



**Learn English Through Stories**

**A1 Stories**

**Elementary Level**

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# HONEYSUCKLE

TEXTBOOK IN ENGLISH FOR CLASS VI



# 1. Taro's Reward

## A Japanese Story

A YOUNG woodcutter named Taro lived with his mother and father on a lonely hillside. All day long he chopped wood in the forest. Though he worked very hard, he earned very little money. This made him sad, for he was a thoughtful son and wanted to give his old parents everything they needed.

One evening, when Taro and his parents were sitting in a corner of their hut, a strong wind began to blow. It whistled through the cracks of the hut and everyone felt very cold. Suddenly Taro's father said, "I wish I had a cup of saké; it would warm me and do my old heart good."

This made Taro sadder than ever, for the heart-warming drink called saké as very expensive. 'How do I earn more money?' he asked himself. 'How do I get a little saké for my poor old father?' He decided to work harder than before.

Next morning, Taro jumped out of bed earlier than usual and made his way to the forest. He chopped and cut, chopped and cut as the sun climbed, and soon he was so warm that he had to take off his jacket. His mouth was dry, and his face was wet with sweat. 'My poor old father!' he thought. 'If only he was as warm as I!'

And with that he began to chop even faster, thinking of the extra money he must earn to buy the saké to warm the old man's bones.

Then suddenly Taro stopped chopping. What was that sound he heard? Could it be, could it possibly be rushing water?

Taro could not remember ever seeing or hearing a rushing stream in that part of the forest. He was thirsty. The axe dropped out of his hands and he ran in the direction of the sound.

Taro saw a beautiful little waterfall hidden behind a rock. Kneeling at a place where the water flowed quietly, he cupped a little in his hands and put it to his lips. Was it water? Or was it saké? He tasted it again and again, and always it was the delicious sake instead of cold water.

Taro quickly filled the pitcher he had with him and hurried home. The old man was delighted with the saké. After only one swallow of the liquid he stopped shivering and did a little dance in the middle of the floor.

That afternoon, a neighbour stopped by for a visit. Taro's father politely offered her a cup of the saké. The lady drank it greedily, and thanked the old man. Then Taro told her the story of the magic waterfall. Thanking them for the delicious drink, she left in a hurry. By nightfall she had spread the story throughout the whole village.

That evening there was a long procession of visitors to the woodcutter's house. Each man heard the story of the waterfall, and took a sip of the saké. In less than an hour the pitcher was empty.

Next morning, Taro started for work even earlier than the morning before. He carried with him the largest pitcher he owned, for he intended first of all to go to the waterfall. When he reached it, he found to his great surprise all his neighbours there. They were carrying pitchers, jars, buckets — anything they could find to hold the magic saké. Then one villager knelt and held his mouth under the waterfall to drink. He drank again and again, and then shouted angrily, "Water! Nothing but water!" Others also tried, but there was no saké, only cold water.

"We have been tricked!" shouted the villagers. "Where is Taro? Let us drown him in this waterfall." But Taro had been wise enough to slip behind a rock when he saw how things were going. He was nowhere to be found.

Muttering their anger and disappointment, the villagers left the place one by one. Taro came out from his hiding place. Was it true, he wondered? Was the saké a dream? Once more he caught a little liquid in his hand and put it to his lips. It was the same fine saké. To the thoughtful son, the magic waterfall gave the delicious saké. To everyone else, it gave only cold water.

The story of Taro and his magic waterfall reached the Emperor of Japan. He sent for the young woodcutter, and rewarded him with twenty pieces of gold for having been so good and kind. Then he named the most beautiful fountain in the city after Taro. This, said the Emperor, was to encourage all children to honour and obey their parents.

## **1. Questions and Answers**

### **1. Why did Taro run in the direction of the stream?**

**Answer:** Taro had been busy in chopping .He had an ardent desire to work harder and earn a bit more so that he could buy sake for his old father .But suddenly he heard the sound of a stream flowing. He had no knowledge about a stream in that area. He was thirsty even .So to discover the fact and to quench his thirst he ran to the direction of the stream.

### **2. How did Taro's father show his happiness after drinking sake?**

**Answer:** To the contrary to his expectations, Taro's father got the tasty sake brought by Taro from the magic stream .With delight he drank the sake and was elated to the utmost. His shivering body got a little relief and he stopped quivering .He was so happy that he danced in the middle of the floor.

### **3. Why did the waterfall give Taro sake and others water?**

**Answer:** Taro had some virtues which made him simple, innocent and thoughtful. His thoughts were from the core of his heart. When he reflected thoughtfully about his father's pitiable condition and desired to do the utmost to arrange sake for his father, the magic took place.. The waterfall produced fine sake instead of cold water.

### **4. Why did the villagers want to drown Taro?**

**Answer:** Hearing the story of Taro, all the villagers reached the stream next day. But they found waterfall producing only cold water. They went furious thinking that Taro cheated them with a false story. Out of fury to punish Taro, they wanted to drown him.

### **5. Why did the Emperor reward Taro?**

**Answer:** The noble act of Taro inspired the emperor. Taro's care love and duty to his parents inspired him to reward Taro. He wanted to encourage the all other children of the country to follow the noble tenets of Taro. He wanted them to be kind, caring and loving to their parents.

## 2. Choose the correct option.

1. Taro earned very little money because:

- (i) he didn't work hard enough.
- (ii) the villagers didn't need wood.
- (iii) the price of wood was very low.

2. Taro decided to earn extra money:

- (i) to live a more comfortable life.
- (ii) to buy his old father some saké.
- (iii) to repair the cracks in the hut.

3. The neighbour left Taro's hut in a hurry because:

- (i) she was delighted with the drink.
- (ii) she was astonished to hear Taro's story.
- (iii) she wanted to tell the whole village about the waterfall.

4. "This made Taro sadder than ever."

'This' refers to:

- (i) a strong wind that began to blow.
- (ii) Taro's father's old age.
- (iii) Taro's inability to buy expensive saké for his father.

5. "This, said the emperor, was to encourage all children to honour and obey their parents."

'This' refers to:

- (i) the most beautiful fountain in the city.
- (ii) rewarding Taro with gold and giving the fountain his name.
- (iii) sending for Taro to hear his story.

**Answers:**

1. (iii) the price of wood was very low.
2. (ii) to buy his old father some saké.
3. (iii) she wanted to tell the whole village about the waterfall.
4. (iii) Taro's inability to buy expensive saké for his father.
5. (ii) rewarding Taro with gold and giving the fountain his name.

## 2. The Quarrel

*I quarrelled with my brother  
I don't know what about,  
One thing led to another  
And somehow we fell out.  
The start of it was slight,  
The end of it was strong,  
He said he was right,  
I knew he was wrong!*

*We hated one another.  
The afternoon turned black.  
Then suddenly my brother  
Thumped me on the back,  
And said, "Oh, come along!  
We can't go on all night —  
I was in the wrong."  
So he was in the right.*

### 3. Kalpana Chawla



KALPANA Chawla said that she never dreamed, as a child in Karnal, that she would cross the frontiers of space. It was enough that her parents allowed her to attend engineering college after she graduated from Tagore School.

After a Bachelor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering, against great opposition from her father, she went for a master's degree to the United States of America. She later earned her Ph.D. in aerospace engineering. Kalpana Chawla was the first Indian–American woman astronaut to blast off from the launch pad at Cape Canaveral, Florida, and participate in a successful mission in space. Her family from India cheered along with staff at the Kennedy Space Centre as they watched the *Columbia* lift off.

Kalpana was born in Karnal, Haryana, but was a naturalised U.S. citizen, married to flight instructor Jean-Pierre Harrison. Besides being an astronaut, she was licensed to fly single and multiengine land aeroplanes, single-engine seaplanes and gliders. She was also a certified flight instructor. After qualifying as a pilot, Kalpana began to consider another challenge: applying to NASA's space shuttle program. She was first hired as a research scientist at NASA. In 1994 she was selected by NASA for training as an astronaut.

When asked what it was like being a woman in her field she replied, "I really never, ever thought, while pursuing my studies or doing anything else, that I was a woman, or a person from a small city, or a different country. I pretty much had my dreams like anyone else and I followed them. And people who were around me, fortunately, always encouraged me and said, 'If that's what you want to do, carry on'."



Kalpana's first space mission in the space shuttle, *Columbia*, was 15 days, 16 hours and 34 minutes long. During this time she went around the earth 252 times, travelling 10.45 million kilometres! The crew included a Japanese and a Ukrainian astronaut. The crew performed experiments such as pollinating plants to observe food growth in space, and tests for making stronger metals and faster computer chips — all for a price tag of about 56 million dollars.

On the Saturday night when the news about the *Columbia* disaster broke, there was shock and disbelief. The town of Karnal spent a sleepless night as thousands of households stayed glued to their television sets in the hope that Kalpana and the crew had somehow survived. A journalist wrote:

*She was a heroine. It takes enormous ability to become an astronaut. You need to know a lot about everything, from biology to astrophysics to aeronautical engineering. In this age of super-specialisation, you must have encyclopaedic knowledge to be an astronaut. Her achievement is awe-inspiring.*

For millions of young Indians, the story of Kalpana Chawla, a girl from a small town who touched the skies, had become an inspiration. In a message that she sent from aboard the space shuttle, *Columbia*, to students of her college in Chandigarh, Kalpana said, "The path from dreams to success does exist. May you have the vision to find it, the courage to get onto it... . Wishing you a great journey." There will surely be many who start off on this journey to fulfil their dreams.

## **1. Questions and Answers**

### **1. Where was Kalpana Chawla born? Why is she called an Indian – American?**

**Answer:** Kalpana Chawla was born in Karnal, Haryana, India.

She was called as an Indian – American because her citizenship was not a pure one. She married to flight instructor Jean – Pierre Harrison and turned into a naturalised U.S. citizen.

### **2. When and why did she go to the U.S. Who did she marry?**

**Answer:** Having completed her B.Sc. in Aeronautical Engineering she decided to move to U.S. for higher studies.

She got married to a flight instructor — Jean Pierre Harrison.

### **3. How did she become an astronaut? What gave her the idea that she could be an astronaut?**

**Answer:** After qualifying as a pilot she thought to take up another challenge. She applied for NASA's space shuttle program. She was first selected and hired as a research scientist. Later in the year of 1994 she was selected for the training as an astronaut. Her aspirations that she could be an astronaut gave her the idea of being an astronaut.

### **4. What abilities must an astronaut have, according to the journalist?**

**Answer:** According to the journalist to be an astronaut only specialisation in subject is not enough. An astronaut must have an enormous ability to become an astronaut. An astronaut must know a lot about everything. An astronaut must have knowledge from biology to astrophysics to aeronautical engineering. And in this age of super-specialisation one must have encyclopaedic knowledge to be an astronaut.

**5. Describe kalpana Chawla's first mission in space.**

**Answer:** Along with a Japanese and a Ukrainian astronaut Kalpana Chawla had her first mission in space. This mission in space shuttle Columbia lasted for 15 days 16 hours 34 minutes. During this span of time they went around the earth for 252 times travelling 10.45 million Kilometres. They performed experiments such as pollinating plants to observe food growth in space, and tests for making stronger metals and faster computer chips. The whole mission cost for 56 million dollars.

**6. What does Kalpana Chawla say about pursuing a dream? Do you agree with her that success is possible?**

**Answer:** Kalpana Chawla is optimistic about pursuing a dream. She believes that path of a dream does exist and one needs to have the vision to find it and courage to get onto it.

Undoubtedly success is possible for those who work with diligence, ambition and determination. Kalpana Chawla, herself is a perfect example of all of these.

## 4. Beauty

*Beauty is seen*

*In the sunlight,*

*The trees, the birds,*

*Corn growing and people working*

*Or dancing for their harvest.*

*Beauty is heard*

*In the night,*

*Wind sighing, rain falling,*

*Or a singer chanting*

*Anything in earnest.*

*Beauty is in yourself.*

*Good deeds, happy thoughts*

*That repeat themselves*

*In your dreams,*

*In your work,*

*And even in your rest.*