



**Learn English Through
Stories
D Series**

D20

**Adapted and modified by
Kulwant Singh Sandhu**

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1. The Tastiest of All

King Singh ruled over the kingdom of Singha Purana. He was a king who took his job very seriously. Every now and then he would leave the palace in the evening, dressed in the clothes of an ordinary man, to listen to what his people had to say about him and his ministers.

Once, he set out on a full-moon night. He walked into a little garden just in time to hear four girls debating an interesting issue: what is the tastiest thing of all? One said, "Meat is the tastiest food of all." Another said, "No, it is liquor (alcohol)." The third said, "I think it is love, even though it is a feeling, not a food." And the fourth said, "It is hunger."

The four friends argued amongst themselves, not knowing that the king was listening in the bushes behind them. The king had to go away after a while and he never got to hear the end of the argument. The next day, he woke up wondering who won the debate and what the reasons the winner gave were. He summoned the four girls to court. They came, trembling in fear, and were even more fearful when the king said that he had heard their conversation the night before. Now he said, "Each one of you claimed a different thing as the tastiest of all. What were your reasons? If they are good, I will reward each of you."

So the first girl said, "I think meat is the tastiest thing in the world, even though I am a priest's daughter and have never tasted it."

"Then how can you say so?" asked the king in surprise.

"Our house is opposite a butcher's shop. Every evening, the butcher throws the leftover bones and meat outside the shop. A big crowd of dogs gathers there and fights over these few pieces of meat. And after they are done, flocks of flies sit on the bones. So I think meat must be very tasty."

The king liked her reasoning and gave her a reward. Then he turned to the second girl. "Why did you say liquor is tasty? Have you ever had any?"

The girl shook her head. "My father is a school teacher and no one in my family has had a drop of liquor ever. But I too stay opposite a shop—a liquor shop. There I see many people every day, spending so much money on their drinks. Often their families come and plead with them to come back home. Old parents and mothers with little children beg their sons, brothers and husbands

to come home, but these people don't listen. They are only interested in their next glass. That is why I think liquor must be very tasty.”

The king liked her argument too and gave her a reward. Now the third girl said, “I think love must be very tasty because I have seen how it transformed my sister. She used to be shy and obedient. But when she fell in love with a man my father did not like, she thought nothing of running away with him in the middle of a dark stormy night.” The king smiled and rewarded her too.

Then the last girl said, “I agree with them. But there is one thing that is tastier than all the things they mentioned, and that is hunger. If your stomach is full, the grandest of feasts will be tasteless, but on an empty stomach the most ordinary, even stale food will taste like nectar. Hunger makes our food tasty, whether we are young or old, rich or poor.”

The king now knew who the winner of the argument was. He gave the last girl a big reward for her clever words.

2. The Elephant and the Tailor



There lived a tailor in a small village. His name was Pappu Darji. In the nearby jungle lived an elephant. His name was Hathi Banta. The village was in the middle of the jungle and a river. Every day, the elephant went to the river to drink water and take a bath. He always went through the village. Whenever he passed tailor's shop, he stopped there for a while. Pappu Darji always gave the elephant something to eat. In this manner, they became friends.

There also lived Dhanpat Lal in the village. He was a rich business man. One week, his daughter was getting married. Pappu Darji was stitching a Lehenga dress for her. Two days before the wedding, when she came to try the Lehenga dress — it was too tight for her. The daughter was quite plump. No wonder, her name was Motto Rani.

There was a big argument whose fault it was. Pappu Darji said, "I stitched the Lehenga according to the measurements given..."

Later on that day, the elephant was passing through the village. As usual he put his trunk inside the shop. The tailor was not in a good mood as he had a quarrel with Dhanpat Lal. So he didn't have anything for the elephant.

The tailor instead of giving him something to eat pricked a needle into his trunk. Dhanpat Lal also said some nasty words to the elephant. The elephant silently went away.

The elephant reached the river and took his bath. After that he filled muddy water in his trunk. On his way back he stopped at the tailor's shop and threw all the muddy water on the clothes in the shop. All the clothes were destroyed including a white suit of Dhanpat Lal.

What happened on the wedding day?

The wedding took place. But Dhanpat Lal had to wear his old Kurta Pajama — Motto Rani was wrapped in with her mother's old blue Sari.

3. The Jackal and the Arrow



Once upon a time, there lived a hunter in a village. He was living there happily with his family. One fine morning, he set out from his home with the intention of hunting a deer in the nearby forest. It was a fortunate day as he saw a deer and killed him instantly. He hung the carcass of the deer over his shoulder and happily started for his home.

The Hunter had barely walked a distance, when he saw a wild Boar. He quickly dropped the deer on the ground and shot the boar with an arrow. The arrow pricked the Boar's neck projecting through his back. Before collapsing, the Boar gave a fearful groan and killed the Hunter with his pointed tusks. In no time, the Hunter and the Boar, both were lying dead at the same spot.

After some time, a Jackal happened to pass through that place. He saw a man and a boar, both lying dead at the same spot. At a distance, he also found a dead deer. The hungry Jackal got crazy to find so much to eat at the same time and that too without any effort. He was overjoyed at the sight of mouth relishing flesh and said, "Ah! What a luck I have! It looks as if I am going to have a feast, but I'll eat only a little at a time so it will last longer".

He began to think that with whose flesh to start his feast, the man or the animal. He decided to lick the blood first and taste a little flesh stuck around the arrow. But, as soon as, he put the pointed arrow in his mouth, it pricked his jaws and went through his head. The Jackal died a greedy death on the spot.

Moral: Greed never pays.

4. Three Wishes

Once upon a time, a woodcutter lived with his wife. He would make money by cutting wood and selling it in the market. This was the only way for him to earn money.

One day, he went to the forest to cut wood. He enjoyed the beauty of nature and started to sing a song. He came across a huge tree. The tree was so big that it had enough wood for the rest of his life. He wanted to cut the tree to obtain wood.

He took his axe to cut the tree, but at that moment, he heard a sound, "Please don't cut this tree." This surprised the woodcutter, and he looked around but could see no one. He picked his axe up, and the moment that he was going to hit the tree, he heard the same sound, "Show mercy to me. Don't cut the tree." He again looked here and there, but there was no one around. He was shocked. Then, a fairy showed up and said, "I am a fairy. This tree is my house. I live in the trunk in winter and in the branches for the remaining seasons of the year. If you cut this tree, you will destroy my house. The winter is coming soon, and I can die because of the cold. If you don't destroy my house, I will fulfil your three wishes."

The woodcutter became so happy because he won't need to work anymore. He accepted the proposal. Then he ran to his house to tell his wife this happy news. His wife wasn't expecting him so early. She was surprised to see her husband coming earlier than usual. She said, "Why did you come so early today? You seem to be very happy. What happened?"

The woodcutter replied, "I was very lucky today. We will be very rich soon." He began to dance. His wife couldn't figure out what was happening and said, "I don't understand what you are talking about."

The woodcutter told what had happened to him. His wife became so happy. The woodcutter said to his wife, "I am starving. Give me some food to eat." His wife said, "You wouldn't come so early, so I didn't prepare anything, but I can prepare something immediately." The woodcutter said, "No, you don't need to. I have three wishes to fulfil. I want sweets and a hot plate of rice pudding as a first wish."

Immediately after he told this, a hot plate of pudding appeared before him. He started to eat and as he was finishing the plate, it filled continuously. He also told his wife to eat it, but she was quite angry and told her husband, "One of the wishes was lost. You wasted it, now I wish the pudding will stick on your face." Then the hot pudding pasted on woodcutter's nose. The woodcutter got

so frustrated and said, "What have you done! You wasted the second boon. It was a very silly thing." He wanted to clear hot pudding, but he couldn't. His wife said, "We have the last boon. We can ask a lot of money." The woodcutter wasn't happy with this and said, "There is a plate of hot pudding on my face and you still want money. I can't believe this. I wish this pudding should be cleared now!" The pudding was cleared and the woodcutter relieved.

Thus, they wasted all the wishes and lost the opportunity to become rich. They couldn't make use of the luck coming to them and continued the poor life as usual.

5. Grammar page

Some adjectives tell you which place or country a person or thing comes from, or belongs to. They are called **adjectives of origin**.



Chinese kungfu



an **Indian** temple



A **Filipino** shirt



a **Mexican** hat



Dutch clogs

Australian apples
a **Balinese** dancer
the **English** language
the **French** flag
an **Italian** car
a **Japanese** garden
a **Scottish** kilt
Thai boxing

Some adjectives tell you the **color** of things.



Please get me some **white** paint.



The sky is **gray**.

The sea is **blue**.
George is wearing **brown** shoes.
I don't like **green** apples.
Carrots are **orange**.
Flamingos are **pink**.
Eggplants are **purple**.
Roses are **red**.



Your hands are **black**!