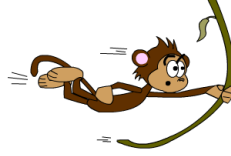


Mongkut the Troublemaker

Hal Ames & William Zeng



In the deep jungles of Southern Asia lived a young monkey named Mongkut. Mongkut lived with his parents in a tall tree. They built a small house there. He was an only child.

Mongkut was always creating problems at school. He did not like to listen to his teacher; he said she was boring. He never did his homework; he said it was too hard. He never helped his mother; he said he was just lazy.

His teacher and his parents were very worried about him. They had a meeting to discuss how to help him to get into a good school when he would go to middle school. At first they argued about how to help him, but at the end they came up with a plan.

Since the family was poor, they did not have enough money to buy him the things he wanted. He always asked for new things, but his parents would buy him secondhand clothes, toys, books, and just about everything else. This made him mad. He wanted new things.

His parents and the teacher agreed that they would get him something new if he worked hard, did his homework and improved his grades.

This worked for a while. He was excited to finally get something that was new. He started to do his homework, he listened to his teacher and every day he improved his grades.

This made his teacher and his parents very happy, but there was a problem. He did not get along with the other students in his class. He was a big bully. He

would make the other monkeys give him money. He even told one of the older monkeys to do his project in science. His parents didn't know that he was a bully. They thought he was doing the work himself.

At the end of the term his grades had improved a lot, but mostly because he was turning in his homework, which someone else had done for him, and he was cheating on his tests.

When the final test came, he wasn't prepared. He did very poorly.

"How did he do so badly on the test when we thought he was working so hard?" his parents asked the teacher. "How can we give him anything if he did so badly?"

The teacher said, "I found out he is a very big bully. He didn't do the work at all. I wish I had known about this sooner."

The parents were dumbfounded. They had no idea what was going on either.

"What should we do now?" they asked.

"With the score he got on the test, I doubt he can get into any school. Maybe he should get a job," the teacher suggested.

"NO! That is not acceptable," his father exclaimed. "He has to go to school and learn so he can have a better life. I don't want him to be poor like me."

His father admitted that when he was Mongkut's age he was just like him. He had not expected that Mongkut would be that way. His mother was surprised about how her husband had been when he was a boy.

"Why didn't you tell me this before? If he's like you, then he will not succeed in life. Now it might be too late," his wife spoke to him in a stern voice.

The teacher jumped in, "It's not too late. I have a suggestion. There is a special school for kids like Mongkut. It's not cheap, but I think I can get some of our families to help. He'll need to go away for three years. Can you live with that?"

The parents said, “That’s okay, if that will make his life better.”

They went home and told Mongkut what they had decided. Mongkut was not happy. He did not want to leave home for three years, especially to a boarding school.

“I am NOT going to that school! I’m going to stay right here. You can’t make me go. I won’t go!” Mongkut screamed at his parents.

His parents got mad at him and said, “Young man! You are in no position to tell us what you are going to do. You’ve cheated in school, you’re a bully to your classmates, and you have failed your test. You WILL go to that school and you WILL do a good job. If you don’t you will have to leave and find work.”

“You’re going to kick me out of the house?” Mongkut was really surprised. “You can’t do that. I live here too.”

“Not if we don’t want you to live here. It is our house, not yours,” his parents explained.

Mongkut ended up having no other choice but to go to the boarding school.

At first he hated the school. He didn’t like the food, he didn’t like the teachers, he didn’t like other students, he didn’t like his bed and most of all he hated being away from home.

He tried to be a bully, but this school was very strict. The headmaster made him sit in an empty room for a whole day every time he did something wrong. He hated the punishment, but soon learned it was easier to obey than to try to make life miserable for everyone else. The school was doing its job.

After three years at the school, Mongkut graduated with a score good enough to get into a good high school. He studied hard, which made his parents very happy.

He then went on to one of the best universities in his country and was very successful in his studies.

After university, he got a good job in the city. He sent money home to his parents to help them out. They were no longer poor and bought a better house.

When Mongkut would return to his home to visit, he always made sure to say thank you to his parents and his teacher for helping him to become a better person.

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. jungle _____ | a. not willing to do work |
| 2. only child _____ | b. school where a student lives |
| 3. boring _____ | c. not expensive |
| 4. lazy _____ | d. used clothing, not new |
| 5. second hand _____ | e. family with one kid |
| 6. dumbfounded _____ | f. strong rules with punishment |
| 7. stern _____ | g. thick forest in the tropics |
| 8. cheap _____ | h. not interesting |
| 9. boarding school _____ | i. very surprised, unexpected |
| 10. strict _____ | j. serious, strong speech |

TRUE / FALSE

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Mongkut was a monkey. | T / F |
| 2. Mongkut lived in a big city. | T / F |
| 3. Mongkut was a good student when he was in elementary school. | T / F |
| 4. Many students bullied Mongkut. | T / F |
| 5. Mongkut went to a boarding school. | T / F |
| 6. Mongkut really liked the school at first. | T / F |
| 7. Mongkut liked the food at the school. | T / F |
| 8. Mongkut's teacher did not like him. | T / F |
| 9. Mongkut got a job after elementary school. | T / F |
| 10. Mongkut's parents were poor at the end of the story. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What kind of animal was Mongkut? _____
 - a) horse
 - b) monkey
 - c) donkey
 - d) goat

2. Where did Mongkut's family live? _____
 - a) in a tree
 - b) in a city
 - c) in a valley
 - d) in a village

3. Why did Mongkut ask for money from his classmates? _____
 - a) he wanted to buy many things
 - b) he was a big bully
 - c) he needed food
 - d) all the above

4. What happened to Mongkut when he was bad? _____
 - a) put him out of the school
 - b) hit his hand with a stick
 - c) made him miss dinner
 - d) sent him to a room by himself

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. Who did Mongkut's homework?

2. How did Mongkut get money?

3. How did Mongkut do on his final exam?

4. Where did Mongkut live before he went away?

5. Who offered to help Mongkut?

6. Where did Mongkut go after elementary school?

7. Who punished Mongkut when he was bad at the boarding school?

8. How did Mongkut do in his studies at the boarding school?

9. Who did Mongkut visit after he graduated from university?

10. Who did Mongkut thank for helping him to become successful.?
