



● The Girl Who Hated Books ●

**Full transcript. Reading. Video.
Comprehension and response
questions. Answer key.**

The Girl Who Hated Books

Once there was a girl named Meena. If you looked up her name in a book, you would find that it means "fish" in ancient Sanskrit. But Meena didn't know that because she never looked up anything anywhere. She hated to read, and she hated books.

"They're always in the way," she said. And this was true because in her house books were everywhere. Not just on bookshelves and bedside tables where books usually are, but in all sorts of places where books usually aren't.

There were books in dressers and drawers and desks, in closets and cupboards and chests. There were books on the sofa and books on the stairs, books crammed in the fireplace and stacked on the chairs.

Worse still, her parents were always bringing home MORE books. They kept buying books and borrowing books and ordering books from catalogs. They read at breakfast and lunch and dinner. But when they asked Meena if she wanted to read, she would stamp her feet and shout, "I hate books!" And when they tried to read out loud to her, she would put her hands over her ears and shout even louder, "I HATE BOOKS!"



There was probably only one person in the world who hated books more than Meena. And that was her cat, Max. A long time ago, when he was just a kitten, an atlas fell on his tail. It bent the tip like a pipe cleaner. Ever since, he's tried to stay on top of the books rather than below them.

One morning, after Meena moved all the books out of the sink to brush her teeth, she went to the kitchen to get breakfast for herself and Max. First she climbed onto a stack of encyclopedias so she could reach the cereal. Then she opened the fridge and moved a pile of magazines to get the milk. She poured some for herself and some for Max.

"Max!" she called. "Breakfast is ready!" But Max didn't come. She tried again. "Max!" she called. "Breakfast is ready!" He still didn't come.

"Where could he be?" she wondered. She looked in the bathtub and behind the dryer. She looked under the stairs and on top of the clock. She found more books, but she didn't find Max.

Suddenly she heard a loud "Meeeyooow!" She ran into the dining room and there he was, stuck on top of the tallest stack of books in the house. It was made up of all the books her parents kept buying her and she kept refusing to read. At the bottom were big shiny picture books from when she was a baby. In the middle were alphabet books and nursery rhymes. At the top, right by the ceiling, were fairy tales and adventure stories. They were all covered in dust.

"Don't worry Max," Meena called up to him. "I'll rescue you!" She started to climb the pile of books. At first it was easy because the picture books had hard covers, and she felt as if she were climbing stairs.

But when she reached the paperbacks her foot slipped on a book of poetry. She lost her balance and started to slide.

CRASH! The books went flying. They fell every which way, the bindings cracking open for the very first time, and the pages flipping apart. As they fell, strange things began to happen. People and animals started falling out of the pages and tumbling to the ground. They dropped one on top of the other, scattering the books and toppling the chairs.

There were princes and princesses, fairies and frogs. Then, a wolf and three pigs and a troll on a log. Humpty Dumpty went flying and then broke in half, behind Mother Goose and a purple giraffe. There were elephants, emperors, emus and elves and an assortment of monkeys tangled up in themselves.

But most of all there were rabbits, falling this way and that. Wild rabbits, and white rabbits, and rabbits with hats.

Meena sat there in the middle of it all, too surprised to move. "I thought books were full of words, not rabbits!" she said, as six more came rolling out of a book beside her.



By now, she couldn't recognize the dining room at all. The elephant was balancing on a coffee table juggling the good china plates. The monkeys had torn down the curtains and were using them as capes. And the rabbits were nibbling on the table legs.

She started with one strange creature she didn't recognize at all. "Who are you?" she asked. "A is for Aardvark!" the animal said angrily, and stomped off in search of her Alphabet Book.

She found a wolf sobbing under the dining room table and asked him where he belonged. "I can't remember if I'm from Little Red Riding Hood or The Three Little Pigs!" he wailed and blew his nose on the table cloth. But Meena couldn't help him because she had never read either story.

Then she had another idea. She picked up the nearest book and began to read aloud. "Once upon a time," Meena began. "In a land far, faraway ..."

Slowly, the creatures stopped jumping and howling and gibbering and chattering. They crept closer and closer to hear what happened next. Soon they were all sitting in a circle around her, listening to her read.

When Meena reached the top of the second page, the pigs in the circle jumped up. "That's us!" they cried. "That's our page! That's our book!" They leapt up out of the circle, dove into her lap, and disappeared into the book. Meena clapped it shut before they could pop out again.

She grabbed another story. One by one she began reading all her books. And one by one the creatures found out where they belonged.

At last, there was just one little rabbit in a little blue coat left in the room. Meena slowly picked up a book. It was The Tale of Peter Rabbit. "Maybe I could keep this rabbit with me," she thought. She was beginning to feel lonely now that everyone else was gone.

But the little rabbit stood in front of her, shifting nervously from foot to foot and twitching his fuzzy nose. He was anxious to get back home. So, with a big sigh, Meena opened the last book. The rabbit hopped in, and with a flash of his white cotton tail, he was gone.

The house was quiet. Max sat on some books washing his face. Meena sighed. "I'll never see those rabbits again!" she said.

Then she noticed that the books were still there, lying around her. She started to smile.

When her parents came in that afternoon they couldn't believe their eyes. Not because the curtains were gone and the dishes were broken and the table legs were chewed up. But because there, sitting in the middle of the room, was Meena. She was reading a book.

Meena's house was full of books, but Meena hated them all. But one day a very strange incident happened which converted Meena from a book hater to a book lover. What happened? To find out read this amazing story of little Meena.



I LOVED this story and video because ...

The Girl Who Hated Books – Comprehension Questions.



1. What was the problem Meena faced?
2. What did Meena do to solve her problem?
3. What did Meena's parents see when they returned home?
4. Define and explain 'Her parents **couldn't believe their eyes**' in your own words.
5. Why do you think Meena now enjoys reading?
6. What advice would you give a friend who doesn't like reading at all? How could you convince them reading is fun, enjoyable and important?

The Girl Who Hated Books – Comprehension Questions.



1. What was the problem Meena faced?

All the characters in the books had escaped and were destroying the house.

2. What did Meena do to solve her problem?

Meena tried to find the books for each character and when she read the book, the characters went back into the books.

3. What did Meena's parents see when they returned home?

They saw that Meena was reading. They also saw all the damage to the house but they didn't care about that.

4. Define and explain 'Her parents **couldn't believe their eyes**' in your own words.

It means that her parents were surprised.

5. Why do you think Meena now enjoys reading?

She realized that books opened up a whole new world of characters and people that she could never find in real life. She didn't see words, she saw things that were alive in books.

6. What advice would you give a friend who doesn't like reading at all? How could you convince them reading is fun, enjoyable and important?

The Girl Who Hated Books – Comprehension Questions.



Q. Where was Meena when her parents returned?

Q. What had happened to the room?

Q. Define - explain 'they couldn't believe their eyes' in your own words.

Q. Why do you think Meena hated books?

Q. Why did Meena begin reading?

Q. What surprised Meena's parents when they returned home that afternoon? What do you think brought about this change in Meena?

Q. What advice would you give to a friend who says she/he does not enjoy reading?

The Girl Who Hated Books – Comprehension Questions.



Q. Where was Meena when her parents returned?

Answer: When her parents returned, Meena was sitting in the middle of the dining room.

Q. What had happened to the room?

Answer: The curtains of the room were gone and the dishes were broken and the table legs were chewed up.

Q. Define - explain 'they couldn't believe their eyes' in your own words.

Answer: After returning home, Meena's parents saw that she was reading books, sitting in the middle of the dining room. Meena always hated books. So, her parents could not believe their eyes that Meena was actually reading books.

Read, reflect and write

Q. What were the different kinds of books that Meena's parents had brought for her?

Answer: Meena's parents had brought big shiny picture books when she was a baby. They brought alphabet books and nursery rhymes. They also bought fairy tales and adventure stories.

Q. Why do you think Meena hated books?

Answer: I think hated books because she probably had a bad experience with books, like her cat Max.

Q. Why did Meena begin reading?

Answer: Meena began reading books because she wanted to put all those creatures in right books. As she did not know which creature belongs to which book, she had to read all the books to know their proper place.

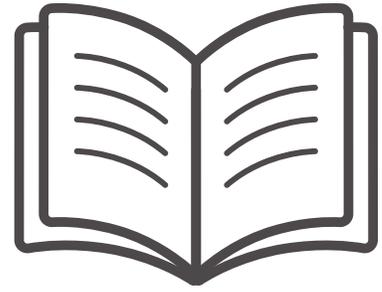
Q. What surprised Meena's parents when they returned home that afternoon? What do you think brought about this change in Meena?

Answer: Meena's parents returned home and they saw Meena was reading books. This surprised Meena's parents. Meena had to read to know the proper places of all those creatures which had come out of those books. And then, I think Meena started enjoying reading the books. While reading books, Meena gradually started liking the stories. So, she continued reading.

Q. What advice would you give to a friend who says she/he does not enjoy reading?

Answer: I would tell my friend that books are our best friends. Books give us knowledge and increase our wisdom. Books enrich us with lots of information and help us move forward in life. Once we start reading books, we start enjoying reading. I will suggest my friend to develop the practice of reading books.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS



Before Reading

What do you think the story will be about?
What story clues are in the title or cover page?
Do you think the story is fiction or non-fiction?

During Reading

Predict. What do you think will happen next?
How do you feel about the main character?
How do you think the story will end?

After Reading

What was the message and meaning of the story?
What personal connections did you make?
Would you recommend this book? Why?

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