

Deepening Understanding

YR4 Traditional Tales Text

Jack and the Beanstalk by Joe Duffin



Once upon a time, in a farm located half a mile from a small village, lived a boy named Jack and his widowed mother. Jack and his mother both worked on the farm to make money, but one day the farm stopped being profitable. The crops barely grew and one by one the farm animals died, until one day only Daisy the cow remained.

However, after a while Daisy's health began to deteriorate and she could no longer produce milk. Jack and his mother loved Daisy and were faced with a difficult dilemma: Should they keep Daisy or sell her for money? Jack's mother chose the latter, in spite of Jack's protests. She asked Jack to take Daisy to the village market and sell her.

Unfortunately, when Jack arrived at the market, he could not find a buyer for Daisy. After all, who would want a cow that could no longer produce milk? Surely no-one would buy a cow to keep as a pet? Cows are huge and Daisy was certainly no exception.

Jack asked everyone at the market but he could find no buyer until an elderly stranger approached, dressed in a ragged suit and shoes that had more holes than leather.

"Excuse me young man, but I would like to buy this cow you are selling," said the stranger.

Jack couldn't believe what he was hearing. Finally, someone wanted to buy Daisy.

"That will be 5 gold coins please sir," answered Jack.

The old man smiled. "Young man, I have no coins but I have something even better. Behold these magic beans," and the old man produced five ordinary-looking beans out of his pocket.

"What can I do with five magic beans, sir?" snorted Jack, believing this to be a trick.

"If you plant these magic beans, I promise you that something amazing will happen. Now, do you want these beans or not?"

Jack was frightened to returned to his mother with Daisy the cow unsold. Perhaps, after all, the magic beans would be worth more gold coins. Maybe they would even grow a money tree! So, Jack hesitated only for a moment before agreeing to sell Daisy. He said a reluctant farewell to his long-time companion and walked back home.

As you can probably imagine, Jack's mother was less than pleased with the deal Jack had done. Think of any and every synonym for angry, and that's how Jack's mother felt. She almost hit the roof when Jack showed her the magic beans. Days passed before she eventually calmed down and one evening, she told Jack to plant the magic beans.



"It's an utter waste of time, so don't go getting your hopes up and imagining anything wonderful is going to happen," she warned Jack.

After planting the beans, Jack had his supper and went to bed. Despite his mother's warning, he could not help but dream what the magic beans might do. He'd imagined a money tree before, but perhaps the magic beans might produce something greater, like a golden tree, or a plant made out of diamonds!

The morning arrived, Jack and his mother woke up unusually cold. It was always warm in this village but this morning, something was different. Jack and his mother went outside to inspect the weather. Immediately, they noticed a giant shadow cast over their humble farm. Something was blocking the sun's rays, but what? They looked around and they saw...

Something incredible. The magic beans were magic! For where Jack had planted the seeds there now stood a gigantic, green beanstalk! The green skyscraper stood magnificently tall and proud.

"See, mother! I told you the beans were magic!" exclaimed Jack excitedly.

"Yes Jack, those beans were magic. But tell me this, WHAT ON EARTH ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH A GIGANTIC BEANSTALK?" screamed Jack's mother so loudly that nearby birds flew away suddenly.

Jack smiled a cheeky smile. "Well mother, I'm going to find out where it leads!"

