

Excerpt adapted from



“Rikki-tikki-tavi”



by Rudyard Kipling

1 Rikki-tikki-tavi was a mongoose, rather like a little cat in his fur and his tail, but quite like a weasel in his head and his habits.



2 One day, a flood washed Rikki-tikki out of the burrow where he lived with his family, and carried him away.

He found a floating wisp of grass, and clung to it till he lost his senses. When he **revived**, he was lying in the hot sun on the middle of a garden path, very **bedraggled** indeed, and a small boy and his mother were standing over him.

3 “Let’s take him in and dry him,” said the mother.

4 They took him into the house, and wrapped him in a cloth, and warmed him over a little fire, and he opened his eyes and sneezed.

5 “Now,” said the father, “don’t frighten him, and we’ll see what he’ll do.”

6 It is the hardest thing in the world to frighten a mongoose, because he is eaten up from nose to tail with curiosity. The motto of all the mongoose family is “Run and find out,” and Rikki-tikki was a true mongoose. He looked at the cloth, decided that it was not good to eat, ran all round the table, sat up and put his fur in order, scratched himself, and jumped on the small boy’s shoulder.

7 “Don’t be frightened, Teddy,” said his father. “That’s his way of making friends.”

8 “Ouch! He’s tickling under my chin,” said Teddy.

9 Rikki-tikki looked down between the boy’s collar and neck, snuffed at his ear, and climbed down to the floor, where he sat rubbing his nose.

10 “Good gracious,” said Teddy’s mother, “and that’s a wild creature! I suppose he’s so tame because we’ve been kind to him.”

11 “All mongooses are like that,” said her husband. “If Teddy doesn’t pick him up by the tail, or try to put him in a cage, he’ll run in and out of the house all day long. Let’s give him something to eat.”

12 They gave him a little piece of raw meat. Rikki-tikki liked it immensely, and when it was finished he went out and sat in the sunshine and fluffed up his fur to make it dry to the roots. Then he felt better.

13 “There are more things to find out about in this house,” he said to himself, “than all my family could find out in all their lives. I shall certainly stay and find out.”

Answer the following questions about the excerpt from “Rikki-tikki-tavi.”



Author's Craft

- Rikki-tikki is compared to which **two** animals?
 a. cat b. mongoose c. bird d. weasel
- How is Rikki-tikki similar to the animals above? Fill in the chart below.

animal	similarity
cat	fur and tail
weasel	head and habits

- Who is telling the story?
 a. Teddy b. an outside narrator
 c. Teddy's father d. Rikki-tikki-tavi
- What does the underlined sentence in the story mean?

It's very hard to scare a mongoose
because they are so curious.



Vocabulary

- What does the word **bedraggled** mean in this selection?
 a. dirty b. unharmed
 c. happy d. serious
- Which is a synonym for **revived** as it is used in this selection?
 a. relaxed b. stopped
 c. awakened d. continued



Sequence of Events

- The events of the story are mixed up. Number them from 1 to 5 to put them in order.

The family helps Rikki-tikki get warm. 3

The family feeds Rikki-tikki. 4

Rikki-tikki is washed away in a flood. 1

Rikki-tikki decides to stay. 5

The family takes Rikki in the house. 2



Characterization

- Which two paragraphs best support the idea that Rikki-tikki is curious?
 a. Paragraph 2 b. Paragraph 6
 c. Paragraph 10 d. Paragraph 13



Language

- Which of the following phrases from the text contain examples of alliteration? Check all that apply.

“in his head and his habits”

“opened his eyes and sneezed”

“eaten up from nose to tail”

“Ouch! He’s tickling under my chin”

“sat in the sunshine”

“fluffed up his fur”

“Good gracious”