

1 The Lemon and His Army

Get Started

Discuss in groups:

1. Do you add herbs like coriander and mint to your food?
2. Why do you do that?
3. What happens if you add too much of them?

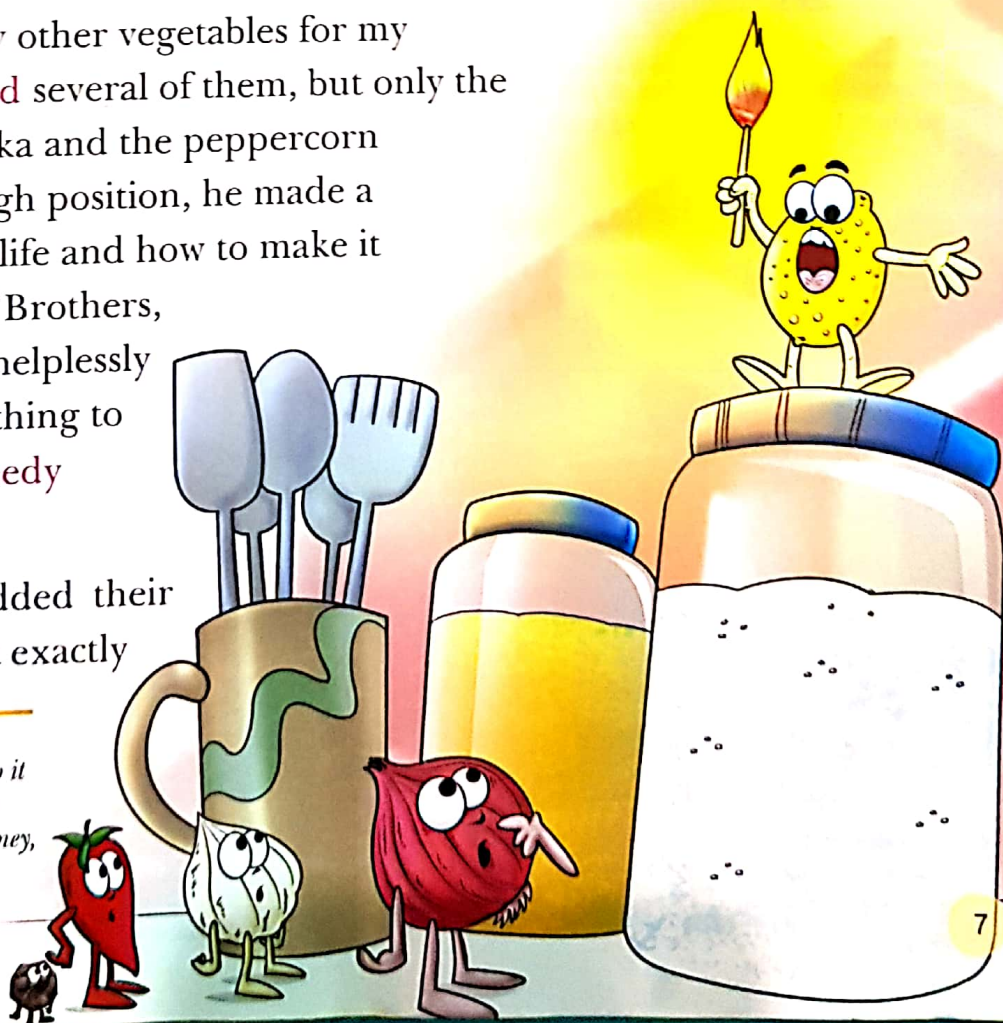


One day, the lemon decided to change the way he lived because he thought his life was under constant **threat**. He always feared that someone might eat him someday. "I must have a better life. I must not end it like my **ancestors**," he often said to himself.

So he thought over the best thing he could do. Finally, he decided that he could not **have it alone**. "If I must leave this place, I'll have to take a few other vegetables for my company." So he **summoned** several of them, but only the onion, the garlic, the paprika and the peppercorn **turned up**. Then from a high position, he made a speech about their terrible life and how to make it better. In the end he said, "Brothers, let's not stay here, waiting helplessly for our end. Let's do something to save ourselves from the greedy mouths of humans."

All the vegetables nodded their heads in agreement. "What exactly

threat possibility of trouble or danger
ancestors forefathers | **have it alone** do it alone | **summoned** called | **turned up** arrived | **greedy** wanting more food, money, power, etc.



should we do?," asked the onion. "Up with freedom!" exclaimed the peppercorn. The garlic also nodded his head to support him. "I am glad you all agree with me. This is what we should do. We will form an army and select a commander to lead us. We will search for new places and new people in this wide world who will not eat us," said the lemon. His friends cheered him for his wisdom and courage, and of course, they chose him as their commander. The lemon thanked them and said, "Brothers, better days are in store for us." Then they all decided to start their journey at once.

All day long they **tramped** across fields, meadows and groves and along the dusty roads. With nightfall, they became afraid of the wild beasts. "I can see a **humble** cottage across the road," said the lemon, his teeth **clattering** with cold, "Let's go there." Without looking left or right, they ran across the road and took shelter in the kitchen of the cottage. They sat silently in the cupboard for some time. Then they peeped into the kitchen. It was a poor peasant's home. Soon the peasant's wife came in, carrying an armful of dry **turfs**. She lit the fire and started cooking for the family. She made the **maize brew**, a dish the family ate every day. After some time her husband and her brother-in-law came, took off their dusty shoes and sat down on low chairs. Their nostrils began to **quiver** as the smell of the brew filled the kitchen. The peasant's wife stirred the brew with the wooden spoon and then poured it into big copper dishes. Then both the brothers said their prayers before they began to eat.

tramped travelled/marched on foot | **humble** modest or not large | **clattering** making noise | **turfs** short grass held together by its roots | **maize brew** a soup made from maize | **quiver** shake slightly



The man looked at his brew, turned to his wife and said, "Have you any garlic left, dear? Put some in the brew." She went to the cupboard and thrust her hand into the shelf and took out the garlic. She placed it on the table, hit it hard on its head and the poor garlic went into pieces. Then she **pounded** the pieces. The garlic tried hard to save itself by giving out a strong **pungent** smell. But it was of no use. The poor lady **sprinkled** the garlic paste over the brew. Both the brothers had their dinner and left. After a while the young shepherd, who worked for the peasants in the farm, came in and sat down to eat. He looked at the brew and said softly, "I'd like to have some onions with my brew. Can I have some, please?"



The woman went to the shelf once more, looked for onions and caught hold of the one lying in a corner. She gave it to the shepherd. The onion started to **wriggle** out of his hands but all in vain. The shepherd cut it into four pieces. The onion tried to prick his eyes and bite his tongue, but the young man wiped his tears with the back of his hand and went on eating. So that was the end of the onion. Looking at the fate of the garlic and the onion, the other vegetables started trembling. The lemon calmly said, "Don't lose heart, friends. Let's run away when we are alone here." When there was no one in the kitchen, they tip-toed towards the door.

They walked on and on. At the break of dawn, they reached a town and looked for shelter. This time they chose the house of a wealthy man. They entered the kitchen and hid in a cupboard. The lemon studied the place and remarked, "Here we'll be

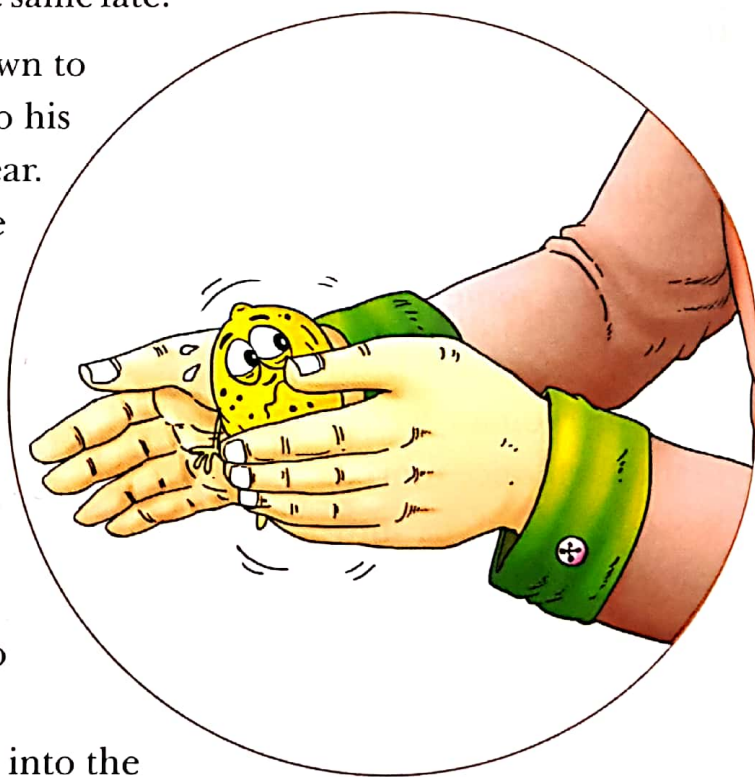


pounded hit hard | **pungent** strong or bitter | **sprinkled** scattered in small proportion | **wriggle** twist and turn

safe. Rich people are not greedy like the **rustic** ones. After some time the cook and the maid came in. The maid lit the fire and the cook started frying the chicken. Suddenly he roared, "Where is the paprika?" The maid ran up to the cupboard and caught hold of the paprika. Then she put it in a grinding mill. The paprika tried to defend itself by attacking the maid's nostrils and burning her hands. The maid **nuzzled** a dozen times and continued with her work till the paprika turned into fine red powder. Finally, it landed into the frying pan. Seeing this, both the vegetables shook badly with fear.

At lunch time, a servant laid the table and took the lemon from the cupboard and put it on the table. "Oh! There's no pepper on the table," he exclaimed. Then he ran to the cupboard, found the peppercorn and ground it. The peppercorn behaved the same way as the paprika, but met with the same fate.

Soon the master arrived and sat down to eat. He took the lemon and brought it to his nose to smell it. The lemon froze with fear. The master put it back on the table. The lemon sighed with relief. When the servant brought the **steaming** soup, the master put some powder in it. Then he caught the lemon again and started pressing and rolling it between his thick palms. Then he took a sharp knife and cut the lemon into two. The lemon **squirted** its juice into the master's eyes to save itself, but the hungry man kept on pressing it until the last drop of juice fell into the soup. Then he asked his servant to throw the crushed **rind** away into the dustbin.



And this is the unhappy end of the story of the brave army and its commander.

(Nada Curcija-Prodanovic)

rustic country people | **nuzzled** rubbed her nose | **steaming** very hot | **squirted** threw liquid with force | **rind** outer skin of a lemon



Respond and Reflect

A. Number the events as they occur in the story.

1. The lemon made them aware of the danger to their lives.
2. They chose the lemon as their leader.
3. The garlic and the onion lost their lives first.
4. The lemon was the last to lose his life.
5. The lemon summoned vegetables for a meeting.
6. The remaining three vegetables started their journey the same day.
7. Some vegetables agreed to go along with him.
8. They started at once and walked on and on till they reached a cottage.
9. The paprika and the peppercorn lost their lives next.



B. Match the parts of sentences under Column A with their related parts under Column B. Keep the story in mind while matching the parts.

A

1. The farmer's wife
2. The peasant
3. The cook
4. The servant
5. The rich master

B

- ate the onion.
- squeezed the lemon till the last drop.
- sprinkled the garlic on the brew.
- cooked the paprika with the chicken.
- crushed the peppercorn.

C. Whom/What are the underlined words used for? Write your answer against each sentence.

1. I must not end it like my ancestors.
2. He made a speech about their terrible life.
3. His friends cheered him for his wisdom.
4. Then they peeped into the kitchen.
5. Their nostrils began to quiver.
6. Then she pounded the pieces.
7. I'd like to have some onion.
8. The lemon studied the place.



9. Finally it landed into the frying pan.
10. He took the lemon and brought it to his nose.

D. Answer the following questions briefly.

1. Was the lemon a good speaker? Why do you think so?
2. Was the lemon a good leader? Was it right for the vegetables to depend on him?
3. Is the life of vegetables similar to ours? Why do you think so?

Learn New Words

A. The teacher dictated a few sentences in the class. While writing them down, Akanksha got the spellings of some words wrong. Underline those words and write their correct spellings in the space given.

1. Peppercorn and papprika are used for making food tasty. _____
2. The nozzel of the teapot was blocked.  _____
3. The cat nuzled her baby's ear. _____
4. The earthquake ocured at night and destroyed many lives. _____
5. Abhinav stirred his cold coffee and started siping it. _____
6. I couldn't fulfil my promise. _____
7. He arrivved at the station very late.  _____
8. He had to struggle hard for getting into the train. _____
9. The pup wrigled out of the narrow opening. _____
10. Don't pitty him. He didn't work enough to get through. _____
11. Our caravan passed through a hilly terraine. _____

B. Underline the odd word in each group of words. One is done for you.

- | | | | |
|------------|--------------|---------|-----------|
| 1. squeeze | <u>stamp</u> | press | squash |
| 2. crush | squirt | spray | spurt |
| 3. pungent | bitter | sour | sugary |
| 4. bite | gnaw | burn | nibble |
| 5. tramp | jog | march | roam |
| 6. leader | follower | captain | commander |

Beautiful Soup

Beautiful soup, so rich and green,
Waiting in a hot tureen!
Who for such dainties would not stop
Soup of the evening, beautiful soup,
Soup of the evening, beautiful soup!

Beautiful soup, who cares for fish,
Game or some other dish?
Who would not give all else for two
Pennyworth only, beautiful soup?
Pennyworth only, beautiful soup!

Bea-ootiful soo-ooop!
Bea-ootiful soo-ooop!
Soo-ooop for the e---e ---evening,
Beautiful, beautiful soup.

tureen a large deep dish with a lid, used for serving vegetables or soup | **dainties** tasty dishes, delicacies | **game** meat of an animal | **pennyworth** not expensive





Understand and Enjoy

- A. Answer the following questions briefly.
1. What is the soup made of?
 2. Over which food does the poet prefer the soup?
 3. At what time is the poet having the soup?
 4. Does the poet like it very much? Write the words that support your answer.
- B. What picture do the following lines bring to your mind? Draw a sketch to show it.
- Bea-ootiful soo-oop!
Bea-ooitful soo-oop!
- C. Write the rhyming words in the poem.
- D. Which food/dish do you like the most? Write a few sentences to describe it.
- E. Can you write a short poem on your favourite food? First write a few words and then compose a short poem with the help of those words.

Example:

care, fair

tomato, potato

dream, cream, stream

ice cream, scream

meat, eat

dish, fish

hot, pot, not

fry, cry, try