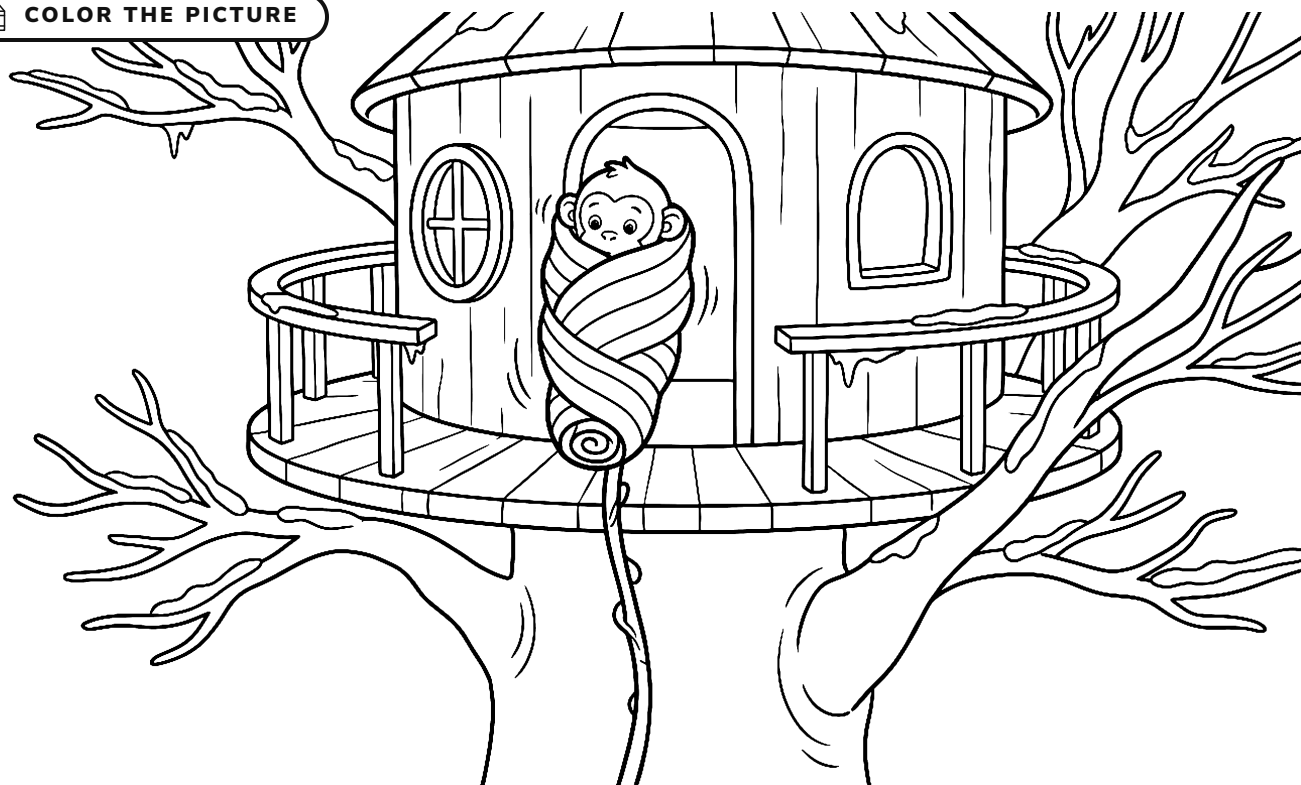


The Blanket Goes Back and Forth

 COLOR THE PICTURE



The night had been the coldest one yet. In the morning, every branch in Wonderful Woods was white with frost, and the river had little crinkles of ice along its edges. Up in the treehouse, the wind came whistling through the cracks, *whoooooo, wheeeeee*.

Mr. Monkey woke up shivering. His teeth went *chikka-chikka*. His tail was curled all the way around him, and it still wasn't enough.

Then he noticed something on top of him. A big, thick, fuzzy blanket. The striped one. Mama Monkey's blanket. The warmest blanket in the whole treehouse.

He peeked across the room. Mama Monkey was curled up in her bed with only a thin little leaf blanket, the kind you use in summer. Her toes were sticking out.

Mr. Monkey sat up. "Mama! You gave me your blanket!"

"You were cold," said Mama Monkey, yawning. "I heard your teeth chattering all the way across the room."

"But now YOU'RE cold!"

"A little," said Mama Monkey, and her teeth went *chikka*, just a little. "But I'd rather you be warm."

Mr. Monkey didn't like that one bit. He hopped up, carried the big striped blanket across the room, and tucked it around Mama Monkey, all the way up to her chin. "There," he said. "Now you're warm."

He climbed back into his own bed and curled up, shivering.

A little while later, he felt something heavy and warm land on top of him. He peeked out. It was the striped blanket again. Mama Monkey was tiptoeing back to her bed.

"Mama!"

"Shh. Go back to sleep."

Mr. Monkey waited until she was snoring. Then he crept out of bed, carried the blanket back across the room, and very, very gently laid it over her. He got back into bed. He closed his eyes.

Fwump. The blanket landed on him again.

He took it back. *Fwump*. He took it back again, faster. *Fwump*. He snuck it over to her while she was looking out the window. She snuck it back to him while he was brushing his teeth. He hid it in her bed under her pillow. She hid it back in his bed under his tail.

By breakfast, the striped blanket had gone back and forth across the treehouse so many times that Daddy Monkey had stopped counting.

"Nineteen," said Daddy Monkey, with his face in his porridge. "Twenty."

Then Mr. Monkey had his biggest idea yet. He would carry the blanket down the vines and hide it somewhere Mama would never find it, so she would have to keep it.

He wrapped himself up in it to carry it, all the way around, like a big striped burrito. Then he tried to climb

down the vine. But he couldn't use his hands. He couldn't use his feet. He couldn't even use his tail.

He started to wobble.

"Uh-oh," said the blanket.

He slid down the vine, slowly at first, then faster, *zzzzzzwip*, all the way to the bottom, and landed on the frosty grass, *fwumpf*, and rolled across Sunny Square like a big striped log, until he stopped right at Mr. Moose's front door.

Mr. Moose opened the door. He looked down at the blanket. The blanket looked up at him with two eyes.

"Mr. Monkey?" said Mr. Moose.

"I'm hiding it," said Mr. Monkey.

"Ha-ha-ha!" laughed Mr. Moose. "You're a monkey burrito."

"Hee hee hee!" went Mr. Monkey, and he wiggled one hand out of the top to wave.

Mr. Moose unrolled him on the doorstep. Mr. Monkey told him the whole thing. The cold night. The blanket. The thin summer leaf blanket and Mama's toes sticking out. Twenty times back and forth.

"She keeps giving it to me," said Mr. Monkey. "And I keep giving it back. Because now she's the cold one."

Mr. Moose thought about that for a long time. He thought about Daddy Moose standing in the cold brook, saying he'd do it again. He thought about Mama Moose sitting up all night. They didn't want it given back. They wanted to give it.

"Mr. Monkey," said Mr. Moose slowly. "When you gave Mama the blanket back, did she look happy?"

Mr. Monkey thought. "No," he said. "She looked like she wanted to give it to me again."

"Maybe that's the thing," said Mr. Moose. "Maybe giving you the blanket is her present. And if you keep giving it back, she doesn't get to give it."

Mr. Monkey looked at the striped blanket in his arms. That was a very strange idea. It made his tummy feel funny. It was so much easier to give something than to take something.

"But she'll be cold," he said.

Mr. Moose thought about that, too. He looked over at the Wishing Tree, where last week's painted leaves were tied to the trunk, and next to it, the empty spot where today's leaves would go.

"Then maybe we do two things," said Mr. Moose. "You keep the blanket. And we help her be warm a different way."

First, Mr. Monkey carried the blanket back up to the treehouse and put it on his own bed, and he kept it there. That was the hardest part.

Then he and Mr. Moose went all over Sunny Square gathering the softest, thickest, warmest maple leaves they could find. Mr. Moose pushed them into big piles

with his nose. Mr. Monkey stuffed them into an old flour sack, until it was fat and puffy and crunchy. They sewed it shut with vine, and Mr. Monkey's stitches went every which way, and some of them went right around the tip of his own tail and sewed it into the seam, so Mr. Moose had to un-sew him.

"Mr. Moose," said Mr. Monkey, sewn to the sack, "I'm part of the blanket now."

"Ha-ha-ha! Hold still," said Mr. Moose.

When it was done, it was the lumpiest, crunchiest, warmest leaf blanket ever made. They carried it up to the treehouse and put it on Mama Monkey's bed.

Mama Monkey looked at it. She looked at Mr. Monkey, with his own striped blanket on his own bed. And her face went soft.

"You kept it," she said.

"I kept it," said Mr. Monkey. "Thank you, Mama."

That afternoon, it was time to paint the thank-you leaves for home. This week, Mama Moose had shown them a new way to paint the back of each leaf: first, what the person gave up. Then, what they did instead.

Mr. Monkey painted the front of his leaf: Mama Monkey's face, smiling. Then he turned it over. On the back, he painted Mama Monkey in her bed under a thin little summer leaf, with her toes sticking out, shivering. And next to her, a tiny monkey, snug and warm under a big striped blanket.

"Instead of being warm," he said, painting, "you gave me your blanket."

Then he added one more thing. In the corner of the leaf, he painted a big, lumpy, crunchy leaf blanket.

Mr. Moose painted one for Mama Moose. A dark night, a little moose asleep, and a big moose sitting beside the bed with her eyes wide open. Then one for Daddy Moose: a log, a brook, and Daddy standing in it, with little shiver lines all around him.

They tied them all to the trunk of the Wishing Tree, faces out, secrets in, two knots each.

"What a day!" said Mr. Monkey as they walked home. "Mama gave me her blanket, and I kept giving it back, twenty times. I rolled down the vine like a burrito. I kept the blanket, and that was the hardest thing. And we made Mama a crunchy leaf blanket, and I sewed myself to it."

Mr. Monkey whistled, and Mr. Moose hummed, and together they sang:

*We are better together,
Moose and Monkey forever.*

And that night, up in the treehouse, Mr. Monkey slept warm under the striped blanket, while across the room, Mama Monkey's leaf blanket went crunch every time she turned over.

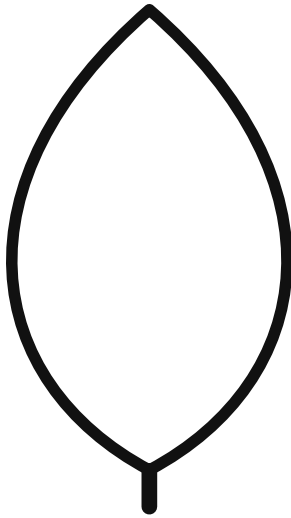
Let's Talk

- 1 Why did Mama Monkey want Mr. Monkey to keep the blanket?
- 2 Is it ever hard to let someone give you something? Why?

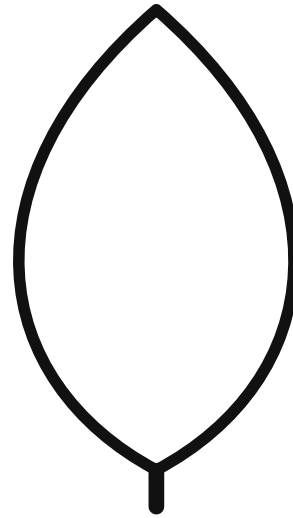
Your Turn

Plan a leaf for someone in your house. Front: their name. Back: draw what they gave up for you.

FRONT: THE NAME



BACK: THE THANK-YOU



Make a real one: with a grown-up, hold plain paper over this page against a sunny window and trace both leaves. Cut them out, glue them back to back, and save it for your family's Thanks Giving Tree.

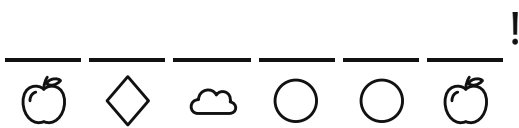
SAMMY'S JOKE



What did one eye say to the other eye?

Crack Sammy's code! Find each picture in the key and write its letter on the line.

Between you and me, something

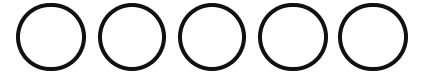


KEY



👁 Spot the Difference

Look closely. Can you find 5 differences?



Read With Me

DRAW THE STORY

Snug

 is not snug.

Mom sets a  on .  is snug!

But Mom is not snug.

 sets the  on Mom. Mom is snug!

Mom sets it on  and sits.

Mom sees , snug in bed.

PICTURE WORDS  Mr. Monkey  blanket

For grown-ups: New sounds: k, -s on the end of a word, and blends like st, sn, sk. New words to learn by heart: sees.



Color a star each time you read it.

♥ My Thank-You

Trace the dotted words. Write their name on the line, or draw a tiny face. Read it to them!

Thank you
for making me feel valued.

👁️ Cozy I Spy

Find and count each one. Write how many in the box.

