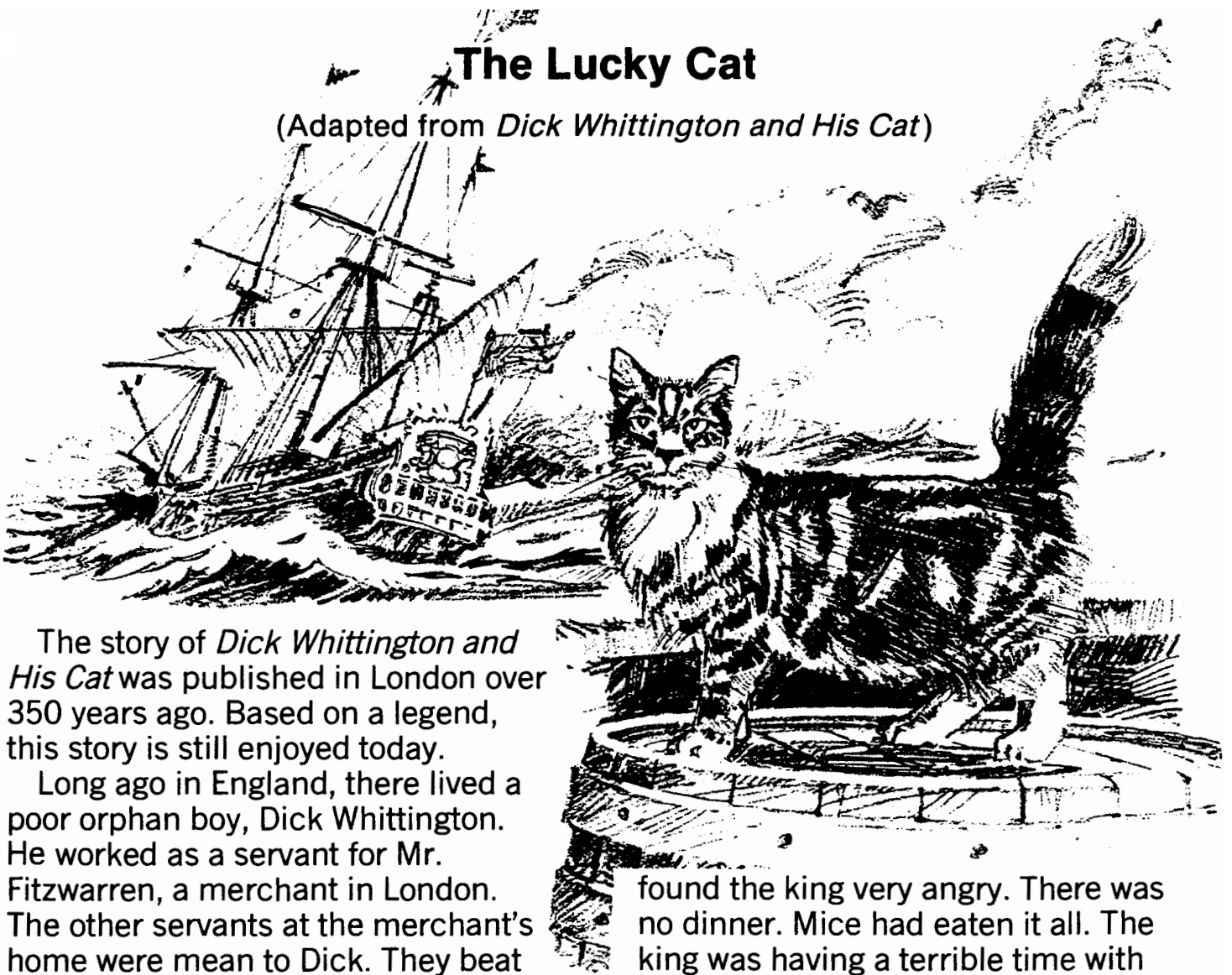


The Lucky Cat

(Adapted from *Dick Whittington and His Cat*)



The story of *Dick Whittington and His Cat* was published in London over 350 years ago. Based on a legend, this story is still enjoyed today.

Long ago in England, there lived a poor orphan boy, Dick Whittington. He worked as a servant for Mr. Fitzwarren, a merchant in London. The other servants at the merchant's home were mean to Dick. They beat him and made him sleep in the attic. All night long, mice crawled all over Dick's bed. It was impossible for him to sleep. Taking his only penny, Dick went to town and bought a cat. The cat happily killed all the mice, and Dick was able to sleep.

Soon after this, one of the merchant's ships was getting ready to sail from England. The captain of the ship heard about Dick's wonderful cat. He told Dick to send it on the voyage. He said it might bring Dick some good luck.

The ship sailed for Africa. When it landed on the coast, the captain was invited to have dinner with the king of Barbary. When the captain arrived, he

found the king very angry. There was no dinner. Mice had eaten it all. The king was having a terrible time with mice and rats. The captain went to the ship and got Dick's cat. The cat pounced on the mice and rats and solved the king's problem. The king was so thankful that he gave the captain a fortune in jewels and gold.

The captain couldn't wait to tell Dick the good news! He put the treasure on the ship and sailed back to England in search of Dick. "See," said the captain, "that cat did bring you luck."

Dick was thrilled with his fortune, but he did not keep it all for himself. He shared it with everyone, even the mean servants. Dick bought a new, clean suit for himself. He looked very

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handsome in it. Mr. Fitzwarren's daughter, Alice, fell in love with this fine young man. Dick and Alice were soon married. Not long after, Dick became Lord Mayor of London. He continued to be very generous until the day he died.

If you look back in history, you will find a real Dick Whittington. He did not make his fortune from a cat. His father was wealthy Sir William Whittington of Gloucestershire. Dick did marry a girl named Alice Fitzwarren, and he was Lord Mayor of London three times. Although some of the story seems to be make-believe, the tale of Dick Whittington's cat is still very popular.



Main Idea

1. In the tale, Dick Whittington made his fortune by
 - a. selling mice.
 - b. the work of his cat.
 - c. working hard at the Fitzwarren home.

Significant Details

2. To buy the cat, Dick had to pay
 - a. a penny.
 - b. more money than he had.
 - c. all his jewels.
3. Dick was rewarded with treasure because
 - a. he was a good servant.
 - b. his cat helped the captain.
 - c. his cat helped a king.
4. In real life, Dick's father was
 - a. Mr. Fitzwarren, a merchant.
 - b. Sir Whittington of Gloucestershire.
 - c. king of Barbary.

Context Clues

5. Dick's cat went on a *voyage*.
 - a. a trip
 - b. a job
 - c. a dinner with the king

Drawing Conclusions

6. After Dick became Lord Mayor of London, what did he probably do with his money?
 - a. build the House of Parliament in London
 - b. build a palace for his wife
 - c. build a hospital for the poor
7. What kind of man was the captain?
 - a. mean
 - b. honest
 - c. selfish

Following Through

8. Look up the real Dick Whittington, Lord Mayor of London. How do you think the story of Dick and his cat started? On another piece of paper, write a paragraph about what you found.

The Three Stones

The three stones in the creek that ran through Wilson's Woods were similar to all the other stones, except for their exceptionally vivid colors. The water gurgled and tumbled over the three stones for many years. As time went on, the three stones became smoother as the force of the rushing water wore down their rough edges.

In the summertime when the creek was low, the three stones showed off their lovely colors to the children who came to wade in the cool, clear water. They liked being admired for their gorgeous colors as they relaxed on the sandy creek bottom.

One summer, the weather turned very hot and dry. The creek dried up. The three stones missed the refreshing water bubbling over them. The dry, dusty air dulled their brilliant colors. No one came to the dried creek to admire the three stones.

"No one will notice us now," complained the largest stone.

"All those years of keeping ourselves polished have been wasted," grumbled the second largest stone.

"Perhaps now that the creek has dried up, it's time for us to make a change," suggested the smallest stone.

"A change?" challenged the largest stone. "Why should we change?"

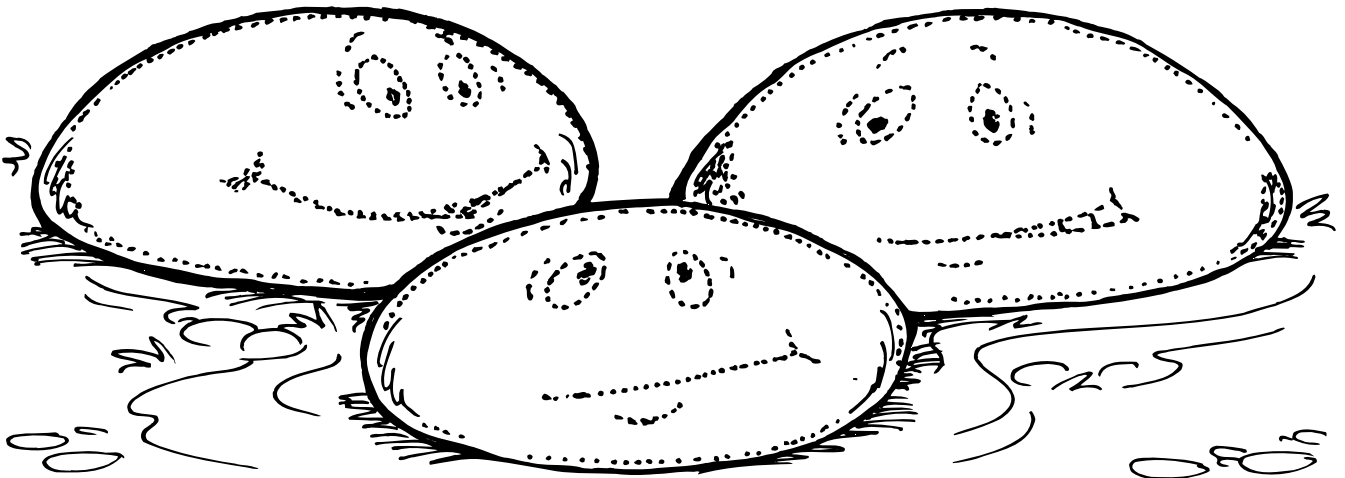
"We are beautiful creek stones," said the second largest stone. "That's all we have ever been. Now that the creek has dried up, we cannot even be that anymore."

"Perhaps we could go back to Stone School and learn to be something else," suggested the smallest stone.

"Something else!" exclaimed the largest stone. "No way."

"But we've been creek stones for thousands of years," protested the second largest stone. "We don't know how to be something else."

"Perhaps it's not too late to learn something new."



The Three Stones (cont'd)

The two larger stones considered the smallest stone's idea. They talked long into the night and into the next day. They argued back and forth. Should they take a chance?

Finally they agreed. They knew their best attributes were their brilliant colors and smoothness. They decided that whatever they became, they wanted to remain together.

That fall the three stones returned to Stone School. They studied very hard and spent hours in the library checking out possibilities. In spring, when they graduated, they were ready to return to the world.

The three stones decided not to take a chance on Mother Nature again. Instead they moved into an indoor goldfish pond at a children's hospital. From then on, they always had plenty of company. Their beautiful colors and smoothness brought pleasure to many young people.



1. What lesson did the three stones learn?

- ___ Don't trust Mother Nature.
- ___ Even stones have feelings.
- ___ It's never too late to learn something new.

2. Underline the cause and circle the effect in this sentence.

The creek dried up because of the long, dry spell.

3. Suggest two other "careers" the three stones might have chosen.

4. What is meant by the words, "The three stones decided not to take a chance on Mother Nature again."

5. Complete the cluster with words from the story that describe the water in the stream before it dried up.

