

Name _____

Timmy and the Tangled Temper

Timmy Tumbles was a curious little hedgehog who lived in the heart of Maplewood Forest. He loved exploring new places, playing with his friends, and collecting shiny pebbles. But Timmy had a tiny problem that often felt as big as a mountain—he had a habit of getting angry.

If Timmy lost a game of pinecone toss, he would stomp his little feet. If someone borrowed his favorite pebble without asking, his quills would puff out like a spiky balloon. Even when the wind blew away his pile of leaves, he'd scowl and huff so loudly that the birds stopped singing.

One day, Timmy's friend, Willa the wise owl, noticed his tantrums. "Timmy, do you know what happens when you let anger take over?" she asked, tilting her feathered head.

"No," Timmy grumbled, still frowning from a game he had just lost.

"Well," Willa said, "anger can become a habit, just like collecting pebbles or eating your favorite snacks. If you keep letting it grow, it'll tangle you up like a vine."

Timmy scratched his head. "Tangle me up? Like the bramble bushes?"

"Exactly!" said Willa. "But the good news is, you can untangle it with practice."

Timmy was curious. "How?"

"I'll show you," Willa said, flying to a patch of soft grass. "Let's start with a game called 'Pause, Breathe, Think.'"

Willa explained the rules: "When you feel your temper rising, pause and count to five. Then, take three deep breaths. Finally, think of a different way to solve the problem."

Timmy wasn't sure it would work, but he decided to try. The next day, while playing with his friends, Pip the squirrel accidentally spilled Timmy's collection of shiny pebbles. Timmy's quills began to puff, but he remembered Willa's words.

"Pause," he whispered, counting to five in his head. "Breathe." He took three deep breaths, imagining the calm ripples of the nearby pond. "Think," he said. Instead of yelling, he asked Pip to help him gather the pebbles.

"Thanks for being patient, Timmy!" Pip said, helping to pick up the scattered stones.

Timmy felt proud. Each time something frustrating happened, he practiced "Pause, Breathe, Think." Over time, he noticed his quills puffed out less and his friends smiled more. He still got angry sometimes—everyone does—but now he had a tool to untangle his temper before it grew into a messy habit.

By the end of the season, Timmy was known not just for his shiny pebble collection, but also for his shiny new attitude. And whenever he saw a vine tangled in a bush, he'd smile, remembering how he had learned to untangle his own anger.

