

# Winter “Why” Tales

*from the Holton-Curry Second Grade Reader, 1914*



## WHY THE BEAR SLEEPS ALL WINTER



## WHY EVERGREENS KEEP THEIR LEAVES

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# WHY THE BEAR SLEEPS ALL WINTER

## PART I

Once a long, long time ago Brother Rabbit lived in the woods. He was busy as a bee all the time, making good things to eat. His pantry was full of them.

Now Big Bear lived in the same woods, and he liked to tease Brother Rabbit. He liked to eat Brother Rabbit's good things, too.

Every morning Big Bear went creeping, creeping, creeping so still up to Brother Rabbit's house. Then he would put his big paw into Brother Rabbit's pantry and upset everything, and eat the very best things there were in that pantry.

Now wasn't that mean of Big Bear? And, just think, he did it every day!

At last Brother Rabbit went to Brother Frog to ask him what to do.

"You look so tired and thin, Brother Rabbit. What's the trouble?" asked Brother Frog.

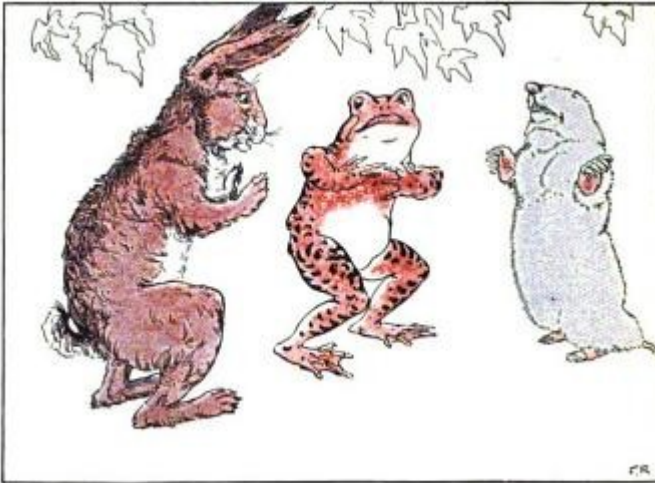
"Oh, Big Bear teases me all the time. He upsets my pantry and eats my good things, too. What shall I do to make him stop? Do tell me, Brother Frog."

"Let's go and ask Brother Mole. He is wise," said the frog.

And away they went to find Brother Mole.

"What's the trouble?" asked the mole. "You look so tired and thin, Brother Rabbit."

"Oh, Big Bear teases me all the time. He upsets my pantry and eats my good things, too. What shall I do to make him stop? Do tell me, Brother Mole."



"Let's go and ask Brother Fox. He is very wise," said the mole.  
And away they went to find Brother Fox.

"What's the trouble?" asked the fox. "You look so tired and thin, Brother Rabbit."

"Oh, Big Bear teases me all the time. He upsets my pantry and eats my good things every day. What shall I do to make him stop? Do tell me, Brother Fox."

"Let's find Big Bear," said the fox. "We'll tell him what's what. He must stop teasing you and eating your good things."

So away they went to the woods to find Big Bear.

too	poor	foot	moon
good	stood	soot	wooden
food	wood	soon	woo-woo-woo

*In which words do you find long oo ?*

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## WHY THE BEAR SLEEPS ALL WINTER

### PART II

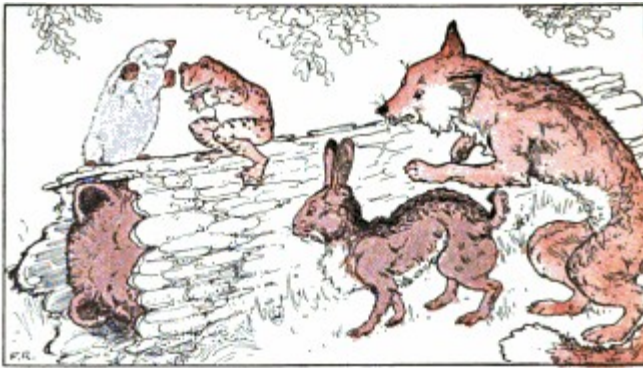
"I don't see where Big Bear can be," said the fox. "We have looked and looked and looked for him."

"I'm sure he is somewhere in the woods. Let's try once more before we give up."

Then they looked and looked again, and where do you think they found Big Bear? In a hollow log, fast asleep! So fast asleep that he didn't hear them.

When Brother Fox saw Big Bear he winked one eye and chuckled and chuckled.

"Keep very still," he said. "We'll play a trick on Big Bear. He'll find out what's what, he will. Bring me some sticks, Brother Mole. Bring me some mud, Brother Frog, and hurry just as fast as you can."



"Brother Rabbit, you stay here and help me. Big Bear won't tease you any more this winter. Big Bear won't upset your pantry or eat your good things this winter, Brother Rabbit."

And Brother Fox winked one eye and chuckled and chuckled again.

Then back came Brother Mole with sticks and Brother Frog with the mud.

"Now we are all ready for work," said the fox. "This will be a fine trick to play on Big Bear.

"Fill the ends of the log with sticks and mud, Brother Rabbit. Make it as hard as you can. Dear me, make it harder, harder. Yes, you can. I know you can.

"There, that will do. Big Bear won't tease you this winter, Brother Rabbit. Big Bear won't upset your pantry or eat your good things this winter."

And Brother Frog, Brother Mole, Brother Rabbit, and Brother Fox all chuckled and chuckled as they went home.

"Big Bear will find out what's what when he wakes up," they said. "He'll find out what's what."

nor	nor th	north
corn	corn er	corner
morn	morn ing	morning

## WHY THE BEAR SLEEPS ALL WINTER

### PART III

Big Bear slept and slept and slept in that hollow log. It was nice and warm in there after Brother Rabbit put the sticks and mud in the ends.



Once Big Bear woke and saw it was dark, so he went to sleep again.

Next time Big Bear woke he heard the wind saying "Woo-woo-woo," and he knew it was cold. So he went to sleep again, and slept a long time.

Big Bear woke and heard the wind saying "Woo-woo-woo," and the snow falling. He knew it was very cold in the woods, so he turned over and went to sleep again. After a long, long, long time Big Bear woke and listened. He heard the birds singing and the wind blowing softly, "Oo-oo-oo."

"I must have been asleep a long time," he said. Then he turned over and stretched himself. Out went the sticks and mud from one end of the hollow log. He stretched himself again, and out went

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the sticks and mud from the other end of the log.

"Did you ever?" said Big Bear. "Birds singing and green leaves growing everywhere! It must be spring.

"Well, well, I slept a long time. I slept all the cold winter, and I liked it. I think I'll do it every winter.

"My! but I am thin and hungry! I think I'll go and see what Brother Rabbit has in his pantry."

And back he went to his old tricks.

This is why Big Bear sleeps all winter and teases Brother Rabbit all summer.

This is why.

*An Old Southern Tale.*

## JANUARY

How can a little child be merry  
In snowy, blowy January?  
By each day doing what is best;  
By thinking, working for the rest.  
So can a little child be merry  
In snowy, blowy January.

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# WHY EVERGREENS KEEP THEIR LEAVES

## PART I

The north wind was blowing. It was a cold, cold day. Winter was coming soon.

Almost all of the birds had gone to the sunny South. But one tiny little bird had a broken wing and could not fly. When he saw all the other birds going away he was sad and lonesome.

"What can I do?" he said, as he shivered and shivered in the cold wind. "How can I keep warm all the long, snowy winter?"

"I know. I'll ask a tree to help me. I'll ask a tree to keep its leaves all winter, and let me live in its warm branches. That's what I'll do." So the poor little bird hopped along until he came to a birch tree.



"O beautiful birch tree," he said, "I am a poor little bird with a broken wing. Will you keep your leaves all winter and let me live in your warm branches? If you will,

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*I'll sing and sing and sing,  
And forget my broken wing.  
I'll sing and sing and sing  
In the spring! In the spring!"*

"Dear me! Dear me!" said the birch tree. "I can't keep my leaves all winter. My baby buds would not grow if I did. No, no; you can't live in my branches. I can't take care of a bird with a broken wing. Go away, go away."

So the poor little bird hopped away to the big oak tree.

"O great, strong oak tree," he said, "I am a poor little bird with a broken wing. Will you keep your leaves all winter and let me live in your warm branches? If you will,

*I'll sing and sing and sing,  
And forget my broken wing.  
I'll sing and sing and sing  
In the spring! In the spring!"*

"Dear me! Dear me!" said the great, strong oak tree. "I can't keep my old leaves all winter. I must get ready to make new leaves. No, no; you can't live in my branches. I can't take care of a bird with a broken wing. Go away, go away."

And the poor little bird hopped away, so sad, so lonesome, so cold.

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*ees tr ees trees oak trees*

*ees b ees bees bumblebees*

*The s sound in these words is the same as z.*

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## WHY EVERGREENS KEEP THEIR LEAVES

### PART II

By the brookside was a beautiful willow tree. Its leaves were turning to gold.

"O beautiful willow tree," said the poor little bird with the broken wing, "will you keep your leaves all winter and let me live in your warm branches? If you will,

*I'll sing and sing and sing,  
And forget my broken wing.  
I'll sing and sing and sing  
In the spring! In the spring!"*

""Dear me! Dear me!" said the willow tree. "I can't keep my leaves all winter. I must rest. I must rest. No, no. You can't live in my branches. I can't take care of a bird with a broken wing. Go away, go away."

The sad, cold little bird hopped away.

On a hill near by was a spruce tree. The spruce tree saw the little bird and said, "What's the trouble, little bird? Why don't you go

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south, where it's warm? Why are you here this cold, snowy day?"

"O spruce tree, I have broken my wing, and I can't fly. I have asked the birch, the oak, and the willow trees to help me, but they won't keep me warm. I don't know what I shall do all the cold winter."

"You may live in my branches," said the spruce tree. "I'll keep you warm, poor little bird."

"And may I live with you all winter, spruce tree? If I may,

*I'll sing and sing and sing,  
And forget my broken wing.  
I'll sing and sing and sing  
In the spring! In the spring!"*

"Yes, yes; you may live in my warm branches all winter. I shall be glad to take care of a little bird with a broken wing."

A big, strong pine tree that stood near by said, "I will keep the wind off the little bird."

"I will give him berries to eat," said a juniper tree.

So the tiny little bird with the broken wing lived in the branches of the spruce tree and ate juniper berries all winter long.

When North Wind and the Frost King came they blew all the leaves off the birch, the oak, and the willow trees.

But they said, "We'll be good to the spruce, the pine, and the juniper trees. They took care of the little bird with the broken wing. Their leaves shall be ever green. Their leaves shall be green all summer and all winter."

And their leaves have been green every winter ever since.

T H E E N D

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