

Autumn Story: A Movement Imagination

~ Wendalyn von Meyenfeldt

Begin sitting down and accompany the story with movement and gestures.

In Autumn, there are good things to eat:
Rose-y apples, crisp and sweet,
Pretty berries, walnuts brown,
Golden corn with a tassel'd crown.

Stand and continue telling the story, accompanying it with movement and gestures.

On the farm these good things grow,
For the farmer tends them so.
Yet around the fields, there creep
Other creatures who like to eat.

Reynard Fox and Winn the Deer,
And Johnny Crow all come near.
And Nibbler the Mouse
With the furry grey ears.

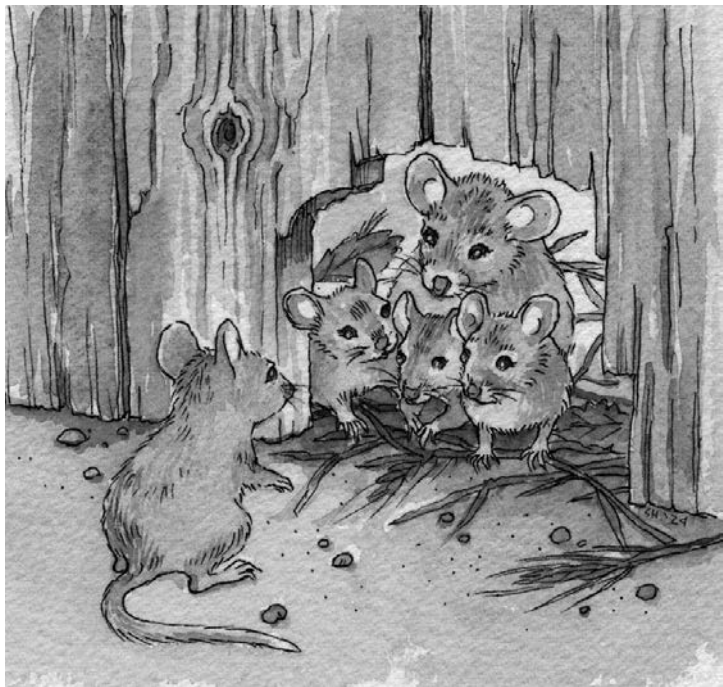


Illustration by Sheila Harrington from Dancing Stories

Take hands and walk around the circle while singing a short autumn song. You might enjoy “Autumn Has Come” by Peter Patterson in the Wynstones Autumn collection.

Stand and continue telling the story, accompanying it with movement and gestures.

Nibbler the Mouse played in the corn
And watched it grow tall all the summer long.
He thought he would gather a few little seeds
To hide in his nest for his winter needs.

But along came the farmer in the early morn
And he cut and he cut, and he cut the corn.
Yes, he cut, and he cut, and he cut the corn.
What did Nibbler do that day? Why, the small mouse
ran away!

Move with quick, light little steps around the circle as mice, with the following verse. If you like, you can hold your arms and hands in front of you, like small paws. With a younger group, you might choose to take hands and move all together around the ring.

Run, Nibbler, run! Run, Nibbler, run!
The harvest time has now begun.
Run, Nibbler, run! Run, Nibbler, run!
The harvest time has now begun.

Stand and continue telling the story, accompanying it with movement and gestures.

At last, the little mouse could rest,
Safe inside a cozy nest.
While the autumn wind went on
To sail the leaves and sing this song.

Take hands and walk around the circle, repeating the autumn song from before. After the song, stand and continue the story, accompanying it with movement and gestures.

Johnny the Crow sat in the patch
And watched all the pumpkins grow plump and fat.
He thought he would tap at the pumpkins so sweet—
A good little dinner for blackbirds to eat.

But along came the farmer when the sun stood high,
And he brought home the pumpkins to bake into pies.
Yes, he brought home the pumpkins to bake into pies.
What did Johnny do that day? Why, the blackbird
flew away!

Move around the circle as birds with the verse below. Extend your arms wide and lift and dip them rhythmically, like wings. With a younger group, you might prefer to once again take hands and move together around the ring.

Fly, Johnny, fly! Fly, Johnny, fly!
Or you too may be baked in a pie!
Fly, Johnny, Fly! Fly, Johnny, Fly!
Or you too may be baked in a pie!

Stand and continue telling the story, accompanying with movement and gestures.

At last the little crow did rest,
Safe inside a cozy nest.
While the autumn wind went on
To sail the leaves and sing an autumn song.

The imagination continues with Winn the Deer and Reynard the Fox. The full text can be found in the Dancing Stories book. The circle concludes as follows:

Now do not think the animals won't eat,
For in the woods are berries sweet.
And leaves and seeds the plants will bear.
Good Mother Earth has left them there ...with care.

All dear animals in every place
Know the warmth of her embrace.
And sheltered in each forest house
Sleep fox and deer and bird and mouse.

Sing a quiet song or lullaby to conclude the story circle, perhaps one with a Mother Earth theme. ♦

Excerpted from *Dancing Stories* (WECAN, 2024)

Wendalyn von Meyenfeldt is a longtime instructor in therapeutic Eurythmy and movement with many years teaching kindergarten in several North American Waldorf Schools. Her interest and delight in movement and circle time work with young children led her to write the stories collected and published by WECAN as *Dancing Stories*. She currently teaches early childhood caregivers in several training institutes. Her home on a beautiful island off the west coast of Canada with trees, animals, and sea continue to inspire her stories.