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## A Hero

Read the following proverb and answer the questions that follow:

‘Fortune  
favours  
the brave.’



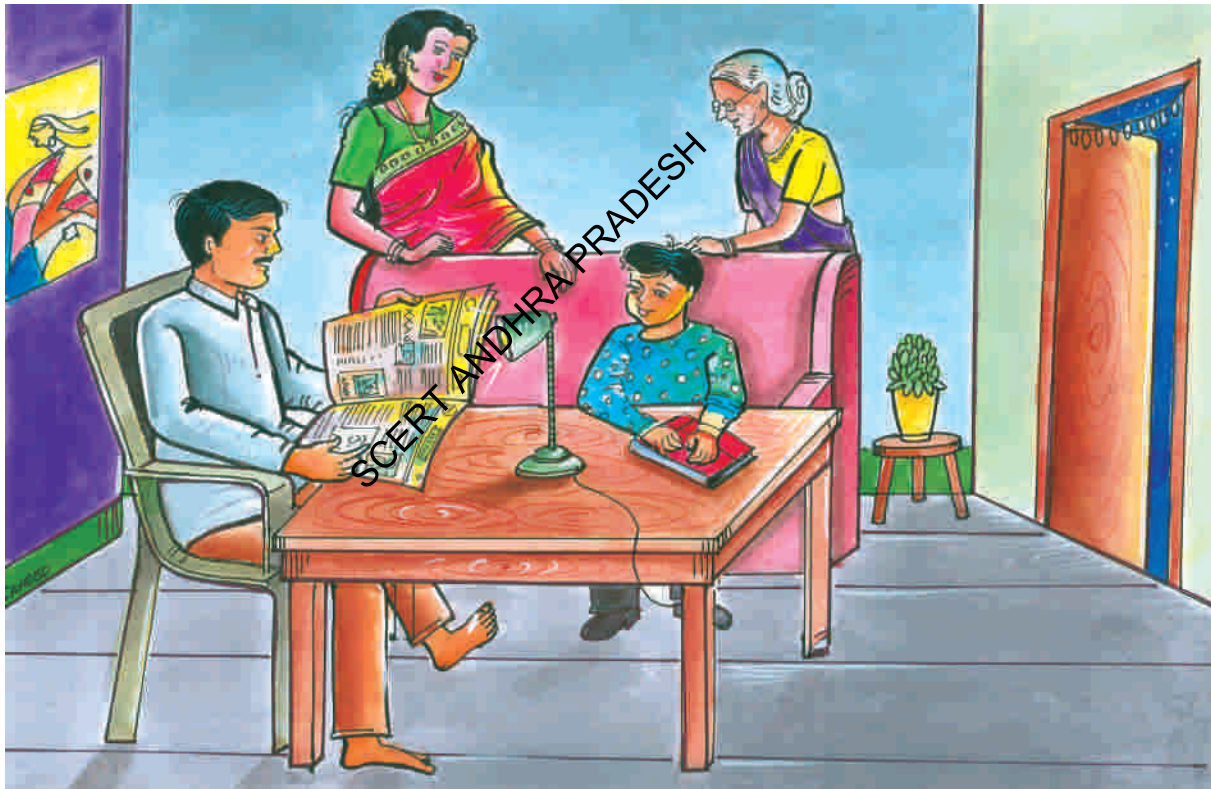
SCERT ANDHRA PRADESH

1. You may have heard of this proverb before. Do you know what it means?
2. Tell the class why the government rewards the brave and adventurous children.
3. Are you aware of any brave boy or girl who may have shown an act of bravery? Talk about his/her bravery to the class.

## A. Reading

Read the following story and answer the questions that follow:

Father was sitting under the hall lamp and reading the newspaper. He looked over the newspaper and said, “Swami, listen to this: News has been received about the bravery of a village lad who was returning home by the jungle path. While he was in the middle of the jungle, he came face to face with a tiger.” The newspaper gave a detailed account of the boy’s fight with the tiger. It also described how the boy flew up a tree where he stayed half a day. At last some people came that way and killed the tiger.



After reading it through, Father looked at Swami fixedly and asked, “What do you say to that?” “I think he must have been a very strong and grown-up person, not a boy at all,” said Swami. “How could a boy fight a tiger?”

“You think you know better than the newspaper?” Father said crossly. “A man may have the strength of an elephant and yet be a coward. “Another may be a mere skeleton; but if he has real courage, he can do anything. Courage is everything; strength and age don’t matter much.” “How can that be?” said Swami. “Suppose I had a lot of courage, but what could I do if a tiger attacked me?”

“Can you prove you have courage?” said Father with a scowl. “Let me see if you can sleep alone tonight in my office room.”

Swami had always slept beside his granny in the porch. The two always had their beds side by side. Any change in this arrangement kept him trembling and awake all night.



He hoped at first that Father was only joking. He tried to change the topic by saying, "Father, our captain says we shall have some elders also in our cricket club. He has asked me to tell you." "We'll see about that later," Father cut in. "Hereafter you must sleep alone."

"From the first of next month, I'll sleep alone," Swami said very humbly, trying to please Father. "No, you must do it right from today," Father said sternly. "Sleeping beside Granny or Mother like a baby is disgraceful. You are now in the Fifth Standard and I don't like the way you are being brought up."

Father lifted the newspaper to his face and started reading it again. Swami rose quietly from his place and tiptoed to his bed in the porch. Granny was sitting up in her bed, and she said, "Boy, are you already feeling sleepy today? Don't you want to hear a story?"

Swami made no reply. He threw himself on the bed and pulled the blanket over his face.

"Don't cover your face," said Granny. "Are you really so sleepy?"

Swami uncovered his face a little and whispered, "Please, please, Granny! Don't talk to me, and don't let anyone disturb me even if the house is on fire. I shall perhaps die if I don't sleep at once."

Then he turned over and curled under the blanket. He started snoring but soon found his blanket pulled away. Father was standing over him.

"Get up, Swami," Father commanded. He looked like a ghost in the semi-darkness of the porch. Swami stirred and groaned as if in sleep. "Get up, Swami," said Father a second time. "Why do you disturb him?" Granny pleaded.

"Get up, Swami," said Father for the third time and Swami got up.

Father rolled up his bed, took it under his arm and said, "Come with me."

Swami looked at Granny, hesitated for a moment, and then followed his father into the office room. "Let me sleep in the hall, Father," Swami pleaded. "Your office room is very dusty and there may be scorpions behind your law books."

"There are no scorpions, boy. You can sleep on the bench if you like."

"Can I have a lamp burning in the room?"

"No. You must learn to be brave. You must not be afraid of darkness; it is only a question of habit." "Will you at least leave the door open?" Swami said very humbly.

"All right," said Father. "But promise you won't roll up your bed and go to your granny's side at night. If you do it, I'll tell your teacher and make you the laughing-stock of the whole school."

Swami was pained and angry. He did not like the cruelty his father was showing. He cursed the newspaper that had printed the tiger's story. He wished that the tiger had not spared the boy.

The night advanced and the silence in the house deepened. Swami's heart began to beat faster. He remembered all the stories of devils and ghosts he had heard. He was almost faint with fear.

Swami hurriedly got up and spread his bed under the bench and crouched there. It seemed to be a much safer place. He shut his eyes tight and encased himself in his blanket. Unknown to himself, Swami fell asleep. In his sleep he had a terrible dream.

A tiger was chasing him. Swami tried hard to escape but his feet would not move. He tried to open his eyes but his eyelids would not open. He groaned in despair.

At last, using utmost effort he opened his eyes. He put his hand out to feel his granny's presence, as was his habit. But he only touched the wooden leg of the bench! At once his lonely state came back to him. He shook in fear and closed his eyes. He heard a little rustling noise in the room.

'What can this be?' thought Swami and slowly opened his eyes.

Something was moving in the darkness. Swami lay gazing at it in horror. He was certain that his end had come. The devil would soon pull him out and tear him to pieces!

"So what is the use of waiting?" Swami thought.



As it came nearer, Swami crawled out from under the bench. At once he clutched its leg and dug his teeth in.

There was a painful cry: "Aiyo! Something has bitten me." Then there was heavy tumbling and falling amidst furniture. Everyone in the house was awakened by the loud noise. In a moment, Father and a servant came running with a light.

Both of them fell on the burglar who lay amidst the furniture with a bleeding knee.

The next day was a day of congratulations for Swami. His classmates looked at him with respect. His teacher patted his back for his courage and bravery. The headmaster said that he was a true scout. Swami had bitten into the knee of a notorious house-breaker and the police were grateful to him.



When Father returned home from the club that night, he asked, “Where is the boy?”

“He is asleep.”

“So early!”

“He didn’t have a wink of sleep the whole of last night,” said Swami’s mother.

“Where is he sleeping?”

“In his usual place.”

“Sleeping beside his granny again !” Father exclaimed. “That is why he wanted to be asleep before I returned home. Clever boy!”

“Let him sleep where he likes,” Mother said angrily. “You needn’t risk his life again.”

“All right, pamper him and spoil him as much as you like,” Father mumbled as he walked away to his room.

Swami was following the whole conversation from under the blanket. He felt a great relief to hear his father giving him up.

-R.K. Narayan

## Glossary

crossly (adv):	a little angrily
scowl (n):	an angry look or expression
porch (n):	a covered entrance to a building; a verandah
sternly (adv):	seriously and strictly
disgraceful (adj):	very bad; shameful
tiptoed (v):	walked quietly on the tips of his toes
curled (v):	drew up his legs close to the body and curved his back
snoring (v):	breathing roughly and noisily while sleeping
stirred (v):	moved slightly
groaned (v):	made a deep sad sound
pleaded (v):	requested
scorpions (n) :	small creatures with a poisonous sting in the long tail
laughing-stock:	someone or something which seems stupid
tumbling (v):	falling helplessly
scout (n):	one who is trained in doing acts of public service
notorious (adj):	well-known for some bad quality or act
faint (v):	likely to lose consciousness
crouched (v):	bent the knees close to the body in fear
encased (v):	covered himself completely
crawled (v):	moved slowly, keeping the body close to the ground

**How well did I read?**

Fill in the boxes using yes/ somewhat/ no.	
I enjoyed reading the passage.	
I got the idea of the passage on my own.	
I got the idea with the help of my friends in the group.	
The teacher helped me to understand the passage.	
I used the glossary given at the end of the passage.	

**I. Answer the following questions:**

- 1) According to the newspaper’s report who fought with the tiger?
- \*2) Can you say why Swami’s father read the news to his son?
- \*3) Did Swami believe the story? Give reasons for your answer.
- 4) What did Swami’s father ask him to do?
- 5) Why did Swami try to change the topic when his father asked him to sleep alone?

**II. Read the following sentences and say whether they are true or false. Write T for true and F for false statements in the brackets. Correct the false statements.**

1. Swami said that he would sleep alone from the following week. ( )
2. Swami’s father looked like a ghost in darkness. ( )
3. When Swami was snoring, his grandmother pulled the blanket away. ( )
4. Swami was really afraid of darkness. ( )
5. Swami wished that the tiger had killed the boy. ( )

**III. Tick the correct option to make the sentence true.**

- 1) Swami was almost faint with fear because
  - a) his father would beat him.
  - b) he was afraid of ghosts.
  - c) a ghost entered his room.
  - d) he had a terrible dream.
- 2) Swami clutched the leg of .....
  - a) his father.
  - b) his grandmother.
  - c) a chair.
  - d) the thief.

**Vocabulary**

**I. Pick out synonyms from the story for each of the following words.**

- |           |            |               |           |            |
|-----------|------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| 1. clear  | 2. bravery | 3. shameful   | 4. hide   | 5. upset   |
| 6. argued | 7. swore   | 8. unpleasant | 9. tapped | 10. damage |





#### IV. Proverbs

A proverb is a short sentence, usually known to many people, stating something commonly experienced or giving advice. Here are some English proverbs:

- Tit for tat.
- Where there is a will there is a way.
- A bad workman always blames his tools.

Every language has proverbs. In Telugu we call them 'saamethalu'. Here is one example from Telugu:

'kukka kaatuki cheppu debba'. It is important to know the meaning of a proverb before you use it.

**Match the parts under A and B to make some proverbs. You can use the clues given within the brackets.**

- | A   |     | B                                 |
|---|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 1. An apple a day (search for a profession) | [ ] | a. is a friend indeed.            |
| 2. A friend in need (rhymes with need)      | [ ] | b. saves nine.                    |
| 3. Failure is (search for 'achievement')    | [ ] | c. mightier than the sword.       |
| 4. A stitch in time (search for a number)   | [ ] | d. keeps the doctor away.         |
| 5. The pen is (search for a weapon)         | [ ] | e. the stepping stone to success. |
| 6. Empty vessels (search for noise)         | [ ] | f. the mighty ocean.              |
| 7. Little drops of water make               | [ ] | g. seldom bite.                   |
| 8. Honesty (ends with 'cy')                 | [ ] | h. while the sun shines.          |
| 9. Make hay (search for a star)             | [ ] | i. is the best policy.            |
| 10. Barking dogs (search for what dogs do)  | [ ] | j. make much noise.               |

#### Grammar

Look at the following sentences from the text.

1. Father was sitting under the lamp and reading the newspaper.
2. He looked over the newspaper.

Sentence 1 is in the Past Continuous Tense form. It conveys that the action was in progress at a particular point of time in the past. In sentence 2, the verb *looked* is in the Simple Past Tense. It shows that the action was complete in the past.

**I. Pick out 5 sentences from the story that use the Simple Past Tense and 5 sentences that use the Past Continuous Tense. Write them down into your notebook.**



**II. Read the following paragraph and fill in the blanks with the simple past or past continuous forms.**

While Swami's father ..... (read) the newspaper, Swami .....(listen) to it. His father ..... (ask) him to sleep alone. But he ..... (be) afraid of ghosts. He .....(want) to sleep in his grandmother's room. While he .....(sleep), he .....(have) a terrible dream. A tiger ..... (chase) him and he .....(try) to escape.



**Writing**

**I. Summarize the story using the following hints.**

Swami \_\_\_ the news report \_\_\_ about a boy's fight \_\_\_ father's advice \_\_\_ sleeps in his grandmother's room \_\_\_ father insists on sleeping alone \_\_\_ a terrible dream \_\_\_ catches a thief \_\_\_ becomes a hero.

**II. Write about an act of bravery that you or your family member or any one of your friends may have shown at some stage in your life.**

**How well did I write?**

Fill in the boxes using yes/ somewhat/ no.	
I was able to explain / describe / narrate well.	
The sentences I used were properly connected.	
I was able to express my ideas in apt words.	
The ideas were arranged in proper sequence.	
I used proper punctuation marks.	

**How well did I edit my work?**

Fill in the boxes using yes/ somewhat/ no.	
I deleted the excess words.	
I corrected the wrong forms of words.	
I corrected the punctuation errors.	
I added new words wherever necessary.	
I corrected the misspelt words.	



**III. Change the story of “A Hero” into a drama and enact it.**

(Group work – Let the students form 3 or 4 groups)

- Read Swami’s story once again.
- Identify the characters.
- Pick out the dialogues of the characters.
- Identify the locations of the events.
- Decide scenes and setting accordingly.
- Assign roles to the members of the groups.
- Enact the drama before the whole class.

**IV. Have a discussion in the whole class on how the performance could be improved in terms of delivery of dialogues, costumes, action, settings, etc.**

**How well did I write the skit?**

Fill in the boxes using yes/ somewhat/ no.	
I was able to fix the events of the skit well.	
I fixed the characters of the skit.	
I used appropriate dialogues in my skit.	
I was able to express the feelings of the characters.	
I concluded my skit well.	
I was able to express my ideas in apt words.	
The sentences I used were properly connected.	
I used proper punctuation and spacing.	

**Can you solve these letter riddles?**

1. What letter of the alphabet is an insect?
2. What letter is a part of the head?
3. What letter is a drink?
4. What letter is a body of water?
5. What letter is a pronoun like “you”?
6. What letter is an exclamation?
7. What letter is looking for causes ?
8. Why is the letter “T” like an island ?



## Study Skills

Change the words given in the box into different parts of speech. Some words may not have all the forms given in the table. You may use a dictionary if you like.

<b>strong</b>	<b>courage</b>	<b>grace</b>	<b>sleep</b>	<b>disturb</b>	<b>hesitate</b>
<b>dark</b>	<b>try</b>	<b>wake</b>	<b>notorious</b>	<b>heavy</b>	

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
courage	discourage encourage	courageous	courageously
	wake		
		strong	
grace			
sleep			
	disturb		
	hesitate		
		dark	
	try		
		notorious	
		heavy	

### Try these tongue twisters

Three grey geese in a green field grazing.

Double bubble gum bubbles double.

Selfish Sal sells shell-fish.

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

## Listening and Speaking

- I. Your teacher will read the story 'Carried Away by an Eagle'. Listen carefully and answer the questions that follow.



1. How old was the child when she was picked up by the eagle?
  2. In which country did the child live when she was picked up by the eagle?
  3. Why did the eagle leave the child on a rock?
  4. Why did the eagle fly round and round over the rock?
  5. Why do you think that the girl was lucky?
  6. Why do you think Svenhild still keeps the torn dress?
- II. Work in groups and retell the story 'Carried Away by an Eagle' in your own words.

