

The Story of The Ugly Duckling

by Hans Christian Andersen

Once upon a time a mother duck had nine baby ducklings. Eight of them were cute and round and fluffy, but the ninth was very ugly indeed - sort of splotchy gray with a too-large beak. All the barnyard animals teased the little creature for being plain and ugly, so he ran away to the forest. Alas, the wild forest animals all made fun of him, too. No one wanted him around.

In his wanderings, the Ugly Duckling came across a flock of beautiful swans preparing to fly south for the winter. He wished to join them, but he was too young and could not fly well. He spent a cold and lonely winter hiding in a cave.

When Springtime came, the swans returned to the lake. When the Ugly Duckling approached, they treated him kindly, as a respected friend and brother. He was puzzled and confused.

Then he noticed his reflection in the water. To his astonishment, he saw that he had grown into a beautiful swan. When the flock of swans flew off, he spread his wings and joined them, finally having found a family who accepted him.



A little about the author

Hans Christian Andersen lived in Denmark in the 1800's. He was born in a **slum** (a very poor neighborhood) and his father was illiterate (couldn't read or write), but he liked to listen to his mother tell stories.

As a child, Hans was very tall and had a big nose, and the other children would **make fun of him**. When he grew up, he wrote stories for children, about people who went through suffering to find wisdom or happiness. Because his stories always have a good lesson, adults like them, too. Some of his stories are very famous, such as:

The Princess and the Pea

The Little Mermaid

The Emperor's New Clothes

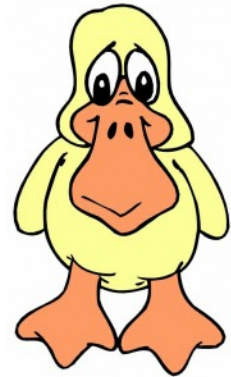
The Ugly Duckling

The Ugly Duckling is one of Andersen's most loved fairy tales, because it has a powerful message about self-image and the importance of accepting others, **even when they are different**. Think of a time in your life when you felt left out or different – maybe for wearing glasses or not being the best at kickball. Everyone has felt that at some time. **This story reminds us that we should be accepting and kind not only to others, but to ourselves as well.**

Study guide provided by The Utah Puppet Theater

Questions for *The Ugly Duckling* Study Guide

- The other animals made fun of the Ugly Duckling because
 - He was poor.
 - He was splotchy gray and his beak was too big.
 - He wore glasses.
- The Ugly Duckling ran away to
 - the forest.
 - the library.
 - the Denmark.
- The Ugly Duckling wished he could fly off with a flock of
 - geese.
 - swans.
 - owls.
- The Ugly Duckling hid for the winter in a
 - lake.
 - barn.
 - cave.
- When the Ugly Duckling looked at his reflection in the lake, he saw
 - a beautiful swan.
 - a gray duck.
 - a little mermaid.
- Who wrote the story of *The Ugly Duckling*?
 - Aesop
 - Charles Dickens
 - Hans Christian Andersen
- The author lived in what country?
 - Denmark
 - Sweden
 - The United States
- The author was born in a
 - castle.
 - slum.
 - school.
- When the author was young, the other children used to
 - make fun of his big nose.
 - sing to him.
 - pick him for kickball.
- What lesson could you learn best from this story?
 - You should never run away from home.
 - You should be kind to everyone, including yourself.
 - You should write stories to make a lot of money.





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