

STORY GUIDE

Rip Van Winkle

Original story by: Washington Irving

Read by: John Paul DeJoria



morals and themes

Working Hard, Love, Family

general comprehension questions

- Where does the story take place?
- Who are the characters?
- Who is your favorite character and why?
- Which character don't you like and why?
- What are the problems the characters face?
- How do they solve these problems?
- How does the story end?
- What lesson does this story teach you?

discussion questions

- Why do you think everyone loves Rip Van Winkle? What makes him so much fun?
- Do you think Rip Van Winkle's wife is nice? Why or why not?
- Rip Van Winkle sleeps through his chores. What chores do you do at home? Do you like doing them?
- How do you think Rip feels when he thinks he is an old man? How would you feel if you woke up and were suddenly really old?
- How does Rip Van Winkle change after his dream? Do you think he is going to be more responsible now?

extension questions

- What other stories does this remind you of?
- How does this story relate to your own life?
- Write an alternate ending for the story.
- Write your own version of what happens next.

writing activity

- Try to use one of these ideas to write a story about dreams.
- Write about a dream that really affected you.
 - Write about someone whose dream changed his attitude.
 - Write a silly story about the craziest dream you can think of.

notes on this adaptation

Washington Irving's classic tale "Rip Van Winkle" is strikingly different from the Speakaboos version. In Irving's version, Rip Van Winkle actually sleeps for years, missing the opportunity to ever apologize to his wife. In the Speakaboos version, however, Rip Van Winkle awakes from his slumber only to find out it was a dream. He then apologizes to his wife and learns some responsibility from the dream. Children who enjoy the sudden change in character and the dream-like sequences might also enjoy "A Christmas Carol" read by James Eckhouse on the Speakaboos.com.