

Little Donkey

It was 'Switch On' night in the village square, and everyone was excited to see the Christmas lights.

Every year, the school children carried lanterns down the main street, and Farmer Holly delivered the Christmas tree. He always donated the biggest and best fir tree on his farm. This year, the tree was gigantic. It was so tall they had to buy extra fairy lights to decorate it. It was so heavy they had to put it on the back of a cart so Farmer Holly's donkey could pull it along.

Before they set off, Farmer Holly said to his little donkey, "There will be a lot of people, but don't be frightened. They'll all be pleased to see you."

SING IT!

Why not sing the Christmas carol **Little Donkey** after reading this fable? Change the words so the little donkey walks down a dusty street and make his precious load the Christmas tree.



The little donkey brayed excitedly and they set off on the dusty road. They walked through the winter's night, until the village was in sight. On the little donkey went, plodding onwards with its precious load. Ahead, the children began their lantern parade.

There were hundreds of people lining both sides of the main street. When they saw Farmer Holly and the little donkey coming, they gasped and

began to clap and cheer. Children smiled and pointed in the donkey's direction. Some jumped up and down with excitement.

The little donkey heard them say, "Wow!" and "It's so beautiful!" It was so pleased with the compliments, it lifted its head proudly and began to strut along. The crowd carried on laughing and clapping and cheering, and the donkey joined in, honking noisily. ➔



The village square was now in sight, but the little donkey was enjoying the attention so much it didn't want the journey to end. It grinned at the crowd and started to bray as tunefully as it could. It began to do a funny little tap dance and wiggled its bottom from side to side. At the end of the performance, it took a bow. But, when it looked up, everyone was quiet.

Farmer Holly rolled his eyes. "Oh dear. They're not cheering for you, show-off – they're cheering for the tree!"

The little donkey looked at the crowd. Farmer Holly was right. Everyone had been smiling and pointing at the big Christmas tree! The little donkey felt silly for being so vain.

"Come along now," said the farmer. As soon as the donkey plodded on again, everyone cheered. When they reached the village square, the farmer put the Christmas tree in its place, and everyone joined in with the countdown, "3... 2... 1!"





One of the children switched on the lights and the whole village sparkled. The tree looked magical. Dazzling colour and light illuminated the night. The little donkey had never seen anything so pretty.

Farmer Holly gave the little donkey a carrot and patted its head. "Now do you see why everyone was cheering?"

The little donkey brayed and decided to keep its tap dancing for its farmyard friends. 🎶