

#### 4-5-6.

### Five Mice and the Funny Top Hat

Samson, the big black cat, was lying across the carpet fast asleep. He was a very big, fat cat. He looked as if he was asleep, but he really had one eye open all the time.

Samson's one eye was looking right at the hole in the wall where a family of mice lived. Five little mice. The five little frightened mice were peeping out from behind the hole in the wall. They wanted to get away from the big, black cat.

Samson yawned and stretched and turned over to sleep a bit longer. The mice were quivering with excitement. Now was their chance to escape. One mouse tiptoed out to cross the room. He started to run towards the door.

Suddenly the door opened! In walked a tall man wearing a top hat. The man threw the top hat onto a chair but it missed the chair and fell on the floor. Samson jumped up and hissed. The mouse ran back to his hole. The chance to escape had gone.

Slowly Samson went back to sleep. The mice looked at the cat and then they noticed the top hat lying on the floor and it gave them an idea. They nodded to each other as they made a plan. They decided to hide under the hat and see if they could sneak past the big, black cat. Carefully, one by one, they wriggled under the hat and waited.

They heard Samson snoring. They carefully started to walk towards the door under the shelter of the hat. Slowly the hat slid across the floor. The cat did not wake up. The mice reached the door. It was open just enough for them to slip out and go down the road. The hat, with the mice, went out of the door.

At the same time Samson woke up. His greedy eyes saw the hat moving across the steps and out of the door. He jumped up and started to walk towards the door. The mice started to run. The cat was getting closer and the mice could see no escape. Behind them was the cat and in front of them was the road and it led to a duck pond. Oh, what should they do?

Whoosh, a sudden gust of wind blew down the road. It tipped the hat over and the mice fell inside. They hung on tightly. What would happen now? The hat flew down the road and into the pond. The mice peeped over the edge. They saw that they were floating on the pond. Now the hat was a boat!

Samson looked at the mice floating on the pond. He was very angry. He could not swim. The mice escaped in their funny top hat. The little mice laughed at the cat. Samson hissed and went home.

7-8.

**The Ugly Duckling**

Once upon a time a Mama Duck sat on her nest.

“These eggs are taking a long time to hatch,” she thought. But a Mama duck must keep her eggs warm until they do hatch. At last, the eggs began to crack. Pretty yellow ducklings came out of their shells. They shook their little wings and said, “Quack, quack!” Mama Duck was very happy. They were all so cute. Mama Duck said, “Come on ducklings, off we go to the pond for your first swim.” Then she counted them; one, two, three, four, five. “Oh dear!” she thought, “I should have six ducklings!”

There was one big egg still in the nest. “Oh well,” thought Mama Duck, “I had better sit on my nest again and wait.” The next day, the big egg hatched and out came a baby boy duckling. He was much bigger than the others. He was dark grey and not yellow. And he had longer legs than the others. “Such an ugly duckling!” said another. “That is not a nice thing to say,” said Mama Duck, “he hatched from the same nest as you. Now, off to the pond for your very first swim.” The other ducklings quacked, “Ugly! Ugly! Ugly!”

The Ugly Duckling did not know why the other ducklings were so horrible to him. Each yellow duckling jumped in the pond and swam behind Mama Duck. The Ugly Duckling jumped in and started to paddle, too. “He’s a good swimmer,” Mama Duck thought.

The Ugly Duckling tried to play with his brothers and sisters. But they yelled, “Go away, you are ugly and grey. And your legs are too long!” One day, one of the yellow ducklings said to the Ugly Duckling, “We don’t like you and wish you would go away!” Then they all quacked, “Go away, go away, go away!”

The Ugly Duckling was sad. “Maybe I should just go,” he thought to himself. That night, the Ugly Duckling flew away to the other side of the pond. He met two grown-up ducks. “Can I stay with you, please?” asked the Ugly Duckling. “All right”, said one of the ducks, “but just keep out of our way.”

“Woof! Woof!” Suddenly a big hungry dog started chasing the two ducks. They flew up in the air, and some feathers fell down on the ground. The poor Ugly Duckling was frightened. The dog sniffed and sniffed at the Ugly Duckling then turned away. “I am so ugly that even a big hungry dog doesn’t want me,” thought the Ugly Duckling with a tear in his eye.

Soon he found a new pond. He looked up and saw a flock of big white birds flying by. They were the most beautiful birds he had ever seen! He stayed at that pond all by himself for a long time. Then winter came and the cold wind and the dark clouds made the poor Ugly Duckling very sad and lonely. He had to go into the cold pond to fish, but it was getting hard to swim. The lake turned to ice. One day he felt the water freezing around him and trapping him in the water.

“Oh, I’m so tired!” he thought, paddling hard. The ice got thicker and thicker. Suddenly two big hands picked him up. “You poor little thing!” said a farmer. He took the Ugly Duckling

back to his warm farmhouse. For the rest of that winter, the kind farmer looked after the Ugly Duckling.

Then spring came. “Time for you to go to the pond to swim again, that’s what you were born to do,” said the farmer. He took the young bird back to the pond where he had found him and set him down on the water. “I feel so strong now!” said the young bird to himself, and flapped his wings.

Just then a flock of those same beautiful birds he had seen before landed on the water.

“I know I’m ugly,” he said to them, “so I will go away.” A great big tear rolled down his cheek. But when he opened his eyes, he saw a reflection in the water. It looked just like one of those beautiful white birds. Why was it so close to him? He jumped back. And the reflection jumped back, too. He stretched out his long neck and the reflection stretched its neck, too.

“We wish you would stay,” said one of the beautiful birds. “Yes, stay with us!” said another, “we can all be great friends.” Then he knew just what had happened! He wasn’t an ugly grey bird with funny long legs anymore. He was a beautiful swan after all! Suddenly, all the other swans flapped their wings and took off into the sky. “Come with us,” one called back.

So he flapped his beautiful white, swanny wings as fast as they could go and joined his new friends.

The End.