

The Turtle Who Couldn't Stop Talking
From
How & Why Stories: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell
A Story from India
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Formatted for Readers Theater by Lois Walker

- READER 1: Long, long ago, a turtle lived in a pond with two swans.
- READER 2: The turtle loved to talk. She always had something to say, and she liked to hear herself say it.
- READER 3/TURTLE: I love to talk, talk, talk! I have so much to say and oh, so little time to say it in. Hi swans! Swim on over here. I have something to tell you. I have something to talk, talk, talk about!
- READER 4: After the turtle and swans had happily lived in the pond for many years, a dry spell came.
- READER 5: There was no rain for weeks and weeks.
- READER 1: At last the pond dried up completely.
- READER 2: The two swans realized they would have to leave their home and fly to another pond with water. The first swan said...
- READER 4/SWAN 1: Sister, we can not stay here any longer. We can't live much longer without water.
- READER 5/SWAN 2: You are right, brother. I hate to leave, but we have no choice.
- READER 1: Sadly, they went to say good-bye to their friend, the turtle.

- READER 3/TURTLE: Oh no! Don't leave me behind! I too have nothing to eat and no water to live on. If you leave me here, I will surely die, die, die.
- READER 4/SWAN 1: But you can't fly.
- READER 5/SWAN 2: How can we take you with us?
READER 3/TURTLE: Take me with you! Take me with you, please, please, please!
- READER 2: The swans felt so sorry for their friend that at last they came up with a plan.
- READER 4/SWAN 1: Turtle, we have thought of a way to take you with us. We will each take hold of one end of a long stick. You must hold onto the middle of it with your beak and never let go.
- READER 5/SWAN 2: Now listen closely turtle. This is important. You must not talk as long as we are carrying you! If you open your mouth, you'll fall to the ground."
- READER 1: The turtle promised not to say a word.
- READER 3/TURTLE: I can do it! You have my word. I won't open my mouth no matter how much I have to say, say, say.
- READER 2: Away the swans flew into the air, carrying the turtle on the stick between them.
- READER 4: As they rose above the treetops, the turtle wanted to say,
- READER 3/TURTLE: Goodness, look how high, high, high we are!
- READER 5: But she didn't say it. She remembered the swans' warning and kept her mouth shut.
- READER 1: Soon they passed over a small town, and a few people looked up and shouted,

ALL: Look at the swans carrying a turtle! What a silly sight!

READER 2: The turtle thought to herself,

READER 3/TURTLE: Why don't they mind their own business? Look who is talking about being silly, silly, silly!

READER 4: But she remembered her promise and did not speak a word out loud.

READER 5: Soon more villagers came to see the sight. They cried,

ALL: How strange! A flying turtle! Look, everybody!

READER 1: The turtle could stand it no longer.

READER 2: She opened her mouth to call out,

READER 3/TURTLE: Hush! You people are foolish, foolish, foolish!

READER 4: But as she did, she let go of the stick and fell to the ground.

READER 5: She landed on her back, and her shell cracked into a thousand pieces.

READER 1: And turtle's shell has remained that way to this day.

READER 2: Her cracked shell reminds us of what can happen...

ALL: if we talk too much!