Storyteller's Corner



Edited by Carol Huey-Gatewood

TCM Teacher Created Materials

Table of Contents

King of the Cats 4

I Want to Be a Pencil Sharpener 8

Baby Elephant 12

Little Mouse Makes Friends 17

The Dog and His Bone 20

The Clever Carpenter 24

Town Mouse and Country Mouse 28

Book Club Questions 32

For Review Only

King of the Cats

People used to believe that the world had a king that nobody knew about—the secret king of the cats.

One night, Aunty Mabel was sitting in her rocking chair by the fire, waiting for her husband to come home. He'd taken the dog for a walk and should have been back a long time ago.



For Review Only

“I wonder where they’ve got to, Tom,” she said, stroking the sleek black cat, who was curled up on her lap. The cat purred lazily in reply.

At last, the door swung open, and in walked her husband and their pet dog. They were both short of breath and looked shaken.

“Where have you been?” cried Aunty Mabel. She noticed that her husband’s hands were trembling as he took off his coat and boots.

“Do you know anyone called Tommy Tildrum?” he asked, nervously.

“Never heard of him!” she replied, but the cat sat up on her lap and looked at the husband with great curiosity.

“Neither have I, but the strangest thing just happened to me. I’m sure I must have dreamt it. We were walking through the woods just now, when I heard a mournful meowing sound.”



For Review Only



Tom the cat let out a long sad meow.

"Yes, just like that," said the husband, nodding. "I thought it was an injured animal, so I followed the sound to a big hollow oak tree that was lit up from the inside. I heard noises, so I climbed onto a branch and looked down. But you'll never guess what I saw there!"

"Tell me. What did you see?" asked Aunty Mabel, perched on the edge of her chair.

"Cats! Black ones, ginger ones, white ones, gray ones. All kinds of cats! Hundreds of them."

Tom the cat leapt off Aunty Mabel's lap and sat in front of the husband, looking up at him eagerly.

"The hollow was lit up by candles and the cats were meowing a haunting melody. I know you won't believe me if I go on!" cried the husband.

"I will!" urged Aunty Mabel, and Tom the cat pawed at the husband's foot.

"Well, I can hardly believe it myself, but eight black cats with smart white chests, just like Tom here, walked into the hollow carrying a small coffin. With every step they took, the rest of the cats gave a mighty meow."

For Review Only

Tom the cat meowed loudly, too.

"Yes, just like that," said the husband. "And on the coffin sat a red velvet pillow with a golden crown on top."

Aunty Mabel gasped. "So, what happened next?" Tom the cat jumped onto the table, his tail up straight and his ears alert.

"Well, when they got to the center of the hollow, the eight cats looked up at me with their shining green eyes and said, 'Can you tell Tommy Tildrum that King Charlie is dead, please?' I was so shocked, I took the dog and ran all the way back here."

"The king's dead, you say?" asked Tom the cat, his eyes shining brightly.

Aunty Mabel leapt up in surprise. Her husband stood, gaping.

"Yes," he managed to answer at last.

"Well, thank you for everything," said Tom. "I'd better be off. I'm the new King of the Cats!"

And he jumped up, strolled across the room, and disappeared through the cat door, never to be seen again.

You never know...perhaps you know a cat with royal connections!



For Review Only

I Want to Be a Pencil Sharpener

By Eszter Molnar

It was almost dress-up day at school, and Daisy and her Mother were talking about Daisy's costume.

"What would you like to go as?" asked Mom. She held up a beautiful dress. "A princess?"

Daisy shook her head.

"A doctor?"

"No."



For Review Only

"A police officer?"

"No."

"A chef? A star? A crocodile?"

"No, Mom," said Daisy. "I want to be a pencil sharpener!"

Mom, Dad, and Daisy worked on the costume until it was just perfect. Daisy couldn't wait to wear it.

Finally, dress-up day came, and everyone went to school in their costumes. There were knights, fairies, superheroes, mermaids, robots, lions, princesses, and kings—but only one pencil sharpener.

Daisy had a wonderful time until one of the lions, Lisa, told her that she didn't like her costume.

"Why are you a pencil sharpener?" she asked Daisy. "Pencil sharpeners are boring. They don't do anything."

"Yes!" Henry the knight agreed. "They're useless."

"Princesses, knights, and animals are so much more interesting!" cried one of the zebras.

"And more fun!" said a princess. "They save the world, they can sing, and they're brave and smart."



Preview Only

Book Club Questions

1. Imagine the secret life of one of your pets or a friend's pet. Will it eventually lead to the pet leaving the house to assume other duties like the cat in "King of the Cats"?

2. Tilly in "Baby Elephant," Dog in "The Dog and His Bone," and Little Mouse in "Little Mouse Makes Friends," all have mistaken perceptions. How do their misperceptions affect them?

3. What lessons do Dog and Country Mouse learn at the end of their stories? How are these lessons alike?

4. How could including modern technology change the story "I Want to Be a Pencil Sharpener"?

5. Compare Little Mouse and Country Mouse. How are they alike and different?

6. Which character would you most want to be like in "The Clever Carpenter"? Why?

For Review Only