

LEVELED BOOK • N

The Drum



**Multi
level
H•K•N**

An Indian Folktale
Retold by Katherine Follett
Illustrated by Teresa Martinez

www.readinga-z.com

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Focus Question

What lesson does this story teach about kindness?

Words to Know	
deeds	insisted
feebly	musicians
goods	roti

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Correlation	
LEVEL N	
Fountas & Pinnell	M
Reading Recovery	20
DRA	28



Once there was a boy who lived with his mother in Punjab, India. They were very poor and had only a bit of land to grow grain. They sold their grain at the market to buy sugar, butter, and clothing.

One day, Mother got ready to go to the market. She asked the boy, “Would you like me to buy you anything?”

The boy’s eyes went wide with delight. “More than anything else, I want a drum!”



Mother sold her grain at the market. She bought butter, sugar, and clothing. There was no money left over. The boy wanted a drum so badly, but there was nothing she could do.

On her way home, Mother found a fine, sturdy stick. It was not a drum, but it was better than nothing. She smiled sadly when she handed the boy his gift.

When the boy saw her face, he decided not to be disappointed.

“Thank you,” he said. He tapped, slapped, and banged on every object with his new stick.





As he went tapping along, he saw his neighbor trying to light her stove. The dung stank and smoked. Her eyes watered, and she coughed.

“Here, Auntie,” he said. “Use my stick to heat your stove.”

The woman thanked the boy. When the burning stick got the stove nice and hot, she baked him a soft, round **roti**.



The boy was looking for a shady place to enjoy his roti when he heard a baby crying. The baby was hungry, but the mother had no food.



“Take this roti,” the boy said. “My family has enough to eat. You need it more than I do.”

The woman happily fed the warm bread to her baby. “Take my water pot as thanks,” she **insisted**, handing the boy a large metal jug.

What a gift! The boy tapped,
slapped, and banged the jug.
It dinged, bonged, and thumped
like a drum.

He almost didn't hear the thin
groans coming from a roadside
ditch.





An old man with torn clothes was lying in the dust. “Water!” he cried **feebly**. The boy ran to the well, filled his jug, and brought the man some water.

The man drank his fill. “I am a trader, but robbers stole my **goods**,” he said. Two frightened horses stood by the trees. The boy held out the water jug for them, and they drank until they were calm.

“You can have my jug to trade,” the boy offered.

“For your kindness, take one of my horses,” urged the trader.

“What a rich gift!” the boy said.
He climbed on the horse and rode happily down the street.





He passed a group of men sitting in the shade of a fig tree. They were beautifully dressed, but they looked miserable. “What’s the matter?” asked the boy.

One young man said, “I’m going to my wedding, where this band will play. But if I show up on foot, my bride will laugh at me.”



The boy hopped off the horse and handed the reins to the young man. “I have lived my whole life without a horse. You need it more than I do!”

The **musicians** leaped up and sang. As they danced down the road, the last musician stopped.

“Thank you for being so kind,” he said. He handed the boy a beautiful drum.



The boy shouted with joy. He tapped, slapped, and banged his drum the whole way home.

Mother came out to see what the noise was. The boy told her the story of the stick, the roti, the jug, the horse, and the drum.

“When you are kind, your good deeds come back to you,” Mother said.

It was a lesson the boy never forgot.



Glossary

deeds (<i>n.</i>)	actions done on purpose, often ones that are kind, noble, or brave (p. 15)
feebly (<i>adv.</i>)	weakly (p. 10)
goods (<i>n.</i>)	things that can be bought and sold to meet people's wants and needs (p. 10)
insisted (<i>v.</i>)	demanded in a firm or forceful way (p. 8)
musicians (<i>n.</i>)	people who make music (p. 13)
roti (<i>n.</i>)	a type of flat, round bread originally from India (p. 7)

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A Reading A-Z Level N Leveled Book
Word Count: 618

Connections

Writing and Art

What is something kind you can do for someone else?

Draw a picture and write about it.

Social Studies

Discuss with your class where India is located and how its location compares to where you live.



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