

The Milkmaid and Her Pail - Fable

The Milkmaid and Her Pail

Early one morning, a milkmaid walked toward the market with a full pail of fresh milk balanced on her head. The road was quiet, and she felt proud that she could carry the milk without spilling a drop.

As she walked, she began to dream. She imagined the money she would earn from selling the milk. With that money, she would buy strong chickens. The chickens would lay eggs, the eggs would hatch into chicks, and soon she would have many chickens to sell.

Her thoughts raced ahead. She pictured herself buying a beautiful new dress and wearing it to the fair. People would turn to look at her. The boys would ask her to dance, and the girls would admire her clothes. Smiling with pride, she lifted her head.

At once, the pail slipped. It fell to the ground and broke, and the milk spread across the dusty road. The milkmaid stood still, staring at the spilled milk. In a moment, all her dreams were gone. She returned home sadly and told her mother everything. Her mother spoke gently, “My child, *do not count your chickens before they hatch.*”



Questions for “The Milkmaid and Her Pail”

1. Where was the milkmaid going? What was she carrying?
2. Why did she feel proud as she walked?
3. What did she plan to do with the money from selling the milk?
4. What did she imagine would happen after the eggs hatched?
5. What did she want to buy for herself?
6. What did she imagine would happen at the fair?
7. What caused the pail of milk to fall?
8. How did the milkmaid feel after the milk spilled?
9. What lesson can we learn from the milkmaid’s mistake?



Answers:

1. She was going to the market. She was carrying a pail of fresh milk on her head.
2. She felt proud because she could carry the milk without spilling it.
3. She planned to buy chickens with the money.
4. She imagined the eggs would hatch into chicks that would grow into chickens she could sell.
5. She wanted to buy a beautiful new dress.
6. She imagined people admiring her, boys asking her to dance, and girls admiring her clothes.
7. She lifted her head while daydreaming.
8. She felt sad and disappointed.
9. We should not count on plans before they really happen, or count our chickens before they hatch.