

Reading Comprehension: The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey

Directions: Read the fable and answer the questions that follow.

Once, a man and his son were going to the market with their donkey. As they walked, a man passed them and said, "How silly. You are walking that donkey when you could be riding it instead. What is a donkey for but to ride on?"

Hearing this, the man put his boy on the donkey's back and they went on their way. But soon they passed a group of women, one of whom said, "You should be ashamed of yourself young man. Your father who is older than you should be riding and you should be walking." Red-faced and embarrassed, the boy jumped down to have his father get up on the donkey.



They hadn't gone far when they passed a man and a woman, one of whom said to the other, "Doesn't he know they can both fit on that donkey? His boy doesn't have to walk this dusty road." Well, the man didn't know what to do, but at last he took his son up and sat him down in front of him on the donkey. They reached the town and people began to jeer and point at them. "You're overloading that poor donkey – you and your son both sitting there. You both look strong! You'd be better off carrying the donkey yourselves."

They got off of the donkey and tried to think what to do. At last they cut down a pole and tied the donkey's feet to it. With it tied to the pole like this, they raised the pole to their shoulders and carried the donkey towards the bridge that lead to the market. This was difficult to do.

The townspeople laughed and heckled them so much that the donkey was frightened by everything going on. Its feet slipped loose from the ropes and it fell. Once it got to its feet again it ran away kicking and bucking.

"That will teach you," said an old man who had followed them. "Try to please everyone and you will please no one."

Questions

1. Where were the man and the boy traveling? _____

2. Why did the man put the boy on the donkey? _____

3. What happened after they passed a man and woman? _____

4. How did the people act when the man and the boy reached the town? _____

5. What does the picture show? _____
