



Uncle Rabbit

by Jack Fodus
illustrated by Maurie Manning



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN



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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT
School Publishers

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Uncle Rabbit was known throughout the land as a rascal. He was always playing tricks and stirring up trouble. He would **tease** people and **brag** about how he could outsmart anyone, even the king.

Finally, the king decided that he had had enough of Uncle Rabbit and his tricks. So the king met with his advisers.

“We must do something about Uncle Rabbit,” he said. “I want you to catch him. Then I will decide what to do with him.”





▶ The king’s advisers talked first of one plan and then of another. They were not sure that they could outwit Uncle Rabbit.

▶ At last one adviser said, “Let’s go hide at the water hole, where all the animals go to drink. When Uncle Rabbit gets thirsty, he will go to the water hole. Then we can catch him and bring him to the king.”



🔊 The advisers thought this was a good plan. What they did not know was that Uncle Rabbit was hiding right behind the bushes. He had heard every word of the advisers' plan.

🔊 “Those silly people. I will go and drink from the water hole, but they will not catch me,” said Uncle Rabbit. He laughed as he hopped off in the **direction** of the water hole.

Uncle Rabbit had a plan. In a little while, he came to a shoe shop. He spied a fine pair of shoes that the shoemaker had placed in front of his shop.

“Good morning,” said Uncle Rabbit as he approached the shoemaker. “How hot it is today!”





🔊 The shoemaker had been sitting at his workbench in the sun. Now he stood to his full **height** and mopped his forehead. He agreed with Uncle Rabbit. “It is indeed a hot day. It’s too hot to be making shoes.”

🔊 Uncle Rabbit said, “You must be thirsty on such a hot day! You should go inside and get a cool drink of water.”

🔊 Again, the shoemaker agreed with Uncle Rabbit. “That sounds like a good idea. A drink of water would cool me off.”

🔊 The shoemaker went into his shop. As soon as he was inside, Uncle Rabbit grabbed the pair of shoes. Then he hopped **toward** the water hole.



🔊 In a little while, Uncle Rabbit saw a man walking down the road. Uncle Rabbit knew that the blisters on the man's feet had just **healed**. So the man wore no shoes. On his back, the man carried a big jar. Uncle Rabbit knew that the jar contained honey.

🔊 “How wonderful honey would taste right now. I will get some,” said Uncle Rabbit. He dropped one of the fine shoes in the middle of the road. Then he ran to hide in a little **tunnel** by the roadside.





When the honey seller saw the shoe in the middle of the road, he stopped. “Now here is one fine shoe. I could certainly use a new pair of shoes now that my blisters have healed. But without the other shoe, this one is not worth taking.” So the honey seller continued walking down the road.

In a flash, Uncle Rabbit ran through the bushes ahead of the honey seller. The road curled out of sight, so the honey seller did not see him. He dropped the other shoe in the middle of the road and hid again.

When the honey seller came along the road, he saw the other shoe. He stopped once again. “Now here is the other shoe to the pair. All I must do is go back and get the first shoe. Then I can wear these grand shoes. It will only take a minute.”

So the honey seller set down his heavy jar of honey and went back down the road. He thought his honey would be safe for a short time.





As soon as the honey seller was out of sight, Uncle Rabbit grabbed the jar of honey and ran into the woods. He stopped under some trees and sat down near a pile of dead leaves. Then he ate honey until his stomach was about to burst.

🔊 When he was finished eating, Uncle Rabbit tipped the jar over and poured the sticky honey all over his fur. He poured it over his ears, his head, his legs, and his tail. Then he rolled in the dead leaves until they covered every part of his body.





Then Uncle Rabbit set off for the water hole. His honey bath and leaf rolling made him look like a moving pile of leaves. No one had ever seen a creature like this before. And no one dared come near him.

🔊 The king's men were waiting at the water hole to capture Uncle Rabbit, but they did not recognize him. They just stared at the amazing leaf creature.

🔊 Uncle Rabbit walked slowly up to the water hole and right past the king's advisers. He drank his fill of water. His prediction had been right. The king's advisers did not catch him at the water hole. Uncle Rabbit had played yet another trick!





Responding



TARGET SKILL Understanding

Characters What kind of character is Uncle Rabbit? What details in the story tell you this? Copy and complete the chart below.

Words	Actions	What I Know
He would tease people.	He ?	Uncle Rabbit is always ?



Write About It

Text to World Uncle Rabbit is a trickster. Write a summary paragraph about the trick that he plays in the story. Then explain if it is or is not a good idea to play tricks. Include only the most important ideas from the story.



TARGET VOCABULARY

brag
curled
direction
healed

height
tease
toward
tunnel

EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY

outsmart
outwit
prediction

rascal
tricks



TARGET SKILL **Understanding**

Characters Tell more about characters.



TARGET STRATEGY **Summarize**

Stop to tell important events as you read.



GENRE A **folktale** is a story that is often told by people of a country.

Level: N

DRA: 34

Genre:

Folktale

Strategy:

Summarize

Skill:

Understanding Characters

Word Count: 891

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