

The Story of Fiveton

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Once upon a time, far, far from here there was the kingdom of Fiveton. The kingdom was ruled by a king and a queen. It had ladies and lords, knights, magicians, peasants, squires, farmers, shop keepers and shepherds, to name a few.

Fiveton was nestled in an enormous valley that lay between two broad and tall ranges of snow-capped mountains. In the valley there were rolling hills, wide open plains, rivers, streams, and dark forests where you would find squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, deer, foxes, wolves, bears, all kinds of birds, and once in a while, if you were lucky, you might find a unicorn.

The castle's gamekeepers and foresters took care of the parts of the forest near the castle and the king and queen liked to go there sometimes and wander through the woods. The queen had a special interest in the animals. She kept a log, a special journal, where she kept track of all animals she saw on their walks: 4 squirrels, two crows and a fox one day, three deer and two squirrels the next and so forth. They never ventured too far from the castle walls, though, for the forest could be a wild and dangerous if you weren't careful. There were parts of the forest where no one had ever been, where the royal maps were blank. The royal cartographers, whose job was to make maps, kept saying that they were going to go in there and see what was what but so far these areas remained unexplored.

Most of the kingdom, though, was well-known, settled, and quite pleasant in all seasons. Oh, there was the occasional winter storm when temperatures would drop, the wind would sigh in the trees and the snow would fall, sometimes piling up 2 or 3 feet! When this happened people would mostly stay home – it was too hard to get their wagons and carts onto the roads and into town. They would build up the fire, sit down with a good book or maybe play a game with the rest of the family until the sun returned and the snow melted. This kind of weather was pretty unusual in the kingdom of Fiveton. Mostly the weather was fine, sunny. It might get a little hot in the summer except in the highest hills. But it was just about perfect in the Spring and Fall with pleasant breezes, beautiful white puffy clouds and just the occasional shower or thunderstorm. After the storm there would often appear a beautiful rainbow that stretched from the mountains on one side of Fiveton all the way across the sky to the mountains on the other side. At the

very end of the valley there was the ocean. The people of Fiveton were not big seafarers. Once in a while someone would build a boat and venture a few miles out to sea but no one had ever found land as fine as Fiveton and although a few people had simply sailed away never to return, most came back and were happy to live on land in their beautiful valley.

The people who lived in Fiveton, both men and women, were mostly farmers, ranchers or shepherds. The land was quite fertile – good for growing crops and animals - and so if a family was willing to work pretty hard, their efforts were well rewarded with good crops that could be sold in the villages and the small town that stood near the old castle. On market days, once every two weeks, the farmers would load up their carts and wagons, hitch up a team of horses or oxen and make their way to markets where they would sell their goods to the townspeople. The best foods were often bought by the royal cook and served to the king, the queen and the folks who lived in the grand old castle. Not only did they have the best food, they had the best clothes, the best horses, the best books, and the best toys. They had servants who washed their royal clothes, servants who took care of their royal gardens, servants who kept track of the royal children, even servants who cleaned up after their royal messes. To tell the truth, the king and queen had it pretty easy.

You might think that this would make them lazy or greedy or selfish or maybe all three, but no... for the most part they were pretty good as rulers go. They did have responsibilities: to defend the kingdom from attack, to help those in the kingdom who were struck by misfortune, and to settle disputes that sometimes arose among the people who lived in Fiveton. The queen had a real talent for this. She was known throughout the kingdom as a fair and impartial judge, which meant that she didn't take sides, treating everyone more or less the same. Every two weeks, on market day, you could find her in the royal Chamber of Justice. She would sit on her royal throne or pace back and forth, listening to concerns of her subjects. They would wait in line, sometimes 20 or more, each with a question or a concern. Sometimes the questions were pretty easy. For example, a farmer and the royal cook had arranged the sale of 250 baskets of apples. They both agreed on the amount, 250 baskets, and the farmer and his family had arrived at the royal kitchens with 250 baskets of beautiful red and yellow apples. But the farmer was sure that the royal cook had promised him 4 coins for each basket. The cook claimed that she had promised only 2 coins per basket. The queen thought for a moment, clapped her hands and declared a

compromise. The cook would pay the farmer 3 coins per basket and in the future they would write up a contract that would be witnessed by the royal record keeper. The farmer and the royal cook agreed to this and the next people in line were shown into the Chamber of Justice.

As I said, sometimes the problems were easy but sometimes they were hard. This was a hard one. The royal gardener had arranged with the royal woodcutter that he would chop down 4 acres of trees on the north side of the castle so that the royal gardens could be extended. The woodcutter had promised to do the work over the winter so that the gardens could be planted in the spring. The winter had been cold, though, and the woodcutter had fallen ill. He and his children had done some of the work but most of it remained undone and planting season was just around the corner. What to do? The queen thought and thought, pacing back and forth before her throne, as she often did when the questions were hard. She took a walk through the woods where the gardens were to be created. Then she went and spoke briefly with the captain of the guard, a knight who was in charge of all the other castle knights. She then walked briskly back to the Chamber of Justice and declared her solution. The royal knights would go the very next day and clear the land so that the planting could begin. The royal woodcutter, as soon as he recovered, would chop the fallen trees into firewood for the royal knights, delivering it to them that summer so that they would be ready for the next winter.

Meanwhile, the king, too, had been busy. On market days he could often be found walking through the market place talking with the people to find out how their lives were going, whether their harvests had been fair or poor, checking to see who had been married, who had died, and who had been born, how school was going for the children and how was the fishing in the rivers that year. The king took responsibility for wages and for taxes paid by the people in return for protection of the castle and he wanted to make sure that their pay and the taxes they paid were fair.

Yes, the king and queen were all right. Once in a while they made a mistake, but mostly they were fair and just and worked pretty hard to make sure the people in the kingdom had a chance for a good life. Of course the king and queen weren't the only ones working in the kingdom. Everyone had a job of some kind. Even the children, whose main job was to go to school and learn all they could, had jobs at home or sometimes in the castle if they were old enough or had special skills.

For example, Maria and Mario were twins. They lived on the Cinco River with their aged mother and father. When they were younger they had made a good living fishing and selling their catch in town. The twins were born at the height of fishing season. They had spent their early years playing on the riverbanks and helping their parents with the family business, tending the fish in the Cinco river.

They were now nine years old and in the 4th grade at their school. They were not quite like their classmates. Ever since they were babies it was clear that they had special talents when it came to fish. They loved to be near the river and spent all their time there when they could. It wasn't so much that they were great at fishing, more that fish just seemed to like them. Wherever they went on the river, the fish followed. Even when they were babies, as they crawled along the river you could see fish swimming alongside, sometimes jumping clear of the water to catch a glimpse of the twins.

No one knew why the fish were so attracted to the twins but it was clearly so and when they reached the age of nine the Queen gave them an after-school job to supplement their parents' dwindling income. They were to count the fish in the Cinco river and report to the royal gamekeeper. The gamekeeper used this count to keep track of whether the river was healthy or not. The twins would spend a happy hour on the bridge over the Cinco river. Over the course of an average hour the twins would count nearly one hundred fish. They did this each day, rain or shine, then walked into town to give the day's total to the gamekeeper who kept a record of their count. For this they were paid 2 coins each day.

End of Day 1 (of 11)

Beginning of Day 2 Story

(Review the highlights of Day1)

The kingdom of Fiveton was, by and large, a peaceful place. No one could remember the last time there had been a war or even a real battle. It was known that in neighboring valleys there were other kingdoms and other countries but the mountains that surrounded the valley of Fiveton were so tall, so rugged, and so deep that people rarely crossed over them. Certainly no one ever thought of marching an army across these mountains. And anyway, why would they? The people had what they needed right there in their beautiful, broad, and spacious valley. As a consequence, though, the knights of the castle didn't have a lot to do. After all, knights are most often seen wearing armor, carrying swords and shields, riding around on horses, charging into battles, chasing dragons and so forth. But with no battles to fight and only a few small and not very fierce dragons there was little to keep them busy. Mostly they polished their armor, sharpened their swords and did odd jobs around the castle.

The captain of all the knights was a man named Sir Golub. His mother had been one of the royal scientists in the castle. At first she had wished that her son would follow in her footsteps discovering new pieces of the puzzle of the world. But from early on the child had been interested in horses and swords, armor and lances and the art of defense. He never wavered in this fascination with the martial arts and so his mother and his father, who worked in the royal stables, supported his interests. He became a squire, which is sort of an assistant knight, when he was just 12 years old. He was made a full-fledged knight at age 22 and by the time he was 35 he was captain of the knights.

But when you saw Sir Golub these days around the castle at Fiveton you could tell that he was just a bit bored. He had grown rather heavy – a bit fat, to tell the truth. His mustache drooped. His armor was getting dull and was that rust on his helmet? His sword needed sharpening and he had *lost* his lance. He needed something to do.

It was a bright and sunny market day and Sir Golub was wandering aimlessly through the town. Everyone had brought their wares to the market. There were farmers selling corn, rice, beans, fruit, nuts, cheese,

milk, eggs, and so forth. There were weavers with cloth and finished articles of clothing – shirts, pants, dresses, jackets and so on. Cobblers, people who made shoes, boots, and sandals had stacks of footwear in different colors and sizes. Artists had brought paintings, sculptures and beautiful things made from glass, metal and wood. Maria and Mario, the twins from the Cinco river had come to town. They had recently developed a real talent for painting – pictures of the river and its fish – and had brought a few of these to town to sell.

Sir Golub who was strolling by their pictures had stopped to take a closer look. He was thinking about buying a particularly beautiful painting of a dashing silver trout, fighting her way up a difficult and swift running stretch of the Cinco River. Just as he was about to pull out his wallet and pay the twins he heard the sound of excited voices and spied a crowd of people gathered in the town square. He wondered what might be happening. Was it news of an invasion? Had there been an attack on a village in the mountains? Did someone need to be rescued? He told the twins he would return and hurried over to the crowd, his sword and shield clanking and his lightly rusty armor creaking as he marched across the square. The people heard him coming and moved aside to let him through.

“What’s going on here?” he asked. “Are we under attack? How many of them are there? Where did they go?” He reached the center of the crowd at last and found a couple of children: Carla, who was ten years old, tall for her age with short curly hair, and her brother Mica who was eight. They had their big, black dog, Go, with them.

Eventually the story came out. They had been up in the mountains that morning hunting for spring flowers which they would sell at market day. They had found a small valley where the flowers were thick and plentiful. They were filling their sacks when their dog, Go, began to bark and run back and forth excitedly at the base of a cliff. They called to him and told him to quiet down but he kept barking. They went to the dog find out what was bothering him so and found him sitting at the base of the cliff looking up and growling. Here the children paused.

”Well, get on with the story, children,” demanded Sir Golub. “Was there an army there, invading from the north?”

“No”

“A small band of knights from the next valley, perhaps, here to launch a sneak attack?”

“No.”

“An evil wizard determined to put a terrible spell on the castle?”

“No.”

Seeing Sir Golub’s disappointment, they were a bit embarrassed that they hadn’t found an army or a wizard.

“Well, what?!” asked the knight.

“It was a dragon.”

“A dragon!” exclaimed Sir Golub, moving forward and drawing his sword with excitement. “Was it a large and fierce dragon, all red and scaly with rows of spikes up and down his back, big sharp teeth, fiery breath and enormous black wings?”

“No....”

“Well, was it at least pretty big and scary with poison claws and an evil temper, poised to fly into town and snatch up children and small dogs?”

“No.”

The children eventually explained to Sir Golub that what they had seen was really a rather smallish dragon, probably just a baby blown off course by a storm and taking temporary shelter in the mountains of Fiveton. Carla, Mica, and Go had climbed up toward the dragon but it had flown off before they could make contact.

Sir Golub gradually recovered from his disappointment. He turned from the children to the crowd and exclaimed that, “A dragon is a dragon, no matter how small!” He declared that a search party must be assembled immediately to go and hunt for the creature. “Oh, you don’t mean to hurt him do you?” asked Mica. “Well... no,” said Sir Golub. But perhaps he was bigger than you thought, in which case we’ll be ready! I’ll bring thirty of my bravest knights, thirty chargers, and tents and provisions and oh... we shall need all sorts of...”

“It really was just a baby,” said Mica. “I don’t think it could even breathe any fire and it wasn’t much bigger than our dog.”

“Oh.. well... I still say we need to... go and have a look.”

“Well, I’d like to go if it’s okay,” said Efros, one of the town’s bakers.

“So would I!” said Lyla who was one of the royal cartographers and who knew the mountains well.

“Me too!” said Talic who was the smallest student in his 4th grade class. He was doing a project on dragons at school and really knew quite a

lot about them. Many others now chimed in, all wanting to help out in the dragon hunt. “Very well, “ said Sir Golub. “You may all come. We may be gone for a couple of days. Dragons are hard to find. Go home, get what you need, and come back here in one hour. We’ll leave then. Don’t be late.”

So it was that, several hours later, a small crowd of townspeople, led by Sir Golub, was seen marching out of town and up into the mountains. Carla and Mica were with Sir Golub, pointing the way and Go was running ahead. To make a long story short, they searched for three days in the mountains surrounding Fiveton. Several times they thought they saw the creature or something like it disappearing around the next hillside. In the end they trudged back toward town, tired, grubby and empty-handed.

As they neared the edge of town they noticed that no one was home. Everywhere people had left their farms, homes and shops. Where had all the people gone? As they got closer to the castle, they heard first, then saw, great crowds milling around the base of the castle walls. Everyone was looking up. “What is it?” asked Mica to some friends of his. “Check it out,” they said pointing up. He followed their gaze and there atop the highest part of the castle wall was the baby dragon. “It came just after you guys left and it’s been flying around the castle, landing, taking off, and landing again. At first it seemed pretty scared of everyone, but lately it seems pretty friendly. Isn’t it cool?”

End of Day 2 Story (of 11 days)

Beginning of Day 3

Carla hurried up from behind and asked breathlessly “What’s going on? What’s everyone all excited about?” Wordlessly, Mica pointed up to the top of the castle wall. Carla look up and there he was, the dragon they had seen in the mountains. “Oh,” said Carla, “He’s... so cute!” Indeed the dragon was kind of cute. He was, just as the children had said, about the size of their dog, Go, scaly all over except for his wings, which he had folded at his side now. They looked soft, covered with short black fur, almost like velvet. The rest of his body was a very handsome shade of green with gold and blue sparkles. His claws, his spikes, and the small bit of a horn just beginning to grow from his forehead were dark, nearly black, but with the same gold and blue sparkles. He had brown eyes and a small narrow red stripe that began at the base of his horn and ran down the middle of his face to his nose. Altogether he was quite striking.

Sir Golub came clambering up at last. He spied the dragon perched on the castle wall, drew his sword and called out, “Stand Back! Have no fear, citizens of Fiveton. I’ll handle this. Now dragon,” he said addressing himself to the creature. “This town and these lands are under my protection. You have two choices. You can come down and face me in fair combat or you can fly away forever, leaving these fair citizens in peace. What say ye?”

Several of the people shook their heads or chuckled. One of the children walked over and pulled at Sir Golub’s metal sleeve. “Can’t you see I’m busy right now?” hissed the knight. “What will it be, dragon? The sword or the sky?”

“Sir,” said the child and she pulled again.

“What?!” said the knight in an exasperated tone.

“Sir, the dragon is really very nice, sir. He’s been here for three days. He hasn’t hurt anyone. He’s been really nice actually, and I think he’s getting kind of tame. We like him.” The people nearby nodded. Sir Golub lowered his sword, sighed, and said, “Call the royal gamekeeper.”

The royal gamekeeper came hurrying over right away. She had been watching the dragon from the first day when it had arrived and already had a plan. “Ah, this is a fine example of a juvenile – a baby – Welsh Green Dragon. These are generally peaceful creatures, unless provoked – disturbed.

They are most often found in mountain caves and they eat mostly fish and so they are often seen near rivers.”

“Well, he’s been stealing my fish, alright,” said a woman who was selling fish in the market. “Yes. Well that will only get worse as he gets bigger,” remarked the gamekeeper whose name was Melda. “Without parents to teach them how to hunt for themselves they can become used to eating human food and... sometimes... humans. We need to provide a home and ... instruction... in fishing so that he can take care of himself. I propose that we build him a home, here, on the castle walls. Dragons are said to bring good luck to those who help them. Further, I propose that Mario and Maria be assigned to take care of the dragon, teaching him how to fish.” “Fine, fine...” said Sir Golub. “Take it up with the king and queen. I can see there’s nothing for me to do here,” he muttered and he walked back to the castle.

At length, Melda decided that Talic, the small 4th grader who was doing the project and knew so much about dragons, should be given the job of building the dragon’s house and Mario and Maria agreed to take charge of teaching the dragon to fish. Talic agreed happily to this assignment and asked that his little sister Melinda be allowed to help. Together they built a suitable shelter on the castle walls. They designed it so that it could easily be expanded, knowing that the dragon would be growing for many years.

In order to do this building, Talic and Melinda had to buy all the materials needed for the shelter. That brings us to the subject of money. Now let me explain the system of money in Fiveton for it’s not like our own. In Fiveton, the money is quite simple, but it’s also quite strict. There was a spell cast over the country a thousand years ago... but you’ll hear all about that in a minute. Let me tell you the basics first.

[Talk about our coin system: pennies, nickels, dimes quarters and silver dollars.]

In Fiveton there are just 5 kinds of coins: whites which are worth 1, reds which are each worth 5 whites, blue coins which are worth 5 red coins, green coins which are worth 5 blues and purples which are rather rare because they are worth 5 greens. That’s quite valuable.

Now I said that it's quite simple, which it is... But it's also quite strict. A red is worth five whites. That is, when you have four whites and you get one more, you have to trade it in for a red. Likewise, when you have 4 reds and then you get one more, you have to trade it in for a blue. When you have 4 blues and then you get another, they have to be traded for a green, and you've probably guessed this by now, 5 greens must be traded for a purple.

[Show some examples of trades on the overhead]

As I said, there was a spell that had been cast over the kingdom many years ago. The effect of this spell is that you have to trade your coins properly or they will disappear. For instance, if you have 3 white coins and then someone gives you three more... [illustrate the necessary trade on the overhead] If you didn't do the trade the coins would simply evaporate into thin air. Gone!

[Do some more practice on the overhead]

Now we are going to practice this, but first I want you to write the trading rules in your journal so you won't forget.

<u>TRADING RULES</u> 5 whites = 1 red 5 reds = 1 blue 5 blues = 1 green 5 greens = 1 purple

[Hand out chips in paper cups. Each person gets 10 whites, 10 reds, 10 blues, 5 greens and 4 purples. Do some simple problems for about 10 minutes]

[Have them do a journal problem for me to examine.]

End of Day 3 (of 11)

Beginning of Day 4

Talic and Melinda had been assigned the job of building the dragon's home on the castle walls. They talked to the royal builders and found that they had plenty of stone and wood on hand, along with nails and mortar, bricks and so forth. The children would be allowed to use all that they needed so that was no problem. However, they figured that they would also need to make a door of some kind – something that the dragon could push aside easily so that he could come and go. What's more, they would need windows, a bed, a dish for water, a stove so that the place could be kept warm in the winter, and a table and two chairs. The children planned to visit the dragon often and thought it would be good to have a place to sit down.

All these things could be bought at the town market but, altogether they would cost a great deal of money. The children were not sure how much, so they went to the market and wandered from shop to shop making a list of the prices they found. Here is the list: [Write it on the board or overhead]

Bed, Door, Windows (3), Dishes (2), Stove, Table, Chair (2)

[Then write the cost per item next to each item]

[Then point out that you need to buy more than one of a few of the things.]

[We need to have the total cost so that they can get the money from the royal gamekeeper who will get it from the king and queen. So, as a whole class, model the determination of the price for the multiple items. So write the cost per item next to each one and do that.]

Item	Cost per item	Total Cost
Bed	1 red, 2 whites	
Door	4 whites	
Windows (3)	1 red and 3 whites	
Dishes (4)	2 whites	

Stove	2 reds	
Table	1 red	
Chairs (3)	2 whites	
	Total Cost =	

For doing this work, Talic and Melinda were paid 3 whites each day. How much do they have after a week (5 days)?

[Pass out the mats and model the use of the mats for this problem.]

After two weeks?

[Have them write a story problem in their journals. Make sure they title it so that you can identify it.]

[Collect their journals.]

?? time to work on finishing up their characters??

End of Day 4 (of 11)

Beginning of Day 5

[Recall that the dragon is now ensconced in a house on the castle wall, built and furnished by Talic and Melinda. Other highlights from Day 4 etc.]

The king and queen got word that Talic and Melinda had finished the dragon's house. In all their years as the monarchs of Fiveton they had never met a dragon face to face. They decided to pay a visit to this one. They consulted with the gamekeeper who told them that dragons, as a rule, are most active in the morning and evening hours and sometimes at night, but that they tend to be rather sleepy during the middle of the day. They thought about this for a while and decided to go to visit the dragon at midmorning. They figured that at this time the dragon would be a bit sleepy, and less inclined to, well, to eat them. They thought that they would like to bring a house-warming gift to the dragon. Not sure what a young dragon just getting started in a new house would like, they went to the marketplace and strolled along the rows of shops and carts.

It was a bright and sunny day and people from throughout the valley were selling and trading goods. Most of the vendors were farmers but there were also weavers, artists, writers, musicians. The queen and king were having a hard time. They had been up and down the rows and were unable to find anything they thought would be suitable for a young dragon. What would he want, they wondered? Finally they spotted Melinda and Talic, who were there to buy fish for the dragon who had not yet begun to fish for himself. They hurried over and asked them what they thought might be just right. The two children thought for a while. "Hmmm,... a rug might be nice," said Melinda. So they went to the rug seller's store. The only rug they found, however, that was the right size for the dragon's house was one with a picture of the ancient knight, Sir George, slaying a dragon. "Ahh,... no," said the king. "I don't think that will work at all." "Quite right" said the queen.

"How about a game? A board game?" asked Melinda. This seemed like a good idea so she hurried along to the game shop. When they got there, though, they found that almost all of the games required the players to be able to count or to read and they were not sure that the dragon could do either. The only game that would work was one in which you had to use a spinner to move your marker along the board from one colored square to the

next. They thought this would be fine until they saw that there at the very end of the game, in order to win you had to pass by a fierce and scary dragon who was shown perched on a cliff, breathing fire in the general direction of the town. “No,” said the queen. “That will not do.” “Agreed,” said the king.

The four of them sat down in the grass at the base of the castle wall. For a while no one could think of anything that would work. Then Melinda snapped her fingers and said “I’ve got it!” Everyone turned to her, expectantly. “The game and the rug were good ideas but they had the wrong pictures. Well, Mario and Maria make great pictures and they like the dragon! Let’s go see their paintings.” So they did. This worked out well. The twins had just what was needed. The royal couple bought two pictures, one of the Cinco river, and another of an adult dragon perched majestically on a cliff in the mountains, overlooking the town and *not* breathing fire. Happy with their purchases, they hurried off to visit the dragon.

End of Day 5 (of 11)

Talic and Melinda decide to buy a couple of rather expensive books they have been saving up for.

As you recall, they are paid 3 whites each day. This means that after two weeks they each have $2 \times (5 \times 3W = 15W = 3R) = 6R = \underline{1B \ 1R}$.

Talic buys a book that costs 1 red and 4 whites. How much does he have left?

Melinda buys three books that cost 4 whites each. How much does she have left?

[As a whole class, think of something else that Talic needs to buy (a new coat?) and model the creation and writing of a story problem.]

Beginning of Day 6

The king and queen set off to the dragon's new house carrying the pictures they bought from Maria and Mario. They were very happy with their gifts, imagining how splendid they would look hanging on the walls of the dragon's castle-top home. They wondered as they walked how well they would be able to communicate with the dragon. They did not know whether he could talk at all.

As they had planned, it was late morning on that bright and sunny day when they arrived at the dragon's front door. Coming from inside they heard the muffled sounds of voices. They couldn't make out much of the conversation but there seemed to be at least three voices. They were talking about money and one of the king's favorite school subjects, mathematics. "By Golly!" said the king, "Listen to that! I think they're doing math problems. I loved those when I was in school. My favorites were the story problems...." "Yes, yes," said the queen. "But who's in there with the dragon and why are they doing math problems?" "There's one way to find out," said the king. He marched up and.... He couldn't knock on the door – there was just a heavy curtain. Not sure what to do, he glanced back at the queen. She stepped forward and in a loud and clear voice said "Attention within! The queen and king of Fiveton have arrived for our scheduled visit with The Dragon. We come bearing gifts and look forward to a pleasant exchange of greetings. In short, we are here."

There was a sudden silence from within, then a whispered exchange and the sound of chairs being moved. The dragon's snout appeared pushing the curtain aside.

"Hello!" chirped the dragon.

"Ah, well done!" said the queen.

"Yes, yes!" said the king. "You can talk."

"A bit," said the dragon. Talic, Melinda, Maria and Mario teach me some."

"Very good," said the queen.

"You won't come in," said the dragon.

The king and queen looked puzzled. "He means 'won't you come in?'" said Talic hastily. The dragon smiled and nodded, holding the curtain open with his teeth.

Inside they found Talic and Melinda. They were seated at the table that was covered with papers, pens, crayons and chips. “What have we here?” asked the king with interest.

“Math problems, your highness,” said Melinda.

“The dragon has been going to school with us. He’s learning to read, write, and everything.”

“Wonderful!” said the king with enthusiasm.

“The teacher gave us some math problems for homework so we were working on them together.”

“Oh, excellent! I love those. Can I have a look?” asked the king, moving closer.

“You work on those, dear, while I hang the pictures,” said the queen.

“I hope you like them,” said the queen to the dragon. He did indeed.

Here are the problems they worked on. {FivetonSchoolWorksheet.doc}

[Distribute the 10-problem worksheet. Do 3 or 4 of them on the overhead and then let them work in pairs on the rest.]

End of Day 6

Beginning of Day 7

The queen yawned and tapped the king on the shoulder. “Dear, I think it’s time that we should be heading back to the castle – er - down off the castle walls, I think. I need to get to the Chamber of Justice. They’ll be lining up there already.”

“Hmmm,” said the king, not really paying attention. He and Melinda were working on one of the math problems on the worksheet. Talic and the dragon had finished their sheet of problems and the dragon was clearly ready to go to sleep.

“Dear, I really think we should go now.”

“What? Oh! Right!” he said, seeing the dragon nodding off at the table.

“Quite right. Children, let’s tidy this up, we need to go back to the castle and give this fellow some time to rest.”

“We’ve had a wonderful time, really we have. Thanks so much. You must come and visit us soon. And bring more math problems!” said the king as they trooped out of the house and down the steps to the royal chambers.

Talic and Melinda, who had to get back home so that they could work on the rest of their homework, left the castle behind and headed off to their home.

“What do you have for homework?” Talic asked Melinda. “I have that probability worksheet where we have to say whether things are ‘certain,’ ‘likely,’ ‘unlikely,’ or ‘impossible.’”

“Oh,” said Talic. I have to get a big map project done by Friday. I have to do the coloring tonight and look up a bunch of spelling words.”

They increased their pace a bit, realizing that they had a lot to do, especially because they still had their usual farm chores to do on top of the homework.

“I’ll race you home!” said Melinda, who was a very fast runner for her age.

They had just started to run and were coming around a corner when a strange sight met their eyes. It was their friend Emmeline climbing down into a well. This might not seem so strange to you and I because we don’t know what Melinda and Talic knew very well, namely, that a well is a deep and dangerous hole in the ground. It can be a very, very long way down and there is generally water at the bottom. People who fall into wells can and do drown. Very seldom does anyone climb down into a well; it’s dangerous.

So when they saw Emmeline heading down they stopped short and asked her “Hey, what do you think you’re doing?!”

“This is my new job,” she replied.

“What, drowning?” asked Talic in amazement.

”No, silly. See the sign?” She pointed up to a sign that had been posted above the well. It read:

Friends of the Dragon
Make Your Donation Here
Toss in a coin or two. It Adds UP!
All coins will be collected once every hour.
All proceeds will go for Dragon Defense Fund.

“Huh,” said Talic. “So,... people come by here and throw a coin or two down into the well, right?”

”Right, and I got the job of climbing down and scooping up the coins every hour,” said Emmeline.

”Isn’t it awful wet down there at the bottom?”

”Nah, this well went dry a few years ago. It’s not good for much these days so the royal water master told us we could use it for the Dragon Defense Fund.”

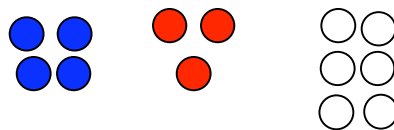
“Oh,” said Melinda. She thought for a moment and then asked, “What happens if someone comes by and throws in 2 whites, then someone else comes and throws in 3 more?”

“Oh, yeah,” said Talic. “I see what you mean. Wouldn’t they just evaporate cause there’s 5 down there and nobody does the trade?”

“Nope,” said Emmeline who was in 7th grade and knew about such things.

“We wondered about that but it turns out that the evaporation doesn’t start until someone actually sees the coins. Then they have a little while to make the trades before the evaporation starts. Watch this!”

She climbed down the ladder and disappeared into the well. A couple of minute later she emerged with a bunch of coins in a small leather bag. She climbed out of the well and sat down on a bench were Talic and Melinda were waiting. “Help me count ’em and make the trades quick,” said Emmeline. Here is what she had:



“That’s easy,” said Talic. “Just trade 5 of the whites for a red and you’ll be fine. So, all in all you have ... 4B 4R and 1W.”

”Right,” said Emmeline. I have to figure out what the right numbers are after I make the trades and write down what it is for each hour.

[Give them the worksheet with the 10 trade problems.]

End of Day 7

Beginning of day 8

The next day Talic, Melinda, Mario, Maria and Emmeline were all walking together on their way to school. They were in a good mood because they had a holiday coming up. There would be no school next week because of the First Growth Festival. This was the time of year when all of the crops had been planted and the very first shoots and sprouts were beginning to poke out from the farmer's fertile fields in the valley of Fiveton. Some families went on vacations in this week. In fact some made the difficult trip over the mountains and in to the next valley and back at the end of the week. The children knew because they had learned it in school that the kingdom in the next valley was the kingdom of Tenton. They had been told that in Tenton they also had white, red, blue, green and purple coins but that each red was worth 10 whites, each blue was worth 10 reds, each green was worth 10 blues and so on. But none of them had ever been to that far away land.

They weren't thinking about Tenton anyway. They were thinking about the gifts they would give one another on Sprout Day. Sprout Day was the climax, the most important day right at the end of the First Growth Festival week. On Sprout Day it was traditional to give presents to others. Last year Maria's parents had given her a beautiful sketch book and a set of colored pencils because they knew that she liked to draw pictures of the fish in the Cinco river. They had given Mario a very large glass aquarium where he could keep injured fish he found in the river. He would nurse them back to health and then return them to their home.

Sir Golub had been given a box of apples by the king. Unfortunately, Sir Golub did not like apples. He disliked them very much in fact and so he had thrown them out the back door of his home in the castle. Much to his amazement, the seeds inside the apples had sprouted and there was now a rather haphazard scattering of apple trees beginning to grow where the apples had fallen.

Talic had given Melinda a book of math story problems. This was a wonderful gift and she liked it very much – too much in fact. She spent every evening for the first few weeks after Sprout Day working on those math problems, then checking them with her teacher. She had become quite good at them.

As they walked along each child was thinking of the gifts he or she had planned for the others. Mario was had been saving his money for some time. He planned to give his sister a magnifying glass. He had saved 2 reds and 2 whites. The magnifying glass cost 1 red and 3 whites. Melinda had saved a grand sum of 1 blue, 3 reds, and 1 white. She wanted to give Talic a toy chest so that he could keep his collection of rocks altogether. The toy chest cost 1 red and 3 whites.

They reached school and put aside their thoughts about Sprout Day as they put away their backpacks and checked the board for what their teacher had for them to do that morning.

End of Day 8

Beginning of Day 9

That afternoon in Fiveton was dreary, downright dark, damp and dreary. The clouds had come up the valley as they often did from the sea and it looked very much as though rain would be there soon. The children were done with school and were on their way home. They were still excited about First Growth Festival week and about Sprout Day but they were hoping that the rain, if it came, would not last long so that they would not have to spend the whole vacation indoors.

The children had reached the market square in the castle, the place where they usually went their separate ways toward their homes. Emmeline was talking about her family's plans to go down to the seashore. They planned to take twelve days for the whole journey – it took four days walking each way to get there - so that Emmeline would have to miss a few days of school.

She was asking Talic if he knew anyone who might want to take her job, collecting the coins for the Dragon Defense Fund, for a few days while she was gone. Talic was about to answer when the gamekeeper came hurrying along the street exclaiming, "Make way! Make way! Look out! I've got to get to the king and queen right away! Oh dear, oh dear. What will happen..."

"What's the matter?" asked the children. "What's going to happen?"

The gamekeeper stopped and mopped at his brow.

"I don't know what will happen. I really don't. How was I supposed to know? Nobody knew. Dragon code of customs.... so odd.... I really must tell the queen and king. They'll know what to do."

"Wait. Tell us. Maybe we can help," said the children.

"Well, you'll jolly well have to won't you?"

"What?"

"Look, do you know the dragon's name? Does anyone know that dragon's name?"

The children looked at one another. "No. We've just been calling him, 'The Dragon.'"

"Exactly!" said the gamekeeper. "So have I. So has everyone. No one stopped to think. It's an old, old custom, part of the dragon code. If a dragon, before it has a name, chooses to live in a kingdom the people of that

kingdom have to win it a name or the dragon must move on to another kingdom.”

“Oh no!” said the children. “Do you mean the dragon will leave us? How do we win a name for the dragon? What do we need to do?”

Quite a crowd had gathered around by this time. All eyes turned to the gamekeeper. Everyone wanted to know what would happen with “their” dragon.

“It’s a demonstration of intelligence and skill,” replied the gamekeeper.

“And it takes place on Sprout Day, at the end of First Growth Festival. I suppose I should tell you ... since some of you will be involved,” he said looking directly at Melinda. Melinda’s eyes widened.

“What do you mean?” she asked.

“Well, I’ve been reading about it. It seems that it’s always test of intelligence and skill, as I said, but it’s different every time.”

“What is it this time?” asked a large man in the crowd.

“I’m getting to that,” replied the gamekeeper.

“This time it’s a mathematics test. There are 10 problems. They come in a deck of ten cards. Each card has a math problem written on it. The king will draw a card from the deck and someone has to work out the answer *in 60 seconds or less!* If they do we get one letter of the dragon’s name.”

”What if they get it wrong?” asked Emmeline.

“If they get it wrong we get an X instead of a proper letter.” (In those days X’s were never used as letters.) “Then the king draws the next card, we see if we get that one right, and so on. If we get all five letters of the dragon’s name before we get five X’s we can give the dragon his new name. If we get five X’s before we get the five letters the dragon has to fly off and try another kingdom.”

“And who will do the math problems?” asked Melinda.

“Well, there, at least, I think we’ve run into a bit of luck. This year it’s the third grade class, your third grade class, Melinda, that will be doing the problems. I know your class and you in particular, are pretty good at these sorts of things.”

Melinda turned a little pale but she stood up straight and took on a fierce look of determination. “We’ll do it, sir! We’ll win that dragon a name. But we’ve got to practice. We have only a week to get into tip top shape for the test.”

“Yes,” replied the gamekeeper. “I found these. Perhaps they will help. I hope so.” He drew from a pocket in his robes a sheet of ten practice problems, handed it to Melinda, and hurried off saying “I’ve got to go and tell the king and queen. Spread the news!”

The children just looked at one another. They were not sure what to think. They looked at Melinda and the other third graders there in the crowd.

End of Day 9

Beginning of Day 10

So the dragon had a name now. No longer just “The Dragon,” he was now “The Dragon Garth” or just Garth to his friends. He certainly had many friends in the valley of Fiveton. Everyone had gathered for the naming contest. They had cheered when the 3rd graders got each problem right, revealing another letter in the dragon’s name. They had groaned when there was a mistake and an X appeared. In the end, the class had come through and the dragon was now a happy citizen of the kingdom.

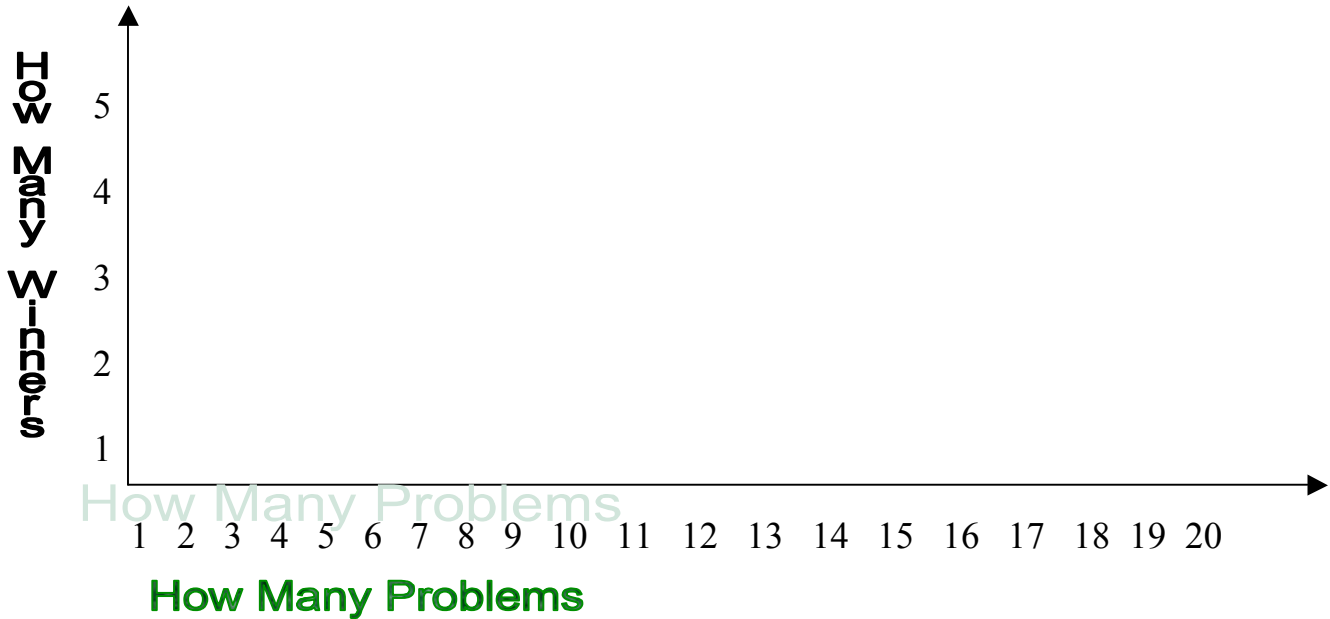
He was so happy, in fact, that he was planning a party for the people of the valley. He had been planning the party for a week, with advice from Mario and Maria. There would be feasting and games, dancing, a circus, and, best of all, some of Garth’s friends and relations, dragons from neighboring valleys, would come and give free rides for all the children and the teachers of the schools.

This last, the free rides up into the air on the back of a real live dragon, was by far the most popular event at the party. Everyone wanted to go and everyone wanted to be first. Garth, Mario and Maria thought for a long time about how to decide who should get that first ride. Certainly it should be one of the 3rd graders, after all, it was because of them that Garth had a name and could stay in Fiveton. But who should go first? At first they thought that the first ride should go to Ms. Carver, the 3rd grade teacher, but in the end they decided that since the name had been won in a contest of wits and mathematical skill, that they should use math one more time to determine who should get those first few rides.

They decided that they would use a Bingo game to determine the order of the riders. They made up boards with 25 squares. In each square they put one of the answers to the 25 math problems they wrote specially for the game. They then made enough of these boards, each one different from the last, so that every child could have his or her own board. They would then get the whole class together and show them math problems whose solutions were the numbers written in the squares. The first winner would get the first ride, the second winner would get the second ride, and so forth.

They began to wonder how many problems it would take to get a winner. Mario thought they would need to do at least 20 problems before anyone

would have the 5 in a row that made a bingo but Maria and the dragon Garth thought it would be fewer, more like 10 or 15. They decided to keep track of the number of problems it took to get a winner. They made a chart with the number of problems along the bottom and the number of winners along the side. Here is how it looked:



When all the preparations for the party had been completed, they invited all the guests and sat back and hoped for a sunny day.

End of Day 10

Beginning of Day 11 (last day).

The Dragon Garth's party was a great success. Nearly everyone from the castle was there and many people from the outlying farms and villages came in as well. This was a very special event. The people enjoyed the circus, the games, the feast and the contests. There was a grand parade to begin the day. Ms. Carver and the 3rd graders led the procession.

The party lasted from morning until night and ended with a fireworks display. As everyone knew they would be, the dragon rides were very popular. Garth himself was still too young and small to give rides, even to the children, but his friends and relations from all around had flown in for the occasion. One very special set of visitors came from the next valley over, the valley of Tenton. These were the dragons Tiana and Abdallando. They were Garth's parents. They were very glad to see that he had found such a fine home and that the people of Fiveton were so fond of Garth.

At the end of the day, Tiana and Abdalando asked Maria, Mario, Talic, Melinda and Emmeline to come over and speak to them. At first the children were worried. What had they done wrong? But they walked bravely over to the two large and imposing dragons. "What is it, sir? Madam? What can we do for you?" The dragons smiled down at the children.

"We understand that you have been good and loyal friends to our son. We would like to invite you to come and visit us in Tenton." We hope to see you soon but you will always be welcome in our home and in our valley." After saying this they took off flapping slowly up and away over the mountains toward Tenton.

The children were very excited. They wanted to go but they knew that the trip over the mountains would be hard. Furthermore it would take at least two days each way. If they stayed three days in Tenton they would need a week at least for the whole journey. How could they miss a week of school?

Mario, Maria, Talic, Melinda and Emmeline got together after school the next day to talk it over. As they saw it, they needed two things: someone to help them cross the mountains and a week off from school. They decided to talk to Sir Golub about crossing the mountains and to Ms, Carver about a week off. As it turned out, Sir Golub was happy to guide them through the

mountains. As a matter of fact he was thinking seriously about quitting his job as Captain of the knights; there was never anything to do and he was a man of action. He was certain of this. He wanted to open up a guide service, taking people for tours into the mountains. The children would be his first clients! Furthermore he said he would do it free of charge if the children would agree to tell everyone what a wonderful guide he was. They replied that if they *had* a wonderful time they would certainly be willing to tell people the truth about it. So that was settled.

Next they went to Ms. Carver. Melinda was pretty sure that she would not simply give her a week off from school. The other kids agreed. Their teachers were pretty strict. And besides, they had just *had* a week of for First Growth Festival. “What are we gonna do?” groaned Melinda. “Maybe if we tell the teachers we’re going on an *educational* trip...,” said Talic. “Maybe,” said Emmeline, but she did not seem too hopeful.

They got to school early the next day and talked first to Ms. Carver. They gave her their plan. She said she would think about it. The next day they met with her again before school and she told them her plan. She had meant for some time to do some research for a math unit using the money and number system of Tenton but she knew very little about it. If the children would agree to learn all about it and would write a report then she and the other teachers would let them miss the week of school.

The children were very excited. They left the very next day and, as Sir Golub had said they would, they had an excellent journey over the mountains. They made good time and arrived in Tenton around lunch-time on the second day. They asked for directions at the castle and were shown to the house of Garth’s parents. Tiana and Abdallando were very glad to see the group and spent the next three days showing them all the sights of the kingdom. In the process they learned a great deal about the number and coins systems in Tenton.

In Tenton, they had square coins rather than round ones. They had yellows, reds, blues and greens. The yellows were worth one, just like the whites in Fiveton. But then the reds were worth 10 yellows. At first this was a little hard for the Fiveton children to understand because in their system there was no number larger than 4! But they were quick learners and they soon got used to the situation and to trading groups of 10 instead of groups of 5. Before long they could add and subtract as though they had been there all

their lives or at least a couple of months. Here are a couple of sample problems:

$$\begin{array}{r} 1) \quad 4_B 2_R 0_Y \\ + \quad 5_R 8_Y \\ \hline \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 2) \quad 8_R 6_Y \\ + \quad 2_R 5_Y \\ \hline \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 3) \quad 4_B 5_R 6_Y \\ + \quad 7_R 8_Y \\ \hline \end{array}$$

In the end, the children wrote a beautiful report about the number system in Tenton, including a set of eight problems so that people could practice once they had been taught the basics. They became experts, in fact, and when they returned to Fiveton they were much in demand as consultants and they lived happily ever after.

THE END
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