

# ***THE GRASSHOPPER***

**(a Fable by Aesop)**

**Adapted by Hal Ames**



There once was a friendly grasshopper that grew up on a farm. He was a happy grasshopper. The field where he was born was full of food and friends.

Every day, during the summer, the grasshopper played in the sun. He loved the warmth of the sun. He jumped and he sang. He always played with the other grasshoppers going from one plant to the next. He was happy playing with his friends.

He loved to eat the green leaves on the plants. When he was not playing, he was eating. He would eat so much he could not jump. Then he would take a nap and wait for the next day.

The grasshopper only worried about today. When he was happy, he would play. When he was hungry, he would eat. When he was tired, he would sleep. It was the same every day.

The grasshopper noticed that the ants were working very hard. He saw them coming and going all day long. They did not play. They did not eat. They did not sleep. They just worked and worked and worked. He thought they were silly to work all of the time.

One day while he was playing, an ant came by dragging some grain. The grasshopper saw the ant and said to him, “Why don’t you come and play with me instead of working so hard. We can play music and have fun.”

The ant replied, “I’m saving food for the winter. I suggest that you save food for yourself.”

“Why should I worry about winter,” the grasshopper said. “There’s plenty of food to eat now.”

The ant ignored the grasshopper, and he continued to drag the grain to his nest.

It was now autumn, and the weather was becoming colder. The clouds filled the sky. The plants began to turn brown. They were not green anymore. The grasshopper was having trouble finding enough food to eat. He was not able to play all day. Now he had to work hard to find food to eat.

Soon he noticed that the ants were not coming to the field anymore. He wondered what they were doing so he went to their nest and looked down into the hole.

“Is anybody there?” he asked.

No one replied.

He yelled louder, “Is anyone there!?”

Just then, an ant poked his head out of the nest.

“What do you want?” the ant asked.

The grasshopper asked, “I was wondering why you don’t come to the field anymore.”

“We have enough food to last for the whole winter. We don’t need to look for food anymore,” the ant answered.

“Do you have some food you could share with me?” the grasshopper asked the ant.

“No, we only have enough food for us. Why didn’t you save food for yourself? There was enough food for you to store food for the winter,” the ant responded.

The grasshopper begged for the ant to give him some food, but the ant disappeared back into his nest.

The grasshopper went back to the field. He was sad that he had not saved food. He was getting very hungry.

When the weather got colder and winter arrived, the grasshopper could not find any food to eat. He went to see the ants again to ask for food.

They said no.

He saw the ants eating the food they had saved during the summer. They were not hungry at all.

It was not long before the grasshopper died because there was no food to eat.

The ants knew this important lesson. It is always best to be prepared for when the need is great.



**"Short Stories for ESL Students"** by **Harold I. Ames** is licensed  
under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License.

**VOCABULARY:** (*Match the word to its definition*)

- |                    |                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. notice _____    | a. more than enough, ample  |
| 2. drag _____      | b. fall, comes after summer |
| 3. plenty _____    | c. store, keep for later    |
| 4. ignored _____   | d. message, example         |
| 5. autumn _____    | e. significant, central     |
| 6. wonder _____    | f. pop up                   |
| 7. poked _____     | g. observe, see             |
| 8. save _____      | h. disregarded, overlooked  |
| 9. important _____ | i. question, think about    |
| 10. lesson _____   | j. pull, tow                |

**TRUE / FALSE:**

- |                                                     |       |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. The grasshopper liked to play.                   | T / F |
| 2. The ants worked all day.                         | T / F |
| 3. The grasshopper lived in the city.               | T / F |
| 4. The ants ate all of their food before winter.    | T / F |
| 5. The grasshopper begged for food.                 | T / F |
| 6. The ants shared everything with the grasshopper. | T / F |
| 7. Winter came and the grasshopper went to sleep.   | T / F |
| 8. The ants lived in a tree.                        | T / F |
| 9. The grasshopper loved to eat.                    | T / F |
| 10. The plants turned brown.                        | T / F |

**MULTIPLE CHOICE:**

1. What did the grasshopper do all day in the summer? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) sang and danced
  - b) worked
  - c) walked
  - d) died
  
2. What is the moral of the story? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) eat, drink and be happy
  - b) life is too short
  - c) save for the future
  - d) exercise is good for the body
  
3. What did the grasshopper want when he went to visit the ants? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) water
  - b) food
  - c) to play with them
  - d) a place to sleep
  
4. Why could the grasshopper not find food? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) there was a flood
  - b) the sun was too hot
  - c) he had eaten it all
  - d) it was autumn

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

1. What did the grasshopper do all day?

---

2. Where was the grasshopper born?

---

3. What color was the food the grasshopper liked to eat?

---

4. Where did the grasshopper go for food after it got cold?

---

5. What did the ant say when the grasshopper asked for food?

---

6. What did the grasshopper do after he ate too much?

---

7. Why did the ants save food?

---

8. Why could the grasshopper not find food?

---

9. What happened to the ants?

---

10. What happened to the grasshopper?

---