

# 1. Pumpkin in a Jar

Once upon a time, a king, went to ride in the forest. He rode so fast that he was separated from his companions. Finally, he stopped his horse to rest a while. He was thirsty, and so was his horse. But there was no sign of water nearby.

**Wandering about**, the king saw a small **thatched** hut that was surrounded by a garden. A young woman was working in the garden. She didn't notice the king standing at the gate.

'Excuse me, I'm **terribly** thirsty. May I have some water to drink?' called the king.

The **maiden** turned in surprise. She recognised the king and bowed low.



'Your Majesty, of course, I can get you cool water right now, but I only have an old clay jar to serve the water in. I'm afraid you will have to drink out of that.'

'Never mind the jar. If the water is cool, I will gladly drink from the old clay jar,' the king replied.

The maiden went inside the hut, **fetches** a jar and filled it with cool, clear water.

The thirsty king drank it with pleasure. After he had given his horse some water as well, the king gave the jar back to the maiden. The maiden took the jar and all of a sudden, she struck the jar on the wall of the hut and it **shattered** to bits. The king was surprised.

He asked, 'Why did you break the jar? I thought this was the only jar you had.'

'I'm sorry, Your Majesty!' the maiden said. 'How could I let anyone else use it after you? I may live in the forest, but I do know how to **pay respect** to the king.'

The king was **impressed**. He had not met anyone like her before. On his way back to the palace he thought, 'She is very thoughtful and kind. I wonder if she is clever too. I'll have to find out.' A few days

later, the king called a soldier and asked him to carry a jar to the maiden.

'Remember,' said the king. 'The jar must have an opening only an inch across the top. Tell the maiden I want her to put a whole pumpkin into it. She must not break the jar or the pumpkin.'

The surprised soldier took the king's message to the maiden in the forest and soon came back with another message. The maiden had said that she would bring the jar to the king in a few months.

The king waited eagerly. After several months, the maiden came to the palace with the jar in her hands. The king was **astonished**. Through the tiny opening of the jar, he could see an enormous pumpkin. He examined the jar closely to make sure that it was the



same jar. It was! What's more! Both the pumpkin and the jar were completely undamaged.

He asked the maiden to marry him on the spot as she was thoughtful, kind and clever! She agreed. When the king found out how she had managed to fit the whole pumpkin into the jar, he laughed long and hard.

Do you know how she did it?

## New Words

<b>wandering about</b>	walking without knowing where one is going
<b>thatched</b>	a roof made of straw or palm leaves
<b>terribly</b>	very thirsty
<b>maiden</b>	a young unmarried woman
<b>fetch</b>	brought
<b>shattered</b>	broke into very small pieces
<b>pay respect</b>	honour
<b>impressed</b>	felt admiration for somebody/ something
<b>astonished</b>	very surprised

## Comprehension

### A. Answer these questions.

1. How was the king separated from his companions?
2. How did the maiden serve water to the king?
3. Why was the king impressed by the maiden? What did he decide to do?

### B. Read the lines from the story and answer these questions.

1. *'Excuse me, I'm terribly thirsty. May I have some water to drink?'*
  - a. Who is the speaker of these lines?
  - b. Who is he speaking to?
  - c. Why was the speaker terribly thirsty?
2. *He examined the jar closely to make sure that it was the same jar.*
  - a. Who does he refer to?
  - b. Why did he want to make sure it was the same jar?
  - c. What was inside the jar?



### C. Think and answer.

1. What kind of a person was the king?
2. Why did the king decide to test the maiden to see if she was also clever?



## Activity

- A. Work in groups of four to find out about things we get from nature—forests, rivers, mountains, and others. Then, make a presentation for your class.
- B. Find the names of different kinds of houses in the grid given below.

J	H	B	U	N	G	A	L	O	W
V	N	D	G	P	N	U	I	R	G
W	P	P	W	V	O	F	G	K	D
C	A	S	T	L	E	O	L	H	P
A	K	C	T	E	N	T	O	E	N
W	G	H	U	T	S	Y	O	Z	W
P	A	P	A	R	T	M	E	N	T
Q	O	G	C	A	R	A	V	A	N
H	O	U	S	E	B	O	A	T	K
F	A	R	M	H	O	U	S	E	N

## Skill Drill Speaking

This project focuses on asking appropriate questions to seek information and answering them.

1. Work in groups of four–five.
2. Take small paper bags and give one to each of the team members. Each team member puts a mystery object in it.
3. Then, the other team members guess what is inside the bag by asking relevant questions.
4. After everyone has asked questions, let the team member holding the mystery bag give clues.
5. Once the object has been correctly guessed, write down what questions were asked and what clues were given.

