

How much bread should the pig get?

Today we have a story to share with you. It's a story about a little red hen.

We'll be doing lots of thinking in question time, and we'll be hearing from other children, too. Let's get started with the story.

Once upon a time there was a little red hen. All day long she walked about the farmyard, scratching at the ground, looking for worms.



That's what the little red hen ate - big, fat, juicy worms.

Nearby, a cat slept in the sun. The cat didn't bother himself with the mouse, who ran here and there as he wished. And in his stall, the pig gobbled up the apples and carrots and cabbages the farmer had left for him.

This is how things were on the farm - until one day the little red hen discovered something small and hard lying in the dirt. It was a grain of wheat.

'That's much too hard for me to eat,' she thought.

And then she had an idea. She picked up the seed in her beak and took it to show the other animals.

'Who will help me plant this grain of wheat?' the little red hen asked the others.

'Not I,' squeaked the mouse. 'I'm far too busy teasing the cat.'

'Not I,' snorted the pig. 'I'm far too busy eating.'

'Not I,' meowed the cat. 'I'm far too busy lying in the sun.'

'Well then,' said the little red hen, 'I will plant it myself.'

And she did. She carried the grain of wheat to the field and covered it with dirt. Then she picked up a bucket with her beak and carried it to the dam. She filled it with water and carried the now heavy bucket to the field. And then she watered the grain of wheat.

Through the long, hot summer days, the pig grew fatter and fatter, the mouse grew cheekier and cheekier, and the cat grew lazier and lazier. And the little red hen kept on scratching in the dirt for worms, just as she always had. Meanwhile, out in the field, the wheat grew into a tall green stalk, and then it ripened in the sun, and turned golden.

Then the little red hen ran once more to the other animals.

'Who will help me cut the wheat?' she asked.

'Not I,' squeaked the mouse, 'It's much too hot.'

'Not I,' snorted the pig, 'I'm waiting for my dinner.'

'Not I,' meowed the cat, 'I'm much too tired.'

'Very well,' said the little red hen, 'I will do it myself.'

And she did. She carefully cut the stalk and took all the grains of wheat out from the husks. And one by one she dropped the grains into a sack.

Then the little red hen called out: 'Who will help me carry the wheat to the mill so that it can be ground into flour?'

'Not I,' snorted the pig, 'that sack is too heavy.'

'Not I,' said the cat, 'the mill is too far.'

But the mouse squeaked, 'I will help you take the wheat to the mill.'

'Thank you, mouse,' said the little red hen.



*Mmmmm, I wonder why the mouse decides now to help the little red hen?
What do you think?*



Rory: Well, maybe the mouse has nothing else to do, so she is able to help.

Ben: She's seen how hard the little red hen is working and wants to help her.

Sarah: I think that the mouse might be starting to feel bad that she hasn't helped the hen before this and maybe she is also hoping that the little red hen will give her a reward for helping.

Okay, let's return to the story. So, together, the little red hen and the mouse dragged the heavy sack of wheat to the mill and asked the miller to grind it into flour. And when the grinding was done, they took the beautiful white flour back home.

'Who will help me to make the flour into bread?' asked the little red hen.

'Not I,' snorted the pig, 'I'm much too busy.'

But the cat said, 'I will help you make the flour into bread.'

And the mouse said, 'I too will help you make the flour into bread.'

'Thank you, cat and mouse,' said the little red hen.

And so together, the cat and the mouse and the little red hen mixed the flour into dough. And then they kneaded the dough and put it into the oven to bake.

The smell of hot fresh bread filled the farmyard. The pig sniffed the air with delight and hurried over to the others.

Then the little red hen turned to the other animals and said, 'Who should get to eat this bread?'

'I don't know,' said the mouse.

'I don't know,' said the cat.

'I don't know,' said the pig.

'What I mean is,' said the little red hen, 'how should we share the bread? Should we all get an equal share? Or should some of us get more than others?'

Now I have some questions for you...



What do you think ...should all the animals get the same amount of bread?



Sarah: No, the hen should definitely get most of the bread because it was her idea and she did most of the work.

Ben: Yes, I think they should all get the same amount because they all live together and they're friends.

Rory: No. I don't think that all the animals should get an equal share, because not all the animals did the same amount of work.



Should the cat and the mouse get the same amount of bread?



Sarah: No, because the work would have been harder for the mouse because he's smaller, so I don't really think that that's a fair opportunity for him.

Ben: I think so, they both helped the hen.

Leo: No, because the cat only helped once and the mouse helped twice.

Sarah: But not as much as the hen - she should get most, then the mouse, then the cat, then the pig.

Rory: No, I don't think they should get the same amount as they are different sizes ...a mouse would eat less than a cat, right?



So...how much bread should the pig get? Should he get as much as the cat or the mouse?



Sarah: I would say the pig gets nothing because he did nothing!

Leo: Well, I reckon that would make the pig really angry!

Anna: Well, he might feel sad too because he's being left out by his friends.



And so, how much bread should the pig get?



Anna: I think the pig should get a little bit of bread because he didn't help, but if they decided to give him some then maybe he'll help out next time.

Leo: None, because he helped zero times.



If you were the little red hen, would you share the bread with the pig?



Sarah: I wouldn't, because it won't be fair because I think that maybe the mouse and the cat would get angry, because like hey, we did the work, why is the pig getting some?

Leo: If I were the hen, I would just share the bread equally with them all because they live together and they're friends.

Ben: But friends would have helped when she asked and they didn't.

Sarah: ...well not til the end when it actually looked like she was onto something. So, if I were the hen, I would give each what they deserved.

Rory: If you share some bread with the pig he'll never learn.

Leo: I think it's just nice to share with others.

We've heard some really interesting ideas today. Thank you for participating. We've been thinking about sharing and how to be fair.

You can talk to your family and friends about this too.

Photo credit: Kameron Kincade on Unsplash

Thank you to our wonderful actors Anna, Ben, Leo, Rory and Sarah 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.