

How The Camel Got His Hump

By Rudyard Kipling

Once upon a time there was a stubborn Camel, who lived alone in the desert, eating sticks and twigs and prickly cactus. Many other animals were working for Man, and one day they tried to get the Camel to follow them. But all he ever said was “Humph.”

“Stubborn Camel,” said the Dog with a stick in his mouth, “Come and fetch like the rest of us.”

“Humph,” said the Camel. And another day went by.

“Stubborn Camel,” said the Horse with a saddle on his back, “Come and trot like the rest of us.”

“Humph,” said the Camel. And another day went by.

“Stubborn Camel,” said the Ox with a yoke on his neck, “Come and plough like the rest of us.”

But all the Camel had to say to that was... “Humph!”

And another day went by. The next day, the Man gathered his Horse, Dog and Ox together and said, “I’m sorry, but the Humph-thing in the desert clearly will not come work for me. I have given up, and you’ll have to work double time to make up for it.”

The animals were very angry. They decided to travel down to the oasis to find the magical spirit who was in charge of All Deserts. They called him the Jinn, or genie. The three animals asked for his help—the Jinn would never tolerate laziness in his deserts, especially from the Humph-thing.

The Jinn found the Camel sleeping in some shade. “Stubborn Camel,” said the Jinn, “What is this I hear of your laziness? You must go work for Man with the other animals.”

“Humph,” said the Camel.

“I would not say that again if I were you,” warned the Jinn, “You have given them three days of extra work.”

“Humph!” said the Camel. And no sooner had he said it, than a great humph sprang out of his back like a big balloon. “What is this?” cried the Camel, “Now I certainly cannot work with a great humph on my back!”

The Jinn chuckled, “You’ve brought that humph upon yourself by not working. Think of it as a gift. You missed three days of work, so now you will be able to work for three days without eating, because you can live on your humph.”

So the stubborn Camel humphed himself in to town to work for Man at last. To this day he has never learned how to behave himself. And that was how the Camel got his hump.





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ACTIVITIES

Draw a line from each word to its meaning.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1. stubborn | Green area with water in the desert. |
| 2. oasis | To accept or allow |
| 3. genie | Not willing to work, idleness |
| 4. tolerate | Not willing to change; hard to deal with |
| 5. laziness | A magical creature who grants wishes |

Circle the answer for the words that have a similar meaning to words from "How the Camel Got His Hump."

Stubborn

"Once upon a time there was a stubborn Camel, who lived alone in the desert, eating sticks and twigs and prickly cactus."

- A. hungry B. pretty C. magic D. difficult

Oasis

"They decided to travel down to the oasis to find the magical spirit who was in charge of All Deserts."

- A. watering hole B. town C. mountain D. cave

Genie

"They called him the Jinn, or genie."

- A. farmer B. sheriff C. magical creature D. mailman

Tolerate

"The three animals asked for his help—the Jinn would never tolerate laziness in his deserts, especially from the Humph-thing."

- A. accept B. punish C. laugh at D. eat

Laziness

"Stubborn Camel," said the Jinn, "What is this I hear of your laziness? You must go work for Man with the other animals."

- A. hunger B. unwillingness to work C. cheerfulness
D. fishing

Circle the correct answer

- Why were the Dog, Horse and Ox angry at the Camel?
A. Because he was prettier than they were.
B. Because he stole their food.
C. Because he wouldn't work for Man
D. Because he had a hump.
- When did the genie give the Camel a hump?
A. Before the Ox, Dog and Horse go to the genie.
B. After the Camel said "Humph!"
C. After the Camel hadn't eaten for three days.
D. After the Camel worked for Man.
- What did the genie say the hump would do for the Camel?
A. It would make the Camel stop saying "Humph!"
B. It would help the Camel carry heavy loads.
C. It would help the Camel trot.
D. It would allow the Camel to work for three days without food.

Put the events in order:

Order

- | | |
|---|-------|
| A. Camel says "Humph!" to the genie. | _____ |
| B. The Dog asks the Camel to fetch. | _____ |
| C. The genie gives Camel a hump so he can work without eating. | _____ |
| D. Man tells the Dog, Horse and Ox that they must work harder since the Camel won't work. | _____ |
| E. The genie tells the Camel to work. | _____ |
| F. The Dog, Horse and Ox visit the oasis. | _____ |