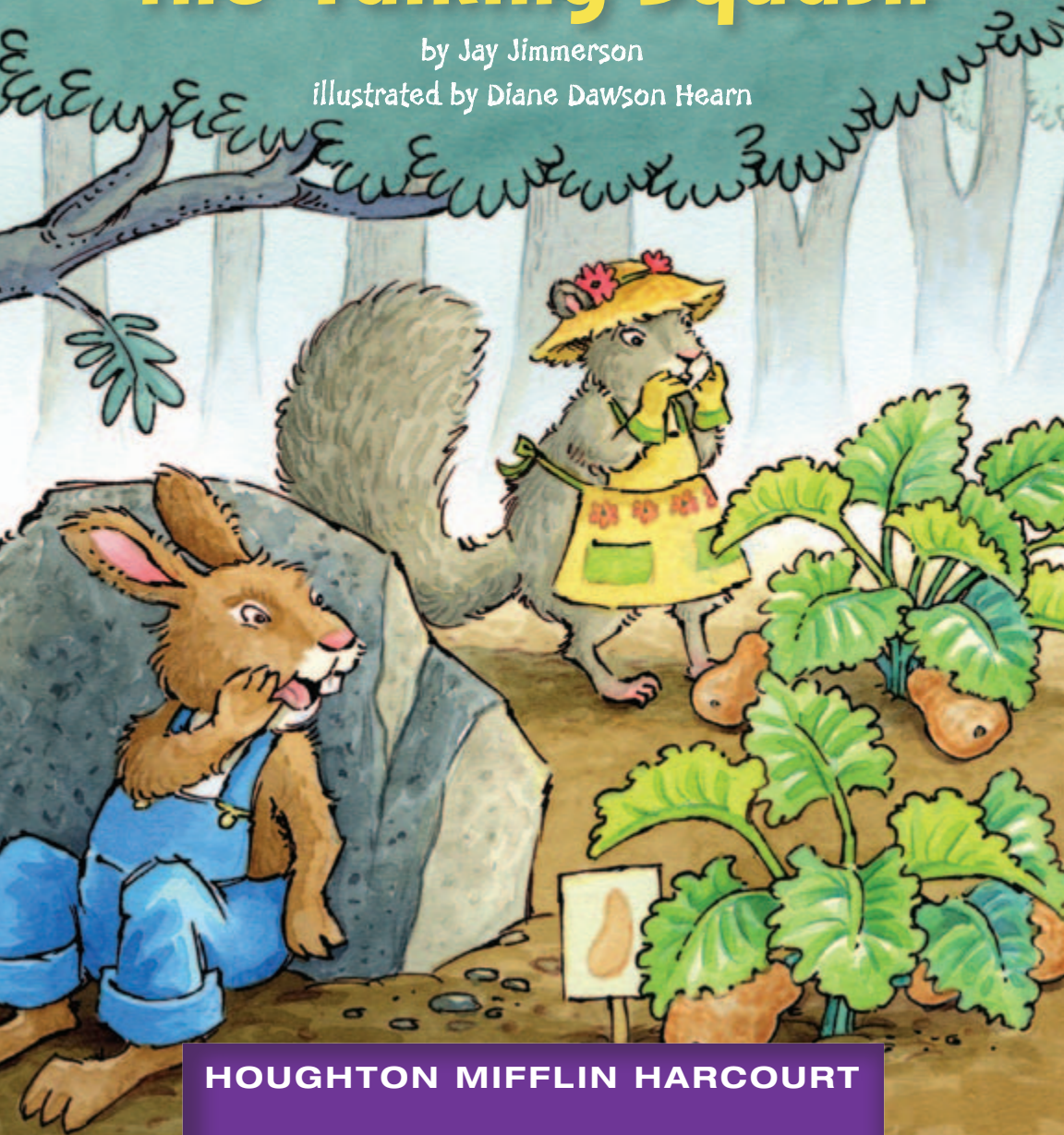




Rabbit and the Talking Squash

by Jay Jimmerson

illustrated by Diane Dawson Hearn



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT

Rabbit and the Talking Squash



by Jay Jimmerson
illustrated by Diane Dawson Hearn



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT

Copyright © by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner unless such copying is expressly permitted by federal copyright law. Requests for permission to make copies of any part of the work should be addressed to Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, Attn: Contracts, Copyrights, and Licensing, 9400 South Park Center Loop, Orlando, Florida 32819.

Printed in the U.S.A.

ISBN: 978-0-547-89017-3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 XXXX 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12

4500000000

A B C D E F G

If you have received these materials as examination copies free of charge, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company retains title to the materials and they may not be resold. Resale of examination copies is strictly prohibited.

Possession of this publication in print format does not entitle users to convert this publication, or any portion of it, into electronic format.



Squirrel kept busy, but Rabbit was lazy.



Rabbit and Squirrel were neighbors. Squirrel's yard was one huge vegetable farm. She was a terrific farmer and grew different **crops**, such as peppers, tomatoes, squash, and carrots. Squirrel kept some to eat and sold the rest for **profit**. She loved to keep busy.



Rabbit's yard was covered with scruffy grass and a few bushes. One lawn chair sat in the middle of the yard. Rabbit loved to stretch out and relax in that chair. He loved to do nothing.

As he sat in his lawn chair every day, Rabbit watched Squirrel hard at work. He watched as she planted seeds, watered the seedlings, and plucked out weeds.

He watched the plants grow until they were ready to eat. He watched as Squirrel picked some off their vines and tugged others out of the ground.

He had to listen to Squirrel, too, because as she worked, she always hummed little tunes.



Rabbit watched Squirrel work in her garden.



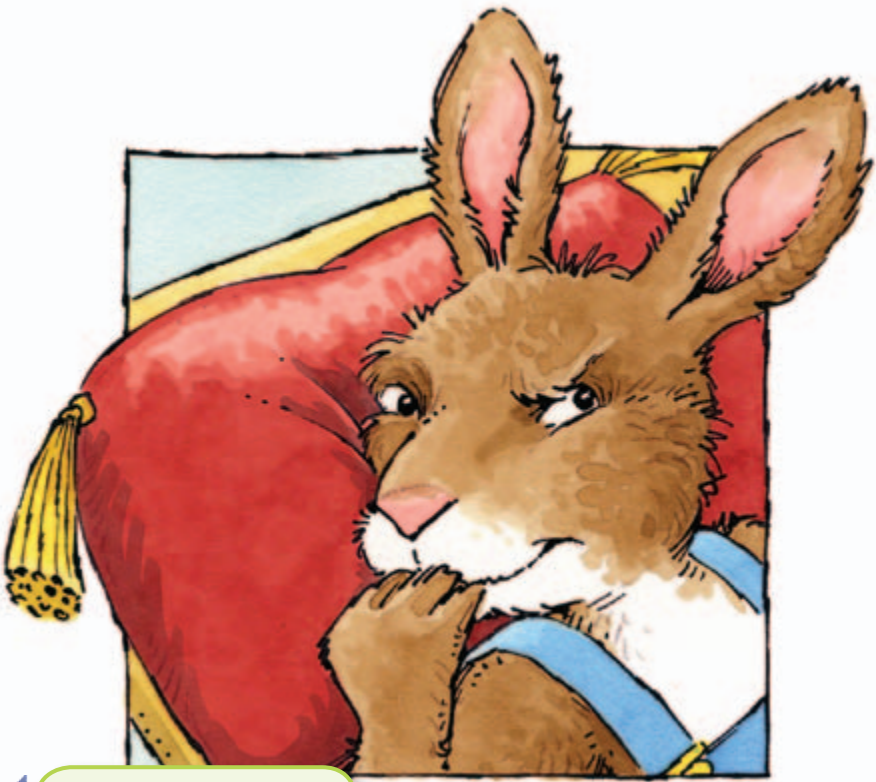
One day in early fall, Rabbit decided he had had enough. He **scowled** and shook his head in anger. He was tired of watching Squirrel work! He was tired of listening to her humming her little tunes! All he wanted was to sit peacefully in his chair, doing nothing and thinking about nothing.

He had to do *something* to get Squirrel to stop working in her garden. But what could he do?



Rabbit was tired of watching Squirrel work!





Rabbit had a plan.

“You’re ever so sly and clever,” Rabbit told himself. “Nobody is better at playing tricks on others than you are. Now come on and think, *think, think!* What trick would get Squirrel to stop working in her garden?”

Then he had a brainstorm: He would trick Squirrel out of working in her garden by scaring her. And he knew just how he would make that happen.



Rabbit peeked out from behind a rock.





The next morning, Rabbit got up before sunrise. He wanted to be sure he was well hidden in Squirrel's garden before she came out to work.

He knew the squash was ready to be pulled up. So he hid behind a large rock next to the squash patch and waited.



Then he heard Squirrel's backdoor bang. He peeked out from behind the rock. There she was, in her apron and sun hat, carrying an empty basket. As usual, she was humming a little tune.

 Squirrel made her way over to the squash patch and put down her basket. Then she leaned over and reached under the green leaves of one of her squash plants. The squash was on the ground, attached to a vine. Squirrel **grunted** as she tugged to free the squash.

 “Hey, stop pulling on me!” Rabbit **hollered** from behind the rock. He used a squeaky voice.

Squirrel let out a shriek and fell backwards. What was going on? Did a squash just yell at her?

 Did the squash yell at Squirrel?



“Did you say something?” Squirrel asked the squash, her eyes wide with surprise.

“Yes!” said Rabbit in his squeaky voice. “All of us vegetables are able to talk now. And we want you to leave us alone . . . *forever!*”

Squirrel shrieked again and dashed back into her house. Behind the rock, Rabbit was trying hard not to roar with laughter. When it was safe, he crept out of Squirrel’s garden and scampered home.





Maybe Beaver could tell Squirrel what to do.

Meanwhile, poor Squirrel sat in her kitchen, wondering what she should do. She felt it was too **risky** to go back out and pick any vegetable in her garden. What if another vegetable yelled at her, too? Squirrel didn't like to be yelled at.

"I need help," she said to herself. "I'll go over and tell Beaver what just happened. Maybe he will know what I should do."



■ Squirrel told Beaver what had happened to her.

■ Beaver listened to Squirrel's tale and shook his head. "That's just not possible," he said. "A vegetable can't suddenly begin to talk."

"I know!" Squirrel wailed, "but it did!"

■ "Wait a minute!" said Beaver. "Where was Rabbit while all this was happening? Was he sitting in his lawn chair the way he usually does, doing nothing the way he usually does?"

🔊 Squirrel thought about the question. “No, he wasn’t,” she said in a surprised voice. “Well, that’s very strange. He’s always out there.”

🔊 “Okay,” said Beaver, smiling and nodding his head. “That wasn’t a squash speaking, that was a tricky rabbit doing all the talking.”

Squirrel scowled and said, “Well, that wasn’t a very neighborly thing to do!”



“I think it’s about time that Rabbit finds out what it’s like to be tricked,” said Beaver. “And I’ve got the perfect plan!”

“I knew you were the one to help me, Beaver!” said Squirrel.

Squirrel and Beaver spent the rest of the day planning. They agreed to get up early the next morning to put their plan into action.

Beaver had a plan to trick Rabbit.





Did the lawn chair and pillow talk?

The next morning, Rabbit strolled over to his lawn chair and checked to see if Squirrel was in her garden. She was not! He laughed happily as he sat down.

A loud voice cried, “Hey, don’t do that! I’m tired of having you sit on me!”

Rabbit screamed. “D-d-did you speak?” he stuttered, staring at his lawn chair. He grabbed at a pillow and hugged it in fear.

A tiny voice cried, “Put me down, you lazy fool! Why don’t you do some work for a change?”



With a wild cry, Rabbit dropped the pillow and ran into his house.

Beaver and Squirrel stepped out from behind the bush by the chair. They were both wearing big grins.

“Thank you, Beaver!” cried Squirrel.

“I’m happy to help,” answered Beaver. “Now maybe Rabbit will think twice before playing a mean trick on someone!”

Responding



TARGET SKILL

Theme Think about how Rabbit acts. What can you learn from him? Copy and fill in the chart below.

Rabbit is lazy.	?	?
?		



Write About It

Text to World What is the message or lesson in this tale? Write a paragraph. Use details from the tale to tell about the message.



TARGET VOCABULARY

crops

grunted

hollered

plucked

profit

risky

tugged

scowled



TARGET SKILL

Theme The theme of a story or tale is its message or lesson.



TARGET STRATEGY

Visualize As you read, use details to picture what is happening.



GENRE Trickster Tale is a tale in which the main character is an animal that likes to play tricks on other animals or people.

Level: N

DRA: 30

Genre:

Trickster Tale

Strategy:

Visualize

Skill:

Theme

Word Count: 923

3.3.12

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Online Levelled Books



ISBN: 978-0-547-89017-3



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT

1507994