

THE BEAVER AND THE LUMBERJACK



BY CAROL MONTGOMERY

The Beaver and the Lumberjack

Adapted from Aesop's Fables

By Carol Montgomery

Time = about 3 minutes

Readability: grade 3.3

CAST (2-4+):

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Beaver

Lumberjack

Casting Suggestions: (If students read more than one part encourage them to use different voices.)

2 Readers: Reader 1 = Narrator 1 and Beaver
Reader 2 = Narrator 2 and Lumberjack

3 Readers: Reader 1 = Narrators 1 and 2
Reader 2 = Beaver
Reader 3 = Lumberjack

4 Readers : as written

Choral Readers Theater:

Teacher = Narrators 1 and 2 (Model and keep things moving.)

Group 1 = Beaver

Group 2 = Lumberjack

Have the groups switch character parts for more practice.

The Beaver and the Lumberjack

Vocabulary:

accidentally

appeared

beautiful

broadly

commotion

cutting

disappeared

dropped

dumbly

fiddlesticks

happily

honest

how'd

immediately

important

initials

lumberjack

narrator

reflection

retrieving

slipped

swimming

unfortunately

woodsman

yellowed

The Beaver and the Lumberjack

Adapted from Aesop's Fables

By Carol Montgomery

Narrator 1: An honest, hard-working lumberjack was cutting down a tree on the bank of a river. Unfortunately, his hand slipped and his axe fell in the water and immediately sank to the bottom.

Narrator 2: Being a poor man who could not afford to lose the most important tool of his trade he sat down and moaned...

Lumberjack: *(moans)* Oh, fiddlesticks! Now what am I going to do? I can't swim. My axe is at the bottom of the river and I have no other way to make money. *(moans loudly)*

Narrator 1: Beaver lived around that river, heard the moans, and he appeared.

Beaver: *(happily)* Yo! Hey there! What's up? Why all the commotion?

Lumberjack: *(moans)* I'm a poor, honest, hard-working man who makes a living cutting down trees and selling the wood. But, I accidentally dropped my axe just now in the river. I have no other way to make money. *(moans louder)*

Beaver: No problem, Friend. Life happens. I can swim. I'll be right back.

Narrator 2: So, Beaver slid down the steep bank and dove into the river, retrieving an axe of solid gold.

Beaver: Is this golden beauty your axe?

Lumberjack: Wow! I wish it was mine! That is a beauty! But no, that's not my axe. *(moans)*

Beaver: Okie dokie. Don't go away. I'll be right back.

Narrator 1: So, Beaver slid down the steep bank and dove into the river, retrieving an axe of solid silver.

Beaver: Hey, Mr. Woodsman, look at this baby shine! I can see myself in the blade! *(smiles at his reflection)*

The Beaver and the Lumberjack

Narrator 2: And Beaver held up the silver axe.

Lumberjack: (*moans*) That's beautiful. But, it's not mine.

Beaver: No problem, Friend. I'll just go swimming again. This is like a treasure hunt!

Narrator 1: The Beaver disappeared again, sliding down the steep bank and diving into the water.

Lumberjack: (*moans*) Oh, God, please help me! Bring that which is hidden to light. Show me what to do.

Narrator 2: When Beaver returned he had the man's axe.

Beaver: Hey ho! What do you know? Could this old thing be your axe?

Lumberjack: (*stares dumbly*) You're kidding! That has to be my axe! I see my initials carved on the handle! How'd you do that?

Beaver: I just didn't give up.

Lumberjack: Hmm... Good point. But, how can I thank you? You've gone out of your way to help me.

Beaver: It's what I do. I see you are an honest and good man. Here, take your axe. But, you must also take the gold and silver axes as a reward for telling the truth. (*smiles broadly*) See these teeth?

Narrator 1: And the beaver flashed a yellowed grin.

Beaver: They're better than an axe in cutting down trees—I can't lose them! (*smiles again*)

Narrator 2: The lumberjack kept staring at the teeth then finally said...

Lumberjack: (*stares at teeth*) Wow! Would you look at that! Maybe we should become partners?

All: The End (*all bow*)



The Beaver and the Lumberjack

Curriculum Links (Valid February 2021)

(Based on “The Beaver and the Woodman” from a book I have; however, online you’ll find “Mercury and the Woodsman.”)

<https://www.storyarts.org/library/aesops/stories/honest.html>

Storyarts short **printable version of “The Honest Woodcutter.”**

http://aesopsfables.org/F156_Mercury-and-the-Woodsman.html

This is a **printable version of “Mercury and the Woodsman” IF you copy paste it into a document.** The font is easy to read, although the story is longer than the one in the book I have.

<http://www.aesopfables.com/cgi/aesop1.cgi?sel&MercuryandtheWoodman>

Small print, but here’s **another free online version of “Mercury and the Woodman”**— basically the same story as “The Beaver and the Lumberjack.”

<http://www.parenting-by-example.com/aesop-fables/MERCURY-AND-THE-WOODMAN.pdf>

Parenting-by-Example’s printable 2-page PDF “Mercury and the Woodman” with a classic illustration and a moral.. There is very little dialogue.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Honest_Woodman

Wiki article on “The Honest Woodman,” also known as “Mercury and the Woodman” and “The Golden Axe,” one of Aesop’s fables.

<http://talkingtreebooks.com/character-education-lesson-plans.html>

Talking with Trees’ **“Character Education Lesson Plan—Honesty, Conscience” for grades K-1 and 2-4, but somewhat adaptable.** Includes discussion topics and extension resources (not reviewed).

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/honesty-lesson/>

Pinterest board on “Honesty Lesson” with several ideas for teachers and families.

<http://www.drawingcoach.com/how-to-draw-a-cartoon-beaver.html>

“How to Draw a Cartoon Beaver with Easy Step by Step Drawing Tutorial”

(List continued on next page.)

YouTube Links for The Beaver and the Lumberjack (Valid Feb. 2021)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNg1G92IZmA>

Have Fun Teaching's upbeat "**Truth Song Honesty Song**" with **great lyrics** on getting elementary students to embrace honesty. (Note: Mark, from Have Fun Teaching, has more character building songs.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WELkRnpgBhw>

Here are the **lyrics on slides for same song**. Students can learn the words while they sing with the video, "Honesty Song Lyrics".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lasXPVg916w>

"The Honest Woodcutter..." 4 chapters of an animated video with the **words of the fable printed on the screen**. There are separate voices and the narration is read slowly so you may read along (**ELL?**). This version uses a fairy (dressed like a fairy mermaid) to help the woodcutter find the axe. There are several changes to the simple Aesop version, but it includes "Sneaky Boris" (chapter 3) who tries to trick the fairy because he is greedy. The fairy turns Boris into a frog because of his greed. The story says the beautiful fairy still lives in the river—don't try to trick her. (NOTE: Children could create their own illustrated versions if they think of this as a Readers Theater script being read.) 9:47

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXWUm25ns-0>

Youtube video animation of "Mercury and the Woodman—Aesop's fables." This version does not allow as much thinking as some versions because of the extra narration. It does not include anything about another dishonest woodman, though. 2:43

