Name: _____ Date: _____

# The Milkmaid and Her Pail

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 248 words

The morning sun was just rising. A farm girl had finished milking the cows.

She balanced the pail of milk on her head. It was full and heavy, but she walked carefully.

"This milk will make cream," she thought. "The cream will make butter. I will sell the butter at the market."

"With the money, I will buy a dozen eggs. The eggs will hatch into chickens. The chickens will grow fat and healthy."

She smiled happily. She could almost hear the chickens clucking. Soon the whole yard would be full of them.

"I will sell some chickens and buy a beautiful dress. It will be green, with a yellow ribbon."

She hurried along a little faster. The pail rocked on her head, but she never noticed.

"I will wear it to the fair on Saturday. Everyone will stop and admire me."

"Some people will invite me to come along. But I will say no. I will toss my head, like this!"

She tossed her head. The pail tipped, and wobbled, and slid right off.

Splash! The milk ran down the path and into the dust. Not a drop was left.

The girl stared at the empty pail. There was no cream, and there was no butter. There were no eggs.

There were no chickens and no beautiful dress, either. They had all gone with the milk.

She picked up the pail with a sigh. Then she walked back to the cow. This time she watched her feet.

## Questions

**1. What did the girl carry on her head?**

A. A basket of eggs
B. A pail of milk
C. A green dress

**2. Why did the milk spill?**

A. She tossed her head
B. A cow bumped her
C. She tripped on a stone

**3. What had the girl really got, before it spilled?**

A. A yard full of hens
B. A new dress
C. Only a pail of milk

**4. What does "wobbled" mean in this story?**

A. Fell flat
B. Rocked from side to side
C. Stood still

**5. What does this story show?**

A. Plan with what you have, not with what you have not got yet
B. Never carry a pail
C. Hens are better than cows

## Words to know

pail: bucket
cream: rich milk
market: place to sell
hatch: come out of eggs
fair: country show
wobbled: rocked

# Answer key: The Milkmaid and Her Pail

1. B. A pail of milk
2. A. She tossed her head
3. C. Only a pail of milk
4. B. Rocked from side to side
5. A. Plan with what you have, not with what you have not got yet