

Sukhomlynsky News



Stories from *An Ethics Anthology*

How Nina overcame her fear of a gander

Five-year-old Nina was walking to kindergarten. On the path ahead of her sat a big, white gander. Next to him were ten geese who were a little bit smaller, and about thirty little goslings. Nina looked with wide eyes at the gander. How huge he was, and how frightening! What a long bill he had!

Looking around in fear, Nina walked off the path so as to pass around the gander, but the gander raised his head, hissed loudly, ran at the little girl, and pecked her on the leg. The geese cackled merrily. Nina burst into tears and ran home.

Nina told her mother how the gander had attacked her. Her mother told her, 'You must not be afraid of him, and then he won't attack. Look him bravely in the eye and walk straight at him. Do not walk round him.'

Nina walked back along the same path. The gander was still sitting in the middle of it, and next to him were the geese and goslings. Nina looked boldly at the gander. He was sitting in the middle of the path and seemed to be waiting to see what would happen next. Nina kept walking straight towards him, looking at him boldly and thinking, 'I'm not afraid of you, gander.'

The gander took fright, left the path, and ran away across the grass, looking over his shoulder. The geese and goslings ran after him.

Nina walked bravely on.



New publication

Dear reader,

I hope you are keeping well.

On 15 November Springer published the **Second International Research Handbook on Values Education and Student Wellbeing**.

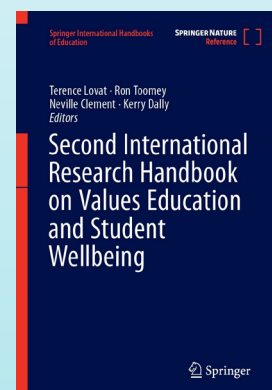
I would like to thank Professor Terry Lovat and the other editors of the handbook for including an article on Sukhomlynsky. The article was written by Sukhomlynsky's daughter – Professor Olga Sukhomlynska – and myself. It is cause for celebration that an article by such an eminent authority on Sukhomlynsky as his daughter has appeared in such a significant collection of research.

This month's newsletter once again includes translations of stories from Sukhomlynsky's **Ethics Anthology**.

I hope you find the stories interesting.

Best wishes,

Alan Cockerill



Stories from *An Ethics Anthology*

The grade one fox cub

A mother fox had a son – a red-haired fox cub. He was in grade one at school. Every morning the mother fox walked her son to school.

The fox cub was not a particularly conscientious student. He did not like getting up early in the morning, washing, cleaning his teeth and having breakfast. One day he decided, 'I won't go to school today.' He whispered pitifully to his mother, 'Mum, my tooth is aching.'

He thought his mother would say, 'My poor little fox cub! You just stay in bed. You don't need to go to school today. I'll bring you some sweet porridge to eat.' But instead, she said, 'I'll go and get the bear—the dentist. He'll come and pull out that sore tooth for you.'

The fox cub was frightened. No-one wants to have a completely healthy tooth pulled out. He said to his mother, 'You know, mum, my tooth just stopped aching. I'll go to school. But first I'll wash, clean my teeth and have some breakfast.'

His mother smiled and said, 'Thank goodness you're feeling better. I've got some sweet porridge ready for you.'

Who painted the rooster?

Grandma Maria had two grandsons in grade one: Kolya and Yura. One day the two boys visited their grandmother. They saw a wooden rooster high up on their grandmother's roof. The rooster was standing on top of a steep spire and raising its head.

Kolya took some paint, climbed up onto the roof, scrambled up the steep spire to reach the rooster, and painted it. The rooster came to life, with a brightly coloured tail and a red comb.

Yura sat on the grass and watched. He was afraid that at any moment Kolya would fall... Wouldn't grandma be cross then! Kolya would be in terrible trouble!

At last, Kolya climbed down from the roof. Grandma came out. She saw the painted rooster and asked, 'Who climbed on the roof? Who painted the rooster?'

'Not me, grandma,' answered Yura.

Kolya stood there, hanging his head.

'So, it wasn't you?' Grandma said to Yura, and she shook her head.

Green mittens

Today a new student named Zoya joined grade two. She is small, with dark blue eyes and blonde pigtails. Her parents have come to our village from the far north.

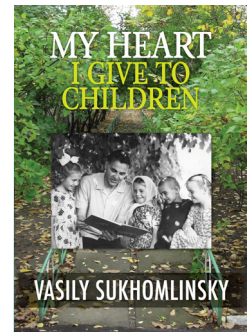
It is winter now, with crackling frosts. Zoya arrived wearing green mittens. She left them in the corridor next to her coat.

The boys and girls gave Zoya a friendly reception. They gave her an interesting book with pictures.

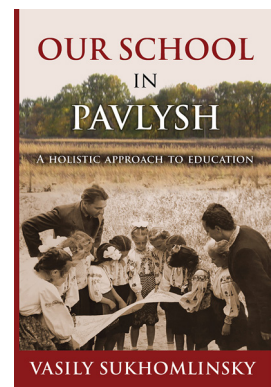
After school Zoya could not find her green mittens. She felt too ashamed to tell her new friends that her mittens had disappeared. Could it really be that someone had taken them?

Zoya walked home quiet and thoughtful. There was a frost outside, and by the time she reached home her hands were frozen. Her mother asked her, 'Where are your mittens, Zoya?'

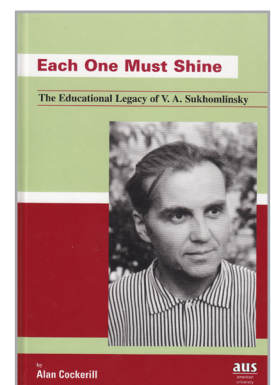
'Oh, mum,' said Zoya, 'I was crossing a bridge over a deep ravine... I took my mittens off for a second and the wind caught them and carried them down into the ravine...'



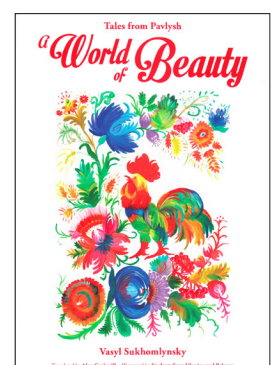
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'How careless you are,' said her mother reproachfully. 'It is just as well that you still have some other mittens—green, red and white. Which ones will you wear tomorrow?'

'The green ones, mum.'

Why everyone was happy

Our whole class went for a walk in the forest. It was a warm, spring day, the sun was shining brightly, and birds were singing. We had fun in the forest. We pretended to be partisans and admired the beautiful flowers and butterflies.

Towards evening we arrived at a green clearing and sat down to rest. Once we were refreshed, we stood up to go home. Suddenly someone called out, 'Galya can't find her scarf.' Galya was standing under an oak tree, looking upset and confused. The teacher said, 'Perhaps you lost it in the forest.'

'No, I had it just now. I just took it off and put it down on the grass.'

We walked around the clearing, looking for the scarf in the grass. There was no scarf to be found. We all felt awkward. Everyone was quiet. We could not look each other in the eye. We walked out of the forest and set off for home in silence.

Suddenly someone called out, 'Look, there's a scarf hanging in that oak tree!'

Everyone turned around and saw Galya's white scarf hanging in an oak tree.

'I hung it there and forgot,' said Galya quietly.

Everyone was suddenly happy. Now nobody was silent. We all talked about how much fun we had had in the forest.

The red star

Sashko in grade one is very happy. His brother Mikhail has some leave and has come to visit. He serves as a border guard in the Soviet Army.

Sashko admires his brother's army cap with its red star. While he is on leave, Mikhail wears a suit, a coat and fur hat, and his army uniform and cap hang in his wardrobe next to his greatcoat. When no-one else is at home, Sashko tries on his brother's cap, picks up a wooden sword and stands to attention. He wants to be a border guard.

There are two days left until Mikhail must leave. Sashko has an idea. He takes the red star off his brother's cap and hides it in his school bag. He thinks to himself, 'When my brother leaves, I'll show it to my friends, and they will be so jealous! And I will take the star and join the army.'

The day arrives when Mikhail must leave. He puts on his uniform and says goodbye to his parents. He puts on his cap, and the star is missing. 'How could I lose it?' says Mikhail in dismay. 'I'll be punished now.'

'What do you mean, you'll be punished?' asks Sashko. 'What will they punish you for?'

Mikhail explains to Sashko that he will be placed under arrest for such a misdemeanour.

Sashko retrieves the star from his school bag, gives it to Mikhail, and says, 'Place me under arrest...'

Mikhail attaches the star to his cap and says, 'You're still too small.'

'Can't you arrest me just for one day?' asks Sashko.

The big glass

In a small village school, there are two classes. In each class there are 25 students. During the lunch break, the children come to the dining room to drink a glass of milk. Grandma Maria, the school cook, places 25 glasses of milk on a large wooden tray. On the table she places 25 pieces of white bread and butter. In the school dining room, there are 24 ordinary glasses and one large glass that is much bigger than the others.

When the first class enters the dining room all the children run over to the large wooden tray. Several children's hands reach for the large glass and one of them is lucky enough to grab it. The ones who miss out are envious of the lucky one. Grandma Maria looks at the children, shakes her head, and says, 'These children haven't been educated properly...'

Then the second class comes to the dining room. The children approach the wooden tray quietly and take the ordinary glasses. The big glass is left on the tray. Grandma Maria says, 'Why isn't anyone taking the big glass?' One slow, shy child, who is clearly embarrassed, comes and takes the big glass. Grandma Maria smiles tenderly and says, 'What well-educated children...'

We're not going any further with you

Three pioneers—Mikhail, Yuri and Vasyl—set off on a long hike. They had to walk through a very extensive forest and find a dug-out where partisans lived during the Great Patriotic War. It was not easy to follow the forest paths. The boys tired. At midday they came across a little forest stream. Its pure spring water babbled soothingly.

The young explorers sat down and lay their rucksacks on the grass. They decided to stop and rest. Mikhail and Yuri went over to the stream, crouched on their knees, and drank deeply. 'What sweet-tasting water!' they said.

Vasyl also went over to the stream, sat on the grass, took off his boots, and began to wash his feet in the stream. Mikhail and Yura exchanged glances. They went over to Vasyl, and Mikhail said, 'Vasyl, we're not going any further with you. You can go back home.'

How two boys ate some honey

A mother sent her two seven-year-old twins, Oleg and Roman, to visit their grandfather in a neighbouring village. The brothers were delighted. They had not visited their grandfather for a long time. He had tasty apples growing in his garden. 'We'll get to eat some,' they thought.

They brought their grandfather a shirt that their mother had embroidered. Their grandfather thanked them and said, 'Go into the garden, boys, and pick yourselves some apples.'

Oleg and Roman ran into the garden. There were lots of apples and they were all tasty. The boys climbed into one apple tree and picked some apples. Then they climbed into another tree, and the apples were even more delicious. It was all so tempting...

When they had eaten their fill of apples, their grandfather put a jar of honey on the table. Oleg and Roman had one spoonful each, but they could not eat any more... As they got ready to return home, their grandfather gave them the jar of honey and said, 'Your mother should try the honey, too.'

The boys set off for home. It was a long way to walk, and after a while they were hungry. They sat under a willow tree and ate a little of the honey. They walked on, then stopped again and ate what seemed like just a little honey, but there was not much left in the jar. Then they stopped a third time and polished the honey off.

When they reached home, they sat under a maple tree and thought, 'What will mum say?' Their mother came out of the house and saw her boys sitting under the maple tree, crying.

'What are you crying for, boys?' asked their mother in surprise.

When they told her how they had eaten all the honey, their mother seemed very happy and laughed.

The boys were surprised, and asked, 'What are you so happy about, mum?'

'I'm happy that you are crying...'

How Pavlik copied Zina's homework

Pavlik came to school looking worried. He had spent a long time on a maths problem set for homework but had been unable solve it. Now he had only one thought: whose homework could he copy?

Zina arrived. She was good at solving maths problems. Pavlik asked her, 'Zina, how many steps were there in the maths problem?'

'Three,' answered Zina. 'Couldn't you solve it?'

'No, I couldn't do it... Can I copy yours, Zina?'

'Oh, Pavlik, why don't you think for yourself?' said Zina, but she gave him her exercise book.

Pavlik copied the first step, and then the second. When he came to the third step, he noticed that Zina had made a mistake. She had written 32 instead of 23. Pavlik wrote the correct answer in his own exercise book, but he did not tell Zina about her mistake.

The teacher collected the exercise books to correct the homework. The next day she said, 'Pavlik has full marks. Well done, Pavlik. You worked well on that problem. Zina, I had to take a mark off you, because you made a mistake...'

Zina was surprised and looked over at Pavlik. Pavlik lowered his head and his face turned red.

Honey in his pocket

Dima, Vasya and Yura were getting ready for a walk in the forest. Their mothers gave them a pie each. The friends wrapped their pies in paper and put them in their pockets.

Yura's mother also gave him a little jar of honey. She said to her son, 'Don't tell the other boys you have honey. Find a place in the forest to sit and eat it by yourself.'

Yura put the little jar of honey in his pocket. The friends walked into the forest and finally found a clearing where they could sit and rest. They were hungry and took out their pies and ate them.

Suddenly a bee flew up to Yura, settled on his trousers and tried to crawl into his pocket. Then a second bee came, and a third. A host of bees came flying and they all tried to crawl into Yura's pocket.

Dima and Vasya were amazed. 'What have you got there?' they asked.

And the bees just kept on coming.

Yura took the jar of honey from his pocket and threw it into the grass. It was soon covered in bees.

Yura lowered his head, and Vasya and Dima laughed. 'So that's what you were hiding!' they said.

