



Sing-Song of Old Man Kangaroo

by Rudyard Kipling

A long time ago, the Kangaroo looked very different than he does now. He was grey and woolly, with four short legs. He was very boastful, and wanted nothing more than to be the most important and well-loved animal in Australia.

One day, his pride really got the better of him. The old Kangaroo went to the Little God Nia, who was known for granting wishes.

“Make me different from all the other animals,” demanded the old Kangaroo, “it must be done by 5 o’clock this afternoon.” Up jumped Nia from his seat on the rocks and he shouted, “Go away!”

So the old Kangaroo went to the Middle God Nialu, and commanded, “Make me different from all the other animals, and make me very popular too! It must be done by 5 o’clock this afternoon.” Up jumped Nialu from his seat in the bushes and he shouted, “Go away!”

So the old Kangaroo went to the Big God Nialuwa and stated, “You must make me different from all the other animals, and very popular, and very wonderfully run-after. It must be done by 5 o’clock this afternoon.”

Nialuwa was tired of the old Kangaroo’s shenanigans, and so he proceeded to grant his wishes. Nialuwa called the yellow dog Dingo and said, “See that Kangaroo?” The Dingo nodded. “Well, he wishes to be different from all the other animals, and very wonderfully run-after. Make him so! You have until 5 o’clock this afternoon.”

And with that, the Dingo began to chase the grey and woolly Kangaroo for miles and miles. The old Kangaroo ran and ran on his four legs, through the desert, through the mountains, through the salt-pans, the reed-beds and the blue gums... he had to! Soon



they came to a river, and the Kangaroo didn’t know how to cross. He began to hop through the river. Then he hopped through the forest, and soon his back legs began to get stronger. He tucked up his front legs, hopped on his hind legs and stuck out his tail for balance as he hopped away from the Dingo.

Eventually the sun began to set. The tired old Kangaroo hopped and hopped, and suddenly realized that the Dingo was no longer chasing him. It was 5 o’clock in the afternoon! And low and behold, the old Kangaroo was now different from all the other animals, not to mention, he’d been run-after all day.

Activities

Word Meanings

Circle the answer for the words that have a similar meaning to words from “Sing-Song of the Old Man Kangaroo.”

woolly

“He was grey and woolly, with four short legs.”

- A. smooth and shiny, like silk
- B. long and sharp, like wire
- C. thick and curly, like wool
- D. light and airy, like a cloud

boastful

“He was very boastful...”

- A. full of pride
- B. full of sadness
- C. full of anger
- D. full of water

shenanigans

“Nialuwa was tired of the old Kangaroo’s shenanigans...”

- A. demands
- B. questions
- C. talking
- D. silly behavior

gums

“The old Kangaroo ran and ran on his four legs, through the desert, through the mountains, through the salt-pans, the reed-beds and the blue gums...”

- A. rivers
- B. flowers
- C. trees
- D. weeds

hind

“He tucked up his front legs, hopped on his hind legs and stuck out his tail for balance...”

- A. front
- B. back
- C. tired
- D. big

Fill in the missing words

Write the correct word in the blank.

1. Nialuwa sent _____ to run after Kangaroo.
2. Kangaroo wanted everything done by _____ o’clock.
3. Kangaroo _____ through the river.
4. Kangaroo wanted to be _____ from the other animals.

Who was it?

Circle the correct answer.

Who wanted to be well-loved?

- A. Dingo B. Nialuwa C. Nia D. Kangaroo

Who got tired of the kangaroo’s shenanigans?

- A. Dingo B. Nialuwa C. Nia D. Kangaroo

Who said “Go away!” to Kangaroo

- A. Dingo B. Nialuwa C. Nia D. Kangaroo

Secret Code of Nialuwa

Use the secret code numbers to spell out a sentence about “The Sing-Song of the Old Man Kangaroo.”

4 9 14 7 15 3 8 1 8 5 4

11 1 14 7 1 18 15 15

Code Key

1 = A	5 = E	9 = I	13 = M	17 = Q	21 = U	25 = Y
2 = B	6 = F	10 = J	14 = N	18 = R	22 = V	26 = Z
3 = C	7 = G	11 = K	15 = O	19 = S	23 = W	
4 = D	8 = H	12 = L	16 = P	20 = T	24 = X	



