

Have you ever been called lazy?

Today we have a story and some scenarios to share with you. We'll be doing lots of thinking in question time, and we'll be hearing from other children, too.

Are you comfortable? Let's get started with a story.

This story is called 'The ants and the grasshopper'.

One bright day towards the end of summer, a family of ants is bustling about in the warm sunshine,

searching for stalks of wheat. The stalks are big and heavy - much too big for one ant to carry. But when they all work together, they can just manage to carry the stalks of wheat over the hard stones and the dry leaves and the rough pieces of bark, all the way to the hole that leads down to their nest.

The ants are hard at work, when suddenly the ant at the front of the line, stops.

"Can you hear music?" he asks the other ants. As he speaks, the sound of the music gets louder and louder. The sound of the music is beautiful. And just then, they see a grasshopper coming towards them, chirping and singing and playing his violin.

"What are you doing?" the grasshopper asks the ants.

One ant replies confidently, "We are storing up food for the winter that's coming, and you should be doing the same."

The grasshopper places his violin back under his chin and starts responds, singing: "Winter is far away, and it is a beautiful day to play."

And the grasshopper chirps and sings and plays some more. And the ants keep on working.

Now I have some questions for you.



The ant says to the grasshopper, 'We are storing up food for winter, and you should do the same'. Why do you think the grasshopper didn't take the ant's advice?

Let's see what some other children are thinking.





Olive: The grasshopper thinks he has plenty of time, because he says that winter is far away.

Max: And he was having fun and he didn't want to stop and do some work.

Joe: He was being lazy.



'He was being lazy'. What do you think?

What do others think about that?



Max: Yes, I agree. He is being lazy because he should be working, getting ready for winter.

Olive: Maybe, or maybe he was right. Maybe grasshoppers can gather food up faster than ants.

Ruk: I don't know if I agree. He wasn't exactly being lazy, because he was still practising his music.



Did the grasshopper think carefully about what the ant said?



Max: I don't think so. He just kept on singing – like he wasn't really thinking about what the ant said.



Why do you think that was?

*Could it be that the grasshopper was too lazy to think carefully about what the ants said?
What do others think?*



Ruk: Yes, it's not as if he stopped and thought about it and decided it was okay for him to keep playing music right now.

Joe: Yeah, he didn't even really stop to think about it.



So, is that being lazy?

What do you think?



Max: Yes, I think you could call that being lazy – too lazy to think about what you should do.



Do you think the grasshopper was being lazy?

What makes you think that?

Let's listen to some scenarios to help us think more about what we mean by 'being lazy'. This scenario is about Ty. Ty is in high school, in year 10, and for the last week his class has had lots of

tests. They have tests in all their subjects. Ty really wants to do well, and he has been studying really hard for ages.

Now it's Friday afternoon, and he's just finished the last test. As soon as he gets home, he flops onto the couch. Ty says, 'I don't want to do anything. I'm going to sit here and watch my favourite movie. And I'm going to eat ice-cream and those chocolates I got for my birthday.'



*Do you think it is okay for Ty to spend the afternoon watching a movie and eating ice-cream and chocolates, now that the tests are over?
Why do you think that?*

Let's see what some other children are thinking.



Olive: Yes, it might be okay to have a rest after you've been working hard.

Joe: He can take a rest now, because he's earned it.

Max: But even though he's finished the tests, he still could keep trying to improve.

Ruk: I think he could go outside and get some exercise instead of just lying around.



*What do you think? Is Ty being lazy?
What if Ty had done this before the tests - if he'd watched movies or TV instead of studying for the tests? Would that have been lazy?
What do others think about that?*



Olive: Yes, that's being lazy. You should try to do your best, and that means putting in the work.

Max: Well, I think it is okay to take some time off occasionally. You can't study all the time.

Joe: Yeah, it's not being lazy if you just take a break while you are working hard.

Ruk: Well, even if that is being lazy, it's okay to be lazy sometimes.



*Hmm... 'It's okay to be lazy sometimes? What do you think?
What do others think?*



Olive: No. I don't think that you should ever be lazy. That's just wasting your life.

Max: I think it's okay sometimes, if it's not going to hurt you.

Ruk: Yes, it's okay because you don't have to try your hardest at everything you do. Sometimes it's okay just to do things for fun. I do swimming for fun.



What do you think? Is it okay to be lazy sometimes?

Let's listen to one more scenario – this one is about Elsa.

Elsa is really good at maths. In maths lessons she's always the first to finish the work that the class has been set, and she hardly ever makes a mistake. So, she always gets to do the harder extra questions at the end of the worksheets. She usually does these pretty quickly too.

Today, as usual, Elsa races through the maths problems on the worksheet. But then, instead of turning over to look at the extra questions, she puts down her pencil and stares out the window.

'All those numbers,' she thinks to herself. 'How weird to think they go on forever! How can anything go on forever? What does that even mean - forever? And what are numbers anyway? Are they real - out there in the world, like tables and chairs? Or do we just make them up?' 'These questions are so hard,' she thinks to herself. 'I wonder what the answers might be. Maybe I can ask Mr Bond.'

And then she realizes that Mr Bond is standing next to her. He's smiling.

Mr Bond says, "Can I have your worksheet please, Elsa?" But as he picks it up, he notices that Elsa hasn't done any of the extra questions.

"Elsa", Mr Bond exclaims, "you've been really lazy this lesson!"



Is Mr Bond right?

Has Elsa been lazy? What do you think?

Let's see what some other children are thinking.



Leon: No, she hasn't been lazy because she's been thinking about maths questions.

Joe: I think Elsa would feel pretty bad about being called lazy by Mr Bond.

Ruk: Well, she should have done the other questions instead of sitting there.

Olive: But they're extra questions and that means she doesn't have to do them, right?

Max: Elsa was sort of doing her own extra questions instead, so she's not been lazy.



In the scenario, we heard what Elsa was thinking about – questions she wanted to know about the maths she was working on. Will thinking about these questions help Elsa? What do you think?

Let's have a listen to what others think, too.



Max: Elsa was still thinking about maths stuff, so I think that helps her.

Ruk: It might help I suppose, but she got into trouble off her teacher.

Joe: Maybe Elsa could tell him what she was thinking about.



Has Elsa done something wrong? What do you think?

Let's think about what we've heard in this lesson:

The grasshopper was playing music and not storing up food for the coming winter.

Ty was resting after studying hard.

Elsa was thinking about other ideas about numbers and not doing the extra questions on her worksheet.



What do you think counts as being lazy, and is there anything wrong with being lazy?

We heard some really interesting ideas today! Thank you for joining us. You might like to keep thinking about what counts as being lazy and whether there is anything wrong with being lazy. Have a talk to your family and friends about what they think, too.

Photo credit: Thanks to Ty for staging the photo and his dad for the photography

Thank you to our wonderful actors Joe, Leon, Max, Olive and Ruk who helped us to hear different points of view. While sometimes these points of view might have reflected their own opinions, at other times they were asked to express an opposing view in order to help us think more deeply about the topic.