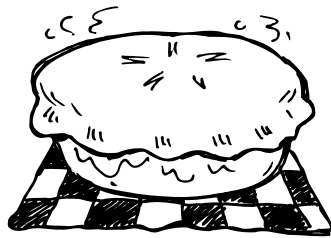


# Apple Picking

Great-great grandmother Clara sat by the window in her room at the nursing home, watching the last of the leaves fall silently to the ground. Pulling her sweater tighter around her shrunken shoulders, she relived a sparkling crisp autumn day, 65 years earlier. She inhaled the memory of sweet, musty hay in the back of the wagon as she rode beside her husband on their way to the orchard. The children romped in the back of the wagon, throwing handfuls of hay at each other. Clara smiled as the leaves crunched under the wagon wheels, a perfect day for apple picking.

"I'll make a nice pie for the children later," Clara thought to herself. She dozed off hearing hot apples bubbling through the slits in the brown flaky crust, the smell of baked apples and cinnamon filling the room.



Great-grandmother: Helen studied the brochures from the travel agent as she sipped hot apple cider. Now that she had retired, she looked forward to spending time with her grown children, visiting friends, and seeing new sights around the country. Perhaps she would spend a few months in Arizona or Florida this year. Helen enjoyed the cool crisp days of autumn, but winters in Michigan seemed to get longer and colder every year.



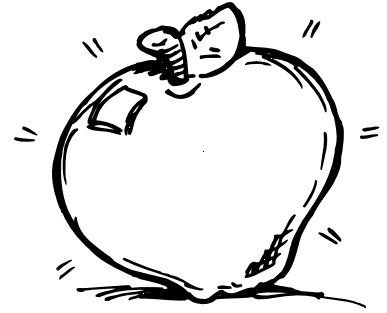
Grandmother: Barbara munched a crisp juicy apple as she rested after raking the lawn. October was her favorite month. She had housework she should be doing, but the weather was too good to waste by being inside. The prospect of two weeks vacation from work brightened the day even more.

As Barbara walked to her daughter's house, she thought about being a grandmother. The idea hadn't fully registered yet, even after three months, but spending time with her granddaughter, buying toys and tiny frilly dresses had become more fun than she had imagined.



# Apple Picking (cont'd)

Mother: Brenda looked forward to the trip to the orchard with her mother. Today would be their first real outing with the baby. Maybe they would take a ride on the hay wagon to the back of the orchard where they had picked Macintosh apples last year. Too soon her maternity leave would end and she would be going back to work. Brenda knew she would enjoy the day ahead.



Baby: Jessie lay in her crib, her eyes occasionally focusing on the bright red plastic apples on the mobile above her crib. She cooed softly, unconcerned about the future or the past. Perhaps some day she too would take her granddaughter apple picking on a crisp fall day.

1. How many generations does the story include? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who remembered the ride in the hay wagon with her husband and children?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who had recently retired? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who was the youngest member of the family? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the main idea of the article? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What common elements tie the characters together? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Select two of the characters. List three ways they are alike and three ways they are different.  
Alike: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Different: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. "Apple Picking" is an example of  
A. myth.                      B. realistic fiction.                      C. biography.
9. Use sensory words (sight, sounds, smells, tastes, and touch) to describe a fall day.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# The First Woodpecker

(adapted from a Native American legend)

Long ago, the Great Spirit came to visit Earth. He was very hungry, so he went to the wigwam of a woman.

“I have fasted for many days,” the Great Spirit told the woman. “Could you give me something to eat?”

“I will make you a cake, if you’ll wait for it to bake,” said the woman.

“I will wait,” the Great Spirit told her.

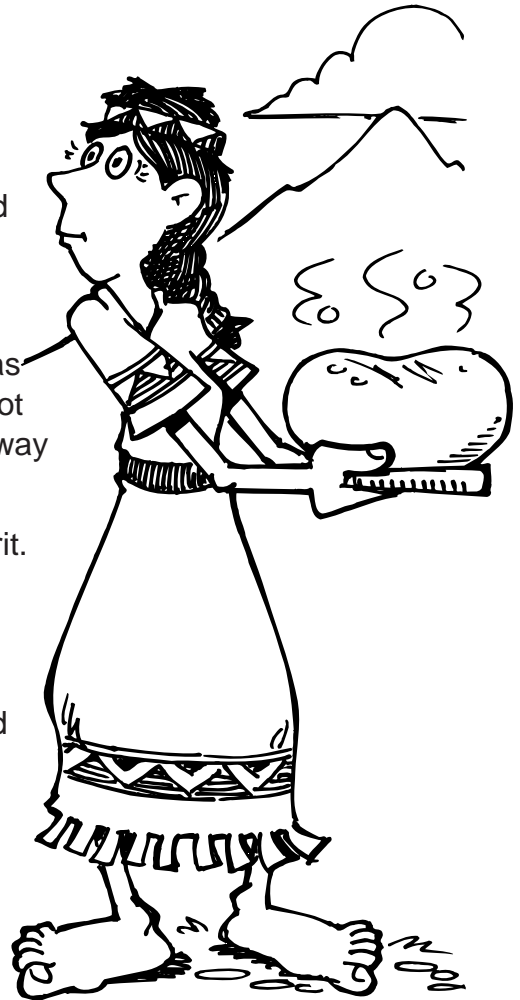
So the woman made a very small cake. But when it was baked, it had become much larger. She decided she did not want to give away such a large cake. Instead, she hid it away and made another smaller cake.

“The first cake did not turn out,” she told the Great Spirit. “If you wait, I’ll give you this cake when it is baked.”

Again the Great Spirit waited. But, lo and behold, the second cake turned out even larger than the first one. The woman told her guest the second cake had not turned out right and she couldn’t possibly dishonor him with an inferior cake.

“But if you will wait, I will make you another cake,” she added.

The Great Spirit again agreed to wait. This time the woman made the smallest cake of all.



Answer these questions before reading the rest of the story.

1. What do you think the third cake was like after it was baked? Explain your reason.

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2. Why did the Great Spirit visit the woman? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did the woman tell the Great Spirit the first two cakes hadn’t turned out?

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# The First Woodpecker (cont'd)

After it finished baking, the woman discovered that the third cake was the largest of all. Although she didn't know it, the Great Spirit had used his magic to make each cake larger.

When the selfish woman saw how big the third cake had become, she told the Great Spirit that she could not part with any of her food.

"Go to the forest and look there for something to eat," she said. "Perhaps you'll find some food on the bark of the trees."

The Great Spirit became furious with her. "You are not a kind or generous person. For being greedy and selfish, you shall no longer be a woman. For the rest of your days, you shall live in the forest and hunt for food in the bark of trees."



The Great Spirit stamped his foot and the Earth shook. The woman began to shrink. Wings and feathers sprouted from her body. With a piercing cry, she rose into the air and flew away into the forest.

Ever since that time, woodpeckers live in the forest and hunt for food in the bark of trees.

4. In this legend, what does "sprouted" mean? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the purpose for telling this tale? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Sets of three items, deeds, wishes, or guesses are often found in stories. Give an example of another story where three of something is an important part of the story.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What is your opinion of the woman? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What is your opinion of the action taken by the Great Spirit?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

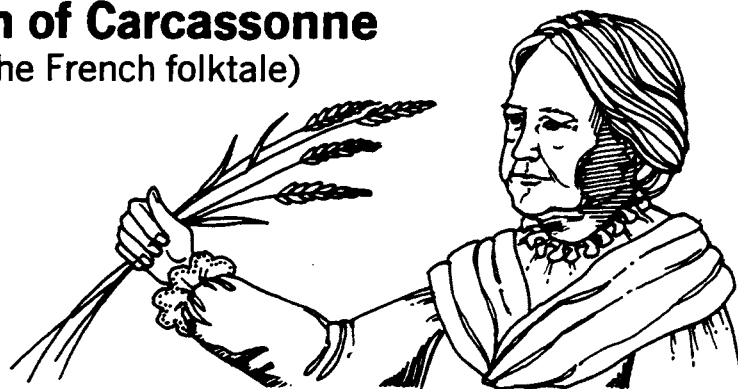
# The Old Woman of Carcassonne

(Adapted from the French folktale)

Once, long ago, an evil king and his army invaded the country of France. They decided to take over a town called Carcassonne. But the French people of Carcassonne locked the gates to their town before the enemy could enter.

Weeks went by. The army still surrounded the town. People in the town began running out of food. They were in danger of starving. The mayor of Carcassonne called a town meeting. He announced that he would have to let in the enemy. At least then the people might be able to get some food.

But an elderly woman in the town stopped him. "The king and his army must be starving, too," she pointed out. "Bring me a cow and I'll show you how we can win." After a careful search, a cow was found hiding in a farmer's house. The woman then asked for grain. Everyone gave what little grain they could. "What are you doing?" demanded the mayor as he watched her feed the



precious grain to the cow. "Just wait," she told him.

That night she let the cow out of the town's gate and in the morning it was discovered by the enemy. Since they were hungry themselves, the army killed the cow and found it had been fed grain. This surprised the evil king. He thought that the people in the town were out of food by now and ready to surrender. With well-fed cows like this wandering around, the people of Carcassonne could stay locked inside their gate for a long time.

Hungry and weary, the king called his army together and retreated. The town of Carcassonne was free thanks to the clever thinking of the old woman.

## Main Idea

1. How did the old woman save the town?
  - a. She attacked the enemy.
  - b. She tricked the enemy into thinking the town would not surrender.
  - c. She convinced the mayor to surrender to the enemy.

## Significant Details

2. Why did the mayor want to surrender?
  - a. He wanted to buy more cows.
  - b. The town was in danger of starving.
  - c. The enemy began attacking the town.

## Context Clues

3. The army *surrounded* the town.
  - a. attacked the town

- b. broke inside the town
- c. stood all around the town

## Inference

4. Why was the mayor angry when the woman fed grain to the cow?
  - a. He didn't think the plan would work.
  - b. His starving townspeople needed the grain.
  - c. He didn't like the old woman.

## Drawing Conclusions

5. Why did the woman's plan work?
  - a. The evil king only wanted a little food to eat.
  - b. The king's army was not very strong.
  - c. The king believed the townspeople had enough food to last them a long time.