



**PRATHAM
BOOKS**

A Book in Every Child's Hand

The Man Who Thought He Was Smarter Than His Wife: A Folktale From Norway

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Level 3

There was once a farmer who was always glum and grumpy. But his wife was not like him at all – she worked hard and was a cheerful soul. But Gloomy Gus was forever finding fault with her. He thought she was stupid, and couldn't do the smallest thing right.

One evening, Gloomy Gus came home from the fields in a very bad mood. He knocked at the door, but his wife was busy, so she took an extra minute or two to open it.

This made Gus as grouchy as a cross-eyed alligator with a toothache. He yelled at his wife, scolded the baby, and stepped on the poor dog's tail. And his crooked teeth went snap-snap, flash-flash, as he kept shouting louder and louder.

When he ran out of breath, his wife said, "Tch! Tch! Why are you making such a fuss? Tomorrow, I'll go out and work in the fields, and you stay here and take care of my jobs. And let's see how you like it."

"That's a GOOD IDEA!" said Gus. He thought he was very smart indeed, and wanted to teach his wife a mighty big lesson. "I'll show you HOW THINGS MUST BE DONE!"



So, early the next morning, he sent his wife out to work in the fields. Gus, of course, stayed behind at home.

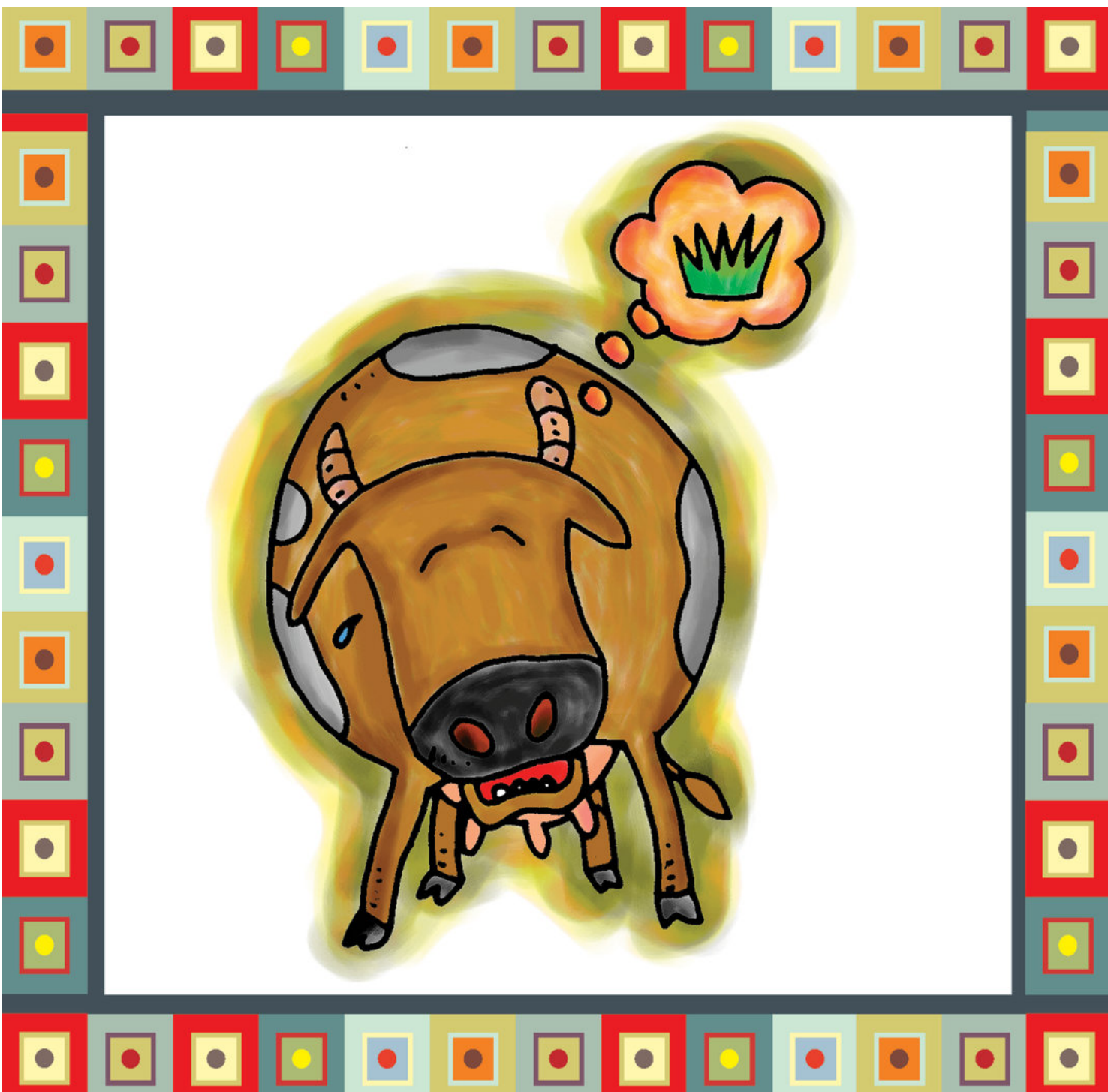
First, he began to churn the butter. But he soon found that the job was not as easy as he'd thought it would be. Besides, it made him ever so thirsty! So Gus went down to the cellar to get some ale.

He had just opened the tap of the ale barrel, when he heard the pig come into the kitchen above. "Tsk! Tsk! That pesky pest of a pig must be at the butter churn... going slurp, slurp, slurp! I must teach him a lesson he won't forget," growled Gus. Without waiting to close the tap, he ran up the stairs as fast as he could, shouting, "Scat! Scarper! Scram!"

But when Gloomy Gus reached the kitchen...it was too late! The pig had already knocked over the butter churn. And there it stood, grunting happily, in a large puddle of cream on the kitchen floor.

Gus gave it such a long, hard kick that the pig fell down dead.





Then, Gloomy Gus remembered that he had left the tap open in the cellar. He ran down the stairs...but it was too late! All the ale had run out of the barrel. His throat was parched. And he was huffing and puffing from running up and down the stairs... and then, he heard the cow moo.

Gus had had no time to think of the cow. He had not given her any grass, or even a sip of water. But he felt lazy to take her all the way down to the meadow to graze. He remembered that there was some grass growing on the roof of his house. The house was close against a steep hill. He thought he would be able to get the cow up the roof if he laid a long, flat piece of wood across the back of the roof.

But now, the little baby was crawling across the kitchen floor. There was still a bit of cream left in the churn and Gus did not want him to spill it. So he lifted the churn on to his back, and went out.

He had to give the cow some water before putting it on the roof. When Gus bent forward to draw water from the well, there was more trouble! All the cream spilt out of the churn. It bubbled over his head and shoulder, right into his eyes and nose and ears! And then the churn fell glug-glug-glug into the well.

By now, it was long past lunch-time. Gus hadn't finished any of the work he should have done. He hadn't churned the butter, or swept the house, or fed the cow or the baby or the dog, or...it was a long, long list. And he felt tired even to think of all that he hadn't done!



By the time he put the cow on the roof, the baby had grown VERY hungry. So, he began to bawl, long and loud, "E-e-e-o! A-a-a-a! E-e-e-o!"

So Gloomy Gus decided to cook some porridge. He lit the fire and filled a pot with water for the porridge. And then, a dreadful thought struck him. The roof sloped very steeply. What if the cow fell off the roof? It would surely break its legs, or even its neck!

So he went to the roof of the house to tie up the cow. He tied one end of the rope around its neck. But there was nothing on the roof to which he could tie the other end. So Gus slid the loose end of the rope down the kitchen chimney, and went back to the kitchen. Then, he tied the rope, which was hanging there, around his own leg.

The water in the pot was boiling, and he started making the porridge. That was when the cow lost its balance and began to fall!



Now, the cow was a heavy, roly-poly creature. It weighed much, much more than Gus and his wife and the baby and the dog, all put together. The cow slowly slid off the roof dragging the rope with which it was tied. And as Gus had knotted one end of the rope around his own leg, this pulled him right up the chimney. And there in the chimney Gus remained stuck, unable to go up or down.

There he stayed until his wife returned home in the evening. She saw the cow hanging halfway down the side of the house, struggling and kicking. So she quickly cut the rope, and the cow reached the ground with a thud.

And inside the house, Gloomy Gus went tumbling down, down, DOWN! Poor man, he ended up with his head in the porridge pot!

And guess what? He never, ever tried to teach his wife again, how to do her job!

MAKE YOUR OWN VIKING SHIP

About 1200 years ago, Norway was home to the Vikings. They were great travelers, who sailed all over Europe and the Atlantic Ocean in big, beautiful ships. How about making your own Viking ship and embarking on the adventure of a lifetime?

You Need

Sheet of white chart paper

Broomstick

Gum or paste

Poster or water colour paints

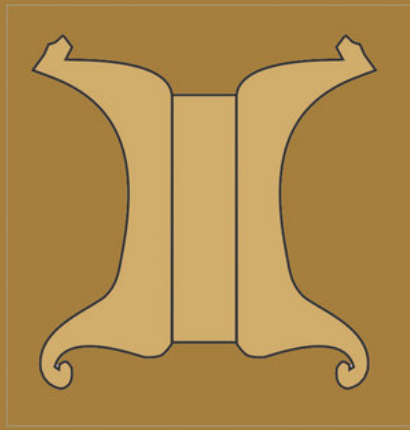
Brushes

Scissors

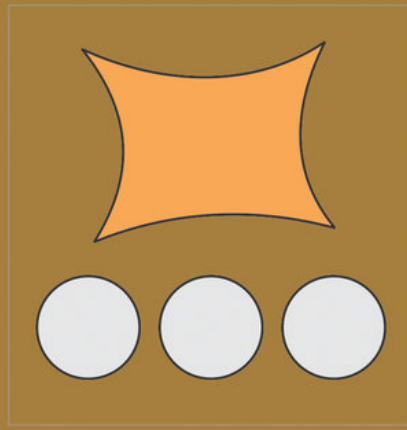
Ruler

Pencil

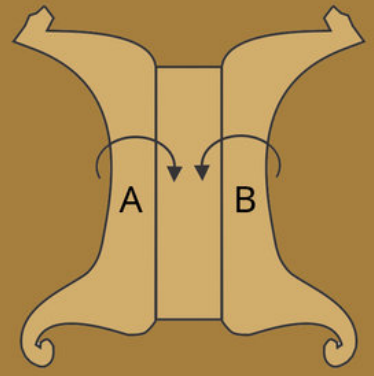
Old matchbox with a few pebbles placed inside



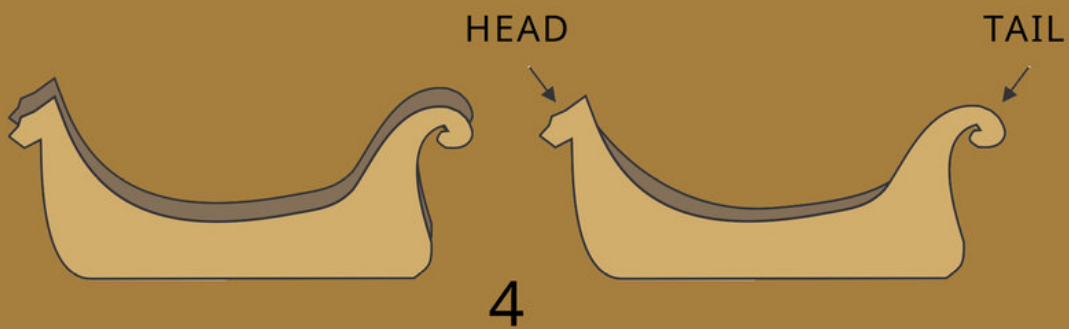
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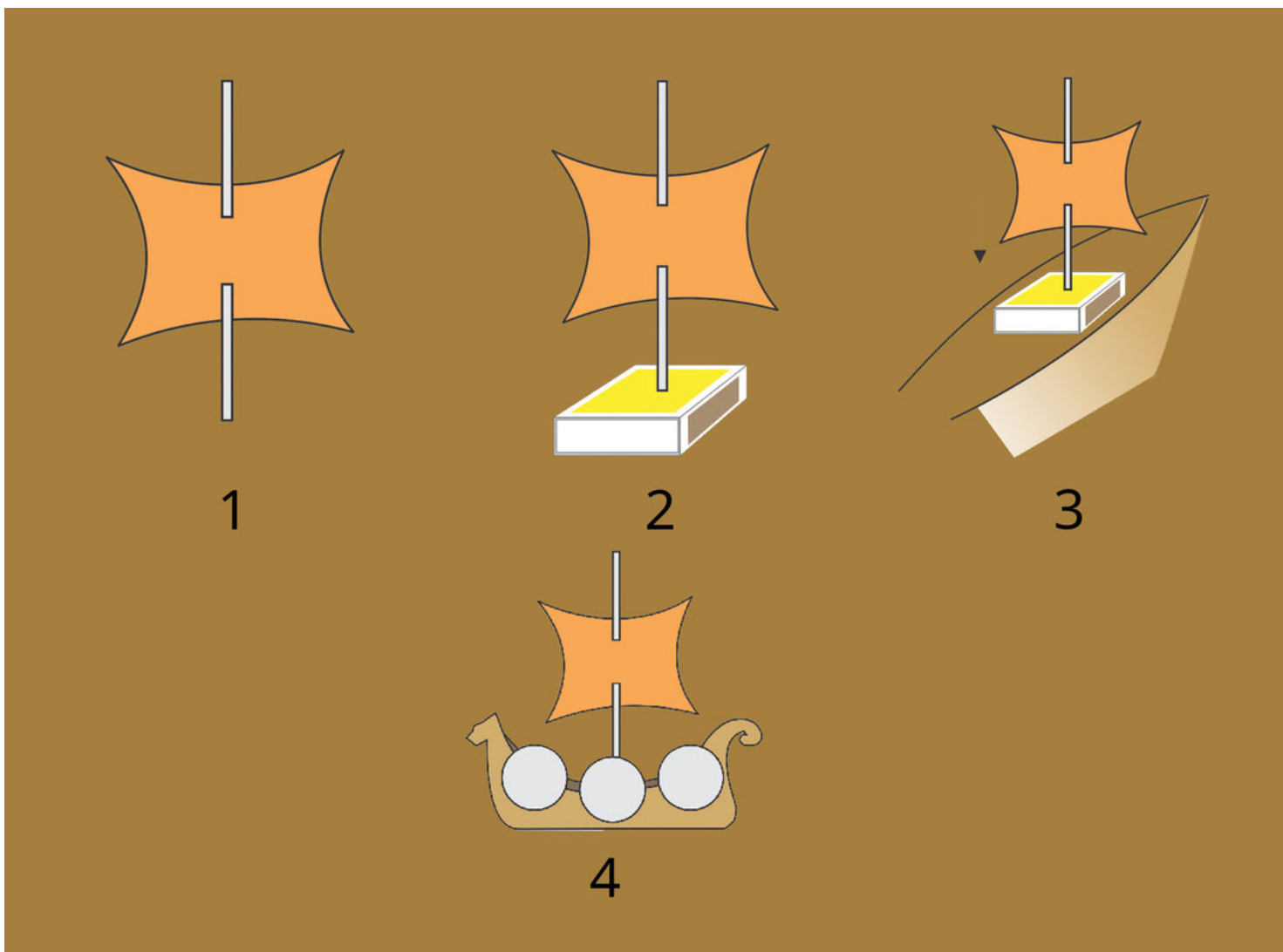
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1. Ship's body 2. (top) Sail 2. (bottom) Shields

To Make the Ship

1. On half a sheet of chart paper, draw the shape of the ship's body given above, paint it and cut it out.
2. On the other half of the sheet, draw the outlines of the sail and the shields as shown. Paint them and then cut them out.
3. Fold each side of the ship inward as shown, along the lines A and B.
4. Stick the two heads and the two tails together using gum. The ship's body is now ready.



To Make the Sail

1. Make two holes in the sail in such a way that the broomstick can be passed through them. Push the broomstick through the two holes as shown.
2. Make a hole in the centre of the matchbox and push the sail into it.
3. Now, place the sail in the ship by pushing the matchbox into the middle of the ship.
4. Stick the shields to the side of the ship as shown.

Are your bags packed? The Viking ship is now ready to sail the seven seas!

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The Man Who Thought He Was Smarter Than His Wife: A Folktale From Norway

(English)

Long long ago, there lived in Norway a grumpy, grouchy farmer called Gloomy Gus. Gloomy Gus was not just a grouch---he was arrogant too, and believed he was smarter than everybody else, especially his wife. Read this captivating and humourous folktale from Norway to find out just how smart he really was!

This is a Level 3 book for children who are ready to read on their own.



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