



Learn English Through Stories

A Series

A37

**Adapted and modified by
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The ugly duckling

By Hans Andersen



A duck sat on her eggs in the woods. She sat there for a long time. Then the eggs opened and some ducklings came out.

The ducklings put their heads outside the eggs. 'Tchick, tchick!' they said.

'Quack, quack!' answered the mother duck. She stood up. 'They aren't all here,' she thought. 'The largest egg isn't open. Do I have to sit here all day?' She sat down again.

An hour later, the big egg opened. 'Tchick, tchick,' said the duckling, and it fell out of the egg. But oh! It was very big and ugly! The duck looked at it. 'That's a very big duckling!' she said. 'It's very strange.'

The next day the mother duck took the ducklings down to the river. She jumped into the water. 'Quack, quack!' she cried, and the ducklings jumped into the water, too. The water went over their heads, but the ducklings started to swim. The ugly duckling jumped in the water, too.

'He can swim. He's a clever duckling,' the mother duck thought. 'He's quite pretty now, in the water.' She called to her ducklings: 'Quack, quack! Come with me! We're going to see the other ducks. But stay near me - and don't go near the cat!' So they went into the garden, and the ducklings stayed near their mother. But the other ducks looked at them and said, 'Now there are too many ducks in this garden. And that big duckling is very ugly. We don't want him here.'

One of the ducks started to push him away.

'Leave him,' the mother duck said. 'He won't hurt you.'

'He's big and ugly, so we don't want him near us,' the ducks said.

'He isn't beautiful, but he's a very good child,' the mother duck told the other ducks. 'He's clever and he swims very well. He stayed in his egg for a long time, so he's different from the other ducklings.'

But the ducks and hens were unkind to the poor duckling. 'He's so big!' they all said.

The duckling was very unhappy. 'They don't like me because I'm ugly,' he thought.

Nobody spoke to him or went near him. His brothers and sisters were unkind, too. 'We want the cat to catch you, you ugly duckling!' they cried.

After the first day, the mother duck said sadly, 'I want you to go away!'

The ugly duckling ran out of the garden. The little birds in the trees were afraid. 'They're afraid of me because I'm ugly,' the duckling thought.

He ran and ran. Then he came to a big field. Some wild ducks lived there. He stayed in the field all night.

In the morning, the wild ducks saw the duckling. 'Who are you?' they asked. The ugly duckling could not answer. Poor thing! He was very sad.

He stayed in the field for two days. Then two wild geese talked to him. 'You're very ugly but we like you,' they said kindly. 'Come with us and be a wild bird.'

BANG! It was the sound of a gun. The two wild geese fell down dead on the ground. BANG! A lot of wild geese flew up into the sky. BANG!

There were men with guns everywhere. First, they killed the wild geese. Then their dogs ran through the fields to the river. The duckling was afraid and closed his eyes.

A big dog came near him. When he saw the duckling, he opened his big mouth. Then he looked at the duckling again and ran away.

'The dog doesn't want to eat me because I'm ugly!' the duckling thought.

All day he heard the sound of the guns. He waited a long time before he left the river. Then he ran very quickly across the fields.

The duckling came to a small house. The door of the house was open, so he walked inside.

An old woman lived in the house with her cat and her hen. The next morning the cat and the hen saw the duckling and made a lot of noise.

'What is it?' the old woman asked. She looked everywhere in the room, but her eyes were not good.

'Oh, it's a fat duck!' she said. 'Good! Now I'll have duck's eggs.'

The old woman, the cat and the hen watched the duckling. They waited for a long time, but there were no eggs. The cat and the hen got angry with the duckling.

'Where are your eggs?' the hen asked.

'I haven't got any eggs,' the duckling answered.

'Then don't talk to us.'

And the cat said, 'Can you make a nice noise? I make a nice noise - purr, purr.'

'No, I can't,' the duckling answered.

'Then don't talk to us,' the cat said.

The poor duckling was very unhappy. 'I want to go into the river again,' he told the hen.

'Why?' the hen asked. 'You're only thinking about the river because you're bored. Give us some eggs! Then you'll be busy and you won't think about the river.'

'But it's nice in the river,' the duckling said. 'The water goes over your head. It's very nice.'

'You're ill!' the hen said. 'Ask the cat. She thinks you're ill too! Who wants water over their head? Nobody! Ask the old woman. She'll tell you. She doesn't want to go in the river!'

'But it's very nice,' the duckling said again.

'What? Nice? Do you know more than the cat and the old woman? You live in a nice house with kind people. Be happy! Give them some eggs, or make nice noises.'

'I want to go to the fields and the woods and the river again,' the duckling said.

'Then go now,' said the hen.

So the duckling went to the river and jumped into the water. But nobody spoke to him because he was so ugly.

It was winter. The days were very cold and it started to snow. 'I'm going to die,' the poor duckling thought.

One night, when it was nearly dark, some large, white birds flew near him. 'They're very beautiful birds,' he thought. They were swans. They flew up and up in the sky. They were on their way to a warm country across the sea. The ugly duckling watched them for a long time.

'Ah! I'll always remember those beautiful birds. What are they? Where are they going?' he thought. He loved them more than anything. 'I don't want to be as beautiful as those birds. I know that isn't possible. But why can't I live with the other ducks in the garden? Then I'll be happy.'

The river was so cold! The duckling could not stay in the water because it was too cold. One night, he fell down in the snow.

In the morning, a man came to the river. He saw the duckling and he took the little bird home to his wife.

The man's children wanted to play with him, but the duckling was afraid. When he tried to run away, he fell into some milk. The man's wife shouted, and the duckling was more afraid. He jumped onto some food and ran everywhere.

The woman shouted again and hit him. The children tried to catch him and they shouted, too. The door was open, so the duckling ran out into the snow.

The poor duckling walked through the fields and the woods. Sometimes he wanted to sit down in the snow and die. But he lived through the winter and one day he saw the sun again.

The duckling stood up. He was bigger now and he could fly high up in the sky. Up, up he flew!

He came down in a large garden by a river. There were a lot of beautiful trees in the garden. Oh! Everything was lovely!

Three beautiful white swans flew down from the sky to the river and sat on the water. The duckling remembered them. 'I saw those birds before,' he thought. 'I'll go and talk to them. They'll kill me because I'm ugly. But I'll try.'

He ran to the water and swam to the beautiful birds.

'Kill me,' said the poor duckling. He put his head down near the water, and he saw... What did he see in the water? He saw a swan! He was not a fat, ugly duckling, he was a swan! He was born from a swan's egg!

The other swans were happy to see him. Then some little children ran into the garden. They threw bread into the water, and the youngest child cried, 'There's a new swan!'

The other children looked at him. 'The new bird's very young and beautiful,' they said. 'He's the most beautiful swan in the world!'

The young swan was very happy! 'Nobody liked me before,' he thought, 'but now I'm beautiful. And I'm the happiest swan in the world!'

2. Grammar Page

Articles: a, an and the:

Guess the answers: a, an, the or, nothing.

1. I got my sister..... CD and..... new book for her birthday. I don't think she liked..... CD, though.
2. Is this..... first time you've stayed at..... Hilton?
3. She started her career as..... teacher but now she's.....journalist.
4. Is..... Nile or.....Amazon..... longest river in..... world?
5. I took..... bus and then.....train to the airport. bus was on time but.....train was late.
- 6... Several million visitors..... year are attracted to..... ski slopes on Alps.
7. I'll meet you outside..... post office. I'll be there in quarter of hour.
8. We lived in..... Netherlands before moving here. But before that, we worked in.....Middle East.

Answers

1. I got my sister **a** CD and **a** new book for her birthday. I don't think she liked **the** CD, though.
2. Is this **the** first time you've stayed at **the** Hilton?
3. She started her career as **a** teacher but now she's **a** journalist.
4. Is **the** Nile or **the** Amazon **the** longest river in **the** world?
5. I took **a** bus and then **a** train to the airport. **The** bus was on time but **the** train was late.
6. **Several** million visitors **a** year are attracted to **the** ski slopes on Alps.
7. I'll meet you outside **the** post office. I'll be there in **a** quarter of **an** hour.
8. We lived in **the** Netherlands before moving here. But before, that we worked in **the** Middle East.

5. Picture Dictionary Page



lawnmower (लानमोवर) A machine used for cutting grass. घास काटने की मशीन.



leaf (लीफ) It is green and grows on plants and trees. पत्ता; पंखुड़ी.



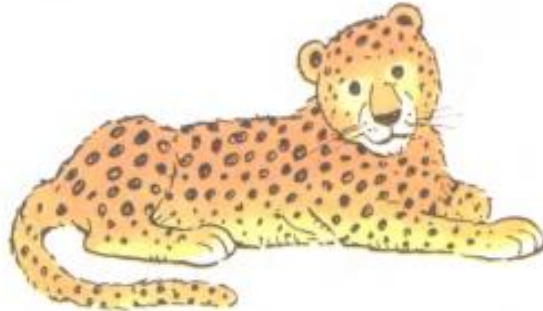
leap frog (लीप फ्रॉग) A game in which one person jumps over another. एक खेल जिसमें झुके हुये खिलाड़ी के ऊपर से कूद कर खिलाड़ी निकलते हैं.



leg (लेग) We have two legs. We walk with them. They are joined to our body. टाँग; लात.



lemon (लेमन) A yellow very sour fruit. नींबू.



leopard (लेपर्ड) A fierce animal which looks like a large cat. तेंदुआ.



letter (लेटर) A message which is written down on paper and then put in an envelope. पत्र; लिखित सन्देश; चिट्ठी.

A

letter (लेटर) A mark that stands for a sound we say. Words are made from letters. अक्षर; वर्ण.



lettuce (लेटिस) A plant with big green leaves. You eat lettuce without cooking it. बन्दगोभी की तरह का पौधा; एक प्रकार का सलाद.