Name: _____ Date: _____

The Donkey in the Lion's Skin

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 239 words

A donkey was walking home along a dusty path. In a ditch he saw something big and golden.

It was a lion costume, like the ones players wear. Somebody had dropped it from a cart.

The donkey had an idea. He wriggled into the costume. It was a bit tight, but it fit.

He pulled the mask over his head. Only his long ears stuck out. He tucked them in as best he could.

Then he set off for the village. He walked slow and tall, just like a lion.

The hens saw him first. They squawked and ran off, flapping, in all directions.

A dog yelped and hid under a cart. The pig dashed into the mud. The goats jumped right over the fence.

"Ha!" thought the donkey. "Everyone is afraid of me!" He felt as grand as a king.

He strutted into the market square. A fox sat in the shade by the well, watching.

The donkey wanted to roar. He opened his mouth, and out came a "Hee-haw!"

Everyone stopped and stared. Then the old fox began to laugh and laugh.

"I might have run away, too," he said. "But then I heard you bray."

The animals crept out. A hen pecked at the mask and tugged it off. There stood a donkey with long, long ears.

The whole village laughed. The donkey folded up the costume. He trotted home, braying loudly, and no one ran.

Questions

1. What did the donkey find in the ditch?

A. A lion costume
B. A hat
C. A bell

2. What did the donkey do that gave him away?

A. He ran
B. He brayed
C. He sat down

3. Why did the fox know it was a donkey?

A. He saw its tail

B. The fox had seen the costume

C. He heard it bray

4. What does "strutted" mean in this story?

A. Walked proudly

B. Fell down

C. Ran away

5. What does this fable show?

A. You cannot hide who you are for long

B. Donkeys are kings

C. Costumes are hard to wear

Words to know

costume: dress-up clothes
wriggled: squirmed
strutted: walked proudly
squawked: cried loudly
bray: donkey's cry
mask: face cover

Answer key: The Donkey in the Lion's Skin

1. A. A lion costume
2. B. He brayed
3. C. He heard it bray
4. A. Walked proudly
5. A. You cannot hide who you are for long