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Nasreddin Ten Stories

by Jennifer Gascoigne

(Adapted book. Beginner level)

Story 1. Nasreddin and the coat

It was 8 o'clock in the morning. Nasreddin was upstairs. His wife was downstairs in the kitchen.

'Your breakfast's ready!' she called. Two minutes later she heard a loud noise in the hall.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

'Oh my goodness! What's that noise?' she said.

She dropped the plates and ran into the hall. Nasreddin was there. He was on the floor at the bottom of the stairs.

'What was that loud noise?' she asked. 'Are you alright, Nasreddin?'

'Yes, I'm fine, my dear,' he replied. 'It was my coat. It fell down the stairs.'

'But coats don't make a noise!' said his wife. 'I heard a loud **THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!**'

'Well... you see, my dear,' said Nasreddin, 'I was inside it at the time.'

Story 2. Nasreddin and the meat

Nasreddin bought three kilos of meat at the butcher's.

He took it home and gave it to his wife. Then he went to work.

His wife immediately went out and called her friends.

'Come and have lunch with me today!' she said. When Nasreddin arrived home that evening, his wife put a plate of bread and onions on the table.

'But where's the meat that I gave you this morning?' asked Nasreddin.

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The cat ate it,' replied his wife.

Nasreddin immediately went and got the scales. He picked up the cat and put it on the scales. It weighed exactly three kilos!

This is very strange!' he said. 'If the cat weighs exactly three kilos, where's the meat? And if this is the meat, where's the cat?'

Story 3. Nasreddin and the beggar

One day Nasreddin saw some water on his bedroom floor. He looked up. 'Oh dear!' he said. 'There's a hole in the roof. I must repair it.'

He took his ladder, climbed up it and started work.

Then a beggar arrived.

'Nasreddin!' he called.

'What do you want?' asked Nasreddin.

'Come down here and I'll tell you!'

Nasreddin wasn't very happy, but he climbed down the ladder to listen to the beggar.

'Well?' said Nasreddin. 'What do you want?'

'I'm a poor man. Can you give me some money?'

'Come with me!' said Nasreddin.

He started to climb up the ladder and the beggar followed him. When they were both on the roof, Nasreddin turned to him and said, 'No!'

Story 4. Nasreddin and the professor

A professor made an appointment with Nasreddin to talk about a difficult problem.

'I'll come to your house at 12 o'clock tomorrow,' he said.

When he arrived at Nasreddin's house, he knocked on the door. Nobody answered. He knocked again but there was still no reply. He looked through the windows but he couldn't see anybody.

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The professor was angry. He took a piece of chalk and wrote the word IDIOT on the door in big letters.

Nasreddin returned home later and he saw it.

‘Oh dear!’ he said. ‘My appointment with the professor!’ He immediately ran to the professor’s house.

‘I’m very sorry,’ he said. ‘I completely forgot our appointment. Please forgive me. I remembered it only when I saw your name on my door!’

Story 5. Nasreddin and the lost key

One evening Nasreddin’s neighbour was going home when he saw Nasreddin on his hands and knees among the cabbages.

‘What are you doing, neighbour?’ he asked.

‘I’m looking for my key,’ replied Nasreddin.

‘I’ll help you,’ said the man, and he started looking for the key too. There was a full moon that night, so they could see very well. They looked among the cabbages and among the onions. They looked among the carrots, too, but they didn’t find the key.

‘Where exactly did you lose your key?’ the man asked.

‘In my house,’ replied Nasreddin.

‘Then why are we looking for it out here in the garden?’

‘Because there is more light out here than in my house,’ said Nasreddin.

Story 6. Nasreddin and the bear hunt

One day the Sultan invited Nasreddin to go on a bear hunt with him.

Nasreddin was very afraid of bears but he couldn’t say ‘no’ to the Sultan.

‘Thank you,’ he replied politely. ‘I’ll be at the palace early tomorrow morning.’

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Nasreddin was away for five days. When he returned to his village, his neighbour asked him, 'So, what was the bear hunt like?'

'It was fantastic!' replied Nasreddin.

'How many bears did you see?' asked the neighbour. 'None!' replied Nasreddin.

'Then why did you say the bear hunt was fantastic?' Nasreddin smiled at him and said, 'Because when the Sultan invites you to go on a bear hunt and you're afraid of bears, not seeing any bears is fantastic!'

Story 7. Nasreddin and the crow

Nasreddin brought home a piece of soap one day and gave it to his wife.

'Here's some soap, my dear. Can you wash my shirt, please?'

His wife went into the garden and started to wash the shirt. Suddenly, a big black crow flew down, took the soap and flew away. Nasreddin's wife looked up and saw the bird in a tree. She shouted at it angrily. Nasreddin heard her and ran out of the house.

'Are you alright, my dear?' he asked.

'That crow took my soap!' she said.

Nasreddin looked at the bird and smiled. 'Look at the colour of my shirt, and look at the colour of that bird!' he said to his wife. 'He obviously needs the soap more than I do!'

Story 8. Nasreddin and the museum guide

One day Nasreddin was in a museum with some tourists. The museum guide showed them a pot and said, 'This pot is five thousand years old.'

'Excuse me,' said Nasreddin politely, 'but I think it's five thousand and four years old.'

The tourists were surprised but the guide was a little angry. He took them to another room and showed them some gold coins.

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‘These coins are three thousand years old,’ he told them.

‘Three thousand and four years old,’ said Nasreddin. Now the guide was very angry. ‘How can you know the exact date?’ he asked.

Nasreddin smiled and replied, ‘It’s very easy. You said the coins were three thousand years old when I was here four years ago!’

Story 9. Nasreddin and the woodcutter

One day Nasreddin went to a friend who worked in a forest and said ‘I want to be a woodcutter.’

‘But woodcutters must be young and strong,’ said his friend.

Try me!’ said Nasreddin.

‘Alright,’ said his friend. ‘There are five hundred trees in that field over there. Go and cut them down.’

Three days later, Nasreddin came back.

‘How many trees did you cut down?’ his friend asked. ‘All of them,’ replied Nasreddin.

And it was true. There weren’t any trees in the field. His friend was surprised.

‘Where did you learn to cut down trees so fast?’ he asked.

‘In the Sahara desert,’ said Nasreddin.

‘But there aren’t any trees in the Sahara desert,’ said his friend.

‘There aren’t any now!’ replied Nasreddin.

Story 10. Nasreddin and the rock

Nasreddin had a lot of friends. Some of them were old and some of them were young. One day he said to them, ‘Old men are more intelligent than young men.’

That’s true,’ his old friends replied. ‘But young men are stronger than old men,’ said one of his young friends.

‘I don’t agree,’ said Nasreddin. ‘I am still as strong as when I was a young man.’

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‘How is that possible?’ his friends asked. ‘Explain that, please, Nasreddin!’

‘Well,’ he said. ‘Can you see that big rock over there?’ They all looked at the rock.

‘When I was a young man, I tried to move it but I couldn’t,’ explained Nasreddin. ‘I am an old man now and when I try to move it, I still can’t!’

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