

Sukhomlynsky News



From *I'll tell you a story...*

Her heart was singing

Just before classes, the vice-principal of the school approached the mathematics teacher, Mariia Petrivna, and told her, 'I looked through your grade six students' exercise books. Your students seem to be a hopeless lot. They don't make any effort to write properly. I don't think they care about anything.'

Mariia Petrivna listened to the vice-principal in silence. 'Is it possible that my students are that bad?' she thought, and her heart ached. Mariia Petrivna walked over to the window. Through her tears, she saw two of her students, Andriiko and Mykolka, playing in the school yard. They were two troublemakers, but they had kind hearts ... The boys were standing and looking at their teacher. Mariia Petrivna stepped back from the window.

The bell rang for the start of classes. With a heavy sigh, Mariia Petrivna collected the classroom journal and headed off to teach her grade six students.

Before opening the door to the classroom, Mariia Petrivna composed herself and put on her brightest smile, and with that welcoming smile she entered the classroom.

The students were sitting at their desks very quietly. Mariia Petrivna could not remember them ever having been so quiet. In the children's eyes she noticed something extraordinary that she had never seen before. It was a mixture of anxiety and affection.

'Children, today, we will be solving mathematical problems at the blackboard,' she said.

'Mariia Petrivna,' said Andriiko, 'Could you please set us some problems to solve independently?'

'Yes,' other students joined in. 'We feel like solving some problems on our own.'

Mariia Petrivna was astonished. She gave Andriiko a set of cards with individual problems for each student. Andriiko handed the cards out to all the students, and a silence fell over the classroom.

At that moment, Mariia Petrivna's heart was singing.



More stories from Pavlysh

Dear reader,

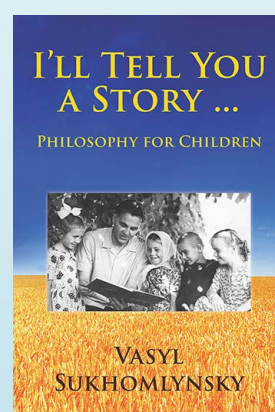
I hope you are well.

This month's newsletter contains another twelve stories from our latest publication, *I'll Tell You a Story, Philosophy for Children*.

If any of these stories touches you or tickles your fancy, please share this pdf newsletter with someone who you think may also appreciate it. Past newsletters can be downloaded at <https://theholisticeducator.net/sukhomlynsky/newsletter/>.

Best wishes,

Alan Cockerill



I'll Tell You a Story ... Philosophy for Children

Over 800 stories

608 pages

Paperback: AU\$44.99

Hardback: AU\$54.99

In stock now at

[The Really Good Bookshop](http://TheReallyGoodBookshop.com)

From *I'll tell you a story ...*

How a gopher ploughed a field and sowed some wheat

The wheat was harvested with a combine harvester, and not a single ear of wheat was left.

On the edge of the forest lived a poor gopher, all by himself. Now there was nothing for him to eat, and he started crying.

Magpie Whitesides flew over, settled on the branch of a tree, and said, 'Don't cry, dear Gopher Softpaws. Make a plough and sow some wheat. It will produce grain, and you'll have something to eat.'

The gopher made a plough and ploughed a big field. He asked the local people for some wheat seed. People felt sorry for the hungry gopher and gave him some seed to plant. The gopher planted the seed, and wheat grew, with large, full ears of grain. The gopher was happy. Now he had enough to eat.

The donkey in a lion's skin

A donkey wanted all the animals to fear him and bow down to him. He found a lion's skin and put it on and fitted the lion's jaw to his mouth. Then he sat under a tree, and started shouting, 'I am a lion, the king of the beasts. I am stronger and cleverer than all of you!'

All the animals in the forest came running. They trembled and bowed down before the lion. A fox also came running. She crept up and sniffed the lion's skin and spotted the donkey's hooves poking out from under it. She whispered to the donkey, 'I know you are a donkey, but I won't tell anyone. Let them all think that you are a lion. They'll bring you lots of meat, and you can give me half.'

'All right,' agreed the donkey, 'But how do I know you won't trick me?'

'I won't trick you. I swear upon my tail,' said the fox.

Since that time, the donkey in a lion's skin has reigned, and the fox has been his chief advisor.

The cheerful loach

A fisherman was sitting on the bank of a pond. He had several rods. Most of the rods had ordinary steel hooks, but one rod had a silver hook.

Ten stupid crucian carp were already caught, and so was a loach. The fisherman put all the fish into a bucket. The crucian carp were very sad. 'How did it happen,' they wondered, 'That the fisherman was able to make fools of us all? He just stuck a piece of worm onto a steel hook, and we took the bait.'

But the loach was very boastful. He always found something to boast about. Even now, in the bucket, he was boasting instead of feeling downcast. 'I am out of your league, you stupid carp!' he cried. 'You were only caught on steel hooks, but I was caught on a silver hook.'

The goat and the hare

A goat was tethered to a stake by the riverbank. The goat was grazing, munching on some grass. Nearby was a field full of cabbages with large, juicy heads. The goat would gladly have eaten some cabbage, but the rope he was tethered to was too short.

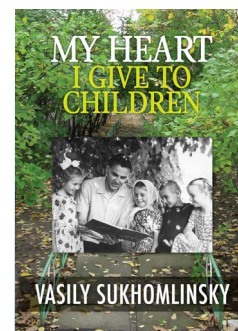
A hare ran by. The goat asked him, 'Where are you off to, hare?'

'I am going to eat some cabbage,' said the hare.

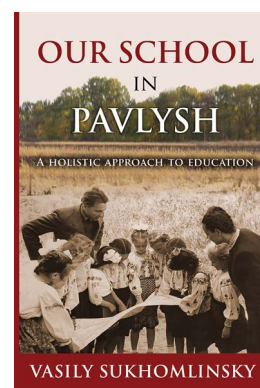
**REALLY GOOD
BOOK SHOP**

<https://www.thereallygoodbookshop.com.au/>

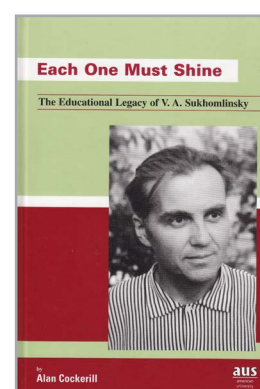
Pricing from
The Really Good Book Shop



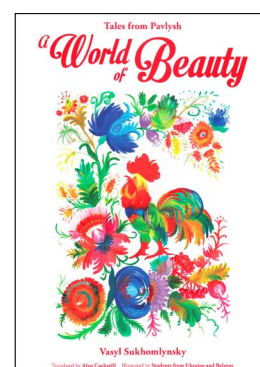
AU\$24.95 (special price)



AU\$34.95



AU\$34.95 (original hardback)



AU\$14.95 (original edition)

‘Ooh, I hate cabbage. I can’t even bear to look at it,’ said the goat, and made a wry face.

The hare tucked into the cabbage, but the goat kept on grumbling, ‘I don’t know how rabbits and hares can eat cabbage. I wouldn’t touch it!’

The boy with a weak heart

There is a boy named Tarasyk studying at our school. He has a weak heart and cannot walk quickly. As soon as he hurries, he becomes breathless.

The children decided to go walking in the forest on Sunday, and Tarasyk wanted to go with them. They gathered early in the morning in the school yard. Tarasyk came too. He brought a bag with some food and a thermos with some water. The children carried his bag for him, and they all set off into the forest.

They walked very slowly, so that Tarasyk would not be exhausted. Petryk wanted to walk faster, and so did Oleh. When they walked on ahead everyone shouted, ‘Have you forgotten that Tarasyk is with us?’

The boys stopped and waited for their friends to catch up. The most beautiful friendship is when even one who suffers misfortune is happy.

Don’t read the story about Yarynka

‘At the next class, we will be reading a story about Yarynka,’ announced the teacher. Olenka and Galynka had read that story at home. It was about a little girl whose father died.

During the break before the reading class, Olenka and Galynka approached the teacher in the corridor and pleaded, ‘Please don’t read the story about Yarynka.’

‘Why?’ asked their teacher.

‘Our Oksanka’s father is in hospital,’ they said. ‘He’s very sick. Oksanka was crying yesterday.’

‘All right, girls,’ quietly promised the teacher and kissed them both on the forehead.

The rainbow in the stone

Myshko spotted a stray puppy in the yard. He thought it looked ugly. The puppy sensed Myshko’s attitude and ran away from the boy. Myshko picked up a stick, ran after the puppy, and hit it.

The puppy yelped and took off into the bushes. Myshko wanted to chase the puppy and hit it again, but he tripped and hit his toe against something. Myshko looked down at his feet and saw a stone. The boy picked it up and wiped it clean, and the stone started shining with all colours of the rainbow.

Myshko sat on the grass, mesmerized by the stone’s beauty. He gazed at it, turning it over in

his hands, and each time he rotated it, it sparkled brightly with all the colours of the rainbow.

Myshko put the stone close to his heart and looked around. Now, everything around him seemed different. He saw that the sky, which previously had seemed pale and dull, was actually a clear blue. He now noticed a flower of stunning beauty poking out of the grass, and the village, drowning in a sea of green gardens, looked like something out of a fairy tale.

Now the boy’s heart ached with pity for the little puppy, who was hiding in the bushes. Myshko looked into the puppies sad, frightened eyes, and his own eyes filled with tears. He lifted the puppy into his arms, hugged him, and took him home.

Myshko spread an old blanket out in their shed, sat the puppy on it, and gave him a saucer of milk. The puppy, still trembling, now trustfully snuggled up to the boy.

From time to time, Myshko took the stone out of his pocket and smiled with joy.

Silent water

During the night it rained. Heavy drops drummed on the steel roof of our house, as if dozens of rabbits were dancing there. The rain was in a good mood and chattered noisily as it streamed down the downpipe. It told of a dark cloud, fierce thunder, and bright flashes of lightning. It was also complaining about something.

I went out to the downpipe and watched the stream of water pouring into a barrel. I listened carefully, trying to understand what it was complaining about. It turned out that it did not want to be confined in the barrel. It said, ‘What can I do in a barrel? I’ll be silent and stop being a stream.’

In the morning, I went out again to the barrel, which was now full of water. The stream of water had been trapped. I opened the tap at the bottom of the barrel, and water streamed out. A stream of water now babbled happily, ‘Thank you, dear girl, for setting me free!’



A dog and a sheepskin coat

A shepherd was pasturing a herd of cattle over the summer, and his dog was helping him. The shepherd had a sheepskin coat. He would often leave it under a haystack and order his dog to guard it, and the dog did so while the shepherd drove the cows to water.

Autumn arrived, and the shepherd took the cattle back to the village, but he forgot all about his sheepskin coat. It still lay covered with straw, and the dog lay near it, vigilantly guarding it. Days and weeks passed. Snow covered the fields.

The sheepskin coat said to the dog, 'Go back to the village. The shepherd has forgotten all about me. What is the point of you staying here?' The dog replied, 'My master told me to guard you. I have to guard you until he returns.'

'What if he never returns?' asked the coat.

'That is not possible,' replied the dog.

It was bitterly cold. The dog was starving. He had to dig the frozen ground to find some potatoes to eat. By springtime, the dog had almost wasted away and was very weak. The sun started giving more warmth, and the shepherd returned to the pastures with the cattle. He was deeply moved when he saw his dog still guarding his sheepskin coat. He hugged the dog and said, 'You are my faithful friend!'

The dog whined joyfully. He was saying, 'Haven't I shown you that many times before?'

An apple for grandma

On Sunday, a little boy named Serhiiko visited his grandfather—his mother's father. His grandfather gave him a large apple, saying, 'This apple is for your grandma. Please give it to her and pass on my best wishes!' The grandmother he was to give the apple to was Serhiiko's father's mother.

Serhiiko put the apple in his pocket and set off for home. He kept his hand in his pocket to warm up the apple. Serhiiko imagined how happy his grandmother would be when he gave her the apple and passed on his grandfather's greeting.

Finally, he reached home. When Serhiiko entered the front yard, he saw a lot of sad, concerned people. He entered the house. His mother and father were sitting by a bed with tears in their eyes.

Serhiiko's grandmother had died.

Serhiiko stood by the bed with his head bowed. He took the apple out of his pocket and gently placed it in his grandmother's palm.

It's lesson time

In the middle of the steppe was a little village with about forty homes. The school in that little village was tiny. It had just fifteen students and one teacher. It did not need a bell to announce that classes were starting, or a large corridor to run down during breaks between classes. The children would play outside on the green grass, and in the winter, they would skate on a pond that lay within a stone's throw of the school.

One warm morning in May, the children went out for their break and became totally absorbed in their games. It was already time to go inside and start lessons, and the teacher had already called the students three times, but they seemed not to hear him.

The teacher went outside onto the grass and told them, 'It's lesson time.'

The children sensed a reproach in the words their old teacher spoke and felt that they had disappointed him. They fell silent and shuffled awkwardly over to their teacher.

Just then, they heard music coming from the other side of the village. It was a funeral procession. Old Grandma Hanna, who had died without any relatives, was being carried to the cemetery. The funeral procession approached the school. The teacher stood silently—sad, and deep in thought. The children also felt sad.

Without a word, the teacher joined the funeral procession. The children followed him. After Grandma Hanna was buried, the teacher repeated the words, 'It's lesson time.' But this time, the words sounded very different. The children sensed in them reflection on the eternal questions of life and death. Each word was like a gentle hand, stroking them on the head.

The children were silent.

