

# 4000 Essential English Words

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# 5

**Paul Nation**

# The Little Mice

Beth was a very **resourceful** and conservative mouse. She knew that winter was coming and that there would soon be a **dearth** of food. So she decided to make gathering food for winter her primary job. Gathering food was a **grueling** and **mundane** activity, but Beth made a **deliberate** effort because she knew that it was important. She **allotted** herself a few hours every day to collect beans. By winter, she had collected a massive pile and hid them in a **cache**.

Beth had a sister named Mary. Mary lacked ambition. She had **fanciful** ideas about how she would survive winter. She thought that food would just come to her and that she could work at her own **convenience**. She **opted** to spend the days playing and dancing, instead of gathering beans. When the final hours of autumn **elapsed**, Mary had only a **paltry** amount of food stored away.

Mary realized that her food supply was too small to last through winter. She visited her sister. Mary said, “Beth, I am in a **dire** situation. I didn’t gather enough food for winter. Will you let me share your beans? Please have some **empathy** for your sister!”

Beth thought for a moment. Then she replied, “Mary, I am truly sorry for you. But I will not give you any of my beans. Instead, I will let you have my empty bag. You can still work hard and gather enough food for the winter. It will be **tedious**, but you will learn the value of hard work.”

Beth’s words **appalled** Mary. Mary cried with **outrage**, “There is too much work! I won’t have any time to dance or play!”

Beth said, “It is crucial that you gather enough food. You must have **sustenance** before you have fun. Go now, and **rectify** your situation.”

Mary **griped** some more, but she knew that her sister was right. She took the bag and went to work gathering her own beans for the winter.



# The Helpful Abbey

It had not rained on the **prairie** for several months. Because of the **drought**, the climate had become very **arid**. There was no **moisture** left in the soil. No crops could grow in the dry ground. By wintertime, the people had nothing to eat.

The hungry families heard about an **abbey** near the mountains where food and water was still **abundant**. So they traveled **inland**, across the prairie, to the abbey.

At first only a few families arrived, seeking food and shelter. Then there was **ample** food. The monks fed them and let them sleep in the small **cathedral**.

Soon, however, more families were arriving every day. These people had to travel farther, so they were in worse condition. The **rugged** journey had made their clothes **ragged**. They were cold and tired. The tiny cathedral was soon full.

Food became **scarce**. The monks began to **grumble**. They began to **speculate** that there would be no food. "If more families come, we won't make it through the winter," said a young monk. "We must ask some of them to leave."

The abbot heard this. "We cannot do that," he said. "It would be wrong to **deprive** them of food and shelter. We took an **oath** to help those that need help. All here are in need, so all are **eligible** to receive our food and shelter."

"But we won't have enough," the monk said.

"That might be true, but we must help them **nonetheless**. We will **fast**," the abbot replied. "Also, we will give our rooms in the abbey to those sleeping outside, and we will sleep in the churchyard that **adjoins** the cathedral."

The monks were reluctant at first, but they did what the oldest monk said. By the end of winter, there was still enough food and shelter for everyone. They learned that sometimes helping others means you must give more help than you first expected.



# The Bachelor's Lesson

A **keen** young **bachelor** had finished his studies at the university. As soon as he had received his **diploma**, he **asserted** to everyone he met that he was the smartest person in town.

"I **excel** at everything I study," he said, bragging about his knowledge. "I've mastered **calculus** and **physiology**. I even understand the great **theoretical** teachings of science, such as **relativity**. There is nothing that I don't know. Whether it's the movements of **celestial** objects, like planets and stars, or how to **harness** the power of **radioactive** substances, I know everything."

But actually, there was something the bachelor did not know. Though his **analytic** abilities were great, he failed to notice he was missing something very important in his life.

One day while walking through town, the bachelor witnessed a **collision** between two cars. Both drivers appeared to be injured, but the scholar only stood and watched.

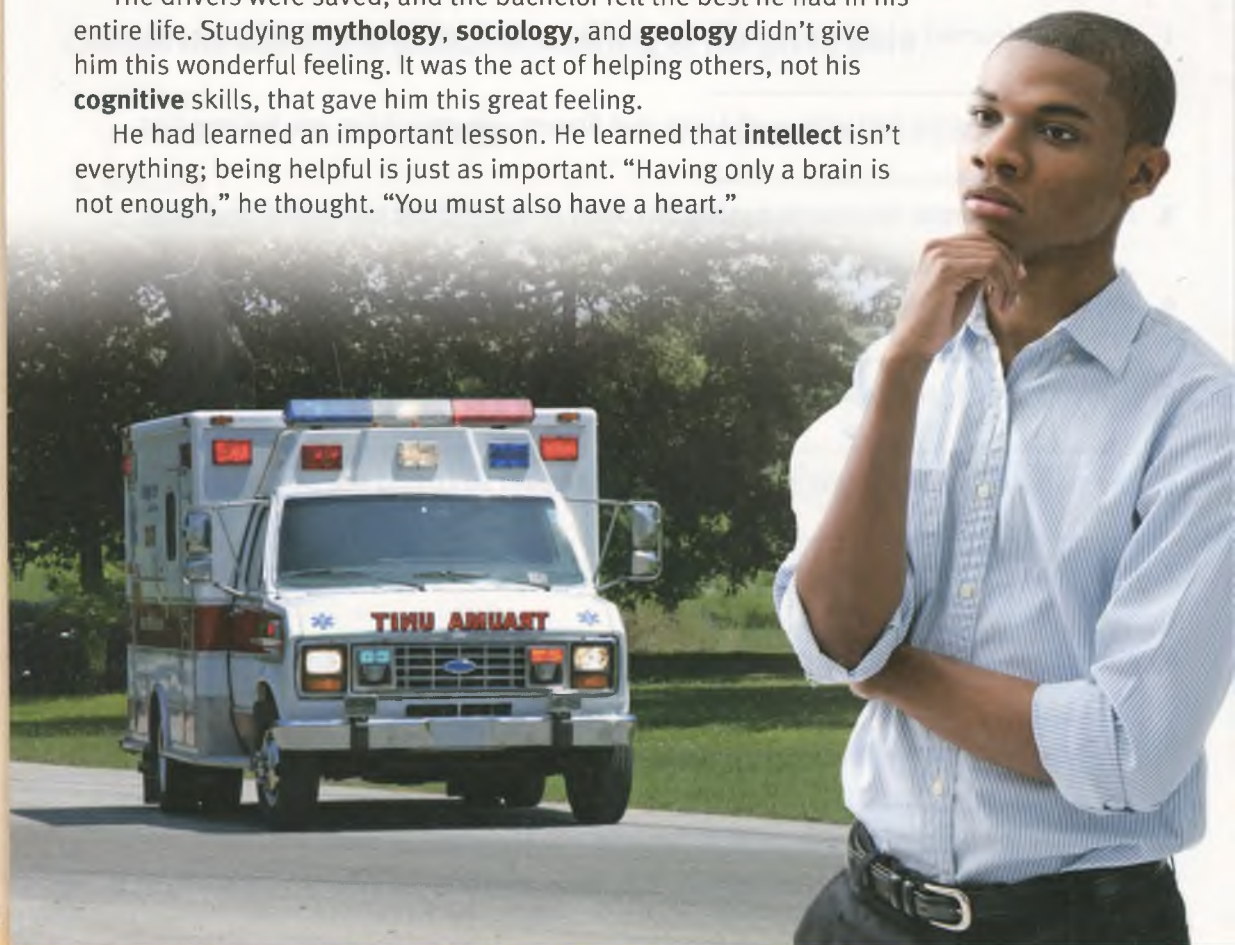
He thought to himself, "Those idiots should have been more alert. They really must not be very **competent**." He never thought the drivers needed help.

"Please help me," said the female driver in a weak voice. "Help me, too," said the male driver. "I'm hurt and can't move."

Suddenly the bachelor realized he was the only person near the accident. He quit thinking and ran to help the drivers. He carefully helped them out of their vehicles and then called an ambulance.

The drivers were saved, and the bachelor felt the best he had in his entire life. Studying **mythology**, **sociology**, and **geology** didn't give him this wonderful feeling. It was the act of helping others, not his **cognitive** skills, that gave him this great feeling.

He had learned an important lesson. He learned that **intellect** isn't everything; being helpful is just as important. "Having only a brain is not enough," he thought. "You must also have a heart."



# The Corrupt Administrator

Mr. Pig was an **administrator** at a big factory that made different kinds of **merchandise**. During a meeting at the company's **headquarters**, his bosses said they wanted the factory to make more money.

"If the factory makes more money, then you will too," his boss, Mr. Horse, told him. It was a great **incentive**. Pig had always wanted to be as **affluent** as his bosses.

Mr. Pig returned to the factory and started making changes. However, most were not very nice, and some were not **legitimate**.

First, he fired all his employees. Then he **automated** the entire factory. Machines now made everything, and the other animals, Mr. Rabbit, Mr. Sheep, and Mr. Dog had no jobs. Next, he **bribed** some **corrupt** senators into **legislating** special **subsidies** for the factory. Finally, instead of paying a company to **dispose** of the factory's **rubbish** properly, he **violated** the law by throwing it into the river to save money.

At first, all the changes to the factory's **infrastructure** created more **revenue**. But soon many stores could no longer sell the factory's goods at **retail**. It seemed that the machines couldn't make products as well as the workers. The customers were disappointed with the factory's merchandise.

There were other problems, too. The animals had told their friends and family to stop buying the factory's goods. Officials discovered the factory's rubbish in the river, and when they **audited** the company, they discovered that Pig had **manipulated** the law in order to get more money.

All **transactions** with Pig's factory stopped. The factory lost money, and Pig lost his job. He realized his mistakes too late. He had tried to become rich by saving money any way possible, but the cheapest way was not always the best.



# A Famous Accident

One of the greatest **pharmaceutical** discoveries happened by accident. In his **haste** to go on vacation, Alexander Fleming had left his laboratory in a mess. The **essence** of his **ongoing** work involved a type of bacteria. An infection caused by the bacteria was often **terminal**, and he was looking for a **remedy**. He had left the bacteria out while he was away.

When he returned from vacation, he found that his lab was covered in fungus. He started cleaning up the mess. While he was cleaning, he had an **impulse** to examine the fungus. He saw that whenever the fungus was in close **proximity** to the bacteria, the bacteria died.

Though he was a messy scientist, his experiments were **precise**. He thought that there might be some **significance** to the fungus. He immediately **commenced** an experiment to **assess** what had happened to the bacteria. It had either died by accident or the fungus had killed it. The **subsequent** tests proved it was the **latter** reason.

What he found **astonished** him. The fungus actually killed the bad bacteria. All this time, he had been looking for a **synthetic** material to kill the bacteria. Instead, a common fungus did the job.

He knew that something in the fungus had killed the bacteria. His next step was to find those **molecules** that had done it. When he found them, he **extracted** them and put them into a pill. The drug proved to be very effective. It also worked against other types of harmful bacteria.

The discovery received a lot of **publicity**. Soon after, the new drug was being used all over the world. Because of the success, the scientist was able to develop even more **fabulous** drugs to help people. His accidental discovery changed the world and helped save many people's lives.



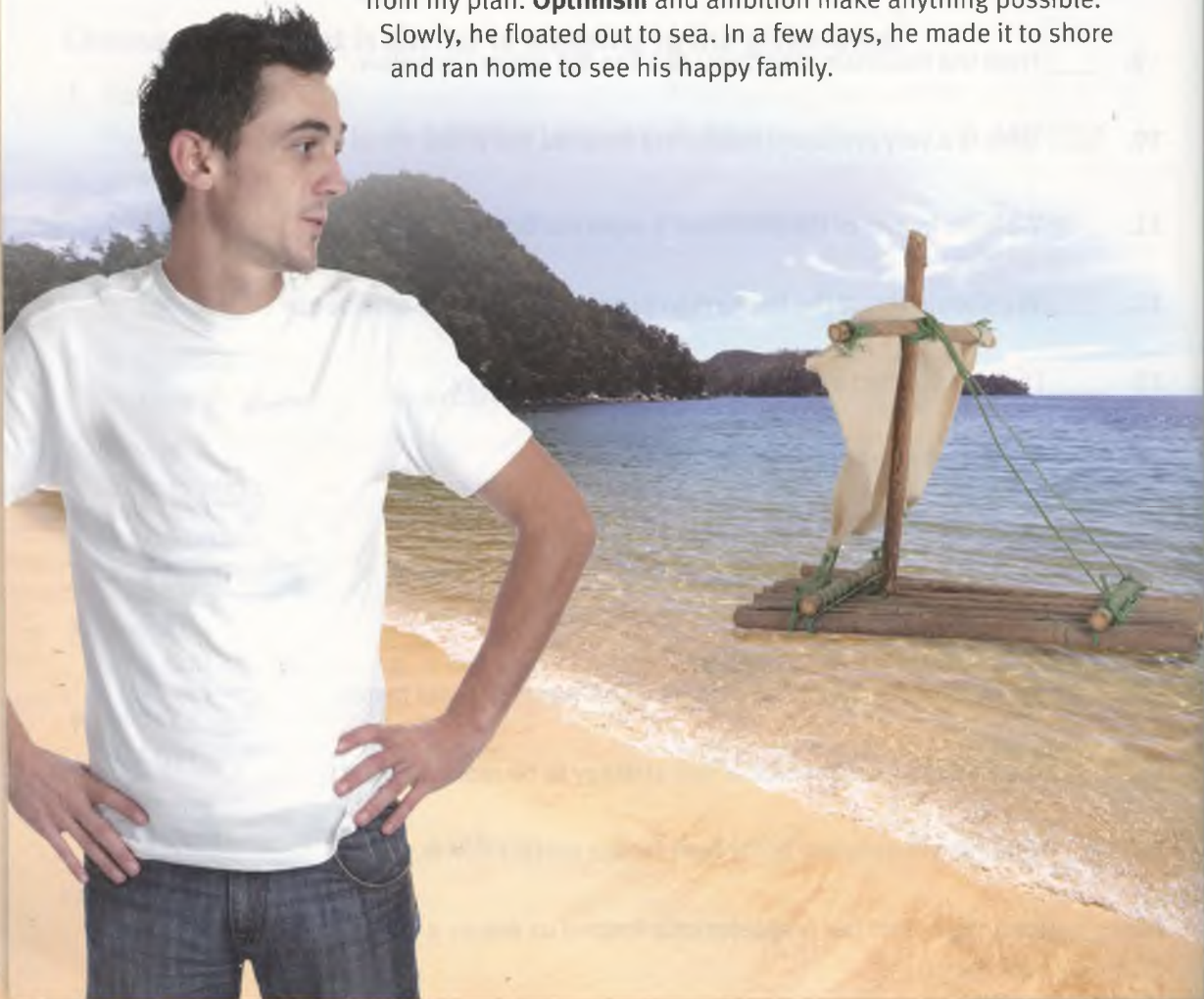
# The Island

“Where am I?” Bob thought to himself when he woke up on a **peculiar** beach. “I can’t remember what happened.” There had been a bad storm, and Bob’s fishing boat sunk. He washed ashore on a small island, but he had gotten hurt during the storm. He had a terrible **migraine**, and he had a **fracture** in his shoulder. He felt awful. But he had a strong desire to make it home to his **spouse** and children. He had to **tolerate** all the pain and **devise** a plan.

Bob stood up and looked around. “I’ll walk to a higher **altitude**, so I can see everything around me,” thought Bob. “Maybe I’ll gain some **insight** about this island and find something to help me escape.” As he walked along a mountain **ridge**, he noticed that the tall **indigenous** trees looked sturdy and thick. Bob got a brilliant idea. He could build a raft! He cut down some leaves and tree **limbs**. Even though his shoulder injury **impaired** his ability to carry the materials, he slowly dragged them down the mountain until he reached the **coastline**.

Bob was a **proficient** builder. He used his building **expertise** to line up the limbs and tie them together with long vines. When the raft was finished, Bob was happy with his work. “This will bring me home to my family,” he said with a smile.

At last, Bob was ready to **implement** his escape plan. With all his might, he **thrust** the raft into the water. He climbed on and began the **quest** to find his way home. Bob smiled again, and thought, “I’m glad I kept a good attitude. It prevented the pain from **detering** me from my plan. **Optimism** and ambition make anything possible.” Slowly, he floated out to sea. In a few days, he made it to shore and ran home to see his happy family.



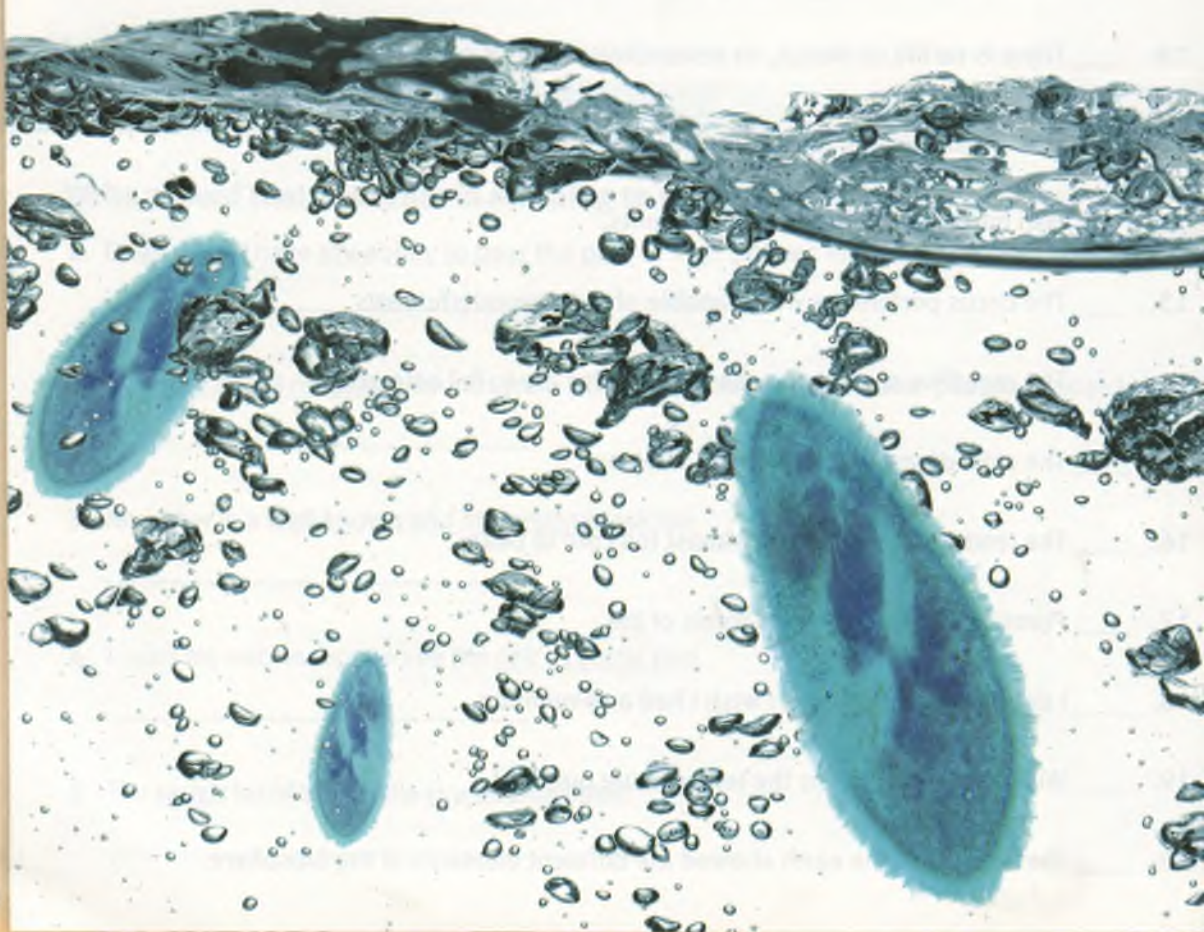
# Small World

Even though people can't see me, I'm an important part of Earth's **biosphere**. Scientists who study **ecology** know that I was the first life form on Earth. There is more of my kind than any other plant or animal in the world. Without me, other plants and animals would not even exist. I am a protist, and my tiny body is made up of one single cell.

In my small world, things can be absolutely **bizarre**. Unlike most **aquatic** plants and animals, I don't need a **temperate** climate. I have a very high **tolerance** for extreme conditions. Right now, I'm swimming around in a bucket of boiling water! The temperature is 150 degrees **Celsius**, but I feel comfortable. I have **coarse** hairs called *cilia* that help me swim around in here. I move my cilia in a **repetitive** motion for the **duration** of my swim. I cannot go very fast, though. It takes me about five minutes to swim a distance of just one millimeter!

When I get hungry, I look for tiny, **vulnerable parasites**. I swim up to one and swallow it whole. I **digest** things much like people do. I have an organ that works just like a human stomach. After I eat, I release nitrogen gas. Nitrogen is a **prominent** gas in the earth's atmosphere. Other plants and animals need my nitrogen to survive.

My **reproductive** ability is my most unique trait. I don't need a **companion** to mate with. Instead, I **undergo** a process called *fission*, where my own **nucleus** splits in half. An exact copy of my nucleus is made, which forms into another protist. It really is an impressive **feat**. I can create an **infinite** number of new protists all by myself!





# Becoming a Healer

Years ago, I worked at a small health clinic in a remote country. I had gone there to treat an **obscure** syndrome. It attacked people's lungs, causing them to need a **respirator** to breathe. I was trying out a new **medication** to treat these people instead of using a respirator. If I was successful, I would become famous.

Everything was going fine until war broke out in a nearby country. Many people from that country fled the **hostile** invading army. The army wanted to **dominate** the people, but the people didn't want to be **oppressed**. So they walked hundreds of miles across **barren** land to get away.

Some of these people came to our clinic for treatment. I talked with them and learned of their difficulties. They did not beg or complain. I was impressed by their **dignity**.

There was one woman I will never forget. Her son suffered from **malnutrition** and stomach pain, and she didn't know what to do. Neither did I. I was not **adept** at treating malnutrition. Nonetheless, when I saw her sadness, I knew I had to help her son.

The woman had been feeding her son bread and water. She had a **misconception** that it would be enough for him. However, I knew that he needed to eat vegetables, too. So I took her outside and showed her a **dense** patch of **edible** plants. I taught her how to dig up the roots, **peel** them, and cook them for her son. I explained that she should increase her son's **intake** of these vegetables. **Likewise**, she should **strive** to get him some meat once a week to help him regain his strength.

I sent her off with a **prescription** for some pain medicine, but she also left my office with some new **culinary** skills. A few weeks later, she returned to tell me her son was healthy again. As thanks, she gave me a beautiful **ceramic** bowl.

I never became famous, but I kept that bowl to remind me what it truly means to heal someone.



# The Weaving Machine

Mr. Joseph Franklin invented a machine that could **weave** cloth. It wove faster and straighter than anyone could weave by hand. He decided to take it to two cities on a **peninsula**, Netherton and Wilton. In these cities, a large **proportion** of the people worked in weaving. Joseph felt sure he could sell his machine there.

Joseph first took his machine to the mayor of Netherton. "Think of the money you will earn from this machine!" Joseph said to him.

But the mayor was a **benevolent** man. He knew about the people's **dependence** on weaving for their livelihood. If he bought the machine, the people would lose their jobs. So he refused to buy it.

Joseph said, "We are no longer in the **medieval** age! Soon everything will be made by machines. Cloth made by hand will soon be **obsolete**. If you don't change your **archaic** ways, your town's income will **diminish!**"

But the mayor said, "I don't like **capitalism**. Don't **impose** your **radical** ideas on my town. Go away!"

So Joseph took his machine to the mayor at Wilton. This mayor thought Joseph's machine was **spectacular** and spent a long time looking at its different **components** made of **brass**. The mayor couldn't **refute** the fact that the machine had **drawbacks** that would affect the people's jobs. But he realized the machine could bring money and **prestige**. So he ordered Joseph to build twenty of them.

Within a year, Wilton was a wealthy city, famous for its wonderful cloth. People no longer wove but worked in **managerial** jobs at cloth factories instead. Nobody bought the cloth from Netherton anymore. The people of Netherton became poor and hungry.

Finally, the mayor of Netherton called Joseph and said, "Now I realize that your machine is not just a passing **fad**. To succeed in business, we must be willing to change." He then ordered twenty weaving machines.

After that, both Netherton and Wilton became rich cities, famous throughout the land for their wonderful cloth.



# Life on the Farm

Bill was an excellent **capitalist**. He **financed** a large aviation **enterprise** that made a lot of money. He knew how to **maximize monetary** gains in every business deal he made. Bill had one big problem, though. He was unhappy all the time. Bill knew that he had to do something about it, or he would be depressed for the rest of his life.

One day, Bill was in his office when he heard a knock at the door. "Come in!" Bill said loudly.

His **accountant**, Jane, walked in. Jane said, "Sir, I haven't seen you smile in a year. What are you so sad about? Your company is doing very well."

Bill told her, "I'm **indifferent** about my company's success. I have **contempt** toward my job. I just want to do something I enjoy. I've always loved growing plants as a hobby. I'm going to quit my job and become a farmer!"

"You're crazy!" Jane said.

"I don't think so," Bill replied. "I want the **simplicity** of a life on a farm. I'm tired of all this stress. Farming will make me happy."

The very next day, Bill carried out the **preliminary** task of buying land and tools. Then he got to work. He **sowed** many types of seeds. He planted **soy**, cabbage, carrots, and onions.

"The **upcoming** summer is going to be very dry," thought Bill. "I need to **irrigate** my crops as a **precaution**, in case it doesn't rain enough."

He took his **spade** and dug a **ditch** down the middle of his farm. "Water from the stream will flow down the ditch and **saturate** the soil around every plant," Bill thought.

Bill **dedicated** himself to farming. After a year, his farm looked **exquisite**. Most importantly, Bill was happy. He finally had the life he always wanted.



# Beethoven's Gift

Beethoven was a great composer of classical music in the 1800s. Many **biographies** have been written that **narrate** his **dominance** in the music world. But do you know what really makes him special? Even though millions of people got to hear his **multiple masterpieces**, he never did. Beethoven wrote his best pieces after he went completely deaf!

His **partiality** toward classical music developed when he was very young. He wasn't interested in anything else as a child. When he was five, he learned how to play the piano. From then, nothing could stop his passion for writing and playing music.

When Beethoven was twenty, he began to lose his hearing. He got **acute, spontaneous** pains in his ears. His hearing kept getting worse over time. It was **inevitable** that he would eventually lose it altogether. It was very hard for him to keep writing music. He lost the **virtue** of patience, and he became **notorious** for his **aggression**. Still, he never stopped trying. His passion for music **compelled** him to keep performing even after he went deaf. He couldn't hear himself play, but he knew that his creations sounded **gorgeous**.

His final concert was held at a huge **banquet**. He gave the musicians a cue, and they began to play. He directed the concert with all his heart. He couldn't hear the music, but he said that he could feel it. **Overall**, performance was one of the finest in history. When it was over, he turned to the crowd. They **clapped** and cheered wildly. In that beautiful moment, the applause **boosted** his emotions, and he began to cry.

In 1827, he suffered from lead poisoning. He didn't survive the sickness, but his music did because great music never becomes **outdated**. Even though Beethoven is gone, his **legacy** will live on forever.



# Brothers

John and Mark were brothers, but they were quite different people. Mark looked very **masculine**. He had a mustache and was very **muscular**. He was a sculptor. He made things out of stone. Mark was a good artist, but he was not very intelligent.

John looked nothing like his brother. He was small and **weak**, but he was very smart. John was an **undergraduate** in college, and he studied **anthropology** and history. He knew a lot about ancient cultures. The brothers loved each other very much, but they thought they had nothing in common.

One day, the mayor **appointed** Mark to build a **monument**: a statue of Egyptian Pharaoh, Tut. Mark agreed to do the job, but he had a problem. He had no idea who Pharaoh Tut was! However, he thought he had the **competence** to build a good statue anyway. He made some **crude** measurements and sculpted a statue of a very old man with a **tattoo** on his chest. Mark was proud of his work, but when John saw the statue, he laughed aloud.

“What’s so funny?” Mark asked.

John replied, “Your **ignorance** makes me laugh. Don’t you know that Tut was only a teenager when he was pharaoh? Let me help you. I’ll **supervise** your work. I’ll give you **feedback**, and we’ll make this a great monument.”

Mark got another **cube** of stone. John told him what Tut looked like. “Make him tall with good **posture**,” John said. “And make sure there is **symmetry** in his body.”

Mark **conferred** with John about every detail. For ten **consecutive** hours, the brothers worked. At last, the finished statue was **situated** in front of the museum. Everyone **applauded** the brothers’ good work.

“We worked together very well. I guess we are **compatible** after all,” Mark said.

John replied, “I agree! When we combine our talents, we are capable of greatness.”



# The Old Hound

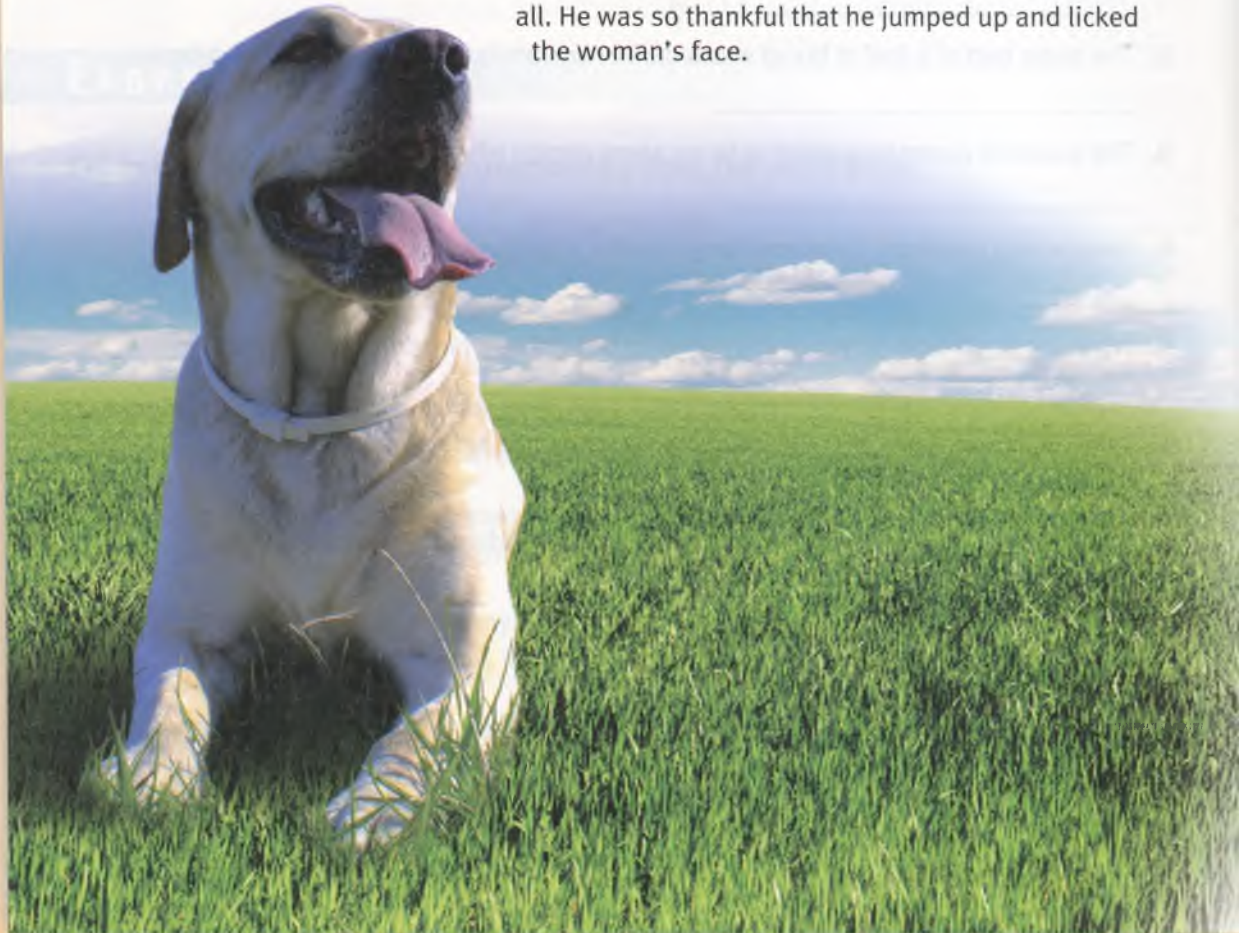
Elvis was a dog that loved to run. He possessed all the **criteria** to be a great racing dog. He had long legs, lean muscles, and a strong heart. He was so good that he never lost a race in the northern **hemisphere**. **Spectators** who bet on dog races always picked Elvis to win.

After ten years of racing, however, Elvis was getting old. His **faculties** were not as strong as they used to be. His owner got upset when Elvis started losing. Elvis's owner wasn't a **considerate** person. He **degraded** the dog all the time. Finally, his owner decided to get rid of him. He threw Elvis in his car and took him to the middle of the forest. He tossed him out and drove away. Elvis was cold and scared. He decided to follow a **brook** into the city.

Elvis soon found out that the city was a big and **impersonal** place. Everywhere he went, he saw signs that said, "No Dogs Allowed." **Pedestrians** yelled at him. He was sad, hungry, and alone. He thought that all people were as cruel and uncaring as his owner had been. He was ready to give up when he heard a soft voice say, "What a beautiful **hound!**" Elvis looked up and saw an old woman. She said, "You're **entitled** to a better life than this. I can take you to a **sanctuary** for old dogs like you. I'll **cater** to all your needs. Would you like to come with me?"

The woman **escorted** Elvis to a beautiful **facility**. There was a sign on the **external** door that said, "Dogs Welcome!" The interior of the building was painted blue, and shiny **ornaments** hung from the ceiling. There was a **heap** of tasty bones and bread **crusts** for **consumption**.

Elvis learned there were kind people in the world after all. He was so thankful that he jumped up and licked the woman's face.



# Day Without Sight

On Friday afternoon, Sam's teacher had a special assignment.

"Next week, we'll be studying **humanitarian** efforts around the world since the time of the **Renaissance**, including those to help the blind," she said. "Over the weekend, I want each of you to wear a blindfold for an entire day. The **premise** of this experiment is that it will help you understand what it's like to be blind," she said.

Sam was a **skeptic**. He really didn't think the assignment would be too challenging. On Saturday morning, Sam took a piece of cloth and tied it around his head to cover his eyes. Then he went into the kitchen for breakfast. He heard the voices of his parents and brothers but couldn't **specify** where each voice was coming from. He thought about how important hearing is for blind people.

"Could you pass me the newspaper, please?" he asked. Just then, he remembered he couldn't see the words on the page. He wondered if **Braille** newspapers were ever made.

After finishing breakfast, his brothers asked him to play soccer. As he followed them, he accidentally walked into the baker's **rack**. He also found that he couldn't play soccer. He wouldn't be able to **coordinate** his actions without being able to see. Without his **optic** senses, he had no **spatial** awareness. Furthermore, he couldn't do **simultaneous** activities because he had to make sure he was safe first.

He sat on the lawn. Suddenly, he realized that though he couldn't see, his other senses worked perfectly fine. In fact, he began to realize new and different **aspects** of common objects. For example, he took a flower **bud** and felt it with his finger. He realized for the first time that it seemed to be covered with **wax**.

His **hypothesis** about being blind was **disproved**. The **informative** experiment had an **imprint** on him. It showed him sight was an **asset** that should be appreciated and taught him to **revere** the talents of blind people.



# The Big Ship

Ernest looked at his **fleet** of ships. Usually, he used them for his firm, which **imported marble** statues from other countries. But today he was going fishing. And the ship he chose was his favorite. It had an **elaborate** painting on the side that showed a **naval** battle. It also had some new **updates** to its computer system. His favorite ship's latest **acquisition** was a device with a small **grid** to show the ship's exact location. This new **accessory** kept Ernest from getting lost.

At daybreak, Ernest happily sailed the temperate waters until he was far from land. Then he saw a small boat in the distance. There was an old man standing next to its **mast**. He was waving his arms in the air. There was also a boy with his head hanging over the boat's edge. Ernest **inferred** that the boy was suffering from **nausea**. Both of their clothes were **saturated** with sea water. Ernest assumed that they were in trouble. Most people never realized, but Ernest had an **innate** desire to help people. He began sailing toward them, eager to **facilitate** their rescue and thus solve their **dilemma**.

As he got closer to the boat, he was shocked by its simplicity. The boat's wood looked no stronger than **cardboard**, and the equipment was old. Still, there were several large fish in a **pouch** in the boat.

Ernest threw a large package onto the boat. He yelled, "Here! You can **inflate** this boat to get you back to land."

"Get out of here!" screamed the old man.

Ernest was confused. "Don't you need help?" he asked. "Your ship doesn't seem **adequate** enough to sail so far away from land."

"You've just scared away a huge fish," the boy said. "We waved to let you know you were too close to us."

Ernest turned around and headed home. He learned that it's better not to help unless asked to. Otherwise, you might not help anyone at all.





# The History of Parachutes

Scientists who study **archeology** say that there may be some evidence of **prehistoric parachutes**. But the first written history of the device comes from China about 2,100 years ago. Scientists **cite** an ancient book that describes parachutes. However, there is no **archeological** evidence that proves that an actual parachute was ever made. Later, people from northern Africa and Italy also had ideas about a similar invention. In fact, a Leonardo Da Vinci's drawing **corresponds** closely with the modern parachute design!

In 1783, French scientist Sebastian Lenormand invented the first modern parachute. Sebastian **brainstormed** with other scientists to come up with a way to help people jump safely out of burning buildings. He thought the solution was to give people an object to **restrict** their speed while they traveled toward the ground. Many people thought that he was up to some kind of **fraud**, but Sebastian had a lot of **integrity**. His **budget** was limited, so he first tested his theory by using two umbrellas. He jumped out of a tree and found that the umbrellas worked.

Next, he **refined** his invention. Rather than using umbrellas, he **knit** a large parachute. Finally, he jumped off a tall building on a French **estate** and landed safely in the **courtyard**.

Sebastian's work gave another man an idea. Jean-Pierre Blanchard had a different **outlook** than Sebastian. He was a hot air balloon **addict**. He was one of the first people to ride in a hot air balloon powered by **hydrogen** gas. He was a **proponent** of using the parachutes to exit from hot air balloons. Starting in 1785, he used his dog to show that animals could land safely from hot air balloons by using parachutes. Then, in 1793, he was faced with a **chaotic** experience. The hot air balloon he was riding in burst and started to fall. He was forced to use a parachute himself. And much to his relief, it saved his life!



# “I Didn’t Do It!”

Billy was in big trouble. The day before, a **donor** gave the school a painting with a sports **theme**. It showed a **referee** congratulating two athletes. The principal hung the painting in front of the office, hoping that it would be a **stimulus** for students to play sports. The next morning, however, the painting was destroyed. There was **graffiti** on it, and it had many holes in it. The worst part was that one of Billy’s **fellow** students said she thought she saw Billy do it!

But Billy didn’t do it. The principal called Billy’s parents and said, “Billy won’t tell us the truth. He’s a **chronic** liar, and he ruined the painting. If you don’t pay for it, we’ll **terminate** his education here.”

Billy’s parents didn’t have enough money to pay for the painting and for his **tuition**. But Billy’s parents had an idea. That afternoon, they went to see Mr. Meyers, an **attorney**.

“Mr. Meyers, my son has been **implicated** in a crime he says he didn’t do,” Billy’s father said. “Everybody believes the **gossip**. Even some of our own **kin** think he did it!”

“I believe you. My **suspicion** is that the tape from the security cameras will show who really did it,” said Mr. Meyers.

The next day, Mr. Meyers received a packet with the videotape from the school. It showed another student who resembled Billy walking up to the painting and writing on it. Then the student took a knife by the **shaft** and started to **stab** large holes in it. Finally, he **severed** the rope that held up the painting, and it fell to the floor.

Mr. Meyers showed the tape to the principal. “Clearly, that’s not Billy,” he said. “This boy is actually responsible and needs some **discipline**.”

Billy was happy that someone believed him. He said to Mr. Meyers, “When I **graduate** and go to university, I will major in law, so I can be a **guardian** of justice like you!”



# The Soldier's Decision

A soldier was captured while fighting in an enemy king's land. It was well known that this king would make **captives** fight one another. This was **commonplace** during his **reign**. For these fights, the king had built several large **arenas**. He often awarded the winners by setting them free or even having them join his elite army **corps**.

The soldier, however, decided he had seen too much violence. He now felt that all life was **sacred**. The night before his first match, he made a risky decision. He decided that he would not engage in **combat**. He knew he may never be set free, but it was a decision that he was willing to accept.

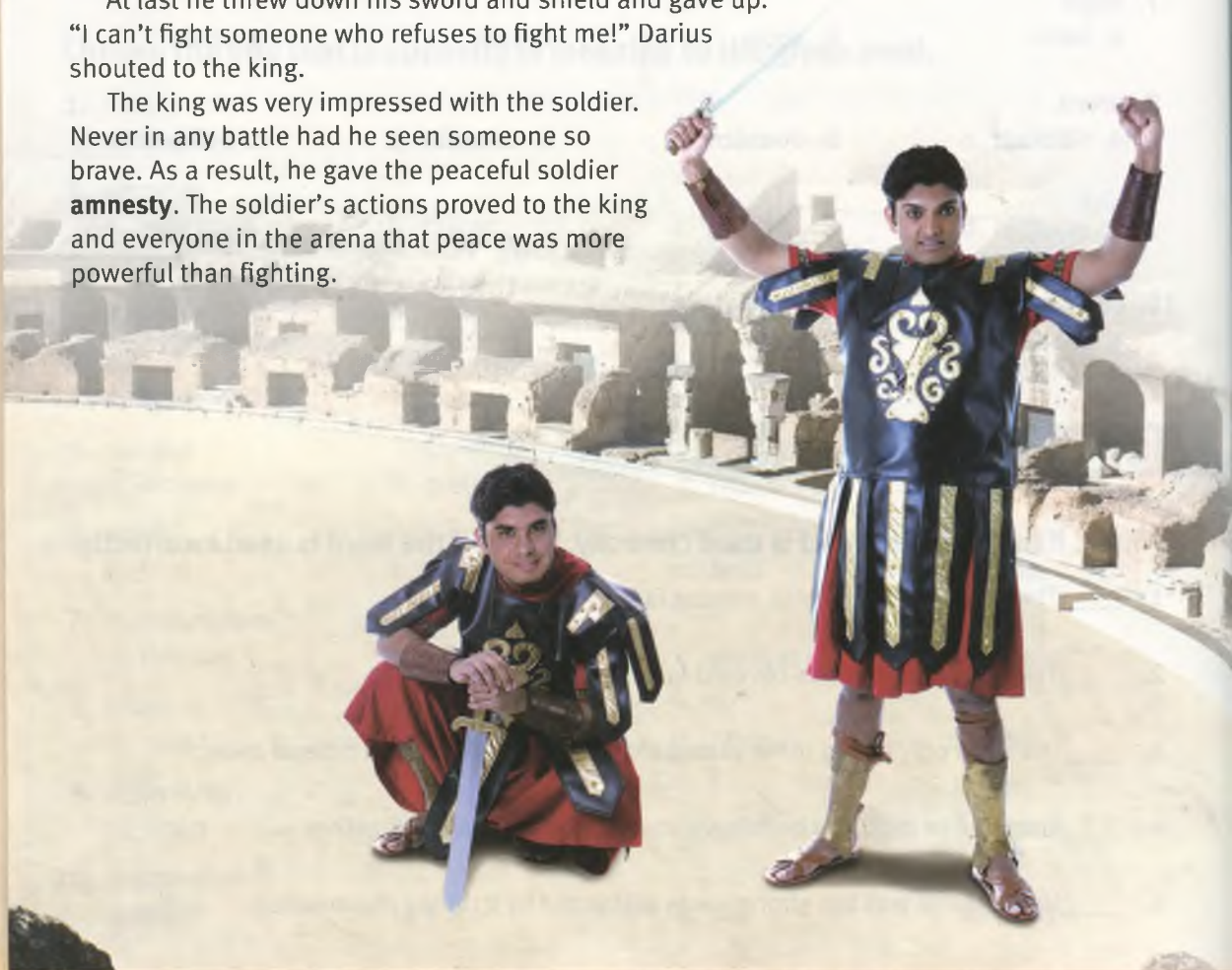
In the morning, he was led from the prisoners' **compound** to one of the king's arenas. A gate coated in **rust** stood between him and the **auditorium's** floor. He was worried, but he knew what he had to do.

When the gate opened, he calmly walked to the center of the arena and sat. He started to **meditate**. His **foe** Darius, who was skilled in the **realm** of sword fighting and was typically not very **aggressive**, would not fight the quiet soldier until he attacked Darius first.

Darius tried to **provoke** him by **hacking** at the air close to his head with his sword. But the soldier was not **distracted**. He sat quietly, as if he were **dumb**, and looked calmly up at the sky. Even when Darius **nicked** him on the cheek with the edge of his sword, the soldier did not move.

At last he threw down his sword and shield and gave up. "I can't fight someone who refuses to fight me!" Darius shouted to the king.

The king was very impressed with the soldier. Never in any battle had he seen someone so brave. As a result, he gave the peaceful soldier **amnesty**. The soldier's actions proved to the king and everyone in the arena that peace was more powerful than fighting.



# Jane's Pride

Jane and her father, Mike, owned a **secondhand** boat. They called it "High Hopes." The two loved to spend time together on the ocean and would often go on long fishing trips.

Mike taught Jane how to perform important tasks. Jane learned how to steer the boat and adjust the sails. She learned how to put **grease** on the **intricate** gears of the motor. She learned how to **submerge** the **anchor** and secure it by putting a rope in a **slot**. Jane liked helping her father, but she thought that she wasn't very good at it. Sometimes, she omitted important steps and made **frequent** mistakes. Jane thought she wasn't capable of manual labor.

Mike wanted to prove to her that she was indeed capable and important. He thought of a **tactic** to test Jane's skills in the **context** of a **catastrophe**. He hid under the deck and pretended to be trapped. He shouted, "Jane, I can't get out! You have to get back to the **dock** and find help!"

Jane began to panic. She thought she might make her usual mistakes, which would **precipitate** a disaster. However, she had to listen to her dad and act **accordingly**. She pulled up the anchor with all of her might. She remembered to **overlap** the sails to **offset** the wind. She steered the boat around **buoys** where the water was shallow. When they got to shore, Mike came out from under the deck.

Jane said, "I thought you were trapped!"

Mike laughed. He said, "It wasn't a **genuine** emergency.

I **distorted** the truth to test your abilities. Look at what a great job you did getting the boat home safely! I knew you could do it."

To honor his daughter, Mike decided to rename his boat. He **designated** it "Jane's Pride" and painted the name on the **fore** of the ship. Jane finally had something to be proud of.



# Microchips

The bond between humans and computers is becoming more **intimate** than ever before. Scientists are now putting **microchips** inside people's bodies. They are made up of **compressed** electrical **circuits** that can detect and record data about the body. They are tiny, but they hold the **equivalent** amount of data as most computers.

A microchip is put to use inside a person with a simple procedure. First, a doctor must put data about the patient onto a chip. **Input** about the person's age, race, gender, and medical history is stored on the chip. The second **phase** of the process involves putting it in the person's skin. The doctor **pinches** a piece of skin and cuts a tiny hole with a tool shaped like a **spiral**. The chip is inserted, and the skin is allowed to heal. At last, it begins the task of putting data into its **database**.

Microchips scan the patient's body to record what is happening on the **quantum** level. They can find problems with the person's **metabolism** and organs. They can also detect **viral** infections. They can find the **aggregate** number of **immune** and infected cells and present the results in a **ratio**. They can even tell doctors what type of **antibiotic** to give to the patient!

To recover the chip's data, the doctor uses a special **magnet** that copies it. This way, the doctor can put the information from the chip onto a computer. Then they can find out exactly what is wrong with the person.

The idea of putting chips in humans is still very new. However, it is now becoming more **prevalent**. Scientists and doctors are hopeful about the future uses of microchips. Someday, all new babies might get a microchip soon after they are born. Doctors will be able to know about any problems from the very beginning. It is obvious that medicine and computers **complement** each other well.



# The Twins

Katie and Alice were twins. They were so alike that few people could tell the **siblings** apart. They were almost like **clones**. They even used the same **colloquial** language as each other. They were best friends.

But the twins' **attributes** were not all identical. Alice liked **humanities**, and Katie was a good **linguist**. One summer, Katie decided to be a **participant** at a summer camp in France. Alice wasn't interested in the French language, so she didn't go. But she felt angry that Katie wanted to spend the summer away from her.

Two months later, Katie returned. Alice **dashed** to the airport to greet her sister. But when Alice saw Katie, she was **astounded**. Katie was now **bilingual**, and she looked completely different! She was wearing nice clothes, **cosmetics** and looked **skinnier**. Alice felt very messy next to her. She was just wearing a **fluorescent** t-shirt, and her hair had **knots** in it.

When Alice asked Katie about France, Katie was **vague** and didn't say much. It made Alice **furious** and filled her with **disgust** because in the past they'd always told each other everything. Now there was a huge **gulf** between them. Over the weeks, the sisters spoke even less.

Two months later, it was the twins' birthday. All their lives, they'd had a **ritual**. Before their birthday, they'd talk all night long. That night, Alice came into Katie's bedroom.

"I'm sorry I haven't spoken much lately," Katie said.

"I understand. You have new friends now," said Alice, angrily.

Katie said, "My French friends don't write much nowadays. For a while, I thought they were more exciting than my friends at home. But I was wrong. You're my sister, and you'll always be my best friend."

Alice said, "I'm sorry, too. I wanted our relationship to stay the same forever. But it's totally **plausible** for twins to have different interests. We can still be best friends without being together all the time."



# The New Bioco

Jack got a new job at a **biotechnology** company called Bioco. Bioco **manufactured** drugs to treat **diabetes** and high **cholesterol**. Jack's job was to use a tiny **mechanism** to get **nectar** from flowers. The nectar was a main ingredient in the drugs. Jack liked his job, and he thought that Bioco was a caring company. However, Jack soon learned that the company wasn't as kind as he first thought.

Bioco's motto was "Make the Earth a Better Place." However, this motto was **deceptive**. The company actually did a number of really bad things to the environment. The company produced a lot of smog and harmful **acid**. Bioco poured the acid in a nearby river, which caused **erosion** and made fish **prone** to illness.

After a few weeks at the new job, Jack saw all the bad things Bioco was doing. He had always had strong **ethics**, and he knew he had to do something. One day, while the Bioco workers were eating in the cafeteria, Jack stood up and gave a speech. He said, "My fellow coworkers, I know you have all seen the evil things our company is doing. I have a **notion** that we can fix them if we form a **coalition**. We can go to the **administration** and tell them we'll quit if they don't **eliminate** the problems. They'll have no choice but to listen to us."

Jack explained what they were to do. His coworkers liked his **explicit** plan. They went to the **administrative** offices and demanded that Bioco stop damaging the environment, or they all would quit. One supervisor said to them, "Thank you for being **straightforward** about this issue. Since I can't afford to lose all of you workers, I guess we'll just have to fix things."

Jack, his supervisor, and his coworkers spent the next month designing a new **framework** for the company. They cleaned up the acid from the river and **minimized** the amount of air pollution the company released. At last, the company motto became apt.



# How Comet Got His Tail

A **solitary** rock **roamed** through the cold **gloom** of outer space. It slowly drifted through the **debris** of broken asteroids with a feeling of sadness. In the vast and beautiful **galaxy**, it was only a tiny rock. It felt like an insignificant **atom**.

In its journeys it encountered many amazing objects. It flew by beautiful **crescent** moons that were covered with **craters** and moon dust.

“Why can’t I be as beautiful as them?” it thought.

The rock passed a **gigantic** planet. The **sphere** had a **circumference** hundreds of times larger than the **breadth** of the small rock.

“Why can’t I be as large as that?” it wondered.

The rock was filled with **despair**. It was surrounded by beauty and greatness, yet it was just a small and ugly **fragment** of rock.

One day, it approached the area of an **astronomical** star.

“What’s wrong?” the star asked.

“Oh, I wish I had a higher **status** in the galaxy. All the other objects are so beautiful and large,” the rock replied. “But I’m just an ugly rock.”

The star considered the problem. At last it said, “You don’t have to worry anymore. I think I can help.” The star **radiated** its light brighter and hotter than it had ever done before. “Come a little closer,” the star said to the rock.

The rock drifted closer to the star. Suddenly, the ice that was **embedded** in the rock’s tiny cracks melted and became steam. Then the steam extended behind the comet to form a brilliant tail. The tail shined with all the colors of the **spectrum**.

The little rock had become a beautiful **comet**. It looked so amazing. It realized that the star helped it change its appearance. “Thank you,” the comet said and then flew away with its new beautiful tail following behind it like a galactic cape.



# The Resourceful Landlord

A kind **landlord** was afraid that he would lose his apartment building. He needed to make some **mandatory** repairs to the old building, or his **tenants** would have to leave by the end of the month. Without tenants to **lease** the rooms, the landlord would be unable to pay his **mortgage**. He'd be **bankrupt**, and the bank would take his building.

But he didn't have the money **whereby** he could **employ** the **personnel** needed to make the repairs. It would seem like he did not want to **conform** to the city's codes before the **forthcoming** inspection. He had requested an **extension**, but it was denied by the city.

He held a meeting with his tenants and explained the unfortunate situation. "If the building does not meet the appropriate standards for safety and **hygiene**," he said, "the city will **expel** everyone."

The tenants were all sad for the kind old man.

"Maybe we can help," the hairdresser who lived on the first floor stated. The other tenants agreed.

One tenant had worked for the city's **utilities**. He knew a lot about **plumbing**, so that's how he helped. Another tenant was a carpenter; he **mended** the holes in the floor and walls. Others cleaned the building from top to bottom so that it was more **hygienic**. They even **furnished** some of the apartments with new beds, dressers, and chairs. When they were done, all of the people dispersed, and the landlord went home to rest.

When the deadline of the inspection arrived, the apartment building was hygienic and safe. The landlord couldn't believe it. His old building now looked like one of the **trendiest** buildings in town. The building passed its inspection, and the landlord and the tenants had a big party.

"Thank you all so much," the landlord said during the party. "I could never have done it by myself. But by working together, we now all have a beautiful place to live."



# The Man and the Monkey

While flying over a jungle, a wealthy **executive**'s private plane crashed. Some of the crew were hurt, so the pilot decided to stay with them and wait for help. The **arrogant** executive, though, didn't care about the **welfare** of the pilot and crew. Rather, he thought he could walk out of the jungle and find a town to stay in.

He followed a **trail** through a **canyon** and along a **creek**. The jungle was actually very stunning. If the arrogant executive had stopped to look around, he might have **perceived** the jungle's beauty. But he was in a **nasty** mood and had no care for the **aesthetic** value of the jungle. He continued to walk up the steep **incline** of the jungle's hills.

Soon, he was lost. Several days passed, and **fatigue** and hunger weakened him. He was very tired and afraid.

Just then, a monkey came out of the trees. It was carrying a **twig** covered in honey. It walked up to a mound where **termites** lived. He then used the twig like a **drill** to make a hole in the mound. Then very carefully, it removed the twig from the hole. The **sticky** twig was covered with termites.

Instead of eating the bugs, the monkey offered them to the executive, but he didn't want what the monkey offered. He shouted at the monkey, "Get away from me, you stupid **primate!**"

The executive's **stereotype** of the monkey was wrong. The monkey was not stupid. It knew how to find food, whereas the executive did not. He refused the help of the monkey, **thereby** leaving himself to starve.

When the executive was finally found, he was very skinny and sick. He had not eaten for a very long time. Because he held a **bias** against the **primitive** ways of the monkey, he had gone hungry and almost died. The executive didn't understand that it was his arrogant attitude that had caused all of his problems.



# Cosmo's Flight

When Cosmo woke up, he was crying. He had a dream that he was falling. This dream had **recurred** for the **previous** five nights. Cosmo was scared that his dreams were a **preview** of what was going to happen on his flight the next day.

Cosmo was a **supernatural** being who was about to turn 15 years old. In his culture, boys of his age were required to participate in an important **rite**. They were given wings and instructed to **orbit** the Earth. After successful flights, the boys officially became men. Cosmo certainly wanted to be a man, but he was scared. He went to the **oracle** of a god named Dano. Cosmo said, "I'm not sure I can make such a long trip. What if I get tired? What if my strength **stalls**, and I can't stay in the air. I'll crash and die!"

Dano replied, "Don't be afraid. You have all the **relevant** skills in your personal **inventory** that have been building up over the years. To ease your worry, let me tell you a little about what will happen tomorrow. You'll begin over Africa. You'll keep flying north until you come to the Himalayas. The mountaintops will look like small **loaves** of bread at such a high distance. The rivers of the world will look like pieces of blue string that cross the **globe**. Keep your body **horizontal** when flying against the winds of the Pacific Ocean. Keep your eyes open and enjoy the beauty of the Earth. You will be fine, you'll see."

Cosmo replied, "Thanks for the **overview** of my journey, I'll do my best."

The next morning, Cosmo was **provided** with a divine set of wings and sent on his way. He **flapped** his wings and went high above the Earth. He flew over mountains, oceans, and **glaciers**. After a while, his **inward** thoughts were no longer about falling. He was actually having fun! He began to **hum** a song as he enjoyed the view. When he reached home, his tribe was there to greet him.

The chief said, "On **behalf** of the tribe, I declare you a man. We're proud of you, Cosmo!" Cosmo was proud of himself, too.



# The First Organ Transplant

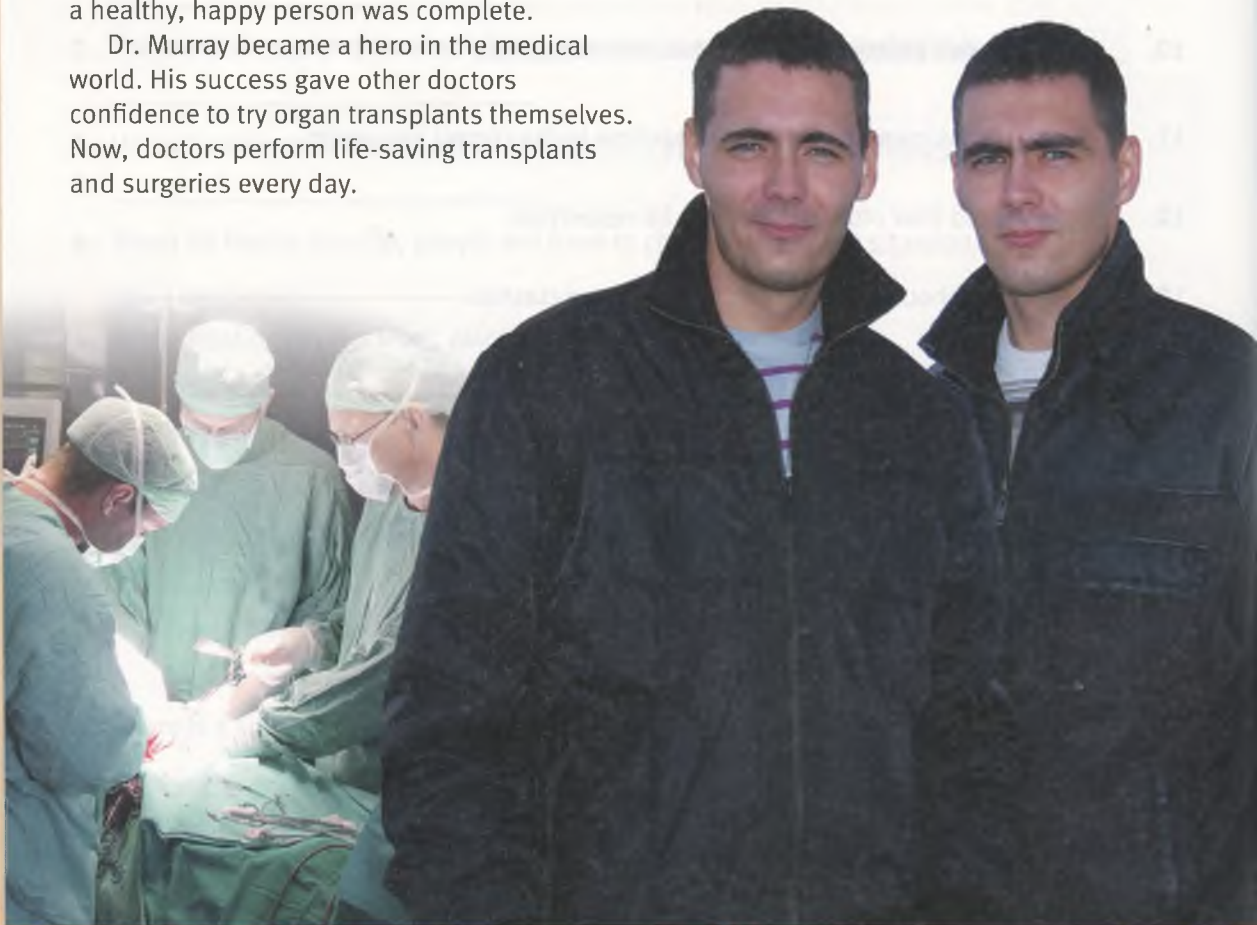
In 1954, a man named Richard was dying of kidney disease. He wouldn't survive for long unless he got a new kidney right away. Richard's twin brother, Robert, was willing to donate one of his kidneys to his dying brother. At the time, however, no doctor had ever performed a successful **internal organ transplant**. The idea of taking an organ out of one person and putting it into another was just a **fantasy**. But the brothers decided to be brave and found a doctor who could make organ transplants a reality.

Since Richard and Robert were twins, their **heredity** was identical. They had the exact same **biological** traits. Even their kidneys were identical on the **cellular** level. Therefore, Robert's working kidney could be **substituted** for Richard's bad one. Richard's body could **adapt** to the new organ if the operation was done correctly.

The twins went to Dr. Murray, who was a **pioneer** of new surgical methods. His **dynamic** team of **surgeons** performed the transplant. Dr. Murray made sure his surgeons followed a **rigid sequence** of directions so that no mistakes were made. First, they made a **minimal** cut in Richard's side and removed the bad kidney. Then, they made another small cut in Robert's side, removed his kidney, and **transferred** it into Richard's body. Finally, they sewed up the **respective** cuts. The entire operation only took about one hour.

After the surgery, it was clear that both brothers were going to be OK. The operation was confirmed a success. Richard's new kidney worked great! Doctors **prescribed** medicine for the pain caused by the surgery. Since Richard was still weak, he used physical **therapy** to **revive** his strength. At last, Richard's **transition** into a healthy, happy person was complete.

Dr. Murray became a hero in the medical world. His success gave other doctors confidence to try organ transplants themselves. Now, doctors perform life-saving transplants and surgeries every day.



# The Lottery

Joe was watching television when he heard a knock at the door. He thought, “Who could that be? It’s probably one of the **naughty** neighborhood children.” Joe stood up and walked to the door. When he opened it, he saw a beautiful woman.

She said, “Good morning, Joe! I have great news. You’re the **recipient** of this check for one million dollars! You won the lottery!”

Joe couldn’t believe it. His mind was **overloaded** with emotions. Joe said, “Thank you! Thank you!”

After he calmed down, Joe made a photocopy of the check in case he **misplaced** the original one. He sat and thought about what he wanted to do with the money. He didn’t want to spend it in an **arbitrary** way. Joe thought, “I know there are others who need this money more than I do. I’ve always loved animals, so I think I’ll buy things for the zoo!”

Joe knew that the zoo was in bad shape. The cages were too small, and they weren’t **insulated** from the cold. Animals couldn’t **thrive** in such conditions.

He took out some stationery and wrote a letter to the zoo. He offered to help the zoo buy huge cages for the large mammals and **reptiles**. He offered to buy healthy food for the **orangutans** to increase their **longevity**. He even said that he would buy new glass walls for the **aquarium** because the old ones were cracked.

Joe’s act of **philanthropy** **intrigued** the zookeeper. He **probed** Joe to learn why he spent his money to **improve** the zoo. It wasn’t a social **convention** for a person to be so **gracious**.

Joe told the zookeeper, “I know it’s not the **norm**, but my **ultimate** decision to help these animals is better than anything I could have done for myself. If I ever write an **autobiography**, I will write that this was the happiest day of my life.”



# Jen's New Job

The history museum needed to **recruit** a new tour guide. The director interviewed dozens of **applicants** before he decided to hire Jen. She was chosen because she was friendly, **punctual** and had a great attitude.

On her first day, Jen got to work and prepared to give her first tour. She looked at the names on the **register**. She saw that the Queen of England and a **diplomat** were visiting the museum. She thought, "It's my very first day, and I have to impress a **monarch!** I hope I don't **humiliate** myself in front of a person of such **renown!**"

Jen was nervous. She took a deep breath and said, "Hello, everyone! I'm going to talk to you about the **chronology** of ancient Egypt." As she turned around to show the group some **artifacts**, she bumped into a **fossil** of an **authentic** elephant **tusk**. It fell to the ground and broke into a million pieces! "Oh no!" said Jen in a subtle voice. "I sure hope the rest of the tour goes better than this!"

The rest of the tour did not go any better. She tripped over an **antique** vase and broke a piece off of it. As she was reading an **excerpt** from a **lyric** poem, she sneezed and tore a page of the **epic**.

After the tour, Jen approached the queen to apologize. She said, "I'm sorry, Your **Majesty**. I was a terrible tour guide. Let me give you a **refund** for the money you spent."

The queen laughed. She said, "I don't want my money back, Jen. I loved the tour. You just have to be a little more careful and work hard to become the best at your job. Hard work **precedes** success."

Jen smiled and thanked the queen. She decided to be extra careful from then on. She was persistent and worked hard. In time, Jen became the best tour guide at the museum.



# The Demon's Bridge

A young woman's cow had crossed the river in the morning when the water level was **moderate**. But when the woman returned with her dog to get the cow, she was **overwhelmed** by how high the water had risen. Even if she crossed, she still couldn't **tow** her cow back through the river.

"What am I going to do?" she wondered.

Suddenly, a man appeared across the river. "A **fragile** young lady like you shouldn't have to struggle across a river," he said. "I'll build you a bridge."

The man was an **enigma**. The young woman's **perception** of him was that he was a **sociable** person. He was **talkative**, yet something was strange about him.

"I don't want to be a **burden** to you, sir," the woman replied.

"Don't worry," he told her as he began **crafting** a bridge. He **merged** the pieces of the bridge together with amazing speed. Soon, it was finished.

"Oh, but how can I pay you for your work? Let's **compromise**. I am sure that we can find a fair solution. What do you think?" The woman asked.

"The only **currency** I need is the first living thing that crosses the bridge," the man replied.

She thought, "This deal sounds weird. Maybe he's actually a river demon." She **shivered** because she realized that he had taken advantage of her **innocence** and **rigged** the deal somehow. But she had a plan of her own. She pulled a piece of bread from her pocket and threw it across the bridge. Her dog ran after it.

"The dog is the first living thing across the bridge," she said to the man.

The man was angry. He suddenly changed into a **hybrid** of a human and a fish. "You **crook!**" he shouted. "You tricked me. I have no use for your dog!" He screamed and dove into the river.

The woman **tramped** across the bridge to the other side and had a happy **reunion** with her dog and cow.



