



## Rusty the Red Runner

*People say the fox runs faster than any other animal in the woods, but is this little red hunter really the champion of speed?*

Rusty is a red fox. He lives in a big forest<sup>1</sup> with tall green trees and small blue rivers. Every morning, Rusty wakes up early. He is hungry, and he wants to find some food. Rusty is a very good hunter, and many animals think he is the fastest runner in the woods.

One cold morning, Rusty saw a rabbit near a small hill. The rabbit was eating grass under the bright sky. Rusty was quiet. He walked slowly, step by step. Then he started to run. His legs moved fast, and his red tail was straight behind him. The rabbit heard a sound and ran too. Rusty ran faster and faster, but the rabbit was quick. It jumped into a hole in the ground, and Rusty could not catch it.

Rusty was not happy, but he was clever<sup>2</sup>. "I do not always need to be the fastest," he thought. "I need to be smart."

The other animals talked about speed all the time. The deer said, "I am faster than you, Rusty. My long legs can run for many kilometres." The bird in the tree laughed and said, "I am the fastest because I can fly!" A small mouse only listened and said nothing.

One day, the animals wanted a big race. They started next to the old river. "Ready?" said the deer. "Run!"

The deer ran very fast on the open grass. Its legs were long and strong. Rusty ran too, but the deer was in front.

Suddenly<sup>3</sup>, the deer came to a thick line of trees and bushes. It was too big to go between them, so it had to stop and go a different way. Rusty was small, so he ran under the trees and through the bushes. Now he was in front!

But there was a problem. In front of Rusty, there was a fast, cold river. This was a real danger<sup>4</sup>. Rusty stopped at the water and did not know what to do. He did not want to feel<sup>5</sup> afraid, but the river was deep.

Then the small mouse walked past him. The mouse was slow, but it was very careful. It knew a secret. There were flat stones in the water, like a small bridge. The mouse walked on the stones, one by one, and it went to the other side. The mouse was the winner<sup>6</sup> of the race!

All the animals were surprised. The fox is fast, and the deer is fast, and the bird is fast. But on this day, the slow and careful mouse won. Rusty smiled and said, "Speed is good, but a clever brain is better. Today, I learned something new." From that day, Rusty knew that the fastest animal is not always the best animal in the forest.

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## VOCABULARY — KEY WORDS FROM THE STORY

| # | WORD                       | DEFINITION                                                                | EXAMPLE SENTENCE                                                                   |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | forest<br><i>noun</i>      | a large area of land with many trees growing close together               | "We walked through the dark forest and saw many birds in the trees."               |
| 2 | clever<br><i>adjective</i> | able to learn and understand things quickly; good at using your brain     | "My sister is very clever, and she always finds a good answer to a hard question." |
| 3 | suddenly<br><i>adverb</i>  | quickly and when you do not expect it                                     | "We were walking home when suddenly it started to rain."                           |
| 4 | danger<br><i>noun</i>      | the chance that something bad or harmful can happen to you                | "There is a lot of danger when you drive a car too fast."                          |
| 5 | feel<br><i>verb</i>        | to have an emotion or a feeling inside you, such as happy, sad, or afraid | "I feel happy when I see my friends after a long week."                            |
| 6 | winner<br><i>noun</i>      | the person or animal that comes first in a game, race, or competition     | "The winner of the running race got a big gold cup."                               |

## COMPREHENSION — ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

## QUESTION 1 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

Why could Rusty not catch the rabbit at the start of the story?

- A-) The rabbit jumped into a hole in the ground      B-) Rusty fell into the cold river  
C-) The rabbit was bigger than Rusty      D-) Rusty was too tired to run

## QUESTION 2 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

Why did the deer lose its place at the front of the race?

- A-) It was too big to go between the trees and bushes      B-) It stopped to eat some grass  
C-) It could not swim across the river      D-) It ran the wrong way from the start

## QUESTION 3 — SHORT ANSWER

How does Rusty change from the start of the story to the end? Use your own words.

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## COMPREHENSION ANSWERS

My score today \_\_\_\_ / 3

Q1 The rabbit jumped into a hole in the ground

✓ Correct (A)

The text says, 'It jumped into a hole in the ground, and Rusty could not catch it.' This shows the rabbit escaped by hiding in a hole, not because Rusty was slow or tired.

Q2 It was too big to go between the trees and bushes

✓ Correct (A)

The story says the deer 'came to a thick line of trees and bushes. It was too big to go between them, so it had to stop and go a different way.' Rusty was small, so he passed the deer here.

Q3 **Answer:** At the start, Rusty thinks speed is the most important thing, and he is proud that many animals call him the fastest runner. When he cannot catch the rabbit, he starts to see that being clever is also important. By the end, after the mouse wins the race, Rusty understands that speed alone is not enough. He learns that a clever brain and careful action can be better than fast legs, and he feels happy to learn something new.

**Explanation:** A good answer must show a clear change: from believing in speed to valuing cleverness. It should use evidence such as the rabbit escaping and the mouse winning, and it should mention Rusty's final words about a 'clever brain'.

## VOCABULARY — TRANSLATION &amp; NOTES

## forest

Common phrases: 'in the forest' and 'a forest fire'. Use 'forest' for a very big area of trees; use 'wood' or 'woods' for a smaller one.

## clever

Often used with people and animals: 'a clever child', 'a clever idea'. In American English, people often say 'smart' instead.

## suddenly

'Suddenly' often comes at the start of a sentence in stories to show a surprise: 'Suddenly, the door opened.'

## danger

Common phrases: 'in danger' and 'out of danger'. Be careful: the noun is 'danger', but the adjective is 'dangerous'.

## feel

We often say 'feel' plus an adjective: 'feel tired', 'feel cold', 'feel afraid'. The past form is 'felt'.

## winner

'Winner' comes from the verb 'win'. The opposite is 'loser'. Common phrase: 'the winner of the game'.

## YOUR TURN — SENTENCE BUILDING

Mastery comes from practice. Write original sentences using today's target vocabulary.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

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