

Read the short story. Then answer each question.

Androclus and the Lion

In Rome there was once a poor slave whose name was Androclus. His master was a cruel man and so unkind to him that Androclus ran away.

Androclus hid in the woods for many days, but there was no food to be found, and he grew weak and sick. One day he crept into a cave and lay down and soon he was fast asleep.

After a while, a great noise woke him up. A lion had come into the cave and was roaring loudly.

Androclus was very afraid because he felt sure that the beast would kill him. Soon, however, he saw that the lion was not angry, but that he limped as though his foot hurt him.

Androclus grew bold and took hold of the lion's lame paw to see what was wrong. The lion stood quite still and rubbed his head against the man's shoulder. He seemed to say,—

“I know that you will help me.”

Androclus lifted the paw from the ground and saw that it was a long, sharp thorn that was hurting the lion a lot. He took the end of the thorn in his fingers, then he gave a strong, quick pull, and out it came. The lion was full of joy. He jumped about like a dog and licked the hands and feet of his new friend.



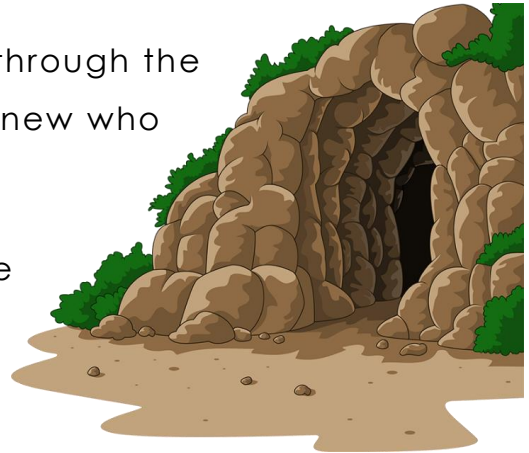
Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Androclus was not at all afraid of the lion, and, when night came, he and the lion lay down and slept side by side.

The lion brought food to Androclus every day, and the two became such good friends that Androclus was very happy in his new life.

One day some soldiers who were passing through the wood found Androclus in the cave. They knew who he was and they took him back to Rome.

It was the law at that time that every slave who ran away from his master should be made to fight a hungry lion.



When the day came, thousands of people crowded to see the sport of the slave fighting the hungry lion.

The door opened, and poor Androclus was brought in. He was very afraid because he could already hear the roars of the lion. He looked up and saw that there was no pity in the thousands of faces around him.

Then the hungry lion rushed in. With a single bound he reached the poor slave. Androclus gave a great cry, not of fear, but of gladness. It was his old friend, the lion of the cave.

The people, who had expected to see the man killed by the lion, were filled with wonder. They saw Androclus put his arms around the lion's neck; they saw the lion lie down at his feet and lick them lovingly; they saw the great beast rub his head against the slave's face as though he wanted to be petted. They could not understand what it all meant.

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After a while they asked Androclus to tell them about it. So he stood up before them and, with his arm around the lion's neck, told how he and the beast had lived together in the cave.

"I am a man," he said, "but no man has ever befriended me. This poor lion alone has been kind to me, and we love each other as brothers."

The people were good enough that they would not be cruel to the poor slave now. "Live and be free!" they cried. "Live and be free!"

Others cried, "Let the lion go free too! Give both of them their liberty!"

And so Androclus was set free, and the lion was given to him. They lived together in Rome for many years.



Questions:

1. Why did Androclus help the lion in the cave?

2. What law says that Androclus must fight a lion?

3. Why do you think the crowd wants Androclus and the lion to be free?

4. What do you think this story is trying to teach you?

Answers:

1. Why did Androclus help the lion in the cave?
Androclus helped the lion because he could see he was in pain.

2. What law says that Androclus must fight a lion?
Roman law says that Adroclus must fight a lion.

3. Why do you think the crowd wants Androclus and the lion to be free?
The crowd wants them to be free as they could see how kind they were to one another. They had not seen that between a man and a lion before.

4. What do you think this story is trying to teach you?
The story is trying to teach us to treat people and animal with kindness. When we do, they treat us back with kindness.