

Reading for Meaning

Welcome, story supporter!

**We hope that you and your child
have fun with this story.**

**Nurturing and supporting
your child is important for
their physical, emotional and
academic development.**

**ZERO
DROP/OUT**

**Part of the Zero Dropout campaign working towards
halving the rate of school dropout by 2030.**

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The four friends

Ndlebende was a very old donkey. For many years he had worked hard for his master. Now he was worn-out and too old to work. But Ndlebende did not have a kind master. His master didn't want to keep the old donkey anymore.

"I will have to kill that lazy old donkey," said his master. "I cannot feed a donkey that does not work."

Poor Ndlebende heard what the master said. He knew he would die if he stayed with his master. So Ndlebende decided to run away. He wanted to go and join the wild animals that lived in the fields.

Ndlebende started to walk before the sun rose. He walked all morning. On his way, he met a dog. The dog greeted him and wagged his tail, just like dogs do when they greet a friend.

"Woof-woof! Hello, I've run away from my master," said the dog. "I served him faithfully for years, but one day he said to me, 'I don't

need you anymore. You're too old to chase burglars now. Get out of my house and go and sleep outside.' So I'm running away. I don't trust humans anymore."

"Well, I'm in the same boat," said Ndlebende. "Let's walk together."

So the dog and Ndlebende walked along together. Soon they became friends.

As they were walking along, they met a friendly cat.

"Me-ow! Hello, I've run away from my master," said the cat. "My master did not want me anymore. He said I was too old to catch mice. I don't trust humans anymore."

"Well, we are in the same boat. Do you want to join us?" said Ndlebende and the dog. So the cat joined the dog and Ndlebende on their journey. Soon the three became friends.

"Cock-a-doodle-doo!" said a friendly voice. But

there was no one standing on the road! Was this a ghost?

“Cock-a-doodle-doo! Hello!” they heard again. “Look up!”

And there, sitting in a tall tree above the three friends, was a rooster.

“Why are you so high up in the tree?” asked Ndlebende.

“My master wanted to eat me for supper,” said the rooster. “I flew away as fast as I could. I’m getting away. I want nothing to do with humans. I don’t trust them anymore.”

“Well, we are in the same boat! Do you want to join us?” said the three friends. “These humans are cruel; we should have nothing to do with them. We can look after each other.”

So then they were four friends.

The four friends travelled together to look for

a new home. Before long, they found an empty hut.

“Look! Let’s live here,” said the dog. They all went inside. No one was inside, but there was something lying all over the floor.

“What’s this?” asked the cat. The friends looked and saw many animal bones lying on the floor.

“Oh no!” said the rooster. “If we stay here, the man who lives in this hut will eat us too!”

The rooster had hardly finished his sentence when, oh no!, the friends heard heavy footsteps.

“The human is coming!” whispered Ndlebende.

“We can’t go outside; he will see us!” cried the dog.

“We will be eaten!” said the rooster.

“Wait!” said Ndlebende, “I have a good idea!” He was a very clever donkey.

“Dog, stand on my back,” said Ndlebende. So the dog jumped up and stood on the donkey’s back.

“Cat, stand on Dog’s back!” said Ndlebende. So the cat jumped up and stood on the dog’s back.

“Rooster, climb onto Cat’s back!” said Ndlebende. So the rooster flew up and onto the cat’s back.

They looked like a tower, one on top of the other. The rooster was the lightest. He stood on top of the cat. Then came the cat on top of the dog. Then came the dog on top of Ndlebende the donkey.

Then Ndlebende said: “When he comes in, each of you shout as loudly as you can! And do not stop until we chase him away!”

The four friends stood very quietly and waited, silent, inside the dark hut.

Suddenly a foot kicked the door open. The man who lived in the hut came in.

“Now!” shouted Ndlebende.

“Hee-Haw! Hee-haw! Woof woof! Meow! Meow!
Cock-a doodle doo!”

The four friends shouted at the tops of their voices.

And what did the man see?



A tall dark shape that looked like a monster, making a terrible noise. Three of them waved their tails! One flapped his wings! And they all made as much noise as they could.

The man yelled “Eeee!” and ran out of the hut and down the road as fast as he could, shouting at the top of his voice: “Get away from me! Get away from me! Help! Big monster! Help!” He ran and ran and he never came back again!

When the four friends saw him running away,

their scary shouting turned into laughter: “Ha ha ha ha”.

After that, do you know what the four friends did? They made that hut into their own safe home. And they lived there happily for many more years. And every now and again they would tell the story of what happened that night, and they would laugh and laugh.

And that is the end of the story.

EXTEND THE STORY...

Let's create
the animals



ARTS &
CRAFTS

WHAT TO USE

*Crayons, old magazines, glue stick, scissors
and a blank piece of paper*

WHAT TO DO

- After reading the story, ask your child to draw the four animals in the story on a piece of paper or they can use cut-outs from an old magazine to glue on the piece of paper.
- Ask your child to write the names of the

characters next to their pictures (a character is a person, animal or thing in a story).

Don't forget to make sure that you are with your child when they use scissors to cut. This hand exercise will help them develop their fine motor skills.

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