

Space Clearing Lesson Plan

For Ages Preschool – Third Grade

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Note: I plan on adding to this and sharing it with other members as well. When I add to it and upload it you will find an announcement in the newsletter. Your name will not be mentioned. The revised version will contain more stories and verses.

Space clearing is like an environmental detox. It also provides the benefits of physical therapy, stress relief, balancing, peace, harmony and much more. Many people discard this activity or put it off because they don't enjoy "cleaning". However, when done in a mindful manner this process is much more than just "cleaning". Each task is a lesson that spans multiple subjects. For example, the process of sorting items satisfies a child's desire to sort things and organize and can also be used as a math lesson (all four processes, geometry and volume), it provides much needed movement and hands-on experiences for the student and each step can be used to go beyond the home and learn something new about a different subject. The steps below are each designed to be complete lessons. Keep this in mind as you go through them. To make sure that they are done in a mindful and educational way be sure to:

- A. Make sure the student is involved in every step. For example, it may seem natural just to set the boxes out for the child to start helping. However, even the small part of the task that involves finding boxes and choosing what room to start with should be part of the educational experience.
- B. Don't rush. Take your time to educate each step of the way. Don't get so involved in sorting things that you hurry the child through the sorting process and forget to reflect on the items you are sorting. Take time to reminisce about items, discuss their function and answer questions about them. Talk about the decision making process, sing some verses, and add or subtract items outloud.
- C. Each step below contains some ideas about what you can do for each step. Expand on these ideas with your own imagination and by listening to your child's request. Perhaps a trip to the landfill inspires the child to want to do a "trash pick up" project on the local nature trail. If this happens, schedule that into the week as part of the lesson. Let the lessons flow naturally and allow for their expansion. Part of this process is getting to know your student better.
- D. When you can tie into the activities below: verses, stories, songs, poems, nature walks, field trips, math, writing, painting, games, movement, reading, writing, painting, cooking and even clay work.

The Process

1. Choose one room to start with: You will do this same process with each room. Don't start another room until you finish one room. You will perform the following steps in each room.
2. Gather, purchase, find or borrow four boxes or tubs. Label them with permanent marker, tape or other method. The student can help you with this. The labels should read as listed below. You can also double this as a lesson for letter "G":
 - a. Goodwill
 - b. Garbage
 - c. Gifts
 - d. Gain
 - e. Group
3. **Goodwill:** Take a trip to Goodwill to deliver the items in the box marked "Goodwill". Use this as an educational field trip. Talk about where the items are going, how people who may not be able to afford new items will be purchasing them, how the store creates jobs for people, and how trips to Goodwill can be a good budgeting decision for any family – no matter what their income level. Also talk about how Goodwill ties into the idea of recycling and community service.
4. **Garbage:** Take a trip to the sanitation landfill to deliver the items in the box marked "garbage". This can be an educational field trip. Take advantage of this trip by pointing out the different kinds of sections they have at the landfill and talk about the topics of recycling, littering and disposal.
5. **Gifts:** Take some time to personally deliver items that you have set aside for particular people, families or organizations. For example, if I have items that may be useful for a preschool I may donate them to the women's center or local church preschool rather than Goodwill. If I have items I know certain friends or family members would find valuable I will give the items to them instead of Goodwill. Sometimes, I may even know someone online who needs one of the items I have. In such cases you can also spend some time packaging up some items to send as gifts.
6. **Gain:** Do you have items you don't need but have value? Set those aside in one box and then take some time to post them to Craig's List, Ebay, or an online list. If you have enough items set them aside for a garage sale. Garage sales are wonderful math lessons!
7. **Group:** Sometimes when I am cleaning a drawer or a cupboard or even a table I find many different items that I know have a particular place in the house – they are just not in that place. Things that may fall into this category include spoons (go in the silverware drawer), socks (go in the sock drawer), batteries (go in the battery drawer in the kitchen), tools (go in the tool box) and so much more! It may take hours to individually find items and put them away but if you toss them all in one box it is much easier to then carry that box around the house later and put things where they belong OR to run from the box to the proper location "back and forth" like a game.

8. **Group: Part Two:** Are you finding a lot of the same kinds of items that don't have a home? Or are there items you know you want to keep but they don't have a place to be? Put these in a box and then take some time to find homes for each of these groups of items. This can also be a lesson in sorting, grouping and volume.
9. **Sage Clearing:** This can be done at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of your cleaning and sorting process. You can also choose to do it more than once. We usually do it at the beginning and at the end. Sage clears negative energy from the air and residue left by past residents, conflicts, or any other unwanted energies in the home. It is a way of "cleaning the slate" so you can start fresh. For this reason, sage clearing needs to be done on a regular basis. Some people even do it after any major event, party or conflict in the room. To do this: Take a ceramic or glass bowl and fill it half with sand. Make a little hole in the sand and fill it with sage leaves. Set them on fire and walk slowly around the house with your "sage fire" distributing the smoke. Concentrate especially on the corners and entryways of the rooms.
10. **Fruit Displays:** Purchase some fresh fruits. Choose the majority of fruits that you know your family already likes. However, you should also choose two new fruits that they have never tried before. Have the student arrange these fruits in a beautiful manner in a basket or bowl on the table. Fruits can be displayed in more than one room. However, if it is not the kitchen then try to stay away from fruits like bananas and kiwi that attract fruit flies very quickly.
11. **Flower/Seasonal Displays:** I usually create these from a mixture of store purchased bouquets and harvested items. To do this take a nature walk and gather sticks, stems and flowers that could fit into a vase or in a display. When you return take some time to arrange these in multiple unique ways. You can use a traditional vase. However, also consider using clay, planters, and shallow bowls. You can put the items in water. However, some dried items do not need water and can be stuck directly into clay or other containers. You can also use glass stones, stones, dirt or other ways of displaying the collection.
12. **Aromatherapy:** Purchase a diffuser and add three drops of essential oil to the diffuser. Put it into the center of the room and allow the scent to fill the room. Alternately (or also) chop up some lemons, oranges, and limes and simmer them on the stove for ten minutes. Then move the pot to the room you are cleaning and let the scent fill the room.
13. **Candle:** Have the student choose a place for a candle. Use a small votive or a small finger-sized candle. The candle should be natural beeswax or plain. Do not use artificially scented candles. Light the candle for a half hour at sunset.
14. **Music:** Play some classical music, harp music, flute music, native American music, Enya or other Irish ballads for at least an hour. You don't even have to listen to it. Just let the music flow around the house.
15. **Cinnamon:** Place a few sticks of cinnamon in a creative manner in a bowl on a table. This will help dispell negative energy in the room.

Discussion

Before, during or after the process you can discuss why you are doing this. You want to create a beautiful perfect world for people to come into and invite them in. Don't let people come in and create or change the atmosphere of your home. You control it. If someone comes and leaves a bad "impression" on your home or you have a fight or a serious discussion then burn the aromatherapy candles, burn some sage, buy some more fresh flowers and re-new YOUR space that you control.

Verses

The following verses are good ones to use while cleaning. I will add to this as I find more. You will also find some verses in your curriculum that may fit into this category.

I've Been Working on the Railroad

I've been working on the railroad, all the livelong day

TOOOT TOOT

I've been working on the railroad, just to pass the time away

TOOOT TOOOT

Can't you hear the whistle blowing? Rise up so early in the morn.

TOOT

Can't you see the captain shoutin' Dinah won't you blow your horn?

TOOOOOOOOOT.

This is the Way We Clean our House

(To the tune of Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush)

This is the way we clean our house

Clean our house, clean our house,

This is the way we clean our house

In the afternoon (or whatever time of day it is)

Note: You can add verses like "Sage our house" or "Arrange Flowers" to reflect other tasks you are doing.

It's Time To Cleanup

(Tune: Frere Jacques)

Are you helping,

Are you helping

Pick up toys, Pick up toys

Let us all be helpers,

Let us all be helpers.

Girls and boys, girls and boys.

You can modify this for one child or for the situation you are in. For example – this is another version:

It's Time to Cleanup – Version Two

Are you sorting?
Are you sorting?
Sorting boxes, Sorting boxes
Let us all be organized
Let us all be organized
All through the house.
All through the house.

Whistle While You Work

Just whistle while you work (whistle)
Put on that grin and start right in to whistle loud and long
Just hum a merry tune (hum)
Just do your best and take a rest and sing your self a song.

When there's too much to do
Don't let it bother you, forget your troubles,
Try to be just like a cheerful chick-a-dee.
And whistle while you work (whistle)
Come on get smart, tune up and start
to whistle while you work.

The Boatman's Song

Oh, the boatmen dance and the sing
The boatmen do most any old thing
When a boatman lands on shore
He spends all his money and he works for more.

Chorus: Hi-ho the boatmen row
Up and down the river on the O-HI-O
Hi-ho the boatmen row
Up and down the river on the O-HI-O.

Have you ever seen the place where a boatman lives
In a house in a hall with a roof like a sieve
Oh the boatman swears if he had one wish
If he'd get any wetter he'd want to be a fish.

Stories

The following stories are good ones to use to inspire cleaning and teach about the reasons we do space clearing. As I find more stories I will add to this. You will also find a lot of stories in the Earthschooling curriculum that fit into this category.

The Three Tests

Space Clearing Moral: You own your space. You decide what energy you want to put into it. Even if a "tiger" comes into your space you can fix it.

Once, long ago three tigers came to Africa. They went to the country of the animals and made this terrible announcement.

"From now on, this land will be ruled by the Tigers. We are, after all, the strongest, fastest and wisest of all animals. Therefore, we are the only fit rulers." they claimed. A little mouse spoke up from the crowd, "But we have a council where we make our decisions together, we don't need or want any ruler."

One of the tigers let out a roar so loud and fierce that the poor mouse started running and didn't stop until he was in the land of the humans. To this day, he lives in the houses of humans. Her cousin, the field mouse misses her terribly.

The other animals didn't like the idea much either, but they looked at those tigers' big claws and sharp teeth and were afraid to speak. These tigers were even bigger than the lion.

"We will collect taxes and we'll also change the name of this country. From now on, this will be Tigerland and you will call yourselves servants of the tigers." they said. Finally, Anansi spoke. "Great tigers, it is clear that you are strong, fast and wise, but just so that everyone will know for sure that you are stronger, faster and wiser than anyone else, let us have a contest." Anansi suggested.

The tigers liked the idea, so Anansi continued. "Let us prepare ourselves, then tomorrow we will choose someone to compete against each of you."

So the tigers left and the animals held a private meeting to discuss what to do. The next morning, the animals were ready. The tigers came to the council circle. The strongest tiger spoke first. "Who will compete against me?" he asked.

"I will." said the tiny voice of the field mouse.

The tiger laughed until he cried. "This will not take long." he said.

"Who will race me?" roared the swiftest tiger.

"I will." said the tortoise.

"This is no contest at all!" shouted the tigers.

Hare told the third tiger, "I must bring you to the home of the owl. She is the wisest of all creatures."

"We will see," said the tiger.

First was the contest of strength. The field mouse brought the tiger to a large clearing. They each stood at one edge of the clearing with one end of a rope. Between them was placed hundreds of big thorn bushes. When she gave a signal of two short tugs on the rope, the tiger was to start pulling. The loser would get dragged across the thorns.

The tiger laughed at the little mouse and said that he was ready. She gave the signal, and the tiger began to pull. What he didn't know was that behind the field mouse, standing in the forest was a great bull elephant holding onto the rope. So while the tiger pulled on one end, the elephant pulled on the other. The tiger got dragged all the way through the thorn bushes yelling, "Ouch! OOOCH! Ouch! Ouch!" all the way.

"If this is how strong the mice are, I would hate to see what the other animals can do!" he shouted.

Next was the race. The tortoise brought the fastest tiger to a five-mile stretch of road in the forest. At each mile marker, one of tortoise's cousins was hiding. (To the tiger they would all look alike.)

When the race began, Tiger went zooming away, leaving the tortoise in his dust. As he was coming to the first mile marker, the tiger was laughing to himself.

"How could a tortoise think he could outrun me?" he said.

Just then, Tortoise came out from his hiding place behind the mile marker.

"What took you so long, Mr. Tiger?" he asked politely.

Tiger was shocked. "How did you get here so fast?!" he screamed.

Tortoise didn't answer. He just slowly plodded off toward the next marker. The tiger zoomed past him and ran at top speed to the second mile-marker, only to find Tortoise sitting there waiting.

"I really thought tigers were faster than this." he said, sounding very disappointed.

"I'll beat you yet!" shouted the tiger as he sped to the next marker. At this third marker, Tortoise was sitting down playing a game of Mankala with Anansi and laughing about how easy the race was. Tiger couldn't believe his eyes.

At the fourth marker, Tortoise was asleep, snoring loudly. Tiger sped by him so fast that he left the tortoise spinning like a top.

Finally, tiger was racing toward the finish line. Tortoise was nowhere in sight. Tiger was running at full speed. Nothing could stop him now. Yet, as he got closer to the line, he noticed a little round thing sitting there. It must be a rock he told himself. But as he got closer, he saw that little head and those four little legs and he knew. Tortoise was already there!

"It's impossible!!" he screamed. But no matter how much he screamed, it didn't change the fact that Tortoise had won the race.

Now the hare was bringing the third tiger to the home of the wise old owl. But the hare kept complaining of stomach pains and said that he couldn't walk very well.

"Can't you get someone else to show me the way?" said the tiger angrily.

"I'm the only one who knows the way," whispered Hare, "It's a secret."

Tiger was irritated. "Then you'll just have to ride on my back," he said.

They rode on for a little while, but the hare kept letting himself slide off the tiger's back, so they weren't making much progress.

"If you bring me to my house, I can get my saddle." Hare suggested, "That way, I won't slip off."

So the tiger brought the hare home and let Hare put a saddle on him.

"And if you let me use these reins," Hare continued, "I can steer you left or right without talking so much. I have a sore throat you know."

Tiger agreed. Then the hare went into his house and came out wearing spurs and carrying a whip.

"Wait a minute!" said Tiger, "What's all that for?!"

"Oh I just wear these spurs for show." Hare said. "And the whip is so I can keep the flies off you while you're giving me a ride."

"Okay," said the tiger, "But be careful."

So they rode on, but not to the owl's home. They went right to the council circle. All the other animals were gathered there. When Hare came in sight of the other animals, he

dug his spurs into the tiger's sides and snapped that whip against the tiger's backside and yelled "GITTY UP HORSEY!"

That tiger went jumping and howling through the crowd looking about as foolish as a fool can look. All the animals laughed and laughed. The other tigers were so embarrassed that they pleaded with the hare to stop.

The hare got off the tiger's back and took his saddle and reins. Those tigers agreed never to come back to Africa again. That's why, to this day, there are no tigers in the forests of Africa.

And everyone got along fine in the land of animals with everyone as equals, no kings, no queens, no rulers.

The Old Woman and Her Pig

Space Clearing Moral: Everything has a consequence even if you don't see it. So if someone comes into your space and has an argument or if you leave one thing laying around it will have an effect on something and that, in turn, will have an effect on something else. There is no telling where it all will lead so it is best to keep the space cleared!

Space Clearing Moral #2: Every little bit counts. If you do one thing it will lead to another and another and pretty soon the space will be cleared! Sometimes all you need to do is just start somewhere. Even if the job seems big.

An old woman was sweeping her house, and she found a little crooked sixpence. "What," she said, "shall I do with this little sixpence? I will go to market and buy a little pig." As she was coming home she came to a stile. The piggy would not go over the stile. She went a little farther, and she met a dog, so she said to the dog:—

"Dog, dog, bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"
But the dog would not.

She went a little farther, and she met a stick. So she said:—

"Stick, stick, beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"
But the stick would not.

She went a little farther, and she met a fire. So she said:—

"Fire, fire, burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile;
And I shan't get home to-night!"
But the fire would not.

She went a little farther, and she met some water. So she said:—

"Water, water, quench fire;
Fire won't burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;

Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"
But the water would not.

She went a little farther, and she met an ox. So she said:—

"Ox, ox, drink water;
Water won't quench fire;
Fire won't burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"
But the ox would not.

She went a little farther, and she met a butcher. So she said:—

"Butcher, butcher, kill ox;
Ox won't drink water;
Water won't quench fire;
Fire won't burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"
But the butcher would not.

She went a little farther, and she met a rope. So she said:—

"Rope, rope, hang butcher;
Butcher won't kill ox;
Ox won't drink water;
Water won't quench fire;
Fire won't burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"
But the rope would not.

She went a little farther, and she met a rat. So she said:—

"Rat, rat, gnaw rope;
Rope won't hang butcher;
Butcher won't kill ox;

Ox won't drink water;
Water won't quench fire;
Fire won't burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"
But the rat would not.

She went a little farther, and she met a cat. So she said:—

"Cat, cat, kill rat;
Rat won't gnaw rope;
Rope won't hang butcher;
Butcher won't kill ox;
Ox won't drink water;
Water won't quench fire;
Fire won't burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"

But the cat said to her, "If you will go to yonder cow, and fetch me a saucer of milk, I will kill the rat." So away went the old woman to the cow, and said:—

"Cow, cow, give me a saucer of milk;
Cat won't kill rat;
Rat won't gnaw rope;
Rope won't hang butcher;
Butcher won't kill ox;
Ox won't drink water;
Water won't quench fire;
Fire won't burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"

But the cow said to her, "If you will go to yonder haymakers, and fetch me a wisp of hay, I'll give you the milk." So away went the old woman to the haymakers, and said:—

"Haymakers, give me a wisp of hay;
Cow won't give milk;
Cat won't kill rat;

Rat won't gnaw rope;
Rope won't hang butcher;
Butcher won't kill ox;
Ox won't drink water;
Water won't quench fire;
Fire won't burn stick;
Stick won't beat dog;
Dog won't bite pig;
Piggy won't get over the stile,
And I shan't get home to-night!"

But the haymakers said to her, "If you will go to yonder stream, and fetch us a bucket of water, we'll give you the hay." So away the old woman went. But when she got to the stream, she found the bucket was full of holes. So she covered the bottom with pebbles, and then filled the bucket with water, and she went back with it to the haymakers, and they gave her a wisp of hay.

As soon as the cow had eaten the hay, she gave the old woman the milk; and away she went with it in a saucer to the cat. As soon as the cat had lapped up the milk—

The cat began to kill the rat;
The rat began to gnaw the rope;
The rope began to hang the butcher;
The butcher began to kill the ox;
The ox began to drink the water;
The water began to quench the fire;
The fire began to burn the stick;
The stick began to beat the dog;
The dog began to bite the pig;
The little pig in a fright jumped over the stile;
So the old woman got home that night!

The Ant and the Grasshopper

Space Clearing Moral: Every living being – even animals – need to prepare their space for the season. What season are you in? What preparations do you need to make? Even animals have a place for everything they gather and keep. Where do you think the grasshopper keeps his food and things? What about the ant? Do you think they just gather food and then throw it on the floor?

Out in the field one summer day an Ant was busy gathering grains of wheat and corn for his winter's store. A Grasshopper who was chirping and singing to his heart's content saw the Ant and said:

"Why not come and chat with me instead of toiling all the day?"

"I am working to lay up food for the winter," said the Ant, "and some time you will wish that you had laid away something also."

"Why think about the winter now," said the Grasshopper, "when we have plenty and to spare?"

But the Ant went on his way and continued to work all summer. When it came winter the poor Grasshopper was almost dying with hunger, for the snow had come and covered up all his food. Sadly he came to the Ant and begged for something to eat, but the Ant said: "No. If you had worked in the summer, instead of playing all day, you would never have come to want."

The Elves and the Shoemaker

Space Clearing Moral: We don't all have elves that will help us but one thing is for sure – if you start a task or show an effort – chances are that someone around you will join in to help because your actions inspire others. So just like the shoemaker – if you start cleaning – you will find help. You will not be alone – even if you start alone.

There was once a shoemaker who worked very hard and was very honest; but still he could not earn enough to live upon, and at last all that he had in the world was gone, except just leather enough to make one pair of shoes. Then he cut them all ready to make up the next day, meaning to get up early in the morning to work. His conscience was clear and his heart light amidst all his cares; so he went peaceably to bed, left all his cares to heaven, and fell asleep.

In the morning, after he had said his prayers, he set himself down to his work, when, to his great wonder, there stood the shoes, already made, upon the table. The good man knew not what to say or think of this strange event. He looked at the workmanship; there was not one false stitch in the whole job, and all was neat and true.

The same day a customer came in, and the shoes pleased him so well that he paid a very high price for them, and the poor shoemaker, with the money, bought leather enough to make two pairs more. In the evening he cut out the work, and went to bed early, that he might get up betimes in the morning to begin his work; but he was saved all the trouble, for when he got up in the morning the work was again all finished. Presently in came buyers who paid him handsomely for his goods, so that he bought leather enough for four pairs more. He cut out the work again overnight, and found it finished in the morning, as before; and so it went on for some time— what was got ready in the evening was always done by daybreak, and the good man soon became thriving and prosperous again.

One evening, about Christmas-time, as he and his wife were sitting over the fire chatting together, he said to her: "I should like to sit up to-night and watch, that we may see who it is that comes and does my work for me."

So they left the light burning, and hid themselves in the corner of the room behind a curtain that was hung up there, and watched to see what would happen.

As soon as it was midnight, there came two little naked dwarfs; and they set themselves upon the shoemaker's bench, took up all the work that was cut out, and began to ply with their little fingers—stitching, and rapping, and tapping at such a rate that the shoemaker was all amazement, and could not take his eyes off for a minute. And on they went until the job was quite finished, and the shoes stood ready for use on the table. This was long before daybreak; and then they bustled away as quick as lightning.

The day before Christmas the wife said to the shoemaker: "These little elves have made us rich, and we ought to be thankful to them, and do something for them in return. I am quite vexed to see them run about as they do; they have nothing upon their backs to keep off the cold. I'll tell you what, I will make them each a shirt, and a waistcoat, and a pair of trousers into the bargain; do you make them each a little pair of shoes."

The thought pleased the shoemaker very much; and, one evening, when all the things were ready, they laid them on the table instead of the work that they used to cut out, and then they went and hid themselves, to watch what the little elves would do. About midnight they came in, and were going to sit down to their work as usual; but when they saw the clothes lying there for them they were greatly delighted. They dressed themselves in the twinkling of an eye, and danced and capered and sang as merry as could be, till at last they danced out of the door over the green, and the shoemaker saw them no more; but everything went well with him from that time forward as long as he lived.

This is the House That Jack Built

Space Clearing Moral: Everything in your home is connected in some way. If you clean or fix one thing it will make everything better. So it may seem that your cleaning is progressing slowly or that cleaning one room or one thing won't matter – but it does!

This is the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat

That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the man all tattered and torn
That kissed the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the priest all shaven and shorn
That married the man all tattered and torn
That kissed the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cock that crowed in the morn
That waked the priest all shaven and shorn
That married the man all tattered and torn
That kissed the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

The Hut in the Woods

By Grimm Brothers

Space Clearing Moral: Don't forget aspects of your home when cleaning. Just like in the story where the children kept forgetting to take care of the animals, sometimes we forget to take care of the dust on top of a shelf or a cupboard we never use – but all these items contribute to the energy of the space we are in. Make sure you don't ignore anything in your space! It is all equally important.

A poor woodcutter lived with his wife and three young daughters in a small hut at the edge of a desolate wood. One morning, when he was setting off to return to work, he said to his wife "Let the oldest daughter bring the noon-day bread to me in the woods. Otherwise, I shan't finish. And so that she does not lose her way," he added "I will take a sack with millet and scatter the grains across the path."

When the sun stood in the middle of the sky high above the woods, the maiden began her walk carrying a pot of soup. But the field and forest sparrows, the larks and finches, the blackbirds and siskins had already pecked the path clean of any millet and the maid could not find her way. Trusting luck, she continued on her way until the sun sank and night fell. The trees rustled in the darkness, the owls hooted and the girl became frightened. In the distance, she saw a light blinking between the trees. "People must live there," she thought "and they will keep me over night." She continued to walk toward the light. It was not long before she came to a house whose windows were brightly illuminated. She knocked and a rough voice called out from inside "Come in." The girl entered a dark hallway and knocked on the parlor door. "Enter," the voice called and when she opened the door, there sat an old, icy gray man at a table. Supporting his head in both hands, his white beard flowed over the table and almost reached the floor. But on the hearth three animals rested: a chicken, a rooster and a brindled cow. The maid told the old man about her fate and requested lodgings for the night. The man spoke:

"Lovely hen,
Pretty cock,
And beautiful brindled cow, too,
How do you moo?"

The animals replied "Duks!". (Which translated probably meant: "We are satisfied, healthy and happy!") The old man continued, "We live in abundance here, go to the stove and cook us dinner!"

The maid found the kitchen. Everything was stocked to excess and the girl was able to cook a hearty meal. But the animals thought differently. When the girl entered the room carrying the bowl, she placed it on the table, sat down beside the old gray man and stilled her hunger. Soon she had eaten her fill and said "But now, I am tired. Where is a bed so that I can lie down and sleep?" The animals replied

"You ate with him,
You drank with him,
About us you have not thought,
You shall stay the night where you ought."

The old man spoke "Just climb the stairs, you will find a chamber with two beds. Shake out the bed and cover it with white linen. I will also come up and lie down." The girl went up and when she had shaken out the feather bed and covered it with fresh linen, she laid down in one of the beds without waiting for the old man. After some time the old gray man came, illuminated the girl with his candlelight and shook his head. When he saw that she was almost fast asleep, he opened a trap door and let her drop into the cellar. The woodcutter came home late that evening and accused his wife of letting him starve the entire day long. "I'm not to blame," she replied "The girl went out at midday. She must have lost her way. Tomorrow she will return again." But the woodcutter rose before daylight, wanted to go into the woods and asked for his second daughter to bring lunch this time. "I will take a little sack with lentils" he said. The grains are larger than millet, the girl will see them better and then cannot miss the path." At lunchtime the girl also carried out the meal, but the lentils were gone: the birds of the forest had eaten them like the day before and none were left. The girl wandered around in the woods until night fell. She also arrived at the house of the old man, heard the voice call out inviting her in and requested food and lodgings for the night. The man with the white beard once again asked the animals:

"Lovely hen,
Pretty cock,
And you beautiful brindled cow, too,
How do you moo?"

Once again the animals responded "Duks," and everything repeated itself like the day before. The maid cooked a good meal, ate and drank with the old man and did not take care of the animals. When she asked about her accommodations for the night, they responded:

"You ate with him,
You drank with him,
About us you have not thought,
You shall stay the night where you ought."

When the girl had fallen asleep, the old man came, looked upon her and shook his head. Then he opened the trap door and let her fall into the cellar.

On the third morning the woodcutter spoke to his wife "Today send me the youngest child with the food. She has always been good and obedient. She will find the right way and not like her sisters, swarm around like wild bumble bees."

The mother did not want to heed his request and replied "Must I also lose my dearest child?"

"Do not worry," he replied, "the girl shall not go astray. She is too smart and understanding. I will take peas in abundance with me and scatter them on the path. They are even larger than lentils and will show her the way." But when the girl went out with her basket on her arm, the forest doves already had the kernels in their gullet. She did not know where to turn. Full of dismay, she only thought about how her poor father would hunger and how her good mother would wail if she did not return. Finally, when night fell, she saw the little light flickering in the woods and came to the forest house. In a friendly voice, she asked if she could stay the night and the man with the white beard asked his animals once more

"Lovely hen,
Pretty cock,
And brindle cow too,
What do you moo?"

"Duks," they replied. The girl went to the hearth where the animals lay and caressed the chicken and rooster and ran her little hand over their smooth feathers. She rubbed the brindle cow between its horns. And when at the request of the old man she prepared a good soup and the bowl was on the table, she asked "Am I to eat my fill and the good animals still have nothing?" There is abundance here. Let me care for them first." She went and fetched barley and scattered it before the hen and cock. She brought the cow fragrant hay, an entire arm full. "I hope you enjoy it, dear animals," the girl said. "And when you are thirsty you should also have a fresh drink." She carried a pail full of water inside. The chicken and rooster jumped onto its rim and stuck their beaks inside. Then they held their heads in the air, like birds do when they drink and the brindle cow also took a hearty gulp. When the animals had been fed, the girl sat down next to the old man and ate what he had left over for her. It was not long before hen and cock began to place their heads under their wings. The spotted cow blinked its eyes. The girl spoke "Shall we not go to bed?"

"Lovely hen,
Pretty cock,
And you beautiful brindle cow, too,
What do you moo?"

The animals replied "Duks,"

"You ate with us,
You drank with us,
You always remembered us,

Now we wish you a good night."

The girl climbed the stairs, shook out the feather pillow and covered it in fresh linen. And when she was finished, the old man came and laid down in bed so that his white beard extended to his feet. The girl lay down in the other bed and said her prayer. Then she fell asleep.

She slept calmly until midnight. Then it became so noisy in the house that the girl awoke. Crackling and rustling sounds began to come from the corners, the door fell open and hit the wall, the beams groaned as if they would be torn from their joints and it seemed as if the stairs were about to collapse entirely. Finally there was a loud crashing sound as if the roof had fallen in. But then it became quiet again and because nothing had happened to the girl, she fell asleep once more. But in the morning when she awoke and the sun was shining brightly, what did she see? She awoke in a large hall and all around her everything glistened in royal splendor. On the walls, golden blossoms sprang up on a green silk background. The bed was made of ivory and the coverlet was red satin. Nearby on the stool lay a pair of slippers with pearl stitching. The girl thought it was all a dream but when three richly clothed servants appeared and asked her what her desires were, the girl replied "Just go, I will get up soon and cook a soup for the old man and then feed the lovely hen, pretty cock and brindle cow."

She thought the old man had already risen and looked over to his bed. But he did not lay there, instead there lay a strange man. And when she gazed upon him and saw he was young and handsome, he awoke. He sat up and said "I am a king's son and was enchanted by an evil witch. I had to live in the woods as an old, icy gray man. No one was allowed to serve me except my three servants, a hen, a cock and a brindle cow. And the enchantment would not end until a maiden came to us, of such good heart, that she not only showed kindness to people but also animals. And you are that maiden and tonight at midnight we have been redeemed by you and the old house in the woods has been once more transformed into a royal palace."

And when they got up, the king's son said the three servants should go out and fetch the father and mother of the maid and bring them to the wedding celebration.

"And where are my two sisters?" the girl asked. "I have locked them in the cellar. Tomorrow they will be led into the forest and shall work for the man who burns charcoal until they have improved themselves and do not let poor animals starve."

The Little Girl Who Would Not Work

There was once a little girl who loved to play all day out of doors among the flowers and the bees.

Her mother thought she would grow to be an idle little girl if she played so much. "You are old enough to do some work, little daughter," she said. "Even when you are a tiny girl you can learn to be busy."

But the little girl said: "Oh, mother, I do not like to work. Please let me go to the woods and play just a little while before I do my tasks."

So her mother said she might play, but only for a little while.

The child ran out of the house, and across the garden, and down to the woods as fast as her feet could carry her. As she hurried on, a Red Squirrel jumped across her path and the little girl said to him: "Red Squirrel, you don't have to work, do you? You may just play, and eat nuts from morning till night. Isn't that all?"

"Not work!" chattered the Red Squirrel. "Why, I am working now, and I worked all day yesterday, and all of the day before. I have a family living in the old oak tree, and I must store away nuts for the winter. I have no time to stop and play."

Just then a Bee came buzzing by and the little girl said: "Little Bee, do you have any work to do?"

"Work!" buzzed the Bee. "Why, I am always working, gathering sweets and making the honeycomb for you. I have not time for play."

The little girl walked along very slowly, for she was thinking, and she saw an Ant, down in the path, carrying a very large crumb of bread.

"That crumb of bread is too heavy for you, Ant," said the little girl. "Drop it, and come and play with me!"

"I don't care how heavy it is," said the Ant. "I was so glad to find it that I am willing to carry it. Oh, no, I couldn't stop to play. Once someone stepped upon our house and crushed it. We Ants thought we would go and hunt for a ready-made house, but we traveled a very long way, and we were not able to find a house ready-made, and we were obliged to come home and build. Oh, we have no time to play," said the Ant, as he started on with his crumb of bread.

So the little girl sat down upon a stone, that she might think better, and she said to herself: "The creatures all have their tasks to do, but I don't believe the flowers work. Do

you work, Pink Clover?" she asked of a little flower growing at her feet.

"Oh, yes, I am very busy," said the Pink Clover. "I gather the sunbeams every morning and keep them shut in my petals quite carefully all day long. I drink up all the moisture I can find with my roots, and I grow, and grow, to get ready for the seed time. The flowers must all work," said the Pink Clover.

Then the little girl decided to go home to her mother, and she said: "Mother, the Squirrels and the Bees and the Ants and the Flowers all work. I am the only idle one. I want some work to do."

So her mother brought out a little apron which the child had begun to hem so long ago that she had forgotten all about it; and the little girl worked so faithfully and well that she was not idle any more, but very industrious.

How the Home was Built

Once there was a very dear family,—Father, Mother, big Brother Tom, little Sister Polly, and the baby, who had a very long name, Gustavus Adolphus; and every one of the family wanted a home more than anything else in the world.

They lived in a house, of course, but that was rented; and they wanted a home of their very own, with a sunny room for Mother and Father and Baby, with a wee room close by for the little sister; a big, airy room for Brother Tom; a cosy room for the cooking and eating; and, best of all, a room that Grandmother might call her own when she came to see them.

A box which Tom had made always stood on Mother's mantel, and they called it the "Home Bank," because every penny that could be spared was dropped in there for the building of the home.

This box had been full once, and was emptied to buy a little piece of ground where the home could be built when the box was full again.

The box filled very slowly, though; and Gustavus Adolphus was nearly three years old when one day the father came in with a beaming face and called the family to him.

Mother left her baking, and Tom came in from his work; and after Polly had brought the baby, the father asked them very solemnly: "Now, what do we all want more than anything else in the world?"

"A home!" said Mother and Brother Tom.

"A home!" said little Sister Polly.

"Home!" said the baby, Gustavus Adolphus, because his mother had said it.

"Well," said the father, "I think we shall have our home if each one of us will help. I must go away to the great forest, where the trees grow so tall and fine. All Winter long I must chop the trees down, and in the Spring I shall be paid in lumber, which will help in the building of the home. While I am away, Mother will have to fill my place and her own too, for she will have to go to market, buy the coal, keep the pantry full, and pay the bills, as well as cook and wash and sew, take care of the children, and keep a brave heart till I come back again."

The mother was willing to do all this and more, too, for the dear home; and Brother Tom asked eagerly: "What can I do?—what can I do?" for he wanted to begin work right then, without waiting a moment.

"I have found you a place in the carpenter's shop where I work," answered the father. "And you will work for him, and all the while be learning to saw and hammer and plane, so that you will be ready in the Spring to help build the home."

Now, this pleased Tom so much that he threw his cap in the air and hurrahed, which made the baby laugh; but little Polly did not laugh, because she was afraid that she was too small to help. But after a while the father said: "I shall be away in the great forest cutting down the trees; Mother will be washing and sewing and baking; Tom will be at work in the carpenter's shop; and who will take care of the baby?"

"I will, I will!" cried Polly, running to kiss the baby. "And the baby can be good and sweet!"

So it was all arranged that they would have their dear little home, which would belong to everyone, because each one would help; and the father made haste to prepare for the Winter. He stored away the firewood and put up the stoves; and when the wood-choppers went to the great forest, he was ready to go with them.

Out in the forest, the trees were waiting. Nobody knew how many years they had waited there, growing every year stronger and more beautiful for the work they had to do. Every one of them had grown from a baby tree to a giant; and when the choppers came, there stood the giant trees, so bare and still in the wintry weather that the sound of the axes rang from one end of the woods to the other. From sunrise to sunset the men worked steadily; and although it was lonely in the woods when the snow lay white on the ground and the cold wind blew, the father kept his heart cheery. At night, when the men sat about the fire in their great log-house, he would tell them about the mother and children who were working with him for a home.

Nobody's ax was sharper than his or felled so many trees, and nobody was gladder when Springtime came and the logs were hauled down to the river.

The river had been waiting too, through all the Winter, under its shield of ice, but now that Spring had come, and the snows were melting, and all the little mountain streams were tumbling down to help, the river grew very broad and strong, and dashed along, snatching the logs when the men pushed them in and carrying them on with a rush and a roar.

The men followed close along the bank of the river, to watch the logs and keep them moving; but at last there came a time when the logs would not move, but lay in a jam from shore to shore while the water foamed about them.

"Who will go out to break the jam?" said the men. They knew that only a brave man and a nimble man could go, for there was danger that the logs might crush him and the river sweep him away.

They looked at each other. But the father was not afraid, and he was surefooted and nimble; so he sprang out in a moment, with his ax, and began to cut away at the logs.

"Some of these logs may help to build a home," he said; and he found the very log that was holding the others tight, and as soon as that was loosened, the logs began to move.

"Jump! Jump!" cried the men, as they ran for their lives; and, just as the logs dashed on, with a rumble and a jumble and a jar that sent some of the logs flying up in the air, the father reached the bank safely.

The hard work was over now. After the logs had rested in the log "boom," they went on their way to the saw mills, where they were sawed into lumber to build houses; and then the father hurried home.

When he came there, he found that the mother had baked and washed and sewed and taken care of the children, as only such a precious mother could have done. Brother Tom had worked so well in the carpenter's shop, that he knew how to hammer and plane and saw, and had grown as tall and as stout as a young pine tree. Sister Polly had taken such care of the baby, that he looked as sweet and clean and happy as a rose in a garden; and the baby had been so good, that he was a joy to the whole family.

"I must get this dear family into their home," said the father; and he and Brother Tom went to work with a will. And the home was built, with a sunny room for Father and Mother and Baby, a wee little room close by for good Sister Polly, a big airy room for big Brother Tom, a cosy room for the cooking and eating, and best of all, a room for the dear grandmother, who came then to live with them all the time.

Dust Under the Rug

There was once a mother, who had two little daughters; and, as her husband was away and she was very poor, she worked diligently all the time that they might be well fed and clothed. She was a skilled worker, and found work to do away from home, but her two little girls were so good and so helpful that they kept her house as neat and as bright as a new pin.

One of the little girls was lame, and could not run about the house; so she sat still in her chair and sewed, while Minnie, the sister, washed the dishes, swept the floor, and made the home beautiful.

Their home was on the edge of a great forest; and after their tasks were finished the little girls would sit at the window and watch the tall trees as they bent in the wind, until it would seem as though the trees were real persons, nodding and bending and bowing to each other.

In the Spring there were the birds, in the Summer the wild flowers, in Autumn the bright leaves, and in Winter the great drifts of white snow; so that the whole year was a round of delight to the two happy children. But one day the dear mother came home sick; and then they were very sad. It was Winter, and there were many things to buy. Minnie and her little sister sat by the fire and talked it over, and at last Minnie said:—

"Dear sister, I must go out to find work, before the food gives out." So she kissed her mother, and, wrapping herself up, started from home. There was a narrow path leading through the forest, and she determined to follow it until she reached some place where she might find the work she wanted.

As she hurried on, the shadows grew deeper. The night was coming fast when she saw before her a very small house, which was a welcome sight. She made haste to reach it, and to knock at the door.

Nobody came in answer to her knock. When she had tried again and again, she thought that nobody lived there; and she opened the door and walked in, thinking that she would stay all night.

As soon as she stepped into the house, she started back in surprise; for there before her she saw twelve little beds with the bedclothes all tumbled, twelve little dirty plates on a very dusty table, and the floor of the room so dusty that I am sure you could have drawn a picture on it.

"Dear me!" said the little girl, "this will never do!" And as soon as she had warmed her hands, she set to work to make the room tidy.

She washed the plates, she made up the beds, she swept the floor, she straightened the great rug in front of the fireplace, and set the twelve little chairs in a half circle around the fire; and, just as she finished, the door opened and in walked twelve of the queerest little people she had ever seen. They were just about as tall as a carpenter's rule, and all wore yellow clothes; and when Minnie saw this, she knew that they must be the dwarfs who kept the gold in the heart of the mountain.

"Well!" said the dwarfs all together, for they always spoke together and in rhyme,

"Now isn't this a sweet surprise?

We really can't believe our eyes!"

Then they spied Minnie, and cried in great astonishment:—

"Who can this be, so fair and mild?
Our helper is a stranger child."

Now when Minnie saw the dwarfs, she came to meet them. "If you please," she said, "I'm little Minnie Grey; and I'm looking for work because my dear mother is sick. I came in here when the night drew near, and—" here all the dwarfs laughed, and called out merrily:—

"You found our room a sorry sight,
But you have made it clean and bright."

They were such dear funny little dwarfs! After they had thanked Minnie for her trouble, they took white bread and honey from the closet and asked her to sup with them.

While they sat at supper, they told her that their fairy housekeeper had taken a holiday, and their house was not well kept, because she was away.

They sighed when they said this; and after supper, when Minnie washed the dishes and set them carefully away, they looked at her often and talked among themselves. When the last plate was in its place they called Minnie to them and said:—

"Dear mortal maiden will you stay
All through our fairy's holiday?
And if you faithful prove, and good,
We will reward you as we should."

Now Minnie was much pleased, for she liked the kind dwarfs, and wanted to help them, so she thanked them, and went to bed to dream happy dreams.

Next morning she was awake with the chickens, and cooked a nice breakfast; and after the dwarfs left, she cleaned up the room and mended the dwarfs' clothes. In the evening when the dwarfs came home, they found a bright fire and a warm supper waiting for them; and every day Minnie worked faithfully until the last day of the fairy housekeeper's holiday.

That morning, as Minnie looked out of the window to watch the dwarfs go to their work, she saw on one of the window panes the most beautiful picture she had ever seen.

A picture of fairy palaces with towers of silver and frosted pinnacles, so wonderful and beautiful that as she looked at it she forgot that there was work to be done, until the cuckoo clock on the mantel struck twelve.

Then she ran in haste to make up the beds, and wash the dishes; but because she was in a hurry she could not work quickly, and when she took the broom to sweep the floor it was almost time for the dwarfs to come home.

"I believe," said Minnie aloud, "that I will not sweep under the rug to-day. After all, it is nothing for dust to be where it can't be seen!" So she hurried to her supper and left the rug unturned.

Before long the dwarfs came home. As the rooms looked just as usual, nothing was said; and Minnie thought no more of the dust until she went to bed and the stars peeped through the window.

Then she thought of it, for it seemed to her that she could hear the stars saying:—

"There is the little girl who is so faithful and good"; and Minnie turned her face to the wall, for a little voice, right in her own heart, said:—

"Dust under the rug! dust under the rug!"

"There is the little girl," cried the stars, "who keeps home as bright as star-shine."

"Dust under the rug! dust under the rug!" said the little voice in Minnie's heart.

"We see her! we see her!" called all the stars joyfully.

"Dust under the rug! dust under the rug!" said the little voice in Minnie's heart, and she could bear it no longer. So she sprang out of bed, and, taking her broom in her hand, she swept the dust away; and lo! under the dust lay twelve shining gold pieces, as round and as bright as the moon.

"Oh! oh! oh!" cried Minnie, in great surprise; and all the little dwarfs came running to see what was the matter. Minnie told them all about it; and when she had ended her story, the dwarfs gathered lovingly around her and said:—

"Dear child, the gold is all for you,
For faithful you have proved and true;
But had you left the rug unturned,
A groat was all you would have earned.
Our love goes with the gold we give,
And oh! forget not while you live,
That in the smallest duty done
Lies wealth of joy for every one."

Minnie thanked the dwarfs for their kindness to her; and early next morning she hastened home with her golden treasure, which bought many good things for the dear mother and little sister. She never saw the dwarfs again; but she never forgot their lesson, to do her work faithfully; and she always swept under the rug.

"Tom-Tit-Tot"

From *English Fairy Tales* by Flora Annie Steel, 1918

Once upon a time there was a woman and she baked five pies. But when they came out of the oven they were over-baked, and the crust was far too hard to eat. So she said to her daughter:

"Daughter," says she, "put them pies on to the shelf and leave 'em there awhile. Surely they'll come again in time." By that, you know, she meant that they would become softer; but her daughter said to herself, "If Mother says the pies will come again, why shouldn't I eat these now?" So, having good, young teeth, she set to work and ate the lot, first and last.

Now when suppertime came the woman said to her daughter, "Go you and get one of the pies. They are sure to have come again by now."

Then the girl went and looked, but of course there was nothing but the empty dishes.

So back she came and said, "No, Mother, they ain't come again."

"Not one o' them?" asked the mother, taken aback like.

"Not one o' them," says the daughter, quite confident.

"Well," says the mother, "come again, or not come again, I will have one of them pies for

my supper."

"But you can't," says the daughter. "How can you if they ain't come? And they ain't, as sure's sure."

"But I can," says the mother, getting angry. "Go you at once, child, and bring me the best on them. My teeth must just tackle it."

"Best or worst is all one," answered the daughter quite sulky, "for I've ate the lot, so you can't have one till it comes again—so there!"

Well, the mother she bounced up to see; but half an eye told her there was nothing save the empty dishes; so she was dished up herself and done for.

So, having no supper, she sat her down on the doorstep, and, bringing out her distaff, began to spin. And as she span she sang:

"My daughter ha' ate five pies today,
My daughter ha' ate five pies today,
My daughter ha' ate five pies today,"

For see you, she was quite flabbergasted and fair astonished.

Now the King of that country happened to be coming down the street, and he heard the song going on and on, but could not quite make out the words. So he stopped his horse, and asked:

"What is that you are singing, my good woman?"

Now the mother, though horrified at her daughter's appetite, did not want other folk, leastwise the King, to know about it, so she sang instead:

"My daughter ha' spun five skeins today,
My daughter ha' spun five skeins today,
My daughter ha' spun five skeins today."

"Five skeins!" cried the King. "By my garter and my crown, I never heard tell of any one who could do that! Look you here, I have been searching for a maiden to wife, and your daughter who can spin five skeins a day is the very one for me. Only, mind you, though for eleven months of the year she shall be Queen indeed, and have all she likes to eat, all the gowns she likes to get, all the company she likes to keep, and everything her heart desires, in the twelfth month she must set to work and spin five skeins a day, and if she does not she must die. Come! is it a bargain?"

So the mother agreed. She thought what a grand marriage it was for her daughter. And as for the five skeins? Time enough to bother about them when the year came round. There was many a slip between cup and lip, and, likely as not, the King would have forgotten all about it by then.

Anyhow, her daughter would be Queen for eleven months. So they were married, and for eleven months the bride was happy as happy could be. She had everything she liked to eat, and all the gowns she liked to get, all the company she cared to keep, and everything her heart desired. And her husband the King was kind as kind could be. But in the tenth month she began to think of those five skeins and wonder if the King remembered? And in the eleventh month she began to dream about them as well. But ne'er a word did the King, her husband, say about them; so she hoped he had forgotten.

But on the very last day of the eleventh month, the King, her husband, led her into a room she had never set eyes on before. It had one window, and there was nothing in it but a stool and a spinning wheel.

"Now, my dear," he said quite kind like, "You will be shut in here tomorrow morning with some victuals and some flax, and if by evening you have not spun five skeins, your head will come off."

Well, she was fair frightened, for she had always been such a gatless thoughtless girl that she had never learnt to spin at all. So what she was to do on the morrow she could not tell; for, see you, she had no one to help her; for, of course, now she was Queen, her mother didn't live nigh her.

So she just locked the door of her room, sat down on a stool and cried and cried and cried until her pretty eyes were all red.

Now as she sat sobbing and crying she heard a queer little noise at the bottom of the door. At first she thought it was a mouse. Then she thought it must be something knocking.

So she upped and opened the door and what did she see? Why! A small, little, black Thing with a long tail that whisked round and round ever so fast.

"What are you crying for?" said that Thing, making a bow, and twirling its tail so fast that she could scarcely see it.

"What's that to you?" said she, shrinking a bit, for that Thing was very queer like.

"Don't look at my tail if you're frightened," says That, smirking. "Look at my toes. Ain't they beautiful?"

And sure enough That had on buckled shoes with high heels and big bows, ever so smart. So she kind of forgot about the tail, and wasn't so frightened, and when That asked her again why she was crying, she upped and said, "It won't do no good if I do."

"You don't know that," says That, twirling its tail faster and faster, and sticking out its toes. "Come, tell me, there's a good girl."

"Well," says she, "it can't do any harm if it doesn't do good." So she dried her pretty eyes and told That all about the pies, and the skeins, and everything from first to last.

And then that little, black Thing nearly burst with laughing. "If that is all, it's easy mended!" it says. "I'll come to your window every morning, take the flax and bring it back spun into five skeins at night. Come! Shall it be a bargain?"

Now she, for all she was so gatless and thoughtless, said, cautious like:

"But what is your pay?"

Then That twirled its tail so fast you couldn't see it, and stuck out its beautiful toes, and smirked and looked out of the corners of its eyes. "I will give you three guesses every night to guess my name, and if you haven't guessed it before the month is up, why—" and That twirled its tail faster and stuck out its toes further, and smirked and sniggered more than ever—"you shall be mine, my beauty."

Three guesses every night for a whole month! She felt sure she would be able for so much; and there was no other way out of the business, so she just said, "Yes! I agree!"

And lor! How That twirled its tail, and bowed, and smirked, and stuck out its beautiful toes.

Well, the very next day her husband led her to the strange room, again, and there was the day's food, and a spinning-wheel and a great bundle of flax.

"There you are, my dear," says he as polite as polite. "And remember! if there are not five whole skeins tonight, I fear your head will come off!"

At that she began to tremble, and after he had gone away and locked the door, she was just thinking of a good cry, when she heard a queer knocking at the window. She upped at once and opened it, and sure enough there was the small, little, black Thing sitting on the window ledge, dangling its beautiful toes and twirling its tail so that you could scarcely see it.

"Good morning, my beauty," says That. "Come! hand over the flax, sharp, there's a good girl."

So she gave That the flax and shut the window and, you may be sure, ate her victuals, for, as you know, she had a good appetite, and the King, her husband, had promised to give her everything she liked to eat. So she ate to her heart's content, and when evening came and she heard that queer knocking at the window again, she upped and opened it, and there was the small, little, black Thing with five spun skeins on his arm!

And it twirled its tail faster than ever, and stuck out its beautiful toes, and bowed and smirked and gave her the five skeins.

Then That said, "And now, my beauty, what is That's name?"

And she answered quite easy like:

"That is Bill."

"No, it ain't," says That, and twirled its tail.

"Then That is Ned," says she.

"No, it ain't," says That, and twirled its tail faster.

"Well," says she a bit more thoughtful, "That is Mark."

"No, it ain't," says That, and laughs and laughs and laughs, and twirls its tail so as you couldn't see it, as away it flew.

Well, when the King, her husband, came in, he was fine and pleased to see the five skeins all ready for him, for he was fond of his pretty wife.

"I shall not have to order your head off, my dear," says he. "And I hope all the other days will pass as happily." Then he said goodnight and locked the door and left her.

But next morning they brought her fresh flax and even more delicious foods. And the small, little, black Thing came knocking at the window and stuck out its beautiful toes and twirled its tail faster and faster, and took away the bundle of flax and brought it back all spun into five skeins by evening. Then That made her guess three times what That's name was; but she could not guess right, and That laughed and laughed and laughed as it flew away.

Now every morning and evening the same thing happened, and every evening she had her three guesses; but she never guessed right. And every day the small, little, black Thing laughed louder and louder and smirked more and more, and looked at her quite malicious out of the corners of its eyes until she began to get frightened, and instead of eating all the fine foods left for her, spent the day in trying to think of names to say. But

she never hit upon the right one.

So it came to the last day of the month but one, and when the small, little, black Thing arrived in the evening with the five skeins of flax already spun, it could hardly say for smirking:

"Ain't you got That's name yet?"

So says she—for she had been reading her Bible:

"Is That Nicodemus?"

"No, it ain't," says That, and twirled its tail faster than you could see.

"Is That Samuel?" says she all of a flutter.

"No, it ain't, my beauty," chuckles That, looking malicious.

"Well—is That Methusaleh?" says she, inclined to cry.

Then That just fixes her with eyes like a coal a-fire, and says, "No, it ain't that neither, so there is only tomorrow night and then you'll be mine, my beauty."

And away the small, little, black Thing flew, its tail twirling and whisking so fast that you couldn't see it.

Well, she felt so bad she couldn't even cry; but she heard the King, her husband, coming to the door, so she made bold to be cheerful, and tried to smile when he said, "Well done, wife! Five skeins again! I shall not have to order your head off after all, my dear, of that I'm quite sure, so let us enjoy ourselves." Then he bade the servants bring supper, and a stool for him to sit beside his Queen, and down they sat lover-like, side by side.

But the poor Queen could eat nothing; she could not forget the small, little, black Thing. And the King hadn't eaten but a mouthful or two when he began to laugh, and he laughed so long and so loud that at last the poor Queen, all lackadaisical as she was said:

"Why do you laugh so?"

"At something I saw today, my love," says the King. "I was out a-hunting, and by chance I came to a place I'd never been in before. It was in a wood, and there was an old chalk-pit there, and out of the chalk-pit there came a queer kind of a sort of a humming, bumming noise. So I got off my hobby to see what made it, and went quite quiet to the edge of the pit and looked down. And what do you think I saw? The funniest, queerest, smallest, little, black Thing you ever set eyes upon. And it had a little spinning-wheel and it was

spinning away for dear life, but the wheel didn't go so fast as its tail, and that span round and round—ho-ho-ha-ha!—you never saw the like. And its little feet had buckled shoes and bows on them, and they went up and down in a desperate hurry. And all the time that small, little, black Thing kept bumming and booming away at these words:

"Name me, name me not,
Who'll guess it's Tom-Tit-Tot."

Well, when she heard these words the Queen nearly jumped out of her skin for joy; but she managed to say nothing, but ate her supper quite comfortably.

And she said no word when next morning the small, little, black Thing came for the flax, though it looked so gleeful and malicious that she could hardly help laughing knowing she had got the better of it. And when night came and she heard that knocking against the windowpanes, she put on a wry face, and opened the window slowly as if she was afraid. But That thing was as bold as brass and came right inside, grinning from ear to ear. And oh, my goodness! How That's tail was twirling and whisking!

"Well, my beauty," says That, giving her the five skeins all ready spun, "what's my name?"

Then she put down her lip, and says, tearful like, "Is—is—That—Solomon?"

"No, it ain't," laughs That, smirking out of the corner of That's eye. And the small, little, black Thing came further into the room. So she tried again—and this time she seemed hardly able to speak for fright.

"Well—is That Zebedee?" she says.

"No, it ain't," cried the impet, full of glee. And it came quite close and stretched out its little black hands to her, and O-oh, its tail...!!!

"Take time, my beauty," says That, sort of leering like, and its small, little, black eyes seemed to eat her up. "Take time! Remember! Next guess and you're mine!"

Well, she backed just a wee bit from it, for it was just horrible to look at; but then she laughed out and pointed her finger at it and said, says she:

"Name me, name me not,
Your name is TOM TIT TOT."

And you never heard such a shriek as that small, little, black Thing gave out. Its tail dropped down straight, its feet all crumpled up, and away That flew into the dark and she never saw it no more. And she lived happy ever after with her husband, the King.

The Three Lazy Ones

By Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

A king had three sons whom he loved equally well, and he did not know which of them to appoint as king following his own death.

When the time came for him to die he called them to his bed and said, "Dear children, I have thought of something that I will reveal to you. The one of you is the laziest shall become king after me."

The oldest one said, "Father, then the kingdom belongs to me, for I am so lazy that whenever I lie down to sleep, and a drop falls into my eyes, I will not even close them so that I can fall asleep."

The second one said, "Father, the kingdom belongs to me, for I am so lazy that when I am sitting by the fire warming myself, I would rather let my heels burn up than to pull my legs back."

The third one said, "Father, the kingdom is mine, for I am so lazy that if I were going to be hanged and already had the rope around my neck, and someone put into my hand a sharp knife with which to cut the rope, I would let myself be hanged rather than to lift my hand up to the rope."

(Note to teacher: I have kept the original Grimm here for the third son but I always feel that the hanging is a bit extreme and I often change what he says)

When the father heard this he said, "You have taken it the farthest and shall be king."

Lazy Heinz

By Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. Note that once again I have kept the original Grimm. However, I usually change "Fat Trina" so say something else as I feel that name is a bit offensive.

Heinz was lazy, and although he had nothing else to do but to drive his goat out to the pasture every day, he nevertheless groaned every evening when he returned home after finishing his day's work.

"It is in truth a heavy burden," he said, "and a tiresome job, to drive such a goat out to the field year in and year out until late in the fall. If I could only lie down and sleep at it! But no, I must keep my eyes open so it won't damage the young trees, or force its way through the hedge into a garden, or even run away altogether. How can I get some rest and enjoy life?"

He sat down, collected his thoughts, and considered how he could lift this burden from

his shoulders. For a long time his thoughts led to nothing, but suddenly it was as if scales were removed from his eyes.

"I know what I will do," he shouted. "I will marry Fat Trina. She too has a goat, and she can drive mine out with hers, and then I shall no longer have to torment myself." So Heinz got up, set his weary limbs into motion, and walked across the street, for it was no further than that, to where Fat Trina's parents lived, and asked for the hand in marriage of their industrious and virtuous daughter.

Her parents did not think about it for long. "Birds of a feather, flock together," they thought, and gave their consent.

So Fat Trina became Heinz's wife, and drove out both of the goats. Heinz now enjoyed life, having no work to rest from, but his own laziness.

He went out with her only now and then, saying, "I'm doing this so that afterwards I will enjoy resting more. Otherwise I shall lose all feeling for it."

However, Fat Trina was no less lazy.

"Dear Heinz," she said one day, "why should we make our lives so miserable, ruining the best days of our youth, when there is no need for it? The two goats disturb our best sleep every morning with their bleating. Wouldn't it be better for us to give them to our neighbor, who will give us a beehive for them? We will put the beehive in a sunny place behind the house, and then not give it any more thought. Bees do not have to be taken care of, nor driven into the field. They fly out and find their way home again by themselves, and they collect honey without any effort at all on our part."

"You have spoken like a sensible woman," replied Heinz. "We will carry out your proposal without delay. And furthermore, honey tastes better and is more nourishing than goat's milk, and it keeps longer too."

The neighbor willingly gave them a beehive for the two goats. The bees flew tirelessly in and out from early morning until late evening, filling the hive with the best honey. Thus that fall-time, Heinz was able to take out a whole jugful.

They placed the jug on a shelf on their bedroom wall. Fearing that it might be stolen, or that the mice might get into it, Trina brought in a stout hazel stick and put it beside her bed, so that she would be able to reach it without having to get up, and then from her place in bed drive away the uninvited guests.

Lazy Heinz did not like to get out of bed before noon. "He who rises early," he would say, "wastes his wealth."

One morning when he was still lying in the feathers in broad daylight, resting from his long sleep, he said to his wife, "Women are fond of sweets, and you have been snacking on the honey. It would be better for us to exchange it for a goose with a young gosling, before you eat it all up."

"But not before we have a child to take care of them." replied Trina. Am I to torment myself with the young geese, wasting all my energy on them for no reason?"

"Do you think," said Heinz, "that the boy will tend geese? Nowadays children no longer obey. They do just as they please, because they think that they are smarter than their parents, just like that servant who was supposed to look for the cow and chased after three blackbirds."

"Oh," replied Trina, "he will get it if he does not do what I say. I will take a stick and tan his hide with more blows than can be counted."

"See here, Heinz," she shouted in her fervor, seizing the stick that she intended to use to drive away the mice. "See here! This is how I will beat him."

She struck forth, unfortunately hitting the jug of honey above the bed. The jug struck against the wall and fell down in pieces. The fine honey flowed out onto the floor.

"There lies the goose with the young gosling," said Heinz. "And they do not need to be tended. But it is lucky that the jug did not fall on my head. We have every reason to be satisfied with our fate."

Then noticing that there was still some honey in one of the pieces of the jug, he reached out for it, saying quite happily, "Wife, let us enjoy the leftovers, and then we will rest a little from the fright we have had. What does it matter if we get up a little later than usual? The day will be long enough."

"Yes," answered Trina, "there is always time enough. You know, the snail was once invited to a wedding and started on his way, but arrived at the child's baptism. In front of the house it fell over the fence, and said, 'Haste makes waste.'"

Betushka the Wood Fairy

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Betushka. She lived with her mother, a poor widow who had only a tumbledown cottage and two goats. But in spite of this poverty, Betushka was always merry.

From spring to autumn, Betushka drove the goats each day to pasture in a birch wood. Every morning her mother put a slice of bread and an empty spindle into her bag. The spindle would hold the flaxen thread she would spin while she watched the goats. She was too poor to own a distaff on which to wind the flax, so she wound it around her head, to carry it thus to the wood. "Work hard, Betushka," her mother always said, "and fill the spindle before you return home."

Off skipped Betushka, singing along the way. She danced behind the goats into the wood of birch trees and sat down under a tree. With her left hand she pulled fibers from the flax around her head and with her right hand twirled her spindle so that it hummed over the ground. All the time she sang merrily and the goats nibbled the green grass among the trees.

When the sun showed that it was midday, Betushka stopped her spinning. She gave each of the goats a morsel of bread and picked a few strawberries to eat with what remained. After this, she sprang up and danced. The sun shone even more warmly and the birds sang yet more sweetly. After her dance, Betushka began again to spin busily. At evening when she drove the goats home she was able to hand her mother a spindle full of flaxen thread.

One fine spring day, when Betushka was ready as usual to dance, suddenly there appeared before her a most beautiful maiden. Her white dress floated about her as thin as gossamer, her golden hair flowed to her waist, and a wreath of forest blossoms crowned her head. Betushka was struck silent.

The wood fairy smiled at her and in a sweet voice asked, "Betushka, do you like to dance?" At this, Betushka lost her fear. "Oh! I could dance all the day long!"

"Come then, let us dance together. I will teach you." She took Betushka and began to dance with her.

Round and round they circled, while sweet music sounded over their heads. The maiden had called upon the birds sitting in the birch trees to accompany them. Nightingales, larks, goldfinches, thrushes, and a clever mockingbird sang such sweet melodies that Betushka's heart filled with delight. She quite forgot her goats and her spinning. On and on she danced, with feet never weary, until evening when the last rosy rays of sunset were disappearing. The music ceased and the maiden vanished as suddenly as she had come.

Betushka looked around. There was her spindle -- only half filled with thread. Sadly she

put it into her bag and drove the goats from the wood. She did not sing while going down the road this time, but reproached herself for forgetting her duty. She resolved that she would not do this again. When she reached home she was so quiet that her mother asked if she were ill.

"No, Mother, I am not ill." But she did not tell her mother about the lovely maiden. She hid the half-filled spindle, promising herself to work twice as hard tomorrow to make up for today.

Early the next morning Betushka again drove the goats to pasture, singing merrily as usual. She entered the wood and began her spinning, intending to do twice her usual amount.

At noon Betushka picked a few strawberries, but she did not dance. To her goats she said, "Today, I dare not dance. Why don't *you* dance, my little goats?"

"Come and dance with me," called a voice. It was the beautiful maiden.

But this time Betushka was afraid, and she was also ashamed. She asked the maiden to leave her alone. "Before sunset, I must finish my spinning," she said.

The maiden answered, "If you will dance with me, someone will help you finish your spinning." With the birds singing beautifully as before, Betushka could not resist. She and the maiden began to dance, and again they danced till evening.

Now when Betushka looked at her nearly empty spindle, she burst into tears. But the maiden unwound the flax from Betushka's head, twined it around a slender birch tree, seized the spindle, and began to spin. The spindle hummed over the ground and grew thick with thread. By the time the sun had dropped from sight, all the flax was spun. As the maiden handed the full spindle to

Betushka, she said, "Wind it and grumble not. Remember, wind it and grumble not." Then, suddenly, she disappeared. Betushka, happy now, drove the goats home, singing as she went, and gave her mother the full spindle. Betushka's mother, however, was not pleased with what Betushka had failed to do the day before and asked her about it. Betushka told her that she had danced, but she kept the maiden a secret.

The next day Betushka went still earlier to the birch wood. The goats grazed while she sang and spun, until at noon the beautiful maiden appeared and again seized Betushka by the waist to dance. While the birds sang for them, the two danced on and on, Betushka quite forgetting her spindle and the goats.

When the sun was setting, Betushka looked around. There was the half-filled spindle! But the maiden grasped Betushka's bag, became invisible for a moment, then handed back the bag stuffed with something light. She ordered her not to look into it before reaching home, and with these words she disappeared.

Betushka started home, not daring to look into the bag. But halfway there she was unable to resist peeking, for the bag was so light she feared a trick. She looked into the bag, and began to weep. It was full of dry birch leaves! Angrily she tossed some of these out of the bag, but suddenly she stopped -- she knew they would make good litter for the goats to sleep on.

Now she was almost afraid to go home. There her mother was awaiting her. "What kind of spindle did you bring me yesterday?" she asked. "I wound and wound, but the spindle remained full. 'Some evil spirit has spun you,' I grumbled, and at that instant the thread vanished from the spindle. Tell me what this means."

Betushka then told her mother about the maiden and their dancing. "That was a wood fairy," exclaimed her mother, alarmed. "The wood fairies dance at midday and at midnight. If you had been a little boy, you might not have escaped alive. But to little girls, the wood fairies often give rich presents." Next, she added. "To think that you did not tell me. If I had not grumbled I might have had a room full of thread."

Betushka then thought of her bag and wondered if there might not, after all, be something under those leaves. She lifted out the spindle and the unspun flax. "Look, Mother!" Her mother looked and clapped her hands. Under the spindle the birch leaves had turned to gold! Betushka told her mother how the fairy had directed her not to look into the bag until she got home, but that she had not obeyed and had thrown out some of the leaves. "Tis fortunate you did not empty out the whole bagful," said her mother.

The next morning Betushka and her mother went into the wood, to look carefully over the ground where Betushka had thrown out the dry leaves. Only fresh birch leaves lay there, but the gold that Betushka did bring home was enough for a farm with a garden and some cows. She wore beautiful dresses and no longer had to graze the goats. Nothing, however, gave her such delight as she had had dancing with the wood fairy. Often she ran to the birch wood, hoping to see the beautiful maiden, but never again did the wood fairy appear.

Fairies in Your Fingers

Once upon a time there was a dear little girl, whose name was Elsa. Elsa's father and mother worked very hard and became rich. But they loved Elsa so much that they did not like to have her do any work; very foolishly, they let her play all the time. So when Elsa grew up, she did not know how to do anything; she could not make bread, she could not sweep a room, she could not sew a seam; she could only laugh and sing. But she was so sweet and merry that everybody loved her. And by and by, she married one of the people who loved her, and had a house of her own to take care of.

Then, then, my dears, came hard times for Elsa! There were so many things to be done in the house, and she did not know how to do any of them! And because she had never worked at all it made her very tired even to try; she was tired before the morning was over, every day. The maid would come and say, "How shall I do this?" or "How shall I do that?" And Elsa would have to say, "I don't know." Then the maid would pretend that she did not know, either; and when she saw her mistress sitting about doing nothing, she, too, sat about, idle.

Elsa's husband had a hard time of it; he did not have good things to eat, and they were not ready at the right time, and the house looked all in a clutter. It made him sad, and that made Elsa sad, for she wanted to do everything just right. At last, one day, Elsa's husband went away quite cross; he said to her, as he went out the door, "It is no wonder that the house looks so, when you sit all day with your hands in your lap!"

Little Elsa cried bitterly when he was gone, for she did not want to make her husband unhappy and cross, and she wanted the house to look nice. "Oh, dear," she sobbed, "I wish I could do things right! I wish I could work! I wish -- I wish I had ten good fairies to work for me! Then I could keep the house!"

As she said the words, a great gray man stood before her; he was wrapped in a strange gray cloak that covered him from head to foot; and he smiled at Elsa. "What is the matter, dear?" he said.

"Why do you cry?"

"Oh, I am crying because I do not know how to keep the house," said Elsa. "I cannot make bread, I cannot sweep, I cannot sew a seam; when I was a little girl I never learned to work, and now I cannot do anything right. I wish I had ten good fairies to help me!"

"You shall have them, dear," said the gray man, and he shook his strange gray cloak. Pof! Out hopped ten tiny fairies, no bigger than that!

"These shall be your servants, Elsa," said the gray man; "they are faithful and clever, and they will do everything you want them to, just right. But the neighbors might stare and ask questions if they saw these little chaps running about your house, so I will hide them away for you. Give me your little useless hands."

Wondering, Elsa stretched out her pretty, little, white hands.

“Now stretch out your little useless fingers, dear!”

Elsa stretched out her pretty pink fingers.

The gray man touched each one of the ten little fingers, and as he touched them he said their names: “Little Thumb; Fore-finger; Thimble-finger; Ring-finger; Little Finger; Little Thumb; Forefinger; Thimble-finger; Ring-finger; Little Finger!” And as he named the fingers, one after another, the tiny fairies bowed their tiny heads; there was a fairy for every name.

“Hop! hide yourselves away!” said the gray man.

Hop, hop! The fairies sprang to Elsa's knee, then to the palms of her hands, and then-whisk! they were all hidden away in her little pink fingers, a fairy in every finger! And the gray man was gone.

Elsa sat and looked with wonder at her little white hands and the ten useless fingers. But suddenly the little fingers began to stir. The tiny fairies who were hidden away there weren't used to staying still, and they were getting restless. They stirred so that Elsa jumped up and ran to the cooking table, and took hold of the bread board. No sooner had she touched the bread board than the little fairies began to work: they measured the flour, mixed the bread, kneaded the loaves, and set them to rise, quicker than you could wink; and when the bread was done, it was the nicest you could wish. Then the little fairy-fingers seized the broom, and in a twinkling they were making the house clean. And so it went, all day. Elsa flew about from one thing to another, and the ten fairies did it all, just right.

When the maid saw her mistress working, she began to work, too; and when she saw how beautifully everything was done, she was ashamed to do anything badly herself. In a little while the housework was going smoothly, and Elsa could laugh and sing again.

There was no more crossness in that house. Elsa's husband grew so proud of her that he went about saying to everybody, “My grandmother was a fine housekeeper, and my mother was a fine housekeeper, but neither of them could hold a candle to my wife. She has only one maid, but, to see the work done, you would think she had as many servants as she has fingers on her hands!” When Elsa heard that, she used to laugh, but she never, never told.