

Printable Reading Comprehension Stories

This story was primarily created to develop your students' ability to recognize and **comprehend** descriptive and figurative language. A number of **inference** questions have also been included.

Age range 8 – 11 years of age.

Printable Story

Brutus the Bull and the Shortcut

My best friend and I had a problem. I had told Mark that it wasn't a good idea to take a shortcut across this particular paddock. Did Mark listen? No, he did not. We had walked halfway across the paddock when we suddenly stopped.

To our left a loud snorting announced to us that farmer Tim's prized bull, Brutus, had noticed our presence. We slowly turned to face the massive bull. We noted the length of Brutus's great horns and watched as plumes of mist rose from his nostrils in the cold, morning air.

We watched, silent, like frozen statues, as the great beast pawed the ground and snorted at us. He looked and sounded very angry indeed. He clearly didn't like trespassers walking in his paddock. Mark whispered to me, 'We have to make a run for it. When I say go, run as fast as you can for the fence.'

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'Go!' gasped Mark, and bolted. I had never seen Mark run so fast, not even at the school sports days. Mark was fast, but I was faster. I imagined I could feel the breath of Brutus the bull right behind me.

I reached the fence just ahead of Mark and leapt over it to safety. Mark desperately called for my aid. He was stuck on the fence! I bravely went back for Mark and pulled him over the fence. We both collapsed on the ground, exhausted from the chase.

We looked over at Brutus and were amazed to see that the great bull was standing in the exact same spot, still pawing the ground. He looked over at us with complete disinterest and snorted. Brutus hadn't chased us after all.

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No answer sheet is supplied, so scaffolding may be required for some questions.

Recall of Story Details

1. What did the narrator of the story tell Mark it wasn't a good idea to do?

2. How far across the paddock were the boys before they stopped?

3. Who did the bull belong to?

4. What did the bull do when it saw the boys in its paddock?

5. What were the boys amazed about at the end?

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Express Pace Memory

1. We had walked halfway across the paddock when we _____
2. We slowly turned to face the _____
3. He clearly didn't like trespassers walking in _____
4. I reached the fence just ahead of Mark and _____
5. Brutus hadn't _____

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Making inferences from the story

1. Why did the narrator of the story say it wasn't a good idea to cross the paddock?

2. What were the plumes of mist rising from the bull's nostrils?

3. Why was the narrator of the story brave to go back for Mark?

4. Why do you think the bull *didn't* chase the boys?

5. What did the bull do to indicate it was not happy with the trespassing boys?
