



Feathers in the Wind

Part 1

Teacher Reads Folktales are stories that have been told and passed on for a very long time. Many times, a folktale teaches a lesson. Let's read a folktale that teaches a valuable lesson about gossip.

Many years ago, a man who lived in a small town
11 spent all his time spreading gossip about the townspeople.
20 He reported on what other people were doing without
29 checking on the facts first. In fact, this man was gossiping.
40 It had become his daily habit. He did not stop to think about
53 the harm he was causing. The townspeople thought the
62 man's gossiping was dreadful. But they felt there was no way
73 to stop it.

76 One day, the man found out that he had told a fake
88 story about someone. The man felt awful about gossiping
97 and wanted to make things right. But what could he do?
108 He thought about it and decided that he would go to the
120 wise man in the town and ask for his advice.

Part 2

Teacher Reads A wise man or a wise woman is a common character in folktales. This character is respected for having wisdom, experience, and good judgment. Read on to find out what advice, or helpful suggestions, the wise man in this story had for the man who gossips.

130 The man told the wise man, "I regret very much my
141 gossiping. I had not meant to cause harm. Can you help me
153 make things right again?" The wise man told the man to
164 go home and bring back a pillow filled with feathers in the
176 morning. The man was not sure how a feather pillow could
187 solve his problem, but he agreed to do as the wise man asked.
200 That night, the man lay in his bed. He was wide awake all
213 night. He thought again and again about what the wise man
224 requested him to do, but he could make no sense of it.



Part 2 continued

236 The next morning, the man took a feather pillow to the
247 wise man's house. The wise man told him, "Cut the pillow
258 and scatter the feathers." The man did as he was asked, and
270 off flew the feathers every which way with the wind. "Was
281 that it?" thought the man. "Is that all I have to do?"

Part 3

Teacher Reads Read on to see if the wise man is truly wise, and if a feather pillow can really be the answer to the man's troubles.

293 The man thought that his problem had been dealt with
303 in an easy way. But then the wise man said, "Now gather
315 up all the feathers." The man looked back at him in shock.
327 The wind had spread the feathers to every corner of the
338 town and beyond. With each gust of wind, the feathers flew
349 farther and farther away. What the wise man had just asked
360 for was not possible. The wise man said, "Gossip spreads
370 like feathers in the wind. When you speak about others in
381 unkind ways, you can't get back what you said."

390 The man nodded his head in agreement with what the
400 wise man had said. Then the man grabbed one stray feather
411 with his hand and held on tight. He knew he would never
423 gossip again.
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