



GET STARTED



(LISTENING) TEXTS



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There once was a shy and quiet octopus. He was often alone, although he wanted to have lots of friends.

One day, the octopus was trying to catch a very slippery oyster. Before he knew it, he had tied himself into one massive knot, and couldn't move anymore. He tried with all his strength to wriggle free, but it was no good. In the end, he had to ask for help from the passing fish. Many fish swam past but one very kind little fish offered to help to untie all those tentacles. The octopus felt really happy when he was finally set free. But he was so shy and didn't try to make friends. He simply thanked the fish, and quickly swam off.

Later, the octopus spent the whole night thinking that he had wasted a great chance to make friends with that very kind little fish.

A couple of days later the octopus was resting between some rocks. He looked into the distance and saw an enormous fish coming over to feed in that area. The octopus quickly hid but saw that the huge fish was chasing the same fish who had untied him. The octopus, remembering how the little fish had helped him, felt that he had to do whatever he could. So he suddenly came out from the rocks and put himself right in the path of the giant fish. Before the huge fish could do anything, the octopus shot out a big cloud of black ink. He grabbed the little fish, and swam off back to hide in the rocks.

As soon as it was safe again, all the fish who had been hiding came and congratulated the octopus for being so brave. Now he suddenly had lots of new friends but his best friend became the one who had saved his life when nobody else wanted to help him.



Once, a little lamb was grazing in a meadow, together with many other sheep. Because it was only a few months old, it did not know how important it was to stay with them. So the lamb just wandered off, away from the group. There was so much fresh and delicious grass in other places too. So why stay close together in one place?

Now it was completely alone, but had no idea of a danger getting closer and closer. A hungry wolf had seen the lonely lamb and was following it. Finally the lamb discovered that all other sheep were out of sight. It wanted to get back to them. But then the wolf blocked its way. It was impossible to return.

“Are you going to eat me?”, asked the lamb. The wolf said: “Yes, of course. That’s exactly what is going to happen.” The lamb said: “But can you please wait for some more time? I have eaten a lot of grass now and my stomach is filled with grass. If you eat me now, you will feel as if you are eating grass! So please wait until the grass is digested.” The wolf agreed, “Oh yes, I will wait. You are here before me and I can wait for some more time!” The lamb thanked the wolf.

After some time, the wolf got ready to kill the lamb, but was stopped again. “Dear wolf, please wait for some more time. If you eat me now, you will see that there is still a lot of grass in my stomach! Let me dance and then it will be digested easily.” The wolf agreed.

The little lamb danced for a while, but then suddenly stopped. The wolf asked what had happened. The lamb said, “I cannot dance anymore, because there is no music. You see this bell around my neck? Can you untie this bell and ring it loudly? Then I can dance fast and then the grass in my stomach will also get digested fast. And then you can eat me!” The wolf, who was getting really hungry, was ready to do anything. He removed the bell from the lamb’s neck and rang it as loud as he could.

Meanwhile, the shepherd was searching for the little lamb and heard the bell ringing. He saw the wolf and the lamb and ran towards the wolf with a stick. When the wolf saw the big, strong shepherd coming to him, he ran away, and the lamb was saved!



One day an elephant wandered into a forest. He was searching for new friends and hoped to find them there.

The first animal that he saw was a monkey on a tree. The elephant looked up and asked: "Will you be my friend?" "No", replied the monkey, "You are too big. You cannot swing from trees like me."

Next, the elephant met a rabbit. Again, he asked him to be his friend. But the rabbit said, "You are too big to fit in my hole under the ground!"

Then the elephant saw a frog who was sitting in the sun to warm up. "Will you be my friend?" he asked. "How can I?" asked the frog. "You are too big to leap and jump like me."

The elephant was getting a bit sad. Was there no one in this forest who wanted to be friends with him? But then he met a fox. "Will you be my friend?" he asked. The fox said, "I'm very sorry, sir. But you are just too big." By then it was getting dark and the elephant tried to get some sleep.

The next day, the elephant saw all the animals in the forest running for their lives. He asked them what was going on. The bear replied, "There is a tiger in the forest. He's trying to gobble us all up!" The animals all ran away to hide. The elephant wondered what he could do to save them. Meanwhile, the tiger kept eating up whoever he could find.

So, the elephant walked up to the tiger and said, "Please, Mr. Tiger, do not eat up these poor animals." "Mind your own business!" growled the tiger. The elephant had no choice but to give the tiger a heavy kick with one of his front legs.

The tiger flew through the air and landed on his back. He quickly got up and ran for his life. The elephant walked back into the forest to tell the good news to everyone. They all thanked him and said: "You are just the right size to be our friend."



Richmond is a little town in the north of England. It has a library, a doctor and a dentist, two supermarkets, three hairdressers and a few restaurants, a shoe repair shop and some other small businesses. Just enough for all its 8,740 inhabitants.

There is also an animal shop. One day, there was a sign in the shop window. It said: "Puppies for Sale." Many people and children passed by without seeing it. Some of them read it and then walked on anyway. But a few went inside to take a look at the puppies. One of them was Jonathan, a 12-year-old boy who was really interested in buying one. He asked the owner, a friendly young man, how much he was selling the puppies for. The store owner said: "Anywhere from £30 to £50."

Jonathan removed all the money he had from his pocket: "I have £12.50," he said. "Can I please look at them?" The shop owner smiled and whistled. From the kennel, five cute puppies ran out. One puppy was lagging considerably behind. Jonathan pointed at the dog and asked- "what is wrong with that one?"

The shopkeeper explained: "It has a hip problem. At least that is what the doctor told me. It will never walk properly again."

Jonathan cheered with excitement: "That's the puppy I want to buy!"

The owner said: "You don't have to buy that dog. You can have it for free."

But Jonathan looked up at him and said:

"I don't want you to give him to me. That puppy is worth just as much as the rest of them. I'll give you \$12.50 now, and 10 pounds a month until I have fully paid for him."

The shopkeeper replied: "Are you sure you want this dog? It is never going to walk, run or play with you."

Then Jonathan lifted one side of his pants up and showed him his crippled leg supported by a big metal brace. He looked up at the shop owner and said, "Well, I don't run so well myself, and my little puppy will need someone who understands!"



I am a Robot
Robby for you
my real name is
five eight two

chips in my brains
cameras all around
and bionic ears
hear every sound

I am a Robot
black and clean
I really am
a perfect machine

I can drive a car
or sing for you
there's nothing that
I cannot do

I can walk the dog
or cook a meal
I even know
how to feel

today I met
four six nine
a Robot girl
she looks fine

now I can't do
my work anymore
I am in love
that's for sure

I think I found
a way to show
my feelings for her
she has to know

this is my plan
full of energy
my present for her
is a battery!



Spiders have eight legs and different body parts from insects. They also don't move around in the same way insects do.

There are about 40,000 known species of spiders. Most spiders use a web to catch their prey, which is usually insects.

The largest spider is the Goliath tarantula, and they can catch birds. The smallest spider in the world is less than 1mm long!

Spiders have a skeleton that is on the outside of their body instead of the inside, unlike humans.

Spider silk is extremely strong, and has a number of different uses.

One of the ways spiders use silk is to create webs, which catch prey.

There are a few different kinds of spider webs, such as orbs, funnels and sheets.

Not all spiders catch their prey in webs.

The wolf spider, for example, makes a hole in the ground, and waits inside for prey to come near before catching them.

Spiders lay eggs, and store them in an egg sac to keep them safe.

It takes a spider about an hour to build a web, and they usually build a new one every day.



1. Many spiders prepare for the winter by laying their eggs in autumn.
2. They lay their eggs inside a silk egg sac, which is usually hidden in a web.
3. Spiders can produce multiple egg sacs, each containing up to several hundred eggs.
4. Though not all spiders build webs, every species produces silk.
5. All spiders have eight eyes but most of them can't see very well.
6. They rely on what they feel to know when they've caught prey in their webs.



A long, long time ago a boy was walking through a park. His name was Oliver. He had never been there before and didn't know it was so big. There were many paths to choose from, but he wasn't afraid to get lost. His dog was with him and he knew it could always find the way back home.

Then, somewhere in the middle of the park, there was a tree with a sign on it. That's strange, Oliver thought. Let's have a look what's on it. He went a little bit closer to the tree, so he could read the words. The sign read: "I am a magic tree. Say the magic words and you will see." Oliver didn't really believe in magic anymore. But because he had nothing else to do, he tried to guess the magic words. He tried abracadabra, **supercalifragilisticexpialidocious**, tan-ta-ra, and many more... but none of them worked.

Finally, he threw himself to the ground, saying: "Please, dear tree!" and suddenly, **a big door opened in the trunk**. Inside everything was dark, except for another sign that said "Carry on with your magic." Oliver almost couldn't believe his eyes. Then he said "Thank you, dear tree!" With this, **the inside of the tree lit up brightly and showed a pathway leading to a great big pile of toys and chocolate**.

The next day was Saturday. Oliver brought all his friends to the magic tree. At first, he was afraid the tree would be gone, or that he just couldn't find it anymore. But it was still there!

The magic worked again and Oliver and his friends had the best party ever.

So that's the reason why some people say that "please" and "thank you" are magic words.



The Channel Tunnel is a 50 kilometre rail tunnel that links England to France. You cannot drive through the Channel Tunnel because it carries trains only.

However, you can take your car with you, because the Eurotunnel Shuttle is a train that transports cars and people through the tunnel.

Travellers drive their vehicle onto the train, park it, and stay inside while the train takes them to the end of the line. Then they start up their car again, drive off the train and continue their journey.

Construction began in 1988 and finished in 1994.

The first idea to build a tunnel was by a French engineer called Albert Mathieu way back in 1802. That tunnel would have been very different; instead of a railway line, horses would transport the passengers. Halfway across there would be an island for changing them!

At its busiest, approximately 14,000 people were employed in the construction of the tunnel.

There are actually three tunnels down there! Two are for trains and there is also one smaller service tunnel that can be used in emergencies.

11 machines were used to bore and dig the tunnel under the sea bed. Each machine was as long as two football pitches. One of them is still buried under the Channel today.

It takes around 35 minutes to travel the length of the Channel Tunnel. That's definitely faster than swimming. Up to 400 trains pass through the tunnel each day. On average, those trains carry 50,000 passengers, 6,000 cars and 180 coaches from country to country.



There once was a prince
with a beautiful castle.
He lived all alone,
just on his own.
His parents were dead,
his brothers gone
and so he said:
“This cannot go on.
I must find a princess
to live here with me.
I feel so lonely.
That’s not how it should be.”
He got on his horse
and went to a town,
to look for a wife and start a new life.
To the first one he saw, he told of his castle.
She looked in his eyes and said: “Tell me no lies.”
“You don’t have a castle, it cannot be true.”
The prince said: “Then it’s goodbye to you.”
To the next girl he said: “How do you do?
I am a prince and who are you?”
“I am Miss Paula and I am sorry to say,
you don’t look like a prince, I wish you good day.”
“Well, I am a prince, you could be my wife.
But do what you want with the rest of your life.”

To the last one he said:
“I am just John and who are you?”
“I’m princess Claire, how do you do?”
“Thank you my dear, I am okay.
But this is not my lucky day.”
“Tell me John, what sort of work do you do?”
“I work in a castle, what about you?”
“Well, to be honest, I am looking for a man.
Can you help me?” “Yes, I think I can!”
“So, what is it that you can do for me?”
“I know a prince and he is still free.”
“Then take me to him as fast as you can.
This prince of yours could be the right man.”
“Alright dear Claire, I will do as you say.
Come with me, let’s go right away.”
They went to the castle on the back of his horse.
He said: “Wait in the hall, take some rest.
Let me find the prince, I will do my best.”
At the end of the hall our John turned round.
He came back to her and said: “Look who I found!”
“I am prince John. You must be princess Claire.
Welcome to my castle, I am happy you are there.”
But the princess said: “I am not a fool, my dear.
Will you please let me out of here?
You are just John and nothing more.”
And princess Claire walked out of the door.



“Paul, can you do
some shopping for me?
Please no excuses.
I know you are free.
Here is the list
now go, don’t wait.
Shops are still open
don’t be late.”

I went to the supermarket,
to buy some milk, cheese and bread.
Then this bullet came and flew
right over my head.
Strange things happen here in town.
Shooting like cowboys night and day.
People shouting “Get out of the way!”
There I was in the middle of a fight.
On my left two men with guns, on my right
a big man with a knife, holding a beautiful miss.
He smiled at me and then gave her a kiss.
She did not want that, I could see
this woman, she was staring at me.
I said: “Take me, let her go.
She is too young to die, you know.”
He looked at me and said very calm:
“Leave this place kid, I wish you no harm.”
I said: “Hey man, did you not hear what I said?
Let the lady go, take me instead.
There is no other way.
Listen to me and do as I say.”
He smiled and said: “Relax, be cool.
You are a very big fool.
We are shooting ... a film!
The cameras are there.
The actors and actresses everywhere.
Now we have to do
this part again.
Please go,
Mister Hero.”
I looked at him and said:
“Sorry, but how could I know
the shooting was just for the show?”



Once upon a time, there was a poor orphan boy called Dick Whittington. The people in his village believed that the streets of London were paved with gold. So Dick decided to travel there and become a rich man.

Dick walked for many days, but when he arrived in London there were no streets of gold! Tired and hungry, he fell asleep on the steps of a great house. The house belonged to a rich businessman who found Dick and gave him a job cleaning the kitchen. Dick worked very hard and was happy. He had enough to eat and at night he could sleep by the fire.

There was a problem though! At night, rats ran around the kitchen and kept him awake. So Dick went out and found the fastest rat-catching cat in London! The cat caught all the rats that came into the house and Dick could sleep at night.

The businessman heard about the amazing cat and asked Dick if he could take it on his ship to catch rats on his next journey. Dick agreed, but was very sad to see the cat go.

While the businessman was away, the other servants were very mean to Dick, so Dick decided to run away. But as he was leaving, one of the great church bells rang. It seemed to say, 'Turn back, Dick Whittington, Mayor of London!' So Dick came back to the house and soon the businessman returned. He was very happy because Dick's cat had caught all the rats on the ship. He gave Dick a reward and promoted him to his assistant.

Dick worked hard for the businessman and learned everything he could. Eventually he married the businessman's daughter and started a very successful business of his own. And, yes, he did become Mayor of London!



England, Scotland and Wales are on an island in the north-west of Europe called Great Britain.

Great Britain together with Northern Ireland is called the United Kingdom or UK.

England is the largest part of the UK. Its name comes from people called the Angles, who came from Germany, 1500 years ago. About 53 million people live in England and the capital city is London.

Over 5 million people live in Scotland, which is in the north of Britain.

The highest mountain in the UK is in Scotland. It is called Ben Nevis and is 1.345 metres tall.

The capital city of Scotland is Edinburgh but the largest city is Glasgow.

Wales is in the west of Britain. About 3 million people live there and about 20 percent of them speak Welsh. Welsh is one of the oldest languages in Europe.

The Welsh flag has a picture of a dragon. The capital of Wales is Cardiff.

Northern Ireland is a part of Ireland, an island west of Britain. Nearly 2 million people live there. A very popular tourist attraction is The Giant's Causeway. It's a collection of large black lava rocks from a volcano, but an old story says a giant built it.

The capital of Northern Ireland is Belfast.



1. Some British people say that they are from Great Britain.
2. Some say they are from England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.
3. What do you know about these different places?
4. England is the largest part of the UK.
5. Over 5 million people live in Scotland.
6. The Giant's Causeway is a popular tourist attraction.



Computers can do lots of jobs. They can do maths, store information, or play music. You can use a computer to write, or to play games.

What do you know about the history of computers?

The first computers were big. They were the size of a room.

They were so big that people didn't have them at home.

Early computers could also only do simply maths, like a calculator.

In the 1930s Alan Turing had the idea for a computer you could program to do different things.

In 1958 Jack Kilby invented the microchip. Microchips are tiny but can store lots of information. They helped making computers smaller.

The first mouse was made of wood and was much larger than today's mouse.

In the 1970s computers were smaller and cheaper, so people started to use them at home.

In the 1980s computer games were very popular, so lots of people bought computers just to play games.

IN 1989 Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web, which is a way to organise information on the internet.

Today people can use smartphones to play games, email and go on the internet.

In the past a simple computer was the size of a room. Now it can go in your pocket!



1. A computer is a device for working with information.
2. The information can be numbers, words, pictures, movies, or sounds.
3. Computer information is also called data.
4. Computers can process lots of information very quickly.
5. Many modern computers do billions of calculations each second.
6. An English inventor designed the first computer in the 1830s.
7. It was mechanical, not electronic.
8. The machine was so complex that it was never built.



Volcanoes are openings in the Earth's surface. When they are active they can let ash, gas and hot magma escape in sometimes violent and spectacular eruptions. The word volcano originally comes from the name of the Roman god of fire, Vulcan. The Pacific Ring of Fire is an area around the Pacific Ocean where over 75% of the volcanoes on Earth are found.

Hot liquid rock under the Earth's surface is known as magma; it is called lava after it comes out of a volcano.

Some famous volcanic eruptions of modern times include Mount Krakatoa in 1883, Novarupta in 1912, Mount St Helens in 1980 and Mt Pinatubo in 1991.

While we certainly have some big volcanoes here on Earth, the biggest known volcano in our solar system is actually on Mars. Its name is Olympus Mons and it measures a whopping 600km wide and 21km high.

Volcanoes can be active, sleeping or dead if it's very unlikely they will ever erupt again.

Volcanic eruptions can send ash high into the air, over 30km above the Earth's surface.

Large volcanic eruptions can reflect radiation from the Sun and drop average temperatures on Earth by around half a degree. There have been several examples of this over the last century.



1. Volcanoes can cause a lot of damage.
2. Buildings can be destroyed and poisonous gases can kill people and animals.
3. Ash can ruin crops, dust can result in death or illness.
4. Dark skies with heavy winds and rain can occur months after an eruption.
5. Scientists have categorized volcanoes into three main categories.
6. An active volcano is one which has recently erupted.



One day, a turtle and a crocodile met each other near the side of a river.

The crocodile said: “You’re a turtle, but you don’t have to remain a turtle. I was once a turtle just like you, but I became a crocodile.”

“How can that be?” asked the turtle.

“Well, I’ll tell you,” said the crocodile. “You see, turtles and crocodiles are both reptiles.

So I decided I could be any kind of reptile I wanted to be.”

“But,” said the turtle, “there is a difference between turtles and crocodiles.”

“No, not really,” replied the crocodile. “We both have four legs, a big mouth, hard plates on our backs, claws, and a tail.”

“That’s true,” said the turtle. “But how did you change into a crocodile?”

“It didn’t happen right away,” explained the crocodile. “I had to follow a plan. First, I had to think like a crocodile. Then, I began to walk like a crocodile. Next, I learned to talk like a crocodile. I even learned to swim like a crocodile. And most of all, I learned everything a crocodile should know.”

“But,” asked the turtle, “what did other turtles think of this?”

“Well, at first, some of them made fun of me,” replied the crocodile. “But I didn’t mind. I knew that someday I’d be a crocodile and they would be surprised. And one day it happened.”

“What happened?” asked the turtle.

“I began to look like a crocodile. My tail began to grow longer. My big shell began to soften and stretch out from my head to my tail. My legs suddenly grew longer, and my head and brain grew bigger. And here I am today, a crocodile among crocodiles.”

“Wow!” cried the turtle. “This is fantastic. Could I become a crocodile?”

“Of course you can, if you are willing to work at it,” replied the crocodile.

“Oh, I’m willing to work at it,” insisted the turtle.

“Very well,” said the crocodile. And with that, the crocodile used its big tail to knock the turtle into the water. The turtle was stunned for a moment, splashing and trying to keep its head above the water. Finally, after catching some air, the turtle cried out,

“Why did you do that?”

“Now,” said the crocodile, “you have taken the first step to becoming what you want to be. You are no longer someone who is waiting for things to come to you.”

“But what if I don’t become a crocodile—what will happen to me?” cried the turtle.

“Hey, listen here,” replied the crocodile. “Not everybody can become a crocodile.

But who knows? You might become a very well-respected lizard! Go for it!”



1. Crocodiles are reptiles, which means that they are cold-blooded.
2. Their bodies are also very streamlined so they can slide quickly through the water.
3. Some can grow up to 7 metres in length and weigh more than a thousand kilos.
4. Crocodiles are typically found in the tropics in Africa, Asia, America and Australia.
5. They eat fish, frogs, birds, reptiles, and even large animals like hippos and buffalo.
6. Crocodiles have very good night vision and a strong sense of smell.