

## ABOUT THE STORY

- This story probably had its start long before it was published in Europe long ago. It might have first been known as “Henny Penny.” But the story has been told to American children at least since the mid-1800s under a title similar to “Chicken Little.”
- Generations have heard and thought about the lessons of the little chicken who causes big problems for a group of well-meaning but not-so-thoughtful birds.
- Today’s version is based on two examples of the story. One is called *Remarkable Story of Chicken Little*. John Green Chandler had it published in the city of Boston, Massachusetts in 1842. Katharine Pyle published her 1918 version in *Mother’s Nursery Tales*.
- The story has taken on its own American qualities and is like a parable, a story that teaches a moral lesson. Later retellings have made changes to some of the characters or aimed to teach different ideas including a few movie versions.

## PREPARE TO LISTEN

### Get students’ attention

- This can be done in the students’ native language or English.
- Show students a newspaper, magazine, and a computer or cell phone. Ask: “How do you get your news?” List the students’ answers on the board. Their answers may include printed media but also online news, television, and word of mouth.
- Point out how we often get news about our community: “If something is happening at the school, we usually hear about it in an announcement or from a teacher or a friend.”
- Ask, “How do you know the news is true?” List some student answers on the board. They may say they trust the friend who told them, or the media organization they read or listen to. Suggest that there are times when a friend might tell us something that is not true, because they heard it from another person. For older students, they may know the term “Fake News” in English or their own language.

### Connect to students’ experiences

## American Stories Chicken Little

- Tell student, “Today we are reading a story about a bird. She was afraid of something falling from the sky.”
- Ask students, “What kinds of things do you see falling from above you when you are outside?” Depending on your location, students may answer that they see leaves, flowers or fruit falling from trees, snow or rain falling, or even dirt or sand on a windy day.
- Next, ask, “How do you feel when you feel something falling on or near you?” Students may say they are happy, or mad, at rain or snow. Some may say they are afraid. Confirm that this is a normal feeling if something unexpected falls near us.

### Guess: What will happen?

- Give students a clue about the story. For example, “In this story, we are going to hear about some animals on a farm. The name of our story is Chicken Little. Aside from chickens, what other animals do you find on a farm? List animals the students name in English on the board.
- Explain, “In the story, some animals are in danger. What do you think is the danger for these animals on the farm?” If students are not familiar with rural life, suggest the danger may be from other animals or natural events like storms.
- Ask: “What do you think will happen to the animals?” List some student answers on the board. After watching the video, you can go back and check.

## WATCH AND REVIEW THE VIDEO

### Check understanding with specific questions (add your own as necessary)

- Ask, “What is the name of one of the animals in the story?” The characters include: Chicken Little, Henny Penny, Ducky Lucky, Goosey Lucy, Turkey Lurkey and Foxy Loxy.
- Ask, “Where did Chicken Little sleep at the beginning of the story?” (Under some flowers.)
- Ask, “Why did a flower petal fall on Chicken Little’s head?” (The cow was eating the flowers.)

### Talk more about the story

- Ask students what they liked, what made them laugh, what parts they want to read again.
- Teach one or two new words from the video.
- Ask students to say what lesson they can learn from the story.
- Ask: “Are there any stories like this in your own language?”

## 1. Story Sequence Activity

## American Stories Chicken Little

### Set up/materials

- Have drawing paper and writing or coloring materials ready. Have a small sticky note or note card for each student.
- Prepare three large pieces of cardboard or sheets of chart paper. Stand them on the chalk tray or tape them to the classroom wall.
- Label them at the top: Beginning / Middle / End

### How to

- Explain to students that every story has at least three parts: the beginning, the middle, and the end. If the class has read another story recently, remind them of that story's three parts.
- Ask students to draw or write on their card or sticky note what happens in the first part of the Chicken Little story.
- Have students walk to the board and place the note on the large paper. Ask several students to choose another student's note and read it aloud or describe the drawing in English. Confirm if the activity was at the beginning of the story.
- Continue with the middle and end of the story.

### Variation

- Show the images below and ask students to retell one part of the story.

# CHICKEN LITTLE

AMERICAN  
STORIES

Beginning



Middle



End



## 2. Telephone Game

### Set up/materials

- In this game, students stand or sit in a line or circle. The teacher gives the student at one end of the line a phrase. Players speak the phrase softly and quickly into their neighbor’s ear. The neighbor turns to the next student and repeats the phrase, down the line. The last student says what they think the message is. Usually, it is quite different from the original.
- Choose a phrase or sentence, depending on your class level, to use for the game.



Phrases	Sentences
A guppy in a shark tank	Two tiny toads ate fat flying flies.
Candy crunching coconut lovers	The funny bunny hid the colored candy in the colored can.
Red roses with thorny stems	The queen sat on her throne and ate thorny kumquats.
Pretty pink Petunias	Many maids mop motels.
The shark has shiny shoes	Dogs dig holes for big bones.
Clever cats can count	A bunch of yellow bananas launched on a blue boat.
Find four funny fish	Twelve tumbling purple people pulled turnips.
Seven silly seals are sailing	Where is the square?
Blue bubbles in the bath	My pig has a big wig.
Mom has many magazines	Don’t fall over the ball.
Silly sisters sing songs	Why does your owl growl?
Alice ate apples	The cap is on my lap.
Dozens of diving dolphins	I wish I had a dish.

### How to

- Seat students in a circle (or in a line in you prefer).
- Whisper (speak softly) a phrase into the first student’s ear.
- That student must whisper the message into the next student’s ear, so others around them do not hear the message. The second student whispers it to the next student, and so it continues until the message has been passed around the circle.
- The last person in the circle calls out the message and then the first person confirms if the message is correct or if it has been “broken.”

### Variation

## American Stories Chicken Little

- Play a singing version of the game where the student hears a song line and passes it along to the next student by singing it.
- Give students a 5-digit number in English to repeat to the next person in line.
- Ask students to reflect on how a story they heard was misunderstood.

### 3. Writing activity

#### Set up/materials

- Have writing materials available for students to use. Begin by asking students to imagine how the story could have ended differently. Suggest endings, for example, where an animal did not take Chicken Little's story seriously.

#### How to

- Ask students to write a different ending to the story. There are a number of ways it could be changed; the fox could be friendly, or the animals could disbelieve Chicken Little without evidence of her claim.
- Have students share their story endings and in a small group, choose one to act out by reading parts of it aloud as the different characters.

#### Variation

- Ask students to write the story with humans or different kinds of animals and an untruth that is discovered to be false by one of the characters.
- Instead of changing the ending, ask students to change the beginning of the story with a natural event like rain, that other animals explain to the baby chicken.

## WORDS IN THIS STORY

**petal** – *n.* a flat, soft colorful part of a flower

**waddle** – *v.* to walk with short steps while moving from side to side like a duck

**meadow** – *n.* a wide flat area covered with grass that is often surrounded by forest

**strut** – *v.* to walk in a confident or proud way

**yawn** – *v.* to open the mouth wide and take a deep breath usually as a reaction to being tired or bored

**curl** – *v.* to form into a rounded shape

## TEXT

One day, Chicken Little fell asleep under some flowers.

Cow wandered by, reached over the fence and bit off some flowers.

The noise wakened Chicken Little just as a flower **petal** fell on her tail.

"Squawk! Squawk!" cried Chicken Little, frightened by the petal's landing.

"The sky is falling," she continued, her call rising louder with her terror. "Squawk! Squawk!"

And, she jumped up and began to run, moving as fast as her two legs would carry her. She did not stop running until she came to the barnyard. There, she found Henny Penny scratching in the dirt of the barnyard.

"Oh, Henny Penny, do not scratch—run!" cried Chicken Little. "The sky is falling."

The scratching stopped. Then Hen called out: "How do you know that, Chicken Little?"

"I saw it with my eyes, I heard it with my ears, and part of it fell on my tail. Let us run, until we get some place."

"Squawk! Squawk," cried Hen in return, a look of shock on her face. Then, run she did, speeding away from the barnyard.

Chicken Little followed close behind.

They almost ran right past the little lake, just as Ducky Lucky was going in for a swim.

## American Stories Chicken Little

“Oh, Ducky Lucky! Ducky Lucky! Do not try to swim,” cried Henny Penny. “The sky is falling.”

“Seriously, Henny Penny? Why do you think that?” asked Ducky Lucky.

“Chicken Little told me.”

“How do you know the sky is falling, Chicken Little?”

“I saw it with my eyes, I heard it with my ears, and part of it fell on my tail. Oh, let us run until we get some place.”

Ducky Lucky was persuaded.

“Yes, we had better run,” he yelled.

And the three took off, Ducky Lucky **waddling** faster than he ever had before. The birds ran and ran until they came to a green **meadow**, and there was Goosey Loose eating the green grass.

“Oh, Goosey Lucy, Goosey Lucy, do not eat; run,” cried Ducky Lucky.

“Why should I run?” asked Goosey Lucy.

“Because the sky is falling.”

“How do you know that, Ducky Lucky?”

“Henny Penny told me.”

“How do you know that, Henny Penny?”

“Chicken Little told me.”

“How do you know that, Chicken Little?”

“Because I saw it with my eyes, and heard it with my ears, and part of it fell on my tail. Oh, let us run some place.”

“Yes, we had better run,” cried Goosey Lucy.

Away they all ran, Goosey Lucy in the lead, and they ran and ran until they came to the turkey **yard**, and there was Turkey Lurkey **strutting** and **gobbling**.

“Oh, Turkey Lurkey! Do not strut!” cried Goosey Lucy.

“Why should I not strut?” asked Turkey Lurkey.

“Because the sky is falling.”

“How do you know it is?”



## American Stories Chicken Little

“Ducky Lucky told me!”

“How do you know, Ducky Lucky?”

“Henny Penny told me!”

“How do you know, Henny Penny?”

“Chicken Little told me!”

“Chicken Little, how do you know this for a fact?”

“I could not help knowing! I saw it with my eyes, I heard it with my ears, and a part of it fell on my tail. Oh, let us run until we get some place.”

“Yes, it would be best to run,” said Turkey Lurkey, so away they all ran, first Turkey Lurkey, and then Goosey Lucy, and then Ducky Lucky, and then Henny Penny and then Chicken Little.

They ran and ran until they came to Foxy Loxy’s house.

Foxy Loxy was resting, spread out across the doorway. She kept **yawning**, opening her mouth wide so that all her sharp teeth showed. But, her mouth snapped shut at the sudden arrival of the frightened birds, Turkey Lurkey and Goosey Lucy and Ducky Lucky and Henny Penny and Chicken Little.

Her eyes softened and her ears stood up. She was so very happy to see them all and smiled sweetly.

“Well, well,” the dog said, “what brings you all here?”

“Foxy Loxy, prevent yourself from yawning,” cried old Turkey Lurkey, “Indeed, the sky is falling.”

“How do you know that, Turkey Lurkey?” asked the fox.

“Goosey Lucy informed me.”

“How do you know that, Goosey Lucy?”

“Ducky Lucky told me.”

“How do you know that, Ducky Lucky?”

“Henny Penny told me.”

“How do you know that, Henny Penny?”

“Chicken Little.”

“How do you know that, Chicken Little?”

## American Stories Chicken Little

“I could not help knowing, for I saw it with my eyes, and I heard it with my ears, and part of it fell on my tail. Oh, where shall we run? We ought to go someplace.”

“Well,” said the Fox, “you come right into my house, and I will protect you and take such good care of you that, even if the sky falls, you will not know anything about it.”

So, in ran Turkey Lurkey and Goosey Lucy and Ducky Lucky and Henny Penny and — Chicken Little.

Foxy Loxy waited for a while and then shut the door firmly behind her. She would not let the falling sky threaten her guests, you see. She was going to take special care of them all.

And, maybe she did. But no one ever saw Chicken Little or his friends again.

## CHECK UNDERSTANDING

### 1. Quiz

Give students the printed quiz at the end of this lesson guide, have them use the online quiz, or simply write the questions on the board. If you want to test only their listening skills, say the questions but do not write them.

#### Questions:

1. What fell on Chicken Little?
2. The animals asked Chicken Little, “How do you \_\_\_\_\_ the sky is falling?”
3. Chicken Little said, I saw it with my \_\_\_\_\_.”
4. Foxy Loxy said, “I will \_\_\_\_\_ you.”

#### Answer key:

1. Part of a flower
2. How do you know the sky is falling?
3. “I saw it with my eyes.”
4. “I will protect you.”

QUIZ

1. What fell on Chicken Little?

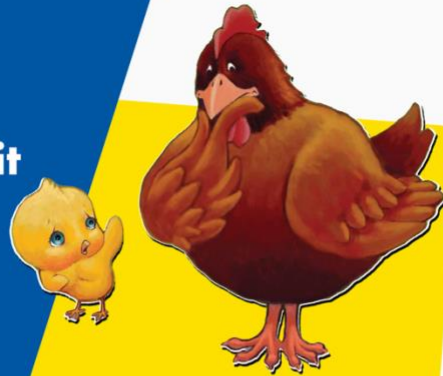
Part of a



2. The animals asked Chicken Little, "How do you  the sky is falling?"



3. Chicken Little said, "I saw it with my .



4. Foxy Loxy said, "I will  you."



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