

THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD

By Rudyard Kipling



Long, long ago, the mighty Elephant had no trunk. His nose was short, and only as big as a boot! But the Elephant's child, just a baby Elephant, was very curious and always asked silly questions: "Aunt Ostrich, why do your tail feathers grow so tall? ... Uncle Giraffe, what makes your skin so spotty? ... Miss Hippo, how does your mouth open so wide?"

One fine morning the curious baby Elephant asked, "What does the Crocodile have for dinner?" All together everybody yelled, "HUSH!" in a dreadful tone, and they shushed and shooed him away angrily. But the baby Elephant did not understand why. He was still curious!

Then the baby Elephant came upon the magnificent Kolokolo bird and he sighed, "My family has shushed and shooed me away, but I still want to know what the Crocodile eats for dinner!" The Kolokolo Bird answered, sadly, "Go to the banks of the great green river if you want to find out." After a long and tiresome search, the baby Elephant found the Crocodile by the river bank. "I have been looking for you, Mr. Crocodile!" he said with excitement, "Will you please tell me what you have for dinner?" The Crocodile grinned wide, and he said, "Come closer, baby Elephant, I'll whisper it to you." The baby Elephant bent his head down to the Crocodile's large, toothy mouth. "I think," growled the Crocodile, "Today I will begin with a baby Elephant!" And suddenly the Crocodile caught him by his little nose. The baby Elephant cried out through his pinched nose, "Led go! You're hurdig be!" Stubbornly, he sat back and began to pull as hard as he could. As he pulled, and leaned back, his nose began to stretch! They both pulled and pulled until the baby Elephant's nose was almost five feet long. Finally the Crocodile let go of his nose with a plop. The poor baby Elephant was left with a very sore and very long nose! At first, all the animals made fun of his great, ugly nose. But then he found many uses for it. He could pick fruit from high treetops, brush away flies, and even breathe when he was underwater!

And that is how the Elephant got his trunk.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Why did everyone tell the baby Elephant to be quiet?

- A. They wanted to sleep.
- B. They were afraid the Crocodile would hear him.
- C. They were tired of him asking so many questions.
- D. They wanted to talk to each other.

2. Why was the Kolokolo bird sad when he told the baby Elephant to go to the river?

- A. He was having a bad day.
- B. All Kolokolo birds are sad.
- C. He was tired of answering questions.
- D. He knew that the Crocodile might try to eat the baby Elephant.

3. According to the story, after the baby Elephant's nose was stretched, what could he do?

- A. Pick fruit, brush away flies and breathe underwater
- B. Catch the Kolokolo bird
- C. Blow water on Aunt Ostrich
- D. Cover his eyes with his nose

WORD SEARCH

K T Z C K T E R K A M J L Q E	Word List
Z E I U J F N U H A S U S S L	Crocodile
A P Y R T X I E G H F C H Q I	Curious
M A A I E C F N M D U U J E D	Dreadful
Z E H O P S I Q A E S U Z A O	Excitement
B N R U J F O E V H T A H O C	Fine
Q A L S I E R M E S W I S C O	Kolokolo
D N F C M D L D E K I W C M R	Magnificent
Z R E K O L O K O L O W S X C	Mighty
R N Y L N R O B B U T S C L E	River
T E M I Y W N Y T H G I M G C	Shushed
A K V R W W Y L V I P J S D B	Stubbornly
T M G I U N O D B E N W D E W	Tiresome
U T T E R B T Q G X B F Y T A	
A T U Q H C S J V M T C H D W	