

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Two Goats on the Mountain

Once there was a little goat that wanted to climb a big mountain, because that's what goats like to do. Every day, from the bottom of the mountain, he watched the other goats standing on top of the mountain. He wondered what it would be like to look over the valley from such a high place. He thought it would be very beautiful.

Once he decided that it was his day to climb, he was in a hurry to get to the top. He started up the path and continued to make his way up until he reached a ridge where he could take a short rest. He was very close to the top and could not wait to join the other goats that he could see from where he stood.

He noticed that the mountain was very steep the rest of the way. He could not see a path up to the top of the mountain from where he stood. "I want to be at the top now," he said.

"Well," he said to himself, "I guess I will just have to jump up to the top." So he gathered all of his strength, and he jumped as high as he could. He jumped only a foot off the ground. He tried again, only to have the same unsuccessful result. Again and again he jumped with all of his might, but always landed back where he started.

"How," he said to himself, "did all those other goats get so high? Maybe they are bigger and stronger than I am."

Just then another little goat came up behind him on the ridge. "What are you doing?" she asked.

"I am trying to get to the top of the mountain," he answered.

"Then follow me," she told him.

The first little goat followed his new friend. He walked to the far side of the ridge and saw there was a winding path up the other side of the mountain. It was an easy path to climb, and soon they were at the top.

"Sometimes," said the second little goat, "the fastest way to get where you want to go is to take many small steps instead of one giant leap."

1. What is the main idea of this passage?

- A. Goats are not very smart animals.
 - B. Winding roads are better than straight paths.
 - C. Slow and steady wins the race.
 - D. Smaller steps are better than one big giant leap.
-

2. Where was the first little goat at the beginning of the passage?

- A. on the ridge of the mountain
 - B. at the top of the mountain
 - C. at the bottom of the mountain
 - D. up the path of the mountain
-

3. What did the second goat say to the first goat when they met?

- A. "What are you doing?"
 - B. "How did all of those other goats get so high?"
 - C. "I want to be at the top now."
 - D. "I am trying to get to the top of the mountain!"
-

4. Which word describes the first goat?

- A. mean
 - B. determined
 - C. clever
 - D. sleepy
-

5. Compared to the first goat, the second goat is

- A. bigger.
 - B. faster.
 - C. wiser.
 - D. older.
-

6. How did the first little goat try to get to the top before the second goat arrived?

- A. He ran fast without stopping.
 - B. He took several different paths.
 - C. He jumped several times.
 - D. He asked for help.
-

The Extraordinary Cat:

A Chinese Tale

by Pleasant De Spain

Once there was a Chinese mandarin who had a cat that he treasured above all other animals. He loved the cat so much and thought that it was so extraordinary that he named it Sky.

One day soon after, an advisor to the court spoke to the mandarin and explained, "There is something much more powerful than the sky, and that is the cloud. The cloud can darken and even hide the sky from view."

"Quite right," agreed the mandarin. "From this day forth my beautiful cat shall be called Cloud."

Two weeks later the mandarin's wife said, "Dear husband, I don't think that Cloud is a proper name for your cat. There is something stronger than the cloud, and that is the wind that blows the cloud about."

"Indeed! From now on my superior cat will be called Wind. Here Wind! Here Wind! Nice little Wind."

During the next month the mandarin's brother came for a visit and agreed that the cat was the most extraordinary animal he had ever seen. "But," he said, "Wind is not a suitable name for this superb creature. The wind is servant to that which it cannot penetrate. . . such as a wall. The wall is stronger than the wind."

"I hadn't thought of that," replied the mandarin, "and you are to be congratulated, brother, for being so observant. From now on, my dearest cat, the most wonderful cat on earth, will be called Wall."

The very next day the royal gardener heard the mandarin call his cat, "Wall," and said, "But sire, you are forgetting that a mouse is able to chew a hole in a wall. The mouse is the strongest."

"How clever of you," said the mandarin. "From this day forth my lovely cat will be called Mouse. Come here Mouse!"

But just then the mandarin's son skipped into the garden to play, and when he heard his father call the cat "Mouse," he started to laugh and laugh!

"What causes you to laugh, my son?" asked the mandarin.

"Father" replied the boy, "everyone knows that there is something stronger than the mouse and that's the cat who catches him!"

The mandarin smiled and then began to laugh with his son. "Of course! How foolish I've been. From now on my extraordinary animal will be called by the name it most deserves, and that is Cat!"

7. Which of these shows that the mandarin thinks that his cat is extraordinary?

- A. The mandarin makes the cat an advisor.
 - B. The mandarin thinks of the cat like a son.
 - C. The mandarin gives the cat special names.
 - D. The mandarin builds the cat its own garden.
-

8. The advisor to the court thinks that the cat's name should be changed to something more

- A. gentle
 - B. powerful
 - C. beautiful
 - D. playful
-

9. Who tells the mandarin he could change the cat's name to "Mouse"?

- A. the son
 - B. the brother
 - C. the gardener
 - D. the wife
-

10. Another good title for this passage could be

- A. The Wise Ruler
- B. So Many Cats at the Court
- C. The Wind and the Clouds
- D. The Cat with Many Names

Answer Key

1. D) Smaller steps are better than one big giant leap.
2. C) at the bottom of the mountain
3. A) "What are you doing?"
4. B) determined
5. C) wiser.
6. C) He jumped several times.
7. C) The mandarin gives the cat special names.
8. B) powerful
9. C) the gardener
10. D) The Cat with Many Names