

**Directions.** Print out. Read the story. Do the activities.

**THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING**

By Ellen Baumwoll

Wendy's grandmother knitted her a Christmas stocking. "Keep it safe," her grandmother whispered. Happy and excited, Wendy put it in her wagon and went for a walk. It was a cold and windy winter day. As the wind blew against the wagon, the stocking fell out and was swept down a steep hill. Some animals found it.

"A Christmas stocking," they called. "Yes," a squirrel replied. He had seen everything. "It belongs to a poor little girl who has just lost it." "Look," a hedgehog pointed. "There is some writing on it?" "What does it say?" asked the animals. "To Wendy with love, Grandma." "What should we do?" asked the animals. "I know," said the squirrel. "We can fill it with gifts and put it in a place where she will find it."

The squirrel scurried to the stocking and put some chestnuts into it.

The hedgehog hurried to the stocking and put some berries into it.

The dairy cow danced to the stocking and put some milk into it.

The pony pranced to the stocking and put some hay into it.

The jaybird jumped to the stocking and put some seeds into it.

The bunny bumped to the stocking and put some grain into it.

The snow goose scuttled to the stocking and put some down into it.

The sheep shuttled to the stocking and put some wool into it.

Now, the stocking was full. The squirrel tied it closed and hung it on the branch of a tree.

When Wendy returned the next day, she found the filled stocking hanging from a tree. "My stocking!" she cried with joy. "I wonder what happened to it?" She never found out.

She carried the stocking home and hung it over the mantle. It was Christmas Eve.

On Christmas day, everyone was excited to see what was in the stocking. "Open it, Wendy," said mother. Wendy opened the stocking and out fell all the gifts. "What wonderful gifts!" cried mother. We can roast the chestnuts and eat them, bake a berry pie, drink the milk, feed the hay to our animals, plant the seeds for next year's crops, grind the grain into flour to make bread, make a down quilt, and spin the wool into a warm blanket. What a wonderful Christmas!"

**END.**

### **Postscript. THE REAL ST. NICHOLAS.**

The real St. Nicholas (later called Santa Claus) was born in the Middle East about 350 miles northwest of Bethlehem in the fourth century on Dec. 6, either 280, 345, or 352 A.D. He lost his parents when he was very young and later dedicated his life to religion. He moved to Myra (now Kale), his home town, Lycia, near the coast of what is now Turkey. He was appointed the bishop of Myra. Legend tells us of his love for children, his kindness, and the good deeds he brought about. He used his inherited wealth to help the poor. Nicholas was a shy man and did not like to give money directly, so he gave it anonymously. One famous story is of a nobleman in Myra, a good man who fell on hard times. He was unable to supply his daughters

**THE REAL ST. NICHOLAS cont'd.**

with a dowry. As the first two daughters approached marriageable age, Nicholas visited their house at night, tossing a bag of gold through the window. The nobleman was determined to discover who was doing these acts of kindness and stayed up one night. He saw Nicholas dropping the third bag of gold. It has been said that Nicholas climbed on the roof and dropped the third bag of gold down the chimney into a stocking hanging up to dry. Nicholas begged him to keep the secret, but the news got out. This has given rise to the modern custom of placing gifts in and hanging up stockings on Christmas Eve. From then on, whenever anyone received an unexpected gift, they thanked Nicholas.

**Animals in the story (8 nouns):** bunny, deer, hedgehog, jaybird, pony, sheep, snow goose, squirrel. A noun is a word used to denote or name a person, place, thing, quality, or act.

**Gifts the animals placed in the Christmas stocking:** berries, chestnuts, down, grain, hay, milk, seeds, wool.

**Rhyming Words (verbs):** scurried, hurried; danced, pranced; jumped, bumped; scuttled, shuttled. (Root words: scurry, hurry; dance, prance; jump, bump; scuttle, shuttle.) A verb is that part of speech that expresses existence, action or occurrence.

**Animal actions:** squirrel scurried, hedgehog hurried; dairy cow danced, pony pranced; jaybird jumped, bunny bumped; snow goose shuttled, sheep scuttled.

**Animal words and actions beginning with the same letter:** squirrel scurried, hedgehog hurried; dairy cow danced, pony pranced; jaybird jumped, bunny bumped; snow goose scuttled, sheep shuttled.

**Animals and their gifts:** squirrel – chestnuts; hedgehog – berries; dairy cow – milk; pony – hay; jaybird – seeds; bunny – grain; snow goose – down; sheep – wool.

**READING AND WRITING.**

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**HOLIDAYS. CHRISTMAS. THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING STORY cont'd.**

**Page 4. WRITE IN THE GIFTS (NOUNS).** Directions. Read the story. Fill in the blanks from the word list below.

1. The squirrel put \_\_\_\_\_  
Into the stocking.

2. The hedgehog put \_\_\_\_\_  
Into the stocking.

3. The dairy cow put \_\_\_\_\_  
Into the stocking.

4. The pony put \_\_\_\_\_  
Into the stocking.

5. The jaybird put \_\_\_\_\_  
Into the stocking.

6. The bunny put \_\_\_\_\_  
Into the stocking.

7. The snow goose put \_\_\_\_\_  
Into the stocking.

8. The sheep put \_\_\_\_\_  
Into the stocking.

**Word List:** Cross out each word as you write it in.

berries   chestnuts   down   grain   hay   milk   seeds   wool

**Gift Answers:** 1. chestnuts; 2. berries; 3. milk; 4. hay; 5. seeds; 6. grain;  
7. down; 8. wool.

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**Page 5.**

**WRITE IN THE MATCHING RHYMING WORDS.** Directions. Fill in the blanks with the matching rhyming word from the word list below.

scurried \_\_\_\_\_

danced \_\_\_\_\_

jumped \_\_\_\_\_

scuttled \_\_\_\_\_

**Word List:** Cross out each word as you write it.

bumped      shuttled      hurried      pranced

**MATCH THE ACTION WORDS THAT RHYME.** Directions. Match the word from column A with the rhyming word from column B by drawing a line from one to the other.

**A**

hurried

shuttled

danced

bumped

**B**

jumped

pranced

scurried

scuttled

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**HOLIDAYS. CHRISTMAS. THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING STORY. cont'd.**  
**Page 6. WRITE IN THE ACTION WORDS (VERBS).** Directions: Fill in the  
blanks with action words (verbs) from the word list below.

1. The squirrel \_\_\_\_\_

2. The hedgehog \_\_\_\_\_

3. The dairy cow \_\_\_\_\_

4. The pony \_\_\_\_\_

5. The jaybird \_\_\_\_\_

6. The bunny \_\_\_\_\_

7. The snow goose \_\_\_\_\_

8. The sheep \_\_\_\_\_

**Word List:** Cross out each word as you write it.

danced    hurried    shuttled    jumped    pranced    scuttled  
bumped            scurried

**Action Word Answers:** 1. scurried; 2. hurried; 3. danced; 4. pranced;  
5. jumped; 6. bumped; 7. scuttled; 8. shuttled.

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**Page 7.**

**DEFINITIONS.** Directions. Fill in the blanks from the word list at the end. First find, write, and cross out the definitions that you already know. Then do the others. See answers after number 8.

1. Moved in a jolting or bouncing way.

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2. Jumped about in a playful way.

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3. Acted or moved quickly.

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4. Leapt, raised, or threw oneself into the air.

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5. Moved proudly with high steps.

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**Word list:** bumped danced hurried jumped pranced

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**HOLIDAYS. CHRISTMAS. THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING STORY cont'd.**  
**Page 8.**

**DEFINITIONS cont'd.** Directions. Fill in the blanks from the word list at the end. First find, write, and cross out the definitions that you already know. Then do the others. See answers below.

6. Moved in a hurried pace with small fast steps.

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7. Ran or moved quickly with short steps.

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8. Went back and forth regularly.

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**Word List:** Cross out each word as you write it.

scurried            scuttled            shuttled

**Definition Answers:** 1. bumped; 2. danced; 3. hurried; 4. jumped;  
5. pranced; 6. scurried; 7. scuttled; 8. shuttled.

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**HOLIDAYS. CHRISTMAS. THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING STORY cont'd.**  
**Page 9. WRITE IN THE ROOT WORDS.** Directions: Write the root word  
for the following past tense verbs. Note: Be careful with “hurried” and  
“scurried.”

1. bumped

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2. danced

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3. hurried

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4. jumped

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5. pranced

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6. scurried

---

7. scuttled

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8. shuttled

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**Root Word Answers:** 1. bump; 2. dance; 3. hurry; 4. jump; 5. prance; 6. scurry; 7. scuttle; 8. shuttle.

**DEFINITIONS.**

**bumped** – *v.* past tense of bump; bump, bumps, bumping. 1. Moved in a jolting, jerking, or bouncing way. *Ex:* The barrels bumped in the back of the truck. *Ex:* The bunny bumped to the stocking. 2. Hit, knocked, or struck something. *Ex:* If the driver had not stopped the car, it would have bumped into the car ahead.

**danced** – *v.* past tense of dance; dance, dances, dancing. 1. Jumped about in a playful way. Frolicked. Bobbed up and down. *Ex:* The goats danced in the field. *Ex:* The dairy cow danced to the stocking. 2. Took steps in time to music. *Ex:* The girl danced to the music.

**hurried** – *v.* past tense of hurry; hurry, hurries, hurrying. Acted or moved quickly or with haste. *Ex:* The teacher hurried to get to class. *Ex:* The hedgehog hurried to the stocking.

**jumped** – *v.* past tense of jump; jump, jumps, jumping. Leapt; raised or threw oneself in the air. *Ex:* The frog jumped into the pond. *Ex:* The jaybird jumped to the stocking.

**pranced** – *v.* past tense of prance; prance, prances, prancing. Moved proudly with high steps. Walked with lively springing steps. *Ex:* The peacock pranced around the garden. *Ex:* The pony pranced to the stocking.

**scurried** – *v.* past tense of scurry; scurry, scurries, scurrying. Hurried or scampered. Moved at a hurried pace with small fast steps. *Ex:* The children scurried to the classroom when they heard the bell. *Ex:* The squirrel scurried to the stocking.

**scuttled** – *v.* past tense of scuttle; scuttle, scuttles, scuttling. Ran or moved quickly with short steps or hurried movements. Scurried. *Ex:* The cat scuttled through the grass. *Ex:* The snow goose scuttled to the stocking.

**shuttled** – *v.* past tense of shuttle; shuttle, shuttles, shuttling. Went, moved, or traveled back and forth regularly, from one place to another. *Ex:* The train shuttled between two stations. *Ex:* The sheep shuttled to the stocking.