



# Learn English Through Stories

F Series

F4

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# 1. The Busy Blue Jay

By Olive Miller



One of the most interesting birds who ever lived in my Bird Room was a blue jay named Jakie. He was full of business from morning till night, scarcely ever a moment still.

Poor little fellow! He had been stolen from the nest before he could fly, and reared in a house, long before he was given to me. Of course, he could not be set free, for he did not know how to take care of himself.

Jays are very active birds, and being shut up in a room, my blue jay had to find things to do, to keep himself busy. If he had been allowed to grow up out of doors, he would have found plenty to do, planting acorns and nuts, nesting, and bringing up families.

Sometimes the things he did in the house were what we call mischief because they annoy us, such as hammering the woodwork to pieces, tearing bits out of the leaves of books, working holes in chair seats, or pounding a cardboard box to pieces. But how is a poor little bird to know what is mischief?

Many things which Jakie did were very funny. For instance, he made it his business to clear up the room. When he had more food than he could eat at the moment, he did not leave it around, but put it away carefully,—not in the garbage basket, for that was not in the room, but in some safe nook where it did not make a mess. Sometimes it was behind the tray in his cage, or among the books on the shelf. The places he liked best were about me,—in the fold of a ruffle or the loop of a bow on my dress, and sometimes in the side of my slipper. The very choicest place of all was in my loosely bound hair. That of course I could not allow, and I had to keep a very close watch of him for fear I might have a bit of bread or meat among my locks. In his clearing up, he always went carefully over the floor, picking up pins or any little thing he could find, and I often dropped burnt matches, buttons, and other small things to give him something to do. These he would pick up and put nicely away.

Pins, Jakie took lengthwise in his beak, and at first I thought he had swallowed them, till I saw him hunt up a proper place to hide them. The place he chose was between the leaves of a book. He would push in a pin far out of sight, and then go after another. A match he always tried to put in a crack, under the baseboard, between the breadths of matting, or under my rockers. He first placed it, and then tried to hammer it out of sight. He could seldom get it in far enough to suit him, and this worried him. Then he would take it out and try another place.

Once, the blue jay found a good friction match. He put it between the breadths of matting, and then began to pound on it as usual. Pretty soon he hit the unburnt end and it went off with a loud crack, as friction matches do. Poor Jakie jumped two feet into the air, nearly frightened out of his wits; and I was frightened, too, for I feared he might set the house on fire.

Often when I got up from my chair a shower of the bird's playthings would fall from his various hiding places: nails, matches, shoe buttons, breadcrumbs, and other things. Then he had to begin his work all over again.

Jakie liked a small ball or a marble. His game was to give it a hard peck and see it roll. If it rolled away from him, he ran after it and pecked again; but sometimes it rolled toward him, and then he bounded into the air as if he thought it would bite. And what was funny, he was always offended at this conduct of the ball, and went off sulky for a while.

He was a timid little fellow. Wind or storm outside the windows made him wild. He would fly around the room, squawking at the top of his voice. Once I brought a Christmas tree into the room to please the birds, and all were delighted with it except my poor little blue jay, who was much afraid of it. Think of the sadness of a bird being afraid of a tree!

Jakie had decided opinions about people who came into the room to see me, or to see the birds. At some persons, he would squawk every moment. Others he saluted with a queer cry like "Ob-blee! Ob-blee! Ob-blee!" Once when a lady came in with a baby, he fixed his eyes on that infant with a savage look as if he would like to peck it, and jumped back and forth in his cage, panting, but perfectly quiet.

Jakie was very devoted to me. He always greeted me with a low, sweet chatter, with wings quivering, and if he were out of the cage he would come on the back of my chair and touch my cheek or lips very gently with his beak, or offer me a bit of food if he had any; and to me alone, when no one else was near, he sang a low, exquisite song. I afterwards heard a similar song sung by a wild blue jay to his mate while she was sitting, and so I knew that my dear little captive had given me his sweetest—his love song.

One of Jakie's amusements was dancing across the back of a tall chair, taking funny little steps, coming down hard, "jouncing" his body, and whistling as loud as he could. He would keep up this funny performance as long as anybody would stand before him and pretend to dance, too.

My Jay was fond of a sensation. One of his dearest bits of fun was to drive the birds into a panic. This he did by flying furiously around the room, feathers rustling, and squawking as loud as he could. He usually managed to fly just over the head of each bird, and as he came like a catapult, everyone flew before him, so that in a minute the room was full of birds flying madly about trying to get out of his way. This gave him great pleasure.

Wild blue jays, too, like to stir up their neighbours. A friend told me of a small party of blue jays that she saw playing this kind of joke on a flock of birds of several kinds, robins, catbirds, thrashers, and others. These birds were gathering the cherries on the top branches of a big cherry tree. The jays sat quietly on another tree till the cherry eaters were very busy eating. Then suddenly the mischievous blue rogues would all rise together and fly at them, as my pet did at the birds in the room. It had the same effect on the wild birds; they all flew in a panic. Then the joking jays would return to their tree and wait till their victims forgot their fear and came straggling back to the cherries, when they repeated the fun.

Once a grasshopper got into the Bird Room, probably brought in clinging to someone's dress in the way grasshoppers do. Jakie was in his cage, but he noticed the stranger instantly, and I opened the door for him. He went at once to look at the grasshopper, and when it hopped he was so startled that he hopped, too. Then he picked the insect up, but he did not know what to do with it, so he dropped it again. Again the grasshopper jumped directly up, and again the jay did the same. This they did over and over, till everyone was tired of laughing at them. It looked as if they were trying to see who could jump the higher.

There was another bird in the room, however, who knew what grasshoppers were good for.



He was an orchard oriole, and after looking on for a while, he came down and carried off the hopper to eat. The jay did not like to lose his plaything; he ran after the thief, and stood on the floor giving low cries and looking on while the oriole on a chair was eating the dead grasshopper. When the oriole happened to drop it, Jakie—who had got a new idea of what to do with grasshoppers—snatched it up and carried it under a chair and finished it.

## 2. Narendra Modi – Indian Prime Minister



Narendra Damodardas Modi was born in Vadnagar on 17th September 1950. Vadnagar is a small village in the Mehsana district of Gujarat. He was the third child among his six siblings. His father, Damodardas Mulchand Modi, was a tea seller and his mother, Hiraba Modi, was a housewife. The entire family lived in a small single-storey house, and they had to struggle to earn their livelihood.

He joined RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) in 1971 in Gujarat. He volunteered in it for a couple of years until political winds began to inspire him. Narendra Modi was always a hard worker from an early age. He continued serving people through RSS and found solace in public activities. He portrayed himself as a pious person with Hindu beliefs which gave him the name of Hindu Nationalist today.

Narendra Modi is an oratorical speaker who can convince his audience with charisma. Before he became a minister of India in 1994, he made a lot of promises and gave Indian people a dream that good days were coming. Despite he did not deliver what he had said, people chose him in 2019 as prime minister again.

Now, a majority of people think that his days are over. His party, recently, lost the election badly in Karnataka. Most elections, he won in the past were due to his polarisation tactics: dividing Hindus and Muslims.

Now, people have also learnt that Narendra Modi is a compulsive liar. All politicians in the world exaggerate and use rhetorical language to convince their voters. But Narendra Modi is a master of lying.

Once he was giving a speech in Bihar and said, “You Bihari people and your ancestors are so brave and courageous. Once, Alexandra the Great (Sikandar) came to Bihar, your ancestors defeated him and sent him back to Greece.”

Alexandra the Great never reached Bihar. He went back from Punjab and died.

Once Modi went to Bangladesh and said, “When Bangladesh was fighting to get its independence, I went to jail for the independence of Bangladesh.”

It was India who helped Bangladesh to get independent. Nobody went to prison in India for that reason.

Despite Modi coming from a poor family, his politics and policies are in favour of rich corporations.

The sudden rise of Mr Adani started when he offered support to Mr Modi in 2003. At the time, the politician and then chief minister of Gujarat — was being heavily criticised for failing to control violent riots that had rocked the state a year earlier.

More than 1,000 people died, most of them Muslims, and Mr Modi was being shunned by India's business elite and the world — he was barred from entering the US for almost a decade until he became prime minister.

Until 2014, Narendra Modi told the public he was a single man.

India's election frontrunner Narendra Modi has acknowledged for the first time that he is married, solving one of the biggest mysteries about the private life of the man tipped to be the next prime minister.



## 3. Grammar Page



### GRAMMAR STUDY: Uses of Articles with Different Nouns

#### ➤ Proper nouns

<i>Do not use articles with proper nouns in a general sense.</i>	He flew to Singapore last week. Archi is a good dancer.
<i>Use 'the' when it is treated as a common noun by comparison.</i>	Pokhara can be said the Switzerland of Nepal. Tushar is the Shakespeare of this class.

#### ➤ Abstract nouns

<i>Do not use articles with abstract nouns in a general sense.</i>	Education is every child's birthright. Honesty is the best policy.
<i>Use 'a/an/the' when it is used as a definite idea or comes with adjectives.</i>	The honesty shown by Mr. Rai is beyond question. The school provides an all-round education.

#### ➤ Meals

<i>We do not use articles with meals.</i>	They have invited me to dinner. They take breakfast at home.
<i>Use 'a/an' if an adjective comes before the meal or it refers to a particular meal.</i>	She does not like to eat a big dinner. I had a light breakfast in the morning. She served us a delicious lunch.

#### ➤ Uncountable nouns

<i>We do not use articles with uncountable nouns.</i>	Milk is good for our health. She likes orange juice.
<i>Use 'the' if it is definite.</i>	The milk in this glass is fresh. The juice in that packet contains no added sugar.

#### ➤ Parts of the body

<i>Use possessive pronouns – his, her, my, your, our; etc with a part of the body when it is referred to the person in the subject position.</i>	She cut her finger last week. He kept hitting himself on his face. His nose was bleeding. I've hurt my leg again. Anita put her hand down.
<i>Use 'the' with a part of the body when it is referred to the person in the object position.</i>	Somebody punched Kabir on the nose. Alan gave me a blow on the head. The ball hit the girl in the face. Kabir was punched on the nose.

#### ➤ School, college, church, temple, court, hospital, market, bed,.....

<i>Do not use article if they are used in the sentence for their primary purposes.</i>	They go to school everyday. They sell vegetables in market. His father went to hospital for treatment. The criminals were kept in prison. He was tired so he went to bed early.
<i>Use 'the' if they are used for other purposes.</i>	He went to the school to meet the Principal. He drove past the market. He crossed near the hospital. His mother met him in the prison yesterday. He found his lost watch in the bed.