each of us different and special in wonderful ways. Make a list of some of the special gifts God has given to you. How can you use them to serve others?

Frog wrote a story. What kind of stories do you like best? Make up a story and tell it to someone. Who could help you act out your story? What kind of props will you need? Who will want to watch you perform your story?

Another kind of rainy-day story is recorded in Genesis 6-9. This is the story of Noah and his family, who spent forty rainy days and nights on an ark. What caused all this rain? What do you think life would have been like on the ark? If you had been a passenger on the ark, what would you have most wanted to do? Draw a picture and share it with someone.

HELP FROG VISIT GRASSHOPPER

Frog wants to row his boat across the pond to visit Grasshopper.

If he leaves Duck, Fox, and the grain behind,

Duck will eat the grain, and Fox will chase away Duck.

What one thing can Frog take with him to avoid these problems?

(The boat is too small to take more than one thing.)





Duck's Wrong Turn

Teaching Ideas for Children

*If there's only one way, It's foolish to say
Another way is okay.*

In the fable, Beaver told Duck how to get to the pond, but Duck didn't listen. Why do you think Duck chose to go his own way? Why do you think Duck went to the trouble to change the sign? What do you think happened to Duck?

Can you think of a time when you didn't listen to good advice? What happened?

Think of some of the tasks that various people you know do, such as delivering the mail, teaching school, and cooking meals. What do you think would happen if everyone did these tasks the easiest way instead of the right way?

Think of something you did your best on recently. Perhaps it was a homework assignment, a household chore, or some other task. How did you feel when you finished? How do you think you would have felt if you had taken an easy shortcut and not done your best?

The Bible says *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"* (Psalm 119:105). How can God's Word in the Bible help you choose the right path for your life?

Proverbs 21:2 says, *"People may be right in their own eyes, but the LORD examines their heart."* And Proverbs 16:25 says, *"There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death."* In your own words, what are these proverbs saying? How do they apply to this fable? How do they apply to your life?

The Bible tells us in John 8:29 and Hebrews 4:15 that Jesus always did what was pleasing to his Heavenly Father. When making a very difficult choice, Jesus prayed, *"Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."* (Luke 22:42) How important is it for you to do what God wants, even when it's not what you want?

Some people say that there are many paths to God (see page 15 of *Frog's Rainy-Day Story and Other Fables* for two examples), but the Bible says that the only way to God is by trusting in Jesus as God's only Son (John 14:6, Acts 4:12). Does it really matter which path we take? Why?

Help Duck get to the pond without tripping over Turtle,
getting pecked by Gander, or getting frightened by Fox.



DUCK'S WORD SEARCH

Can you find the five words hidden within the letters below?

TIP: All of them come from the fable "Duck's Wrong Turn,"
and all are spelled left to right or top to bottom.



B	B	G	S	W	P
J	E	D	W	A	O
O	A	S	I	G	N
W	V	G	M	M	D
Y	E	D	U	C	K
R	R	Z	A	S	B



WORD LIST

BEAVER DUCK POND SWIM SIGN



Pig's Unpopular Play

Teaching Ideas for Children

*Rules are sometimes hard to obey,
But they help keep us from going astray.*

In the fable, why do you think the play never happened? What should the animals have done differently? Do you think Pig was too bossy?

Cow, Goat, and Hen dislike rules. What do you think your life would be like if there were no rules at your school, in your home, or anywhere else? For example, should people be allowed to drive cars however they want and take things that don't belong to them? Should you be allowed to sleep as late as you want and only go to school when you feel like it?

In the fable, Goat says that it's only fair that Cow feel good about what she wears. What happens when everyone does only what feels good? Who gets to decide what is fair?

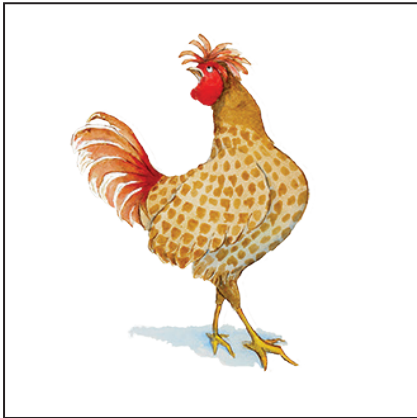
Psalm 19:9-10 says, *"The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair. They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb."*

Why is it important to know and obey the instructions God has given to us in the Bible?

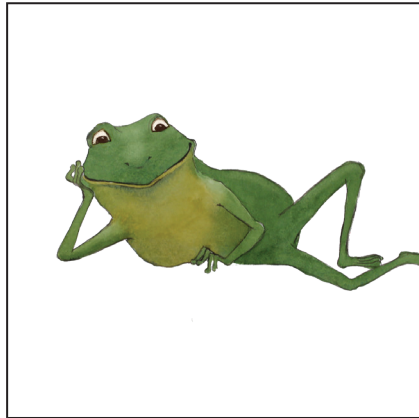
When creating art, it's sometimes fun to break rules. In the space below, draw a picture with lots of things that are different from the way they really are. Ask some family members and friends to see how many crazy things they can spot.

MATCH THE SOUNDS

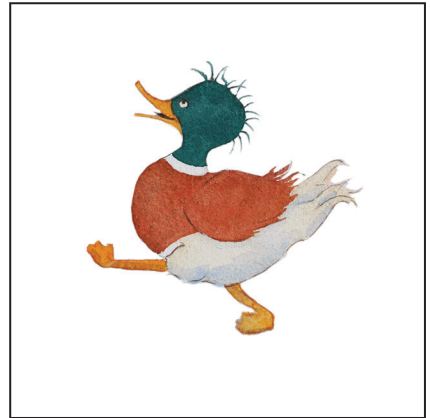
Can you name the sound that each animal makes?
After each sound listed below, write the letter of the matching animal.



A



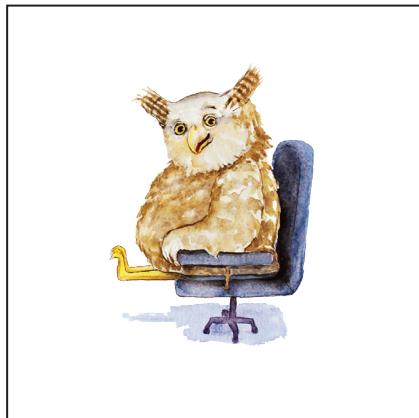
B



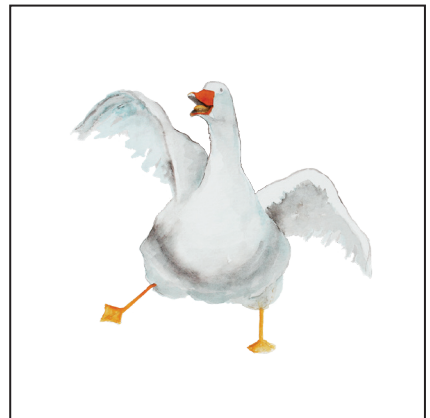
C



D



E



F

oink _____

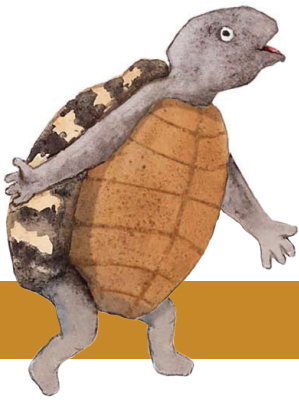
honk _____

hoot _____

ribbet _____

quack _____

cluck _____



Turtle's Favorite Turtle

Teaching Ideas for Children

*Those who puff themselves up in their own eyes,
Are likely to have an unpleasant surprise.*

What kind of unpleasant surprise is Turtle in for? What might Turtle have done differently to avoid this unpleasant surprise?

Why do you think Turtle boasts so much? What is the difference between knowing you are special in God's eyes and puffing yourself up in your own eyes?

In Psalm 34:1-3 below, King David of Israel, who lived about 1,000 years before Jesus, does some boasting. How is his boasting different from Turtle's boasting?

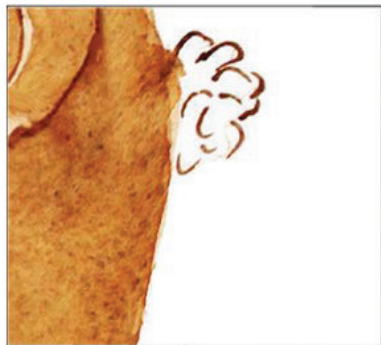
*I will praise the LORD at all times. I will constantly speak his praises.
I will boast only in the LORD; let all who are helpless take heart.
Come, let us tell of the LORD's greatness; let us exalt his name together.*

In the Bible, the Apostle Paul tells us, "Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too." (Philippians 2:3-4). What does this mean to you? How difficult is this to do?

Jesus said that he came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45) Draw a picture below showing one way in which Jesus served others.

MATCH THE TAILS

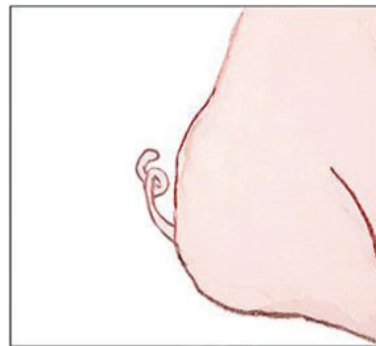
Can you name the animal that goes with each tail?
After each animal listed below, write the letter of the matching tail.



A



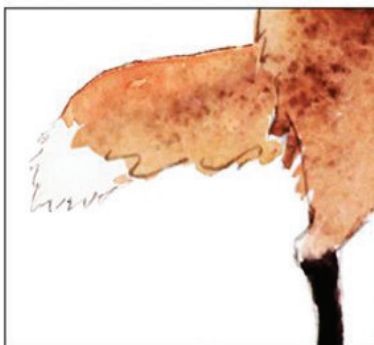
B



C



D



E



F

duck _____

fox _____

beaver _____

hen _____

pig _____

rabbit _____



Owl's Problem

Teaching Ideas for Children

*Try to hold onto happiness, and it will surely slip away;
But delight yourself in the Lord, and true happiness comes to stay.*

Why do you think Mole in the fable is so unhappy? What do you think Mole spends most of his time thinking about? If you could talk with Mole, what would you say?

How helpful was Owl's advice to Mole? What do you think Owl spends most of his time thinking about? If you could give Owl advice, what would you say?

We all love things that make us happy, like a birthday party with friends or getting a new toy or gift. But this kind of happiness always fades away. Why doesn't it last?

Joy is a gift we receive from God when we delight in Him (Galatians 5:22). What do you think it means to delight in God? Why does this kind of joy never fade away?

The night before Jesus was crucified, he washed the feet of his followers (John 13:5). Even though he was their leader, he became their servant. What can we learn from Jesus' example? What does serving God and others have to do with happiness?

You can talk with God in prayer at any time (Ephesians 4:6, Colossians 3:25). Whether you are happy or sad, He always loves you, and He is always there to listen to you and help you. Do you want to talk with God now about something that is on your mind?

Every good and perfect gift comes from God. (James 1:17) In the space below, draw something good that God has given you. Thank God for this gift.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin orange border, intended for a child to draw something good that God has given them.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

How many things that are wrong can you spot in the picture?

Can you spot all seven?





Rabbit's Foxy Guest

Teaching Ideas for Children

*Those who are wise
Love truth and hate lies.*

In the fable, Hedgehog warned Rabbit about Fox. Why do you think Rabbit ignored Hedgehog's advice?

What kind of visit do you think Rabbit had in mind when she invited Fox to lunch? What do you think Fox had in mind when he accepted the invitation?

Rabbit felt strongly about inviting Fox to lunch. What can happen when we rely too much on our feelings and ignore the facts when making decisions? What can happen when we rely too much on facts and ignore our feelings?

During her lunch with Fox, Rabbit mentioned that something sad had happened to her mother. What do you think had happened to Rabbit's mother?

In order to love others, we sometimes must do or say things that they may not consider nice. For example, we may need to tell them an unpleasant truth, because the truth is what will help them. Can you think of a time when a family member or friend loved you enough to tell you the truth, even though it was hard for you to hear? Can you think of a time when you helped someone else in this way?

How important is it for you to know that you can trust other people? How important is it for others to know they can trust you?

How important is it for you to know that you can trust the Bible? Talk with a parent, a grandparent, or a teacher at your church about why you can trust the Bible.

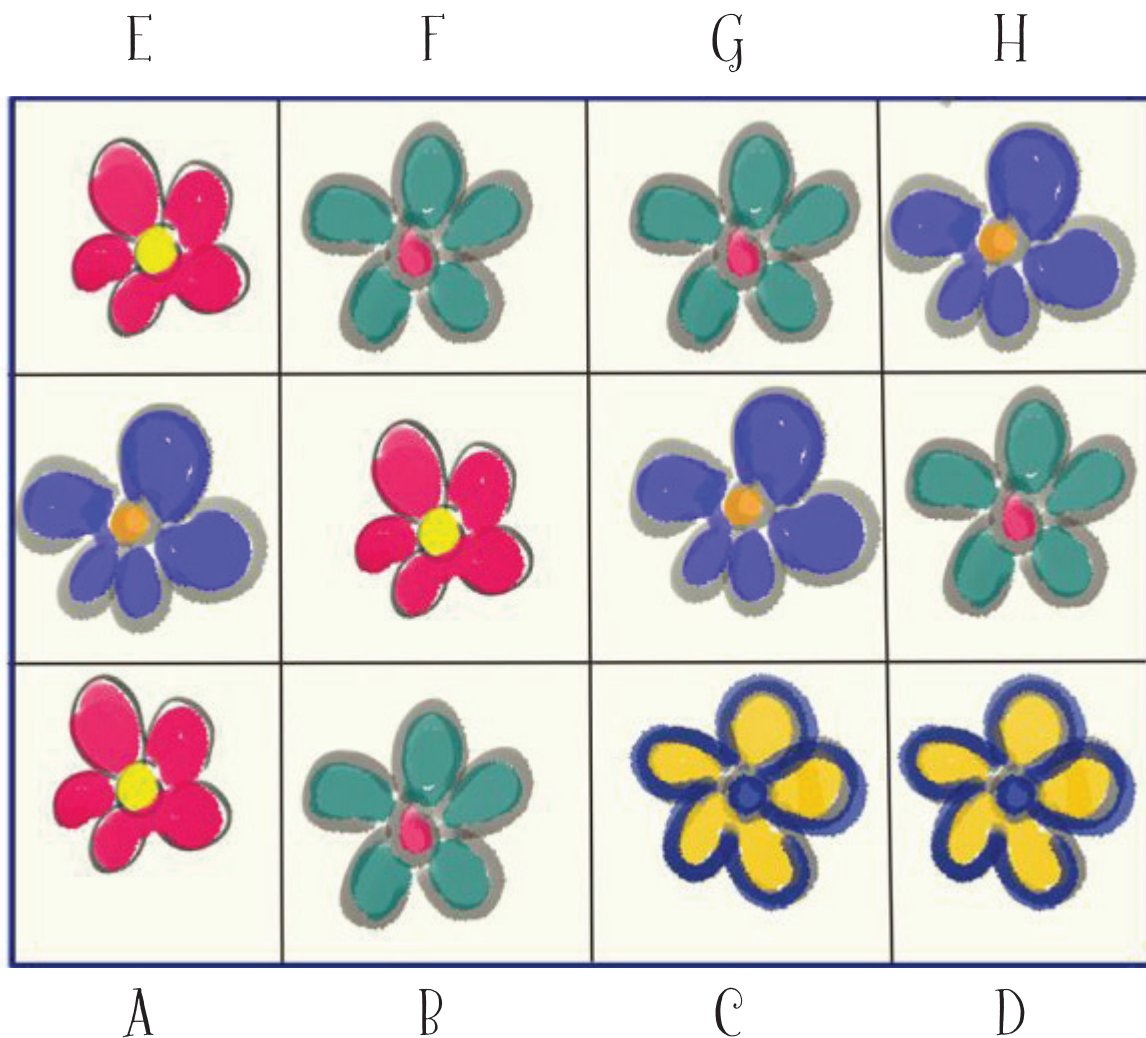
Jesus said that he is the truth (John 14:6) and that everyone who loves the truth listens to him (John 18:37). Talk with a parent, a grandparent, or a teacher at your church about how you can trust your life to Jesus, and why this is important.

Here is a fun true/false quiz about the fable. Circle the correct answers:

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|
| 1. | Fox was very nice. | T | F |
| 2. | Fox never told a lie. | T | F |
| 3. | Rabbit listened to Hedgehog's advice. | T | F |
| 4. | Rabbit's worst mistake was feeding carrots to Fox. | T | F |
| 5. | Fox just happened to bring his luggage; he didn't plan to stay. | T | F |
| 6. | Fox would be a good dinner guest at your house. | T | F |

FLOWERS FOR FOX'S MOM

Help Fox pick 4 flowers and take them
to his mother.
Each flower must be a different color.



Fox may enter the garden at either A, B, C, or D,
and he may exit at either E, F, G, or H.
He must move only straight forward or sideways picking
one flower in each square he enters. What path should Fox take?



Miss Hen's Boyfriends

Teaching Ideas for Children

*Our minds invent reasons as places to hide
From ideas that threaten our comfort and pride.*

In the fable, all of the roosters think Miss Hen is very beautiful. What do you think?

Which rooster is your favorite in the story? Are there any roosters you absolutely don't like? Why?

Miss Hen is very popular. How do you think Miss Hen feels about all of the attention? How do you feel when you get lots of attention, for instance at a birthday party given for you? What happens when we get too much attention?

Why do you think Miss Hen never married? What kind of rooster do you think she is looking for?

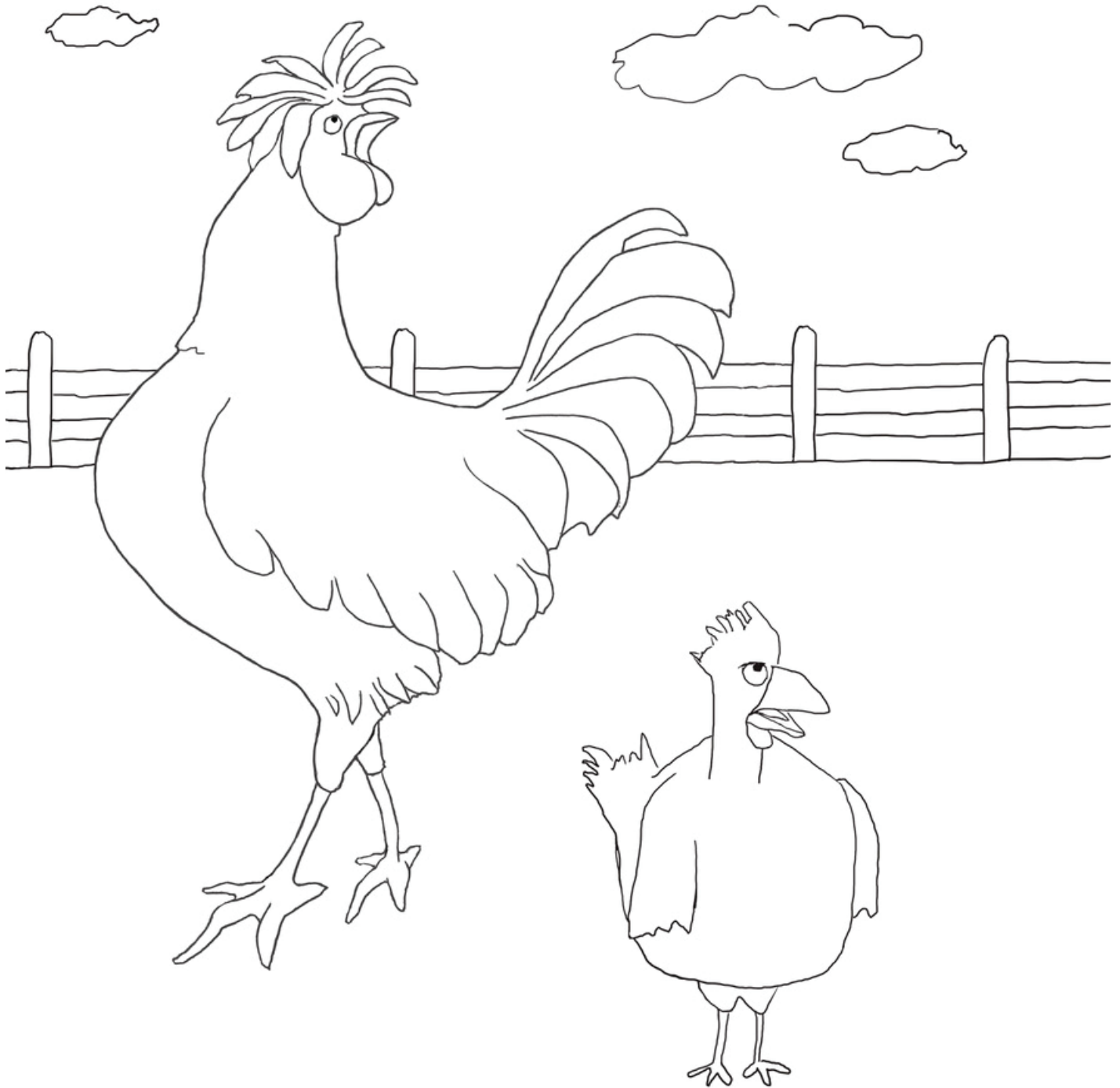
The Bible says that it is good to marry, and it is good not to marry (1 Corinthians 7:25-38). The most important thing when making any decision is to do God's will (Romans 12:2). We can know God's will by studying His Word in the Bible and by asking for His guidance in prayer. We can also get guidance by talking to others who love Jesus and seek to follow him. Talk to someone you trust about how can you can form the habit of seeking and doing God's will.

In Luke 14:16-24, Jesus tells a story about a man who gave a great feast and invited many people. However, some who were invited made excuses about why they could not come. Why do you think they didn't come? Why is it sometimes easier to make excuses than to simply tell the truth?

In Mathew 19:16-22, we read about a rich man who missed out on following Jesus because he was unwilling to give up his wealth. What are some other things besides money that people tend to care about more than God? How difficult is it to give up these things and put God first? Is there anything that you need to be more willing to give up? Ask God to help you.

In order to follow Jesus, we must up admit that we are sinners in need of a savior. Why is this difficult for many people? Talk with a parent, grandparent, or teacher at church about what this means and about how you can put your trust in Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Be sure to discuss the many blessings God gives to those come to Him.

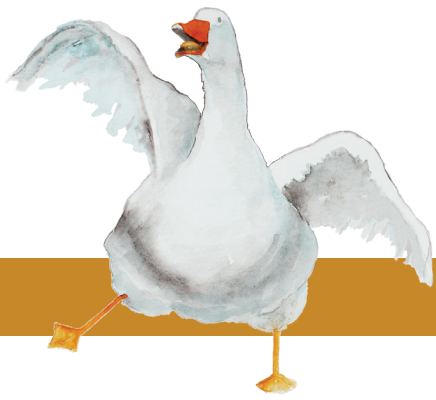
THE TWO HENS



What are these funny hens thinking?

How about drawing some other animals in the barnyard with them?

He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. Psalm 91:4



Gander's Day

Teaching Ideas for Children

*All that amuses will soon be past;
The wise invest in things that last.*

What is your favorite day of the week? What do you like to do on that day? Imagine a perfect day. Draw a picture of what you are doing on this day and show it to someone special.

In the fable, Gander jumped out of bed and exclaimed, *"This is my day! I get to do exactly what I want."* How much control did Gander actually have over his day? How did Gander's day turn out? After the day was over, how do you think Gander felt about it?

King David of Israel wrote, *"The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him."* (Psalm 24:1) Since the earth and everything in it belong to God, who would you say owns your days? How might this truth influence the way you live your life?

Gander got terribly upset when the king interfered with his plans for the day.

- ✦ How do you feel when your plans for having fun get changed?
- ✦ What was more important to Gander than being the Royal Gander?
- ✦ How do you decide what to do each day? How much do you involve God in your decisions?
- ✦ What do you regularly spend time doing that may not be the best use of your time?
What might you cut back on so you can have time for more important matters?

To really get to know God and understand His plan for your life, you must spend time praying to Him and reading His Word, the Bible. How can you do these two things better?

In John 10:27-28, Jesus says, *"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me."* How does it feel to know that Jesus will care for you as a good shepherd cares for his sheep? Even if you make a mistake, he will forgive you and continue to love you.

The Apostle Paul says in Romans 13:9, *"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."* To know more about how to be saved by Jesus, talk and pray with a parent, grandparent, or someone at church who knows and loves God.