

## The Friendly Mongoose

ONCE a farmer and his wife lived in a village with their small son. They loved him very much. “We must have a pet,” the farmer said to his wife one day. “When our son grows up, he will need a **companion**. This pet will be our son’s companion.” His wife liked the idea. One evening, the farmer brought with him a **tiny** mongoose. “It’s a baby mongoose,” said his wife, “but will soon be fully grown. He will be a friend to our son.”

Both the baby and the mongoose grew. In five or six months the mongoose had grown to its full size — a lovely animal with two shining black eyes and a **bushy** tail. The farmer’s son was still a baby in the **cradle**, sleeping and crying alternately.

One day, the farmer’s wife wanted to go to the market. She fed the baby and **rocked** him to sleep in his little cradle. Picking up the basket, she said to her husband, “**I’m off to** the bazar. The baby is sleeping. **Keep an eye on** him. Frankly, I don’t like to leave the child alone with the mongoose.”

“You needn’t be afraid,” said the farmer. “The mongoose is a friendly animal. It’s as sweet as our baby and they are the best of friends, you know.”

The wife went away, and the farmer, having nothing to do in the house, decided to go out and **take a look at** his fields not far away. He **ran into** some friends on the way back and didn’t return for quite some time.

The farmer’s wife finished her shopping and came back home with a basketful of groceries. She saw the mongoose sitting outside as if waiting for her. On seeing her he ran to welcome her, as was **customary**. The farmer’s wife took one look at the mongoose and **screamed**. “Blood!” she cried. The face and **paws** of the mongoose were **smear**ed with blood.

“You **wicked** animal! You have killed my baby,” she screamed **hysterically**. She was blind with **rage** and with all her strength brought down the heavy basket full of groceries on the blood-smear



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The baby was fast **asleep**. But on the floor lay a black snake torn and bleeding. **In a flash** she realised what had happened. She ran out looking for the mongoose.

“Oh! You saved my child! You killed the snake! What have I done?” she cried touching the mongoose, who lay dead and still, unaware of her **sobbing**. The farmer’s wife, who had acted hastily and rashly, **stared** long at the dead mongoose. Then she heard the baby crying. **Wiping** her tears, she went in to feed him.

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### Vocabulary

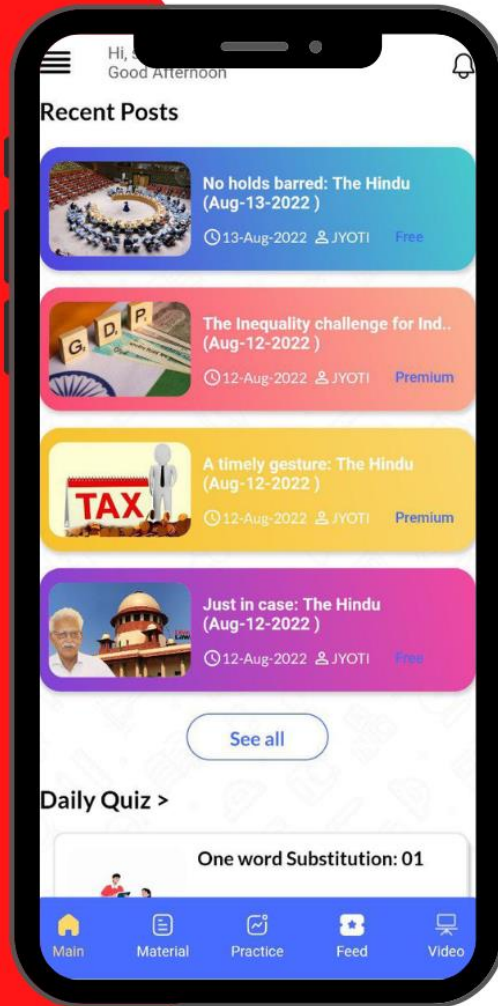
1. **Companion** (noun) – associate, comrade, familiar, fellow साथी, संगी
2. **Tiny** (adjective) – very small बहुत छोटा
3. **Bushy** (adjective) – thick and poorly groomed घना
4. **Cradle** (noun) – a baby bed with sides and rockers पालना
5. **Rock** (verb) – move back and forth or sideways झुलाना
6. **I'm off to** (phrase) – I'm leaving for के लिए रवाना होना
7. **Keep an eye on** (phrase) – keep under careful observation. नज़र रखना
8. **Take a look at** (phrase) – Turn your attention to, examine एक नज़र डालना
9. **Run into** (phrasal verb) – collide with someone or something टकराना
10. **Customary** (adjective) – commonly used or practiced; usual प्रथागत
11. **Scream** (verb) – utter a sudden loud cry चिल्लाना, चीक मारना
12. **Paw** (noun) – animal foot, foot पंजा
13. **Smear** (verb) – stain by smearing or daubing with a dirty substance लीपना, लिप्त होना
14. **Wicked** (adjective) – playfully mischievous. शैतान
15. **Hysterically** (adverb) – with wildly uncontrolled emotion.
16. **Rage** (noun) – violent uncontrollable anger. क्रोध, रोष
17. **Asleep** (adjective) – in a state of sleep. सोना
18. **In a flash** (phrase) – very quickly; immediately. एक पल में, एकाएक
19. **Sobbing** (noun) – noisy crying. रोना धोना
20. **Stare** (verb) – look at with fixed eyes एकटक देखना
21. **Wipe** (verb) – rub with a circular motion पोंछना

**Practice exercise**

1. **Why did the farmer bring a baby mongoose into the house?**
  - A. To assist Farmer's wife in going to the market
  - B. To leave the child alone with the mongoose
  - C. Because the farmer having nothing to do in the house
  - D. To give a companion to his baby.
  - E. None of the above
2. **Why didn't the farmer's wife want to leave the baby alone with the mongoose?**
  - A. Because after all it was an animal.
  - B. Because mongoose is a tiny mongoose and not be fully grown
  - C. Because The farmer's son was still a baby in the cradle, sleeping and crying alternately
  - D. Because The baby is sleeping
  - E. None of the above
3. **What was the farmer's comment on his wife's fears?**
  - A. The mongoose was loved him very much
  - B. The mongoose was a friendly animal and it was as sweet as their own baby.
  - C. Our son grows up and he will need a companion
  - D. The mongoose was a lovely animal with two shining black eyes and a bushy tail
  - E. None of the above
4. **Why did the farmer's wife strike the mongoose with her basket?**
  - A. Because basket was full of groceries and so heavy
  - B. Because mongoose stared at the farmer's wife continuously.
  - C. She thought that he had killed her baby.
  - D. she heard the baby crying and thought that all because of wild mongoose
  - E. None of the above
5. **How does farmer's wife show her repentance?**
  - A. By Wiping her tears and going in to feed the dead mongoose
  - B. By crying and saying what she had done and staring continuously at the dead animal.
  - C. By sitting outside the home as if waiting for her.
  - D. Bothe A and B
  - E. None of the above

**Answers**

5. B    4. C    3. B    2. A    1. D



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