

Why Parrots Only Repeat What People Say
From
How & Why Stories: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell
A Story from Thailand
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Formatted for Readers Theater by Lois Walker

- READER 1: Long ago, the parrot was not taught to speak as it is today.
- READER 2: Long ago, people brought a different bird into their homes and taught it how to speak.
- READER 3: That bird was called a lorikeet.
- READER 4: Back then, the lorikeet was able to repeat what it heard...
- READER 5: and it was able to speak its own thoughts!
- READER 1: Unfortunately, as you'll see from this story, that got the lorikeet into a lot of trouble.
- READER 2: Listen carefully. This is how it happened...
- READER 3: There was once a man who owned a magnificent lorikeet.
- READER 4: One day, the man stole his neighbor's water buffalo.
- READER 5: When the neighbor asked him about the water buffalo, the lorikeet's owner replied,
- READER 1/MAN: I have no idea what happened to your water buffalo. You can't expect me to look after your property. That's your job.
- READER 2: But the lorikeet knew the truth. It called out,
- READER 3/BIRD: Brrrk! Master stole it. Master killed it. Brrrk! Master ate part. Hid the rest in the rice bins. Brrrk!

READER 4:

Sure enough, when the neighbor checked in the rice bins, he found the buffalo meat.

- READER 5: The man claimed he was innocent, but his lorikeet kept calling out,
- READER 3/BIRD: Brrrk! Master stole it. Master killed it. Brrrk! Master ate part. Hid the rest in the rice bins. Brrrk!
- READER 2: At last the neighbor said,
- 4/NEIGHBOR: We'll settle this in court tomorrow!
- READER 1/MAN: That lorikeet has made a lot of trouble for me. Now I've got to think of some way to win at court and not go to jail! Hummm, I think I have an idea.
- READER 5: That evening, the weather was beautiful and clear. The man put the lorikeet's cage in a big box.
- REAER 2: For hours he beat on the box with a stick and poured water over it.
- READER 3/BIRD: Brrrk! I'm scared! I can't see a thing, but I can feel and hear a terrible storm outside. I guess I'm lucky to be inside this big box. Brrrrk!
- READER 4: The next day in court, the judge demanded to know what had happened to the water buffalo.
- READER 5: Once again, the lorikeet called out,
- READER 3/BIRD: Brrrk! Master stole it. Master killed it. Brrrk! Master ate part. Hid the rest in the rice bins. Brrrk!
- READER 2: When the judge heard this, he ordered,
- READER 4/JUDGE: Take this man to jail!
- READER 5: Before the guards could take him away, the man pleaded with the judge,

- READER 1/MAN: Your honor, please give me a chance to defend myself. You see, this bird loves to lie. Ask my lorikeet something else. Ask it what the weather was like last night.
- READER 4/JUDGE: That seems fair. I ask you bird, what was the weather like last night?
- READER 5: When the judge asked the question, the lorikeet replied,
- READER 3/BIRD: Brrrk! Dreadful night. Thunder rumbled. Rain poured. Brrrk! Never so scared in my life! Brrrk!"
- READER 1/MAN: You see, your honor, the bird loves to tell stories.
- READER 2: The guilty man was allowed to go free. When he got home with the lorikeet, he opened the cage and said angrily,
- READER 1/MAN: Go on! Fly away! I don't want to see you in my house ever again!
- READER 2: Since that time, people have not kept lorikeets as pets.
- READER 4: When the lorikeet returned to the jungle, it met a new bird, the parrot. The lorikeet noticed the parrot's beautiful feathers and special voice.
- READER 5: It knew people soon would want to take parrots into their homes. The lorikeet warned the parrot,
- READER 3/BIRD: Brrrk! Don't speak your own mind! You'll get in a lot of trouble. Brrrk! Only repeat what people say. They love to hear their own thoughts. Brrrk!
- READER 1: Sure enough, the lorikeet was right.

- READER 2: Today the parrot is a favorite pet in many homes.
- READER 4: And it still remembers the lorikeet's warning.
- READER 5: That is why the parrot never says what it thinks.
- ALL: It just repeats what people say!