



Learn English Through Stories

A Series

A64

**Adapted and modified by
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1. Taro's Reward: A Simple Japanese Story

Kulwant Sandhu

Taro was a young man. He lived with his mother and father in a small house. The house was on a quiet hill. It was far from the village. Taro worked in the forest. He was a woodcutter. He cut wood all day with his axe. He worked hard, but he got little money. This made Taro sad. He loved his old parents. He wanted to give them a good life.

One cold night, Taro sat with his parents in their house. A strong wind came. It made noises in the walls. Everyone was cold. Taro's father shivered. He said, "I want a cup of saké. It is a warm drink. It will make me feel good."

Saké is a special drink in Japan. It is warm, but it is expensive. Taro felt sad. He had no money for saké. He thought, "How can I buy saké for my father? How can I get more money?" Taro loved his father. He wanted him to be happy. He said to himself, "I will work more. I will cut more wood. Then, I can buy saké."

The next morning, Taro woke up early. The sun was not up. He walked to the forest with his axe. Taro started to cut wood. Chop, chop, chop! He worked fast. The sun came up. Taro was hot. He took off his jacket. His face was wet. He was very thirsty. He thought, "My poor father is cold. I am warm from work. I must get money for saké."

Taro worked harder. He cut more wood. Chop, chop, chop! Then, he stopped. He heard a sound. It was like water moving fast. Taro was surprised. He thought, "Water? In this forest? I never heard water here." He dropped his axe. He ran to the sound.

Taro found a small waterfall. It was behind a big rock. The water was clear and beautiful. Taro was thirsty. He put his hands in the water. He drank. It was not water! It was saké! Taro was shocked. He drank again. Yes, it was saké. It was sweet and warm. Taro smiled. "This is magic!" he said.

Taro had a small jug with him. He filled the jug with saké. He ran home. He was happy. He showed the jug to his father. "Father, try this!" Taro said. His father drank a little saké. He smiled. He was not cold anymore. He felt warm and happy. He danced a little in the house! Taro's mother laughed. Taro was happy to see his father smile.

That day, a woman came to visit. She was a neighbour. Taro's father gave her a cup of saké. The woman drank it. She liked it very much. She said, "This is good saké! Where did you get it?" Taro told her about the waterfall. He said, "I found a magic waterfall. It gives saké, not water." The woman was excited. She said, "Thank you for the saké!" Then, she went home.

The woman told everyone in the village. She said, "Taro found a magic waterfall! It gives saké!" That night, many people came to Taro's house. They wanted to see the saké. Taro told them the story. He gave each person a little saké. Everyone drank. They said, "This is the best saké!" But soon, the jug was empty. There was no more saké.

The next morning, Taro woke up early again. He took a big jug. He wanted more saké from the waterfall. He walked to the forest. When he got to the waterfall, he was surprised. Many villagers were there! They had jugs, pots, and buckets. They wanted saké, too.

One man ran to the waterfall. He put his mouth under the water. He drank. Then, he shouted, "This is water! Not saké!" Another man tried. He said, "Yes, only water!" The villagers were angry. They said, "Taro lied to us! Where is Taro? We will throw him in the water!" But Taro was smart. He hid behind a rock. He watched the villagers.

The villagers were very angry. They said, "This waterfall is not magic. Taro tricked us!" One by one, they left. They took their jugs and buckets. They went back to the village. Taro came out from behind the rock. He was alone. He thought, "Is the saké gone? Was it a dream?" He put his hand in the water. He drank. It was saké! It was still magic for him.

Taro understood. The waterfall was special. It gave saké to him because he was kind. He wanted saké for his father, not for himself. The villagers wanted saké for themselves. They were greedy. The waterfall knew this. It gave them only water.

Taro went home with his jug of saké. He told his parents the story. His father said, "You are a good son, Taro. You work hard. You love us." Taro's mother smiled and said, "We are proud of you."

Soon, people in the village talked about Taro's story. The news went far. It reached the Emperor of Japan. The Emperor was a very important man. He heard about Taro and the magic waterfall. He wanted to meet Taro. He sent men to the village. They said, "Taro, come to the Emperor's palace."

Taro was nervous. He went to the palace. It was big and beautiful. The Emperor was kind. He said, "Taro, I heard your story. You are a good son. You work hard for your parents. You are honest and kind. I want to give you a gift." The Emperor gave Taro twenty pieces of gold. Taro was very happy. The gold would help his family.

The Emperor said more. "Taro, you are a good example. I want all children to be like you. They must love and obey their parents. I will name a fountain in the city after you. It will be called Taro's Fountain. This will encourage children to be kind and generous." Then, the Emperor added, "Taro, learning is important. I will send a teacher to your house. The teacher will help you learn to read and write."

Taro went home. He gave the gold to his parents. They bought a better house. They had food and warm clothes. Soon, a teacher came to Taro's house. The teacher was kind. He taught Taro every day. Taro learned to read books. He learned to write words. It was hard at first, but Taro worked hard. He loved learning. He read stories about heroes and adventures. He wrote his own stories, too.

Taro's stories were good. He wrote about the magic waterfall. He wrote about kindness and love for family. People in the village read his stories. They liked them. They told others about Taro's stories. Soon, people in other villages read them, too. Taro became famous. People said, "Taro is a good writer. His stories teach us to be kind."

Taro was happy. His parents were proud. They said, "Taro, you learned to read and write. Now, you help others with your stories." Taro still worked in the forest, but he also wrote every day. His stories made people smile. They learned to be kind to their families. Taro's Fountain in the city reminded everyone to be good and to learn. Taro showed that kindness and education can make life better.

Moral: Be kind and selfless, like Taro. Help your family with love. Education is important. When you learn to read and write, you can do great things, like Taro.

2. Comprehension Questions and Answers for Taro's Reward

Question 1: Where did Taro live?

Question 2: What was Taro's job?

Question 3: Why was Taro sad?

Question 4: What did Taro's father want to drink?

Question 5: What did Taro find in the forest?

Question 6: Why did the villagers get angry?

Question 7: Who gave Taro twenty pieces of gold?

Question 9: What did Taro do with his new skills?

Question 10: What is the moral of the story?

Answers

Answer 1: Taro lived in a small house on a quiet hill.

Answer 2: Taro was a woodcutter. He cut wood in the forest.

Answer 3: Taro was sad because he had little money to help his parents.

Answer 4: Taro's father wanted to drink saké.

Answer 5: Taro found a magic waterfall that gave saké.

Answer 6: The villagers got angry because the waterfall gave them water, not saké.

Answer 7: The Emperor of Japan gave Taro twenty pieces of gold.

Question 8: What did the Emperor give Taro besides gold?

Answer 8: The Emperor gave Taro a teacher to learn to read and write.

Answer 9: Taro wrote stories and became famous.

Answer 10: Be kind, help your family, and learn to read and write to do great things.

3. Picture Dictionary

smoking
(स्मोकिंग)

धूम्रपान करना



sweeping
(स्वीपिंग)

सफाई करना;
झाड़ू लगाने का
कार्य



snowing (स्नोइंग) हिमपात

swimming (स्विमिंग) तैराकी; तैरना



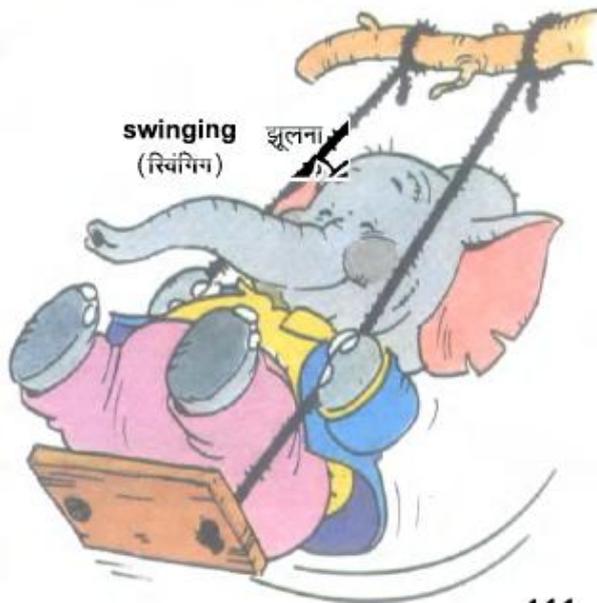
spinning
(स्पिनिंग)

बुमाना या चक्र
लगाना



swinging
(स्विंगिंग)

झूलना



stroking
(स्ट्रोकिंग)

हाथ फेर कर प्यार
करने की क्रिया

