

Within this collection of Indian folktales you'll meet a crafty king, a sneaky salesman and a terrible thief ... along with a jackal who tries to rule the jungle and a greedy sister who gets exactly what she deserves. Read on to discover how cheaters are out-witted, and why honesty is always rewarded!

# Just One Grain of Rice and Other Indian Folktales

Retold by Narinder Dhami

Also available:



EARTH / Grey A

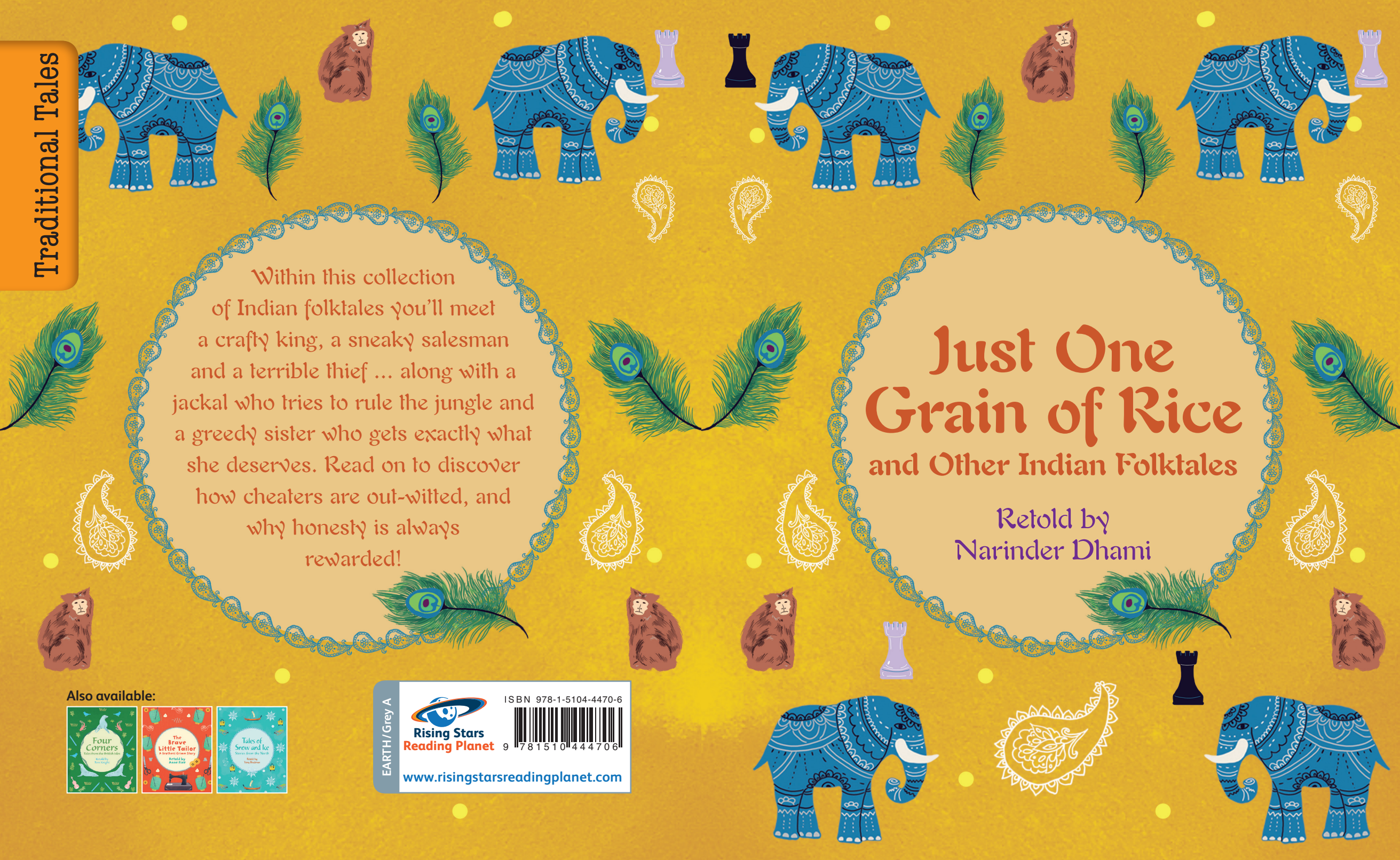


ISBN 978-1-5104-4470-6



9 781510 444706

[www.risingstarsreadingplanet.com](http://www.risingstarsreadingplanet.com)



## A note from the author

When I was growing up, India was just the name of a far-away country. I was born in England, but my dad had come to the UK from India and he often talked about his homeland. Then, when I was a teenager, we went on a family trip to India. I loved it, and I hope my book makes you want to visit this amazing country!

### Now try this!

Write a newspaper article that explains how Janni the jackal fooled everyone when he said that he was king of the jungle. Include a quote from one of the jackals who reveal his true identity!

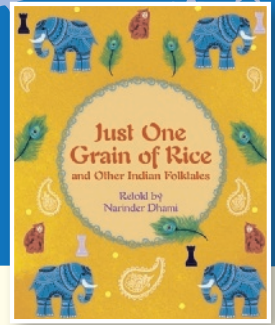
Did you know that chess, Snakes and Ladders, and Ludo are all board games that were invented in India? Try playing each of them with your friends. Which game do you enjoy the most?

Draw a picture of the terrible monster that the villagers thought could be lurking in the forest and ringing the bell.

Play 'I went to the river and I found ...' with a friend. Take it in turns to add one item at a time to a list of items that Pia and Beena have to take home with them after visiting their father. Make sure you repeat them in the right order!

# Just One Grain of Rice and Other Indian Folktales

Retold by Narinder Dhani



## Book overview

This book contains five traditional folktales from India. All five concern badly behaved characters, with other characters carrying out a plan or action that teaches them a lesson. The first is about a rude and unkind king who is taught how to be more caring; the second is about a cunning jackal who uses his unexpected blue-dyed coat to get animals to look after him. The other three look at overcoming fear, cheating, friendships, and being mean.

Each folktale contains elements of the genre, including one or two main characters, good and bad characters, descriptive language, a setting linked to the country or region, and a lesson or moral. All the stories are perfect for retelling orally.

This book links to the Earth non-fiction title, *Incredible India*.

## Key words

Discuss these key words with the children to test understanding before reading or as you read.

**Majesty, advisers** (both p5), **twentieth, thirtieth, million** (all p11), **quintillion, quadrillion, trillion, billion** (all p12), **ravenously** (p14), **banyan tree** (p15), **petrified** (p16), **tropical** (p19), **metallic** (p22), **courage** (p28), **traditional** (p32), **monsoon** (p33), **Honour** (p36), **griddle, precious** (both p43)

## Reading and SPaG\* objectives

This text and the suggested activities will support the children to:

- ★ draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence
- ★ predict what might happen from details stated and implied
- ★ discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- ★ use fronted adverbials followed by a comma.

## Before reading

Together, look at the front and back cover.

- ★ Read the book title and emphasise that the tales are from India. Show some images of India, e.g. traditional Indian patterns, plants and animals. Look at the images on the cover and discuss their links to India. Ask: *How does the design convey a sense of India? (saffron colour, elephants, Indian patterns?)*
- ★ Discuss what a folktale is: a story that is passed down through generations and has a moral or lesson learned by the characters; they are often set in the country where the stories were told. Establish that the author is retelling the folktales in her own words.
- ★ Read the back-cover blurb together to find out about the stories. Ask: *How are some of the characters described? (E.g. crafty, sneaky, terrible, greedy) What lessons might we learn from how the characters behave? What two lessons or morals are in the book? (E.g. Cheaters are outwitted and honesty is rewarded.)*

## During reading

Together, read 'Just One Grain of Rice'. Encourage children to predict and discuss events as they read. E.g. *Why does Sissa want just rice? What might his plan be, and what will the king do when he realises?* Explore the characters of the king and Sissa.

- ★ Note how the first two pages introduce the reader to the king's character. Ask: *What is your impression of the king at the start? Why is it useful to know what he is like before Sissa turns up?*
- ★ Encourage the children to continue looking for evidence to show that the king is rude, impatient and used to getting his own way.
- ★ Ask them to use the story to support their impressions of Sissa. Ask: *What words would you use to describe Sissa's character? (E.g. kind, calm, clever, patient, wise) What actions show that he is clever and patient?*
- ★ Discuss the lesson the king learned at the end of the story. Ask: *How do you think his behaviour will change? Why was Sissa's game such a good idea?*



Read 'The Blue Jackal' together. Explain that a jackal is like a dog or a small wolf often found in India.

- ★ Explain how descriptive words and phrases in folktales can help a reader get a sense of where the story is set. Encourage the children to find evidence in the story that it is set in India (e.g. dense jungle, smell of spices, hot sun, banyan tree, Indian animals).
- ★ Focus on page 14. Ask the children to locate words and phrases that show how hungry Janni felt.
- V Discuss how words such as 'ravenously', 'mournfully' and 'gnawed' help the reader to feel how hungry Janni is. Ask: *Which is your favourite phrase? Why?*
- ★ Ask: *Why is Janni described as 'cunning'? What other words would you use to describe his actions and behaviour in the story? What moral or message does the story give us? (E.g. Dishonesty will be found out in the end.) Do you think Janni has learned his lesson?*

Use 'The Stolen Plough' to practise and develop inference skills through the actions and words of the main characters.

- ★ Discuss the theme of friendship in the story. Together, discuss what makes a good friend. Read up to page 31. Ask: *Do you think Amar is a good or bad friend to Raj?* Encourage the children to use the text to support their view. *The author says Amar's smile is 'as wide as a shark's'. How does this tell us that he is not a trustworthy friend?*
- ★ As they read the story, encourage them to discuss Amar and Raj's actions and behaviour. Ask: *What do you think Amar will tell Raj about the plough? How can Raj tell that Amar is lying? What do you think Raj will do with the horse? Why does the judge understand what Raj is saying?*
- ★ Discuss why Raj intends to find new friends. *What lesson has Amar learned? (E.g. Don't lie to friends and treat them badly.) Do you think Raj will forgive Amar for his actions? Do you think he should? Why or why not?* Share experiences or views about friendships and forgiveness.
- G Point out the time adverbial phrase on page 29: 'Early one sunny morning'. Note how the phrase is at the start of the sentence to let us know when an action takes place. This is a fronted time adverbial. Read the full sentence to demonstrate the natural pause between the adverbial and the rest of the sentence. Point to the comma to show that pause. Find other examples in the text and then let the children work on PCM1.

Read 'The Terrible Bell' and 'Pia and Beena' together. Encourage the children to speak with intonation and expression when reading the dialogue and descriptive verbs and adjectives. Provide

opportunities for them to take part in choral and echo reading within groups or in pairs.

- ★ Ask the children to use text clues and their own thoughts to predict the main characters' actions and plans. Ask them to predict what the tiger might do at the start of 'The Terrible Bell', and why Preeti needs to buy food to get the bell. In 'Pia and Beena', do they think Beena will get any gifts from the tree, fire and stream as she returns home. As she sees each gift, ask: *What could happen when she touches the gift?*
- ★ In 'The Terrible Bell', focus on the use of hyphenated descriptive words. Discuss their meanings in the context of the text and surrounding sentences, such as 'red-handed', 'razor-sharp'. Note how descriptive verbs are used to describe the actions of objects and characters. Invite the children to point to good examples as they read (e.g. *pounce, squabbling, tinkling, weaving*).
- V Compare Pia and Beena's journeys and the different gifts they receive. Invite the children to find evidence in descriptive words and phrases to support their comparisons, such as weather description, characters' dialogue, etc.
- ★ Discuss the endings of the two stories. Ask: *Why do you think Preeti doesn't want people to know the truth about the bell? Do you think she is courageous or just clever? Why does Beena not want to tell Pia what happened? Do you think she will be less mean to Pia? What lesson has she learned?*

Give the children a copy of PCM2. They can work in pairs or individually to complete the table.

## Reading for pleasure

As part of your discussion at the end of the book, encourage the children to discuss whether they liked the book. You could rate the book as a class alongside the other books you've read.

- ★ Ask: *What did you like about the whole book?* Prompt the children to think about the overall theme of the book and the choice of stories.
- ★ *Which story did you enjoy reading the most? Why?*
- ★ *Was there anything that you would change about the book? E.g. More stories, more descriptions, more dialogue?*

## Follow-up activities

Working in pairs, ask the children to select a story and create a story map or comic strip that includes the main parts of the story. Encourage them to use the map or comic strip to retell the story to another group using actions and expressions. Suggest they use their favourite story words and phrases.

## Just One Grain of Rice and Other Indian Folktales

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Fronted adverbials

An adverbial phrase is a group of words that gives us information about how, where or when something happens in a sentence.

The example below is an adverbial phrase that tells us *when* something happens. A fronted adverbial is an adverbial phrase that comes at the beginning of a sentence and is followed by a comma.

Early one sunny morning, Raj was ploughing his fields.

(adverbial phrase)

(main clause)

**1 Find and reorder the fronted adverbial time phrases to make new sentences. Punctuate the new sentences correctly.**

**a** Dev went for a stroll in the jungle one summer’s evening.

\_\_\_\_\_

**b** Raj drove his cart into town after breakfast.

\_\_\_\_\_

**c** The chess board was covered in rice by the evening.

\_\_\_\_\_

**2 Choose three fronted adverbial phrases from the box below and use them to create your own interesting sentences on a separate sheet. Don’t forget to add in the comma!**

For two days and two nights	As darkness fell	After a good night’s sleep
Within seconds	Without warning	From that day forward
In the distance	Above the trees	With a deep sigh

## Just One Grain of Rice and Other Indian Folktales

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Indian folktale chart

Look through the stories with a partner to complete the information table below.

	Who behaved badly?	How?	How were they taught a lesson?	What is the lesson or message of the story?
Just One Grain of Rice				
The Blue Jackal				
The Terrible Bell				
The Stolen Plough				
Pia and Beena				