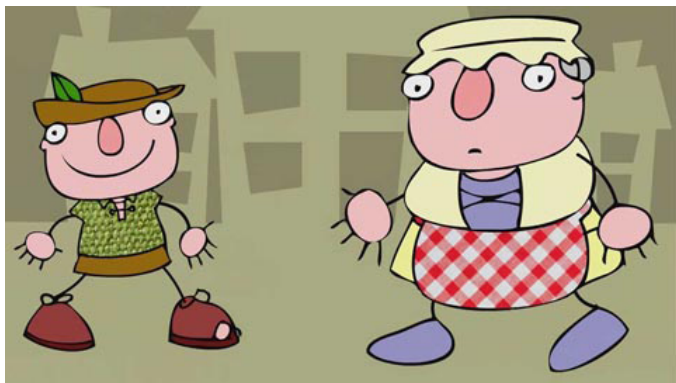




Jack and the Beanstalk

1. What shall we do?

Once upon a time, there was a young boy called Jack who lived in a little village with his Ma.



It was a beautiful, sunny day and Jack was lying in the long, green grass under the shade of a leafy tree. His eyes were shut, but he wasn't asleep. There was a happy, beaming smile on Jack's face - because he was having the most wonderful daydream ever...



In his daydream, Jack was opening the door of the kitchen cupboards. The shelves were full of the most delicious food you could imagine. On the top shelf sat freshly-baked loaves of bread and ripe yellow cheeses. On the middle shelf were big bowls of juicy apples and pears. The bottom shelf was covered with creamy cakes and ginger biscuits. Mmm, it all smelt delicious!



Jack was about to tuck into the best meal of his life – when his daydream came to a sudden end. 'Jack, where are you?' cried Ma's voice. 'It's suppertime!'



Jack opened his eyes with a sigh and stood up. His clothes were ragged and his shoes were full of holes. As he walked towards home, he could feel them trying to fall off his feet. As for his tummy, he felt so hungry, he could hear it rumbling.



The tiny cottage where Jack lived was almost empty. The truth was, he and Ma and all the other villagers were very poor. They were so hungry, they had been forced to sell their furniture to get money for food. There were no beds, or tables or chairs. All that was left were the cupboards in the kitchen.

Jack and his Ma peered inside. The shelves weren't full of yummy food as they had been in Jack's day-dream – in fact, the cupboard was almost empty. On the top shelf sat a tiny, mouldy piece of cheese. On the second shelf a rotten apple core and on the third was a pair of smelly old socks. 'I wondered where they had got to,' said Jack.

'We can't eat mouldy cheese, rotten apple cores and socks!' said Ma. 'We've spent all our money and there's nothing left. How are we going to buy food to eat? If we don't do something soon, we'll starve!'

