



# The Gourd-vine and the Pine Tree

Are you as strong as you think you are?

■ A folktale retold by Dr. Mike Lockett, *The Normal Storyteller*; edited by Linda Ludwig  
PAGE DESIGN BY ANGELA CHANG / ILLUSTRATED BY ARNOLD LEE



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Once there was a very tall, old pine tree. It had been growing for many years in the quiet woods. The tree had grown quite slowly and carefully through the years.

It was nearly the oldest tree in the forest. The tree raised its head high above the other trees toward the sky like the king of trees. Even though it stood high above the other trees, the old pine never **bragged**. It never said anything bad about the other plants in the forest, either.

One spring day a strong **breeze** brought a little seed and dropped it at the roots of the pine tree. It was a proud little seed. It swelled and puffed out to see how quickly it could burst its hard coat and begin to grow. It sent out two green vines that grabbed at the **bark** of the pine tree. It was going to be a gourd-vine.

## Usage Tip

*One spring day a strong breeze brought a little seed and dropped it at the roots of the pine tree. (p. 16, line 11)*

句首的 one spring day 意思相當於 one day in spring，春天 spring 可作名詞亦可作形容詞。

- One fall day at the end of October, we took a drive along the river to see all the leaves that had changed color.

Your turn



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"I will climb to the top of the tree," said the little gourd-vine. "I will show everyone how **rapidly** I can grow. I refuse to grow slowly like these trees."

The gourd-vine tugged and pulled at its roots until they were nearly pulled out of the ground. It kept calling down to them: "Drink more, drink more, I say! I must grow faster." It held on **tightly** to the pine tree and climbed and climbed. It climbed until it was way up to the highest branch.

"Look at me!" **screamed** the little gourd-vine, loudly. "You have been growing for a great many years, and I only began this summer. See how high I have grown!" Day after day the little gourd-vine **gloated** over his growth. "I will soon be the biggest plant in the forest. I will grow much taller than all of you!"



## Usage Tip

*"You have been growing for a great many years, and I only began this summer."* (p. 17, line 11)

片語 a great many years 表「很久、很多年了」，常用在說故事或講述往事。

- The people had lived in the area a great many years when they started to see changes.

Your turn

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## Talk About It

- What is this story trying to teach us?  
- *This story is trying to teach us about ...*
- Do you think the gourd-vine was too proud? Why or why not?  
- *I think/don't think it was ... because ...*
- Why didn't the pine tree say anything?  
- *The pine tree didn't say anything because ...*





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Summer passed, and every day the little gourd-vine bragged to the other trees. But the old pine tree just rustled its branches and said nothing. It knew a thing or two.

Fall passed, and even the little gourd-vine slowed in its growing. Winter came. A huge storm came. A **mighty** wind swept through the trees, bringing snowflakes. The flowers hung their heads. The birds flew south. The old pine tree did not mind the cold in the least. It had lived through many **stormy** times during its life.

But the poor little gourd-vine! It had grown so fast that it had forgotten to grow carefully and well. Its roots were weak. Its stalks were soft. One cold night the **frost** touched it, and it fell in a **heap** on the ground. Not even the old pine tree could hold it up. And that was the end of the proud little gourd-vine.

All the bragging did not help it survive when times became hard. ☹

## Usage Tip

*It knew a thing or two.* (p. 18, line 3)

句型 Someone knows a thing or two about ... 表「某人對某方面的事多少知道一點」。相當於 Someone has some knowledge of ...

- Frank knows a thing or two about computers.

Your turn

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## Word Bank

**pine** (n) [pam] 松樹；松木

There are so many tall **pine** trees along this road.

**brag** (v) [bræg] 吹噓，誇耀

Frank is always **bragging** about his high grades.

**breeze** (n) [briz] 微風，和風

There was such a nice **breeze** outside that we decided to go for a walk.

**bark** (n) [bark] 樹皮

They took some **bark** off the tree to help start a fire.

**rapidly** (adv) [ˈræpidli] 很快地，立即

Babies grow very **rapidly** during the first two years of their lives.

**tightly** (adv) [ˈtaɪtli] 緊緊地

They all held on **tightly** to their hats as the wind got stronger and stronger.

**scream** (v) [skrim] 大聲嚷著；尖叫

Sheila **screamed** at her friends from the upstairs window to come over and play.

**gloat** (v) [glot] 沾沾自喜；幸災樂禍

Mary never **gloats** when she wins because she knows how it feels to lose.

**mighty** (adj) [ˈmaɪti] 巨大的；偉大的

The **mighty** river carried the boat all the way to the sea.

**stormy** (adj) [ˈstɔ:mi] 風暴的；暴風雨的

No one wants to go home because it is so **stormy** outside.

**frost** (n) [frɔ:st] 霜

The first **frost** of the year always kills many plants.

**heap** (n) [hip] (一)堆

Sara fell into a **heap** on the floor and cried when Bobby took away her toy.

## More Information

**gourd** (n) [gɔ:rd] 葫蘆，葫蘆科植物

**puff out** (phr v) [pʌf][aʊt] 鼓起

**rustle** (v) [ˈrʌsəl] 使（紙或樹葉等）沙沙作響

**snowflake** (n) [ˈsnəʊˌfleɪk] 雪花

**stalk** (n) [stɔ:k] 莖；梗

## Word Bank Focus

**frost** (v) [frɔ:st] 結霜

The car windows **frosted** over last night.

**frost** (v) [frɔ:st] 撒糖霜

We are going to **frost** the cake and then decorate it.

**frosting** (n) [ˈfrɔ:stɪŋ] 糖霜；撒糖霜

They covered the cake with chocolate **frosting**.