

Read the short story. Then answer each question.

The Eagle and the Fox

One morning Freddy Fox said to his hungry, crying children, "I will find us some food for breakfast. Have no fear!" Then he went into the woods.

Freddy saw a big eagle's nest at the very top of an oak tree. How could he reach the nest?

Gathering some branches and vines, he built a long ladder. Freddy climbed up the ladder and peeked into the nest. There were four big eggs!

"Give me one of your eggs," he said to the mother eagle.

She screeched at him. "Never! These are my babies." She flapped her wings and showed him her sharp talons. "You are so rude; I would never give anything to you!"

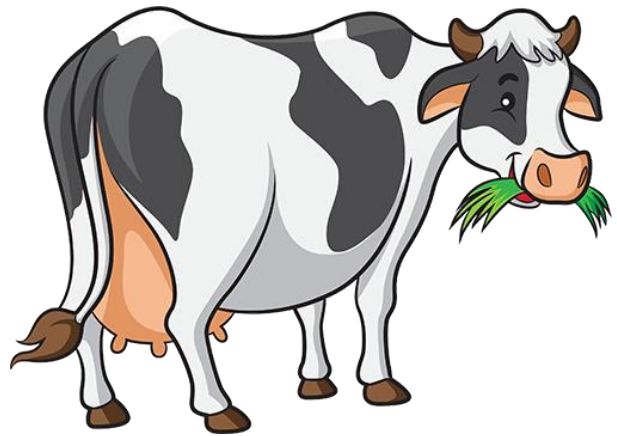
Freddy went back down the ladder as fast as he could go.



“How can I go home without any food for my hungry children?” Freddy groaned.

He continued through the forest and into a meadow. The eagle, curious about Freddy, followed him.

In the middle of the field, a black and white cow stood munching on green grass.



“Give me some milk for my hungry children,” Freddy said.

The cow mooed loudly at him and refused to give Freddy any milk.

The eagle observed all this and silently shook her head.

“What will I do now?” Freddy said to himself. He continued walking. The sun was high in the sky, and he was getting hot. He stopped at a farmer’s well for a drink of water.

“Give me some water,” he said to the farmer.

The farmer yelled at Freddy and chased him away. He did not give Freddy any water. The eagle, still following, shook her head again.

Freddy groaned and began to walk back towards his den. He tried not to think of his hungry children. As he passed a big, red barn, he saw six hens pecking at some grain. "Give me some eggs," he said to them.

The hens ran into the barn.
"Don't eat us!" they clucked.
The barn door slammed shut in front of the fox.



The eagle came down from the sky and landed in front of the fox, silently looking at him.

"Nobody will help me," cried out Freddy.

"That's because nobody wants to help someone who is rude and only thinks of themselves," replied the eagle, before flying away.

As the fox thought about this, an old hen came out of the barn.

"Excuse me, Mrs. Hen," said the Fox. "Could I please speak with you for a moment?"

The hen did not usually speak with foxes, but this one seemed very polite, so she stopped to listen.

“I can see that you have mousetraps around your barn,” stated the fox. Would you like me to chase all the mice away for you?

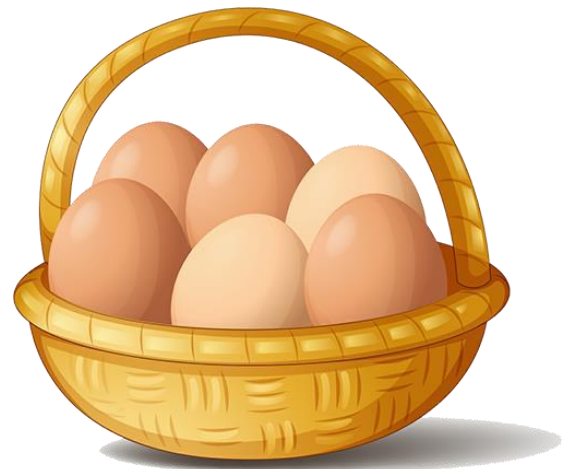
The old hen was surprised and agreed. All the hens were tired of the mice stealing their food.

The fox ran into the barn and spent the next hour chasing all the mice away. He finally came out, tired from his hard work and laid down in the straw. Everything was very quiet. Nothing stirred, not even a mouse – because they were all gone!

The barn door creaked open again, and out came the old hen, carrying a basket full of brown eggs. “We have more eggs than the farmer needs,” she said. “I will give you these eggs, if you promise to say thank you.”

“Thank you very much!” Freddy smiled as he accepted the gift and walked back to his den.

Along the way, Freddy saw the cow again and called out, “Good evening, Mr. Cow. Would you like an egg?”



The cow said he did not like eggs, but he gave Freddy a bucket of milk. Freddy politely thanked him.

Next, Freddy saw the farmer, still standing beside his well. Freddy knew the farmer did not need his eggs or milk. He knew the farmer did not need Freddy to chase away mice.

Freddy slowly walked up to the farmer and said, "Excuse me, sir. Could I please have a drink of water from the well?"

The farmer immediately agreed and let Freddie drink from the well.

Back at his den, Freddy found his hungry pups crying. Leaving the eggs and the milk outside, he said, "I found some breakfast for us."

"Give us the food," the smallest pup said.

Freddy held up his hand. "First, you must say please."

"Please, Papa, may we have some food," the pups asked.

After all the pups said thank you, the fox family enjoyed a very tasty breakfast together.



Questions:

1. Why did the eagle follow Freddy?

2. Why did the hens give Freddy the eggs?

3. Why did the farmer give Freddy water?

4. What lessons did Freddy learn?

Answers:

1. Why did the eagle follow Freddy?
The eagle followed Freddy because she was curious about the fox.
2. Why did the hens give Freddy the eggs?
The hens gave Freddy the eggs because he helped them by chasing the mice away.
3. Why did the farmer give Freddy water?
The farmer gave Freddy water because he asked so politely.
4. What lessons did Freddy learn?
Freddy learned to be polite and think about how he could help others.