

How The Tiger Got His Stripes  
From  
How & Why Stories: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell  
A Story from Vietnam  
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- READER 1: Long ago, the tiger wore a golden coat.
- READER 2: His coat had no stripes.
- READER 4: Today we think a striped tiger's coat is beautiful.
- READER 3: But the tiger hates those stripes!
- READER 5: This is the story of how the tiger got his stripes.
- READER 1: One morning, when the tiger lay on a hillside, he noticed a water buffalo.
- READER 2: The water buffalo was pulling a plow for his master in the field below. The tiger said to himself...
- TIGER/READER 3: Why is a big beast doing what a small farmer tells him to? I have to find out!
- READER 4: As soon as the farmer went home for lunch, the tiger ran down to the field.
- READER 5: The water buffalo saw him coming and got into a fighting position.
- BUFFALO/READER 1: Oh no! I am a water buffalo. I see a tiger coming. I'm in trouble now.
- READER 2: But the tiger said,
- TIGER/READER 3: Relax, friend. I've come to ask you a question, not to fight. I'm very puzzled. You are much

bigger than the farmer and could easily defeat him. Why do you work for him?

BUFFALO/READER 1: Well, in return for my work, the farmer takes care of me. I have a barn to live in and plenty of food.

TIGER/READER 3: That sounds good.

BUFFALO/READER 1: But even if the farmer treated me badly, I couldn't escape. You see, he has a sort of magic that allows him to rule over all his animals. It's called wisdom.

TIGER/READER 3: What is wisdom?

BUFFALO/READER 1: I don't know what it is, but I have heard it is very hard to defeat someone who has it.

TIGER/READER 3: I must find out about this wisdom. I am already one of the strongest animals on earth. If I had wisdom, no one could defeat me!

READER 4: Soon as the farmer came back...

READER 5: And the tiger rushed over to him and said,

TIGER/READER 3: Farmer, I've been told that you have wisdom. I would like to get some.

READER 1: The farmer was afraid. He thought quickly and said...

FARMER/READER 2: Tiger, I wish you had told me this before I went home for lunch. You see, I've left my wisdom at home. But I'll be glad to go back and get it and share my wisdom with you.

READER 4: The farmer turned to leave, but after he had taken a few steps, he turned back and said...

FARMER/READER 2: It's not that I don't trust you, Tiger. But I am worried that you might get hungry and eat my water buffalo. Since I'm willing to share my

- wisdom with you, would you let me tie you to a tree while I'm gone?
- READER 5: The foolish tiger was so overcome by his wish to have wisdom that he agreed.
- READER 4: The farmer told the tiger to stand upright against a tree. He wound a thick rope many times around the tiger until he was tightly bound.
- READER 1: Then the farmer went back to his plowing. The tiger cried...
- TIGER/READER 3: What are you doing, Farmer? You promised to go get your wisdom!
- READER 2: The farmer paid no attention.
- READER 1: He kept plowing all afternoon while the tiger kicked and screamed and tried to break free of the rope.
- READER 2: Just before the sun went down, the farmer turned to leave. The tiger wailed in anger, but the farmer left without saying a word.
- TIGER/READER 3: All through the night I tried to break free from the ropes. The more I struggled, the more I felt the ropes burn into my skin!
- READER 4: At last with a great show of strength, the tiger burst free.
- TIGER/READER 3: Yipeeeeeeee!!!!!!
- READER 5: But his beautiful golden coat was changed forever.
- READER 1: He now had black stripes where the ropes had bound him.
- TIGER/READER 3: To this day, I hate those stripes!

READER 2:

They remind him that he still doesn't have wisdom.

ALL:

And that's how the tiger got his stripes!