

Name _____



Hard Work Pays

One bright morning, the Little Red Hen found some grains of wheat while pecking around the barnyard. She immediately thought about the delicious bread she could bake if she planted the wheat, harvested it, ground it into flour, and then baked it. Excited about her idea, she called out to her barnyard friends.

"Who will help me plant this wheat?" she asked. "Not I," said the lazy Dog, stretching out in the sun. "Not I," said the sleepy Cat, yawning loudly. "Not I," said the noisy Duck, splashing in the pond.

The Little Red Hen sighed but didn't argue. She planted the wheat herself, carefully covering the seeds with soil and watering them each day. As the days passed, the wheat sprouted and grew tall and golden.

When it was time to harvest the wheat, the Little Red Hen once again asked for help. "Who will help me cut the wheat?" she called. "Not I," said the Dog, rolling over in the grass. "Not I," said the Cat, curling up for another nap. "Not I," said the Duck, flapping his wings in the water.

Determined, the Little Red Hen harvested the wheat all by herself. Then she needed to grind it into flour and asked her friends once more.

"Who will help me grind the wheat into flour?"

"Not I," said the Dog. "Not I," said the Cat. "Not I," said the Duck.

Again, the Little Red Hen did the work alone. Finally, it was time to bake the bread. She mixed the flour, kneaded the dough, and placed it in the oven. Soon, the warm scent of freshly baked bread filled the air. The Dog, Cat, and Duck came running, their mouths watering.

"Who will help me eat this bread?" the Little Red Hen asked with a smile.

"I will!" shouted the Dog, Cat, and Duck eagerly.

But the Little Red Hen shook her head. "I did all the work myself, so I will eat this bread by myself." And with that, she enjoyed the delicious bread while her friends looked on, realizing too late the importance of hard work and responsibility.