

MOTHER MELANIA'S MONTHLY MISSIVE - November 2023

A not entirely random mix of reflections on life, coloring pages, thoughts about kids' books & updates on Mother Melania's books

Today's Reflection -

Parents Aren't Perfect

This month's Beatrix Potter book is *The Tale of Tom Kitten*. The book starts out strongly reminiscent of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* - well-behaved girl animals with a naughty brother, Tom Kitten, the naughty brother, scratches his mom when she's combing his tails and whiskers). As the tale unfolds, though, all three kittens (Tom, Mopsy, and Mittens) get in trouble, but it's not really their fault. Instead, the problem was their mother's unwise decision to dress them in their best clothes (to impress the dinner guests who were coming) and THEN send them into the garden. That was a disaster waiting to happen! They actually TRIED to stay presentable, but it just wasn't possible. Then, to make matters worse, the puddle-ducks ended up taking all their clothes. (Sorry, I don't know what makes a duck a puddle duck, but we may find out next month when we read *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck!*). When they get home, their mother sends them upstairs and tells her guests that they are sick.

My first thought was 'What in the world do we want kids to get out of this?! The mom is acting worse than her kids!' But there is at least one crucially important point for a parent to make while reading this book to their kids. And the point is 'Honey, I'm not perfect. I sometimes do hurtful, sinful things. But when I realize it, I will ask your forgiveness and I will, with God's help, change my behavior.'

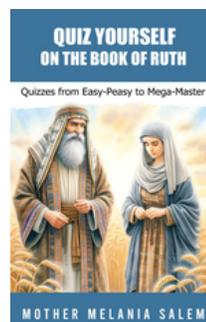
That's a pretty humbling thing to have to say, and I'm sure we'd all like to live in such a way that we'd never have to say it. But kids don't need PERFECT role models. They need consistent, honest ones.. After all, they will make plenty of their own mistakes. So, if you can model humility and an honest effort to change, you will do more for your children than you can ever imagine.

And it doesn't hurt to be more practical, too. So, next time you're having a dinner party, don't send your kids out into the garden in their best clothes!

Mother Melania's Book Update

Quiz Yourself on the Book of Ruth is available as a Kindle e-book for \$0.99 throughout November. Then it will increase to \$2.99.

We will soon be making these individual quizzes available as saddle-stitched brochures. That sounds impressive, doesn't it? Well, it just means stapled together to form a booklet. Nevertheless, we have learned how to do these in house, and so, we are very excited!



Classic Kids' Books: The Tale of Tom Kitten

Tom Kitten and his sisters get in a bit of trouble when their mother sends them out into the garden in their good clothes, but it's really more her fault than theirs. Grown ups can act badly, too! Who knew? Join us and see how it all plays out!



For a free copy of *The Tale of Tom Kitten*, click [here](#)

What's in the Back Pages?

- *Tale of Tom Kitten* worksheets
- Scripture verse coloring page



THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN - Discussion Questions

- Who is Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit? Do you remember her from another book? What was she like?
 - The mother of Tom, Mittens, and Moppet
 - She was in *The Tale of the Pie and the Patty Pan*, where she is quite the gossip
- What is Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit doing with her kittens in the beginning of the story? Why?
 - she's getting them all cleaned up and in their nicest clothes
 - because she is having 'fine company' over for tea
- What does Tom do that shows he's a 'very naughty' kitty?
 - He scratches when his mom she combs his tail and whiskers
- How are Tom's clothes different from his sisters' clothes?
 - Theirs are typical girl clothes of the time, his are typical boy clothes
 - His are much less comfortable than theirs
 - He has gained weight. So, his clothes don't fit him very well
- When the kittens are dressed, Tabitha Twitchit sends them into the garden to get out of her way. What does she tell them to do out there? Why does she tell them this? Why was this unwise?
 - keep their clothes clean; walk on their hind legs; stay away from the ash-pit, Sally Henny Penny, the pig-stye, and the Puddle-Ducks
 - She wants them to stay clean
 - Although they tried, the kittens couldn't stay clean, because they can't easily stand on two legs.
- What do the kittens do when their clothes start getting dirty?
 - They decide to climb up the rockery to sit on the garden wall (probably they think they won't get even dirtier up there)
 - Mittens and Moppet turn their pinafores round and skip and jump easily onto the wall, but Moppet loses her tucker in the process
 - Tom has to climb up the rockery because he's wearing trousers.
- What happens to Tom then?
 - His buttons all start bursting
 - His sisters try to put him back together, his hat falls off, and the rest of his buttons burst
- What happens next?
 - The Puddle-Ducks come by
 - Rebeccah and Jemima Puddle-Duck take the tucker and hat and put them on
 - The kittens laugh so hard that they fall off the wall and lose the rest of their clothes
 - Moppet asks Drake Puddle-Duck to help her and Mittens to dress Tom again
 - Drake puts on Tom's clothes instead
 - Then the Puddle-Ducks go away, wearing all the kittens' clothes (and looking pretty silly)
 - Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit comes out & sees the kittens on the garden wall with no clothes on
- Then what happens?
 - Tabitha Twitchit pulls the kittens off the wall, smacks them, takes them home, sends them upstairs and tells her guests the kittens have the measles
 - The kittens play very loudly so that the guests can hear them

THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN - Discussion Questions

- What happens to the Puddle-ducks?
 - They go to the pond and lose the kittens' clothes because all the buttons are gone
 - They keep looking for the clothes (but never find them)
- How well do the different animals behave in this story?
 - Tabitha Twitchit acts the worst. She unwisely sends her kittens outside and gets mad at them when they get dirty, although she would have known better. Then she punishes them, though it's much more her fault than theirs
 - Tom Kitten starts out acting badly (scratching), but he seems to be doing his best to behave until the end, when he is loud and rambunctious when his mother probably wants him to be quiet
 - Mittens and Moppet try to obey their mom except at the end when they're playing loudly with Tom
 - The Puddle-Ducks shouldn't have taken the kittens' clothes
- What do you think of how Tabitha Twitchit treated her kittens?
 - Answers will vary
 - She blamed and punished them for a situation that was much more her fault than theirs
 - She lied to her friends about why the kittens were upstairs
 - NOTE - this is a great opportunity to tell your children that you realize you sometimes get angry when you shouldn't, make a bad decision, etc. AND when you realize you've done something like that, you will apologize and do your best to make amends
- What was your favorite picture? Why?
 - Answers will vary
 - This is an opportunity to look closely at the pictures for details
 - One thing I noticed is that when Tabitha Twitchit was cleaning up the kittens, Tom is portrayed as being the most mischievous
- What are some lessons you learned from this story?
 - Don't scratch or act bad in other ways
 - Don't lie to people
 - If you do something bad, ask forgiveness as soon as you can

THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN - Vocabulary

Advance - to go forward

Affront - to insult

Article - a particular item (like a piece of clothing or a small kitchen appliance)

Burst - to break suddenly (like a balloon)

Contrary - opposite

Descend - to go down

Difficulties - troubles

Dignity - being worthy of honor

Directly - right away

Disturb - to upset

Drake - a male duck

Elegant - stylish and graceful

Extraordinary - very unusual, amazing

Fetch - to bring something back

Frock - a kind of girl's or woman's dress

Hind - at the back

Pigsty - pigpen

Pinafore - a kind of apron girls wore to keep their clothes clean

Presently - now, soon

Repose - calm, rest, sleep

Tea - an afternoon meal that is common in England

Trousers - slacks, pants

Tucker - a kind of bib

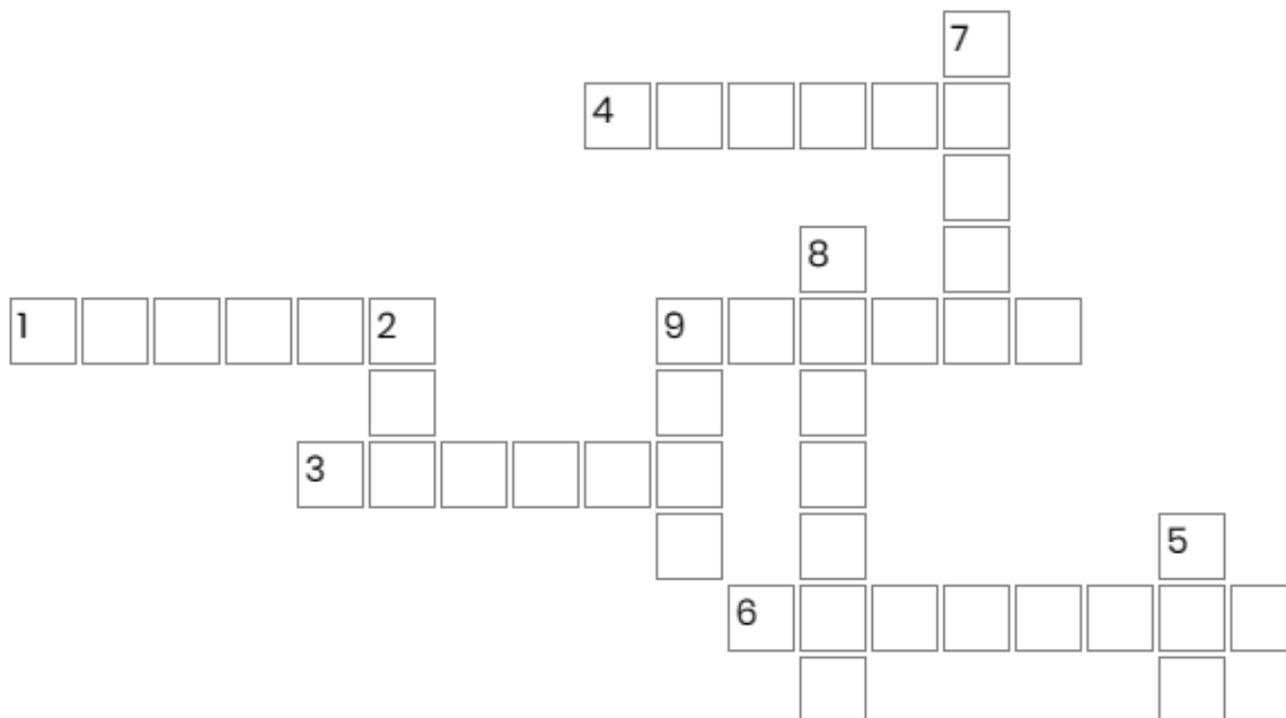
Unsteady - shaky, likely to fall

Various - several, of different kinds

THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN - Matching

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Advance | to go forward |
| 2. Affront | to insult |
| 3. Article | a particular item |
| 4. Burst | to break suddenly (like a balloon) |
| 5. Contrary | opposite |
| 6. Descend | to go down |
| 7. Difficulties | troubles |
| 8. Dignity | being worthy of honor |
| 9. Directly | right away |
| 10. Disturb | to upset |
| 11. Drake | a male duck |
| 12. Elegant | stylish and graceful |
| 13. Extraordinary | very unusual, amazing |
| 14. Fetch | to bring something back |
| 15. Frock | a kind of girl's or woman's dress |
| 16. Hind | at the back |
| 17. Pigsty | pigpen |
| 18. Pinafore | a kind of apron girls wore to keep their clothes clean |
| 19. Presently | now, soon |
| 20. Repose | calm, rest, sleep |
| 21. Tea | an afternoon meal that is common in England |
| 22. Trousers | slacks, pants |
| 23. Tucker | a kind of bib |
| 24. Unsteady | shaky, likely to fall |
| 25. Various | several, of different kinds |

THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN - Crossword



Across

[1] Tom Kitten's sisters and Mittens and _____.

[3] Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit sent her kittens out into the _____.

[4] Moppet's _____ fell down into the road.

[6] _____ and Jemima Puddle-duck put on Tom's hat and Moppet's tucker.

[9] Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit _____ her kittens off the garden wall and smacked them.

Down

[2] Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit was expecting friends to _____.

[5] Tom's _____ fell off and the rest of his buttons burst.

[7] Moppet asked _____ Puddle-duck to help dress Tom.

[8] Drake put Tom's _____ on himself.

[9] The Puddle-ducks lost the kittens' clothes in the _____.

THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN - Word Search

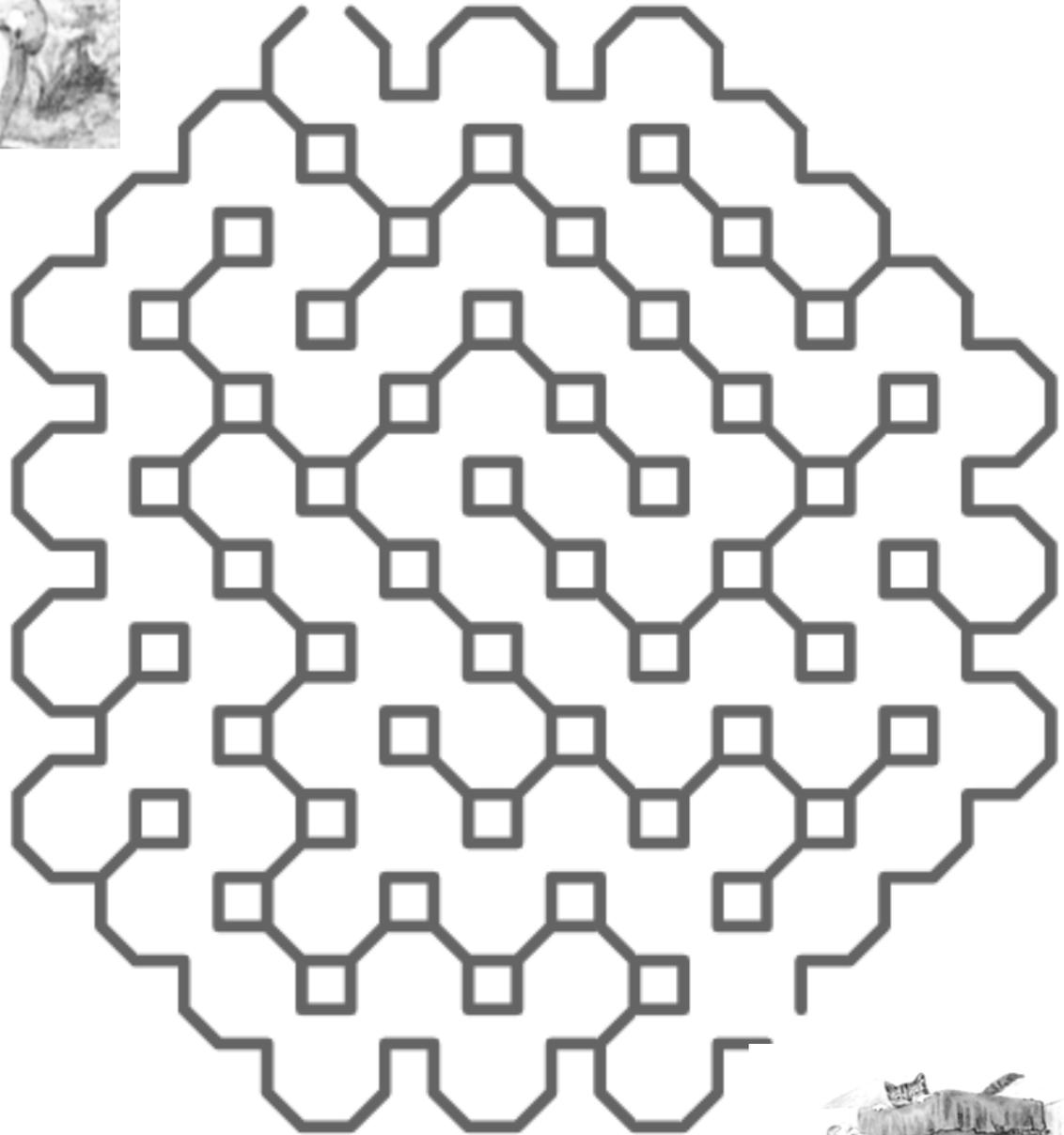


ARTICLES
CLOTHES
FRIENDS
GARDEN
KITTEN
MITTENS
PINAFORE
REBECCA
TOM
TWITCHIT

BUTTONS
DRAKE
FROCK
JEMIMA
MEASLES
MOPPET
PUDDLE
TABITHA
TUCKER
WALL

THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN - Maze

Help Mrs. Tabita Twitchit bring her kittens back home.



THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN

- Coloring Page



THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN

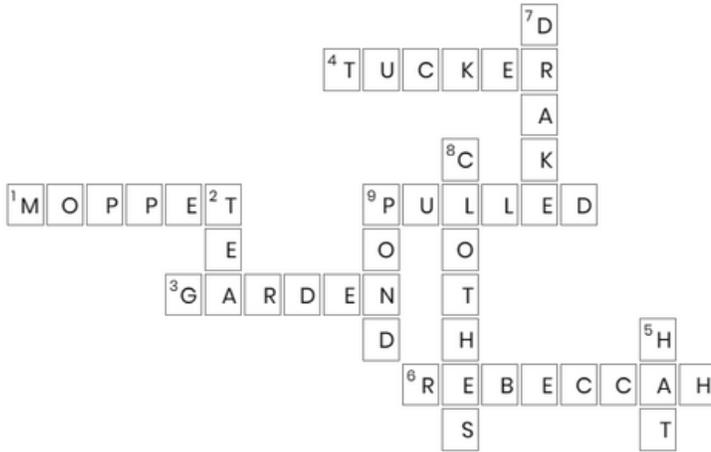
- Coloring Page



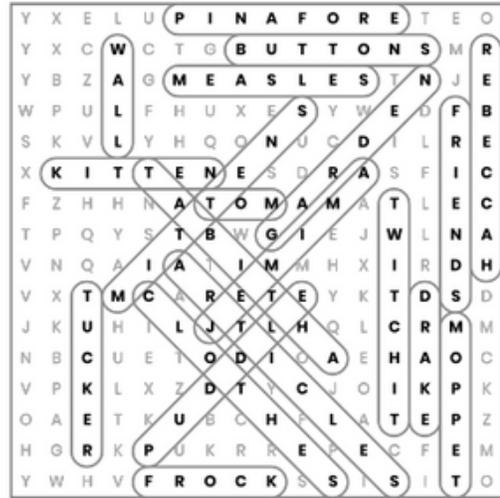
SOLUTIONS - THE TALE OF TOM KITTEN

Matching

Crossword



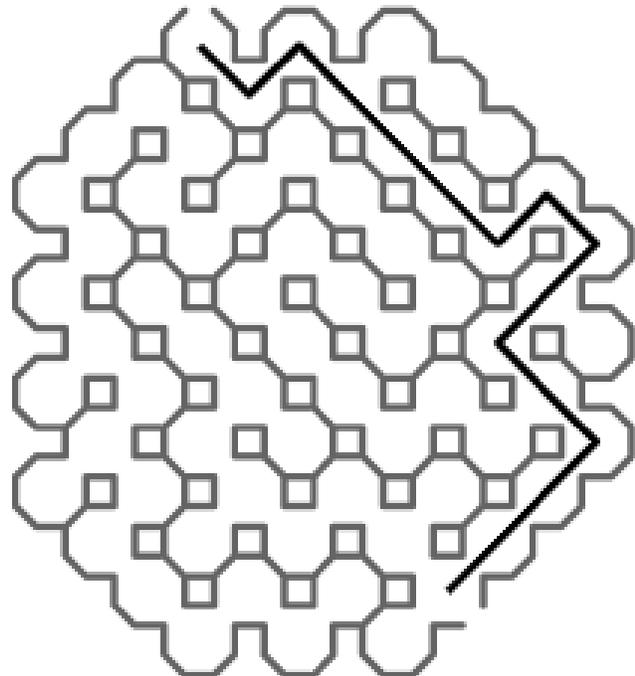
Word Search



Scramble

- MPEPOT M O P P E T
- TTHABIA T A B I T H A
- MTETNIS M I T T E N S
- MTO T O M
- KETITN K I T T E N
- JIEMMA J E M I M A
- RECBEACH R E B E C C A H
- KDEAR D R A K E
- GDERAN G A R D E N
- TKUECR T U C K E R
- ODPN P O N D
- TOUSERRS T R O U S E R S

Maze



And be ye kind one to another,
tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even
as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Ephesians 4:32



**Did anybody ever get mad at you when you think you
didn't do anything wrong?**

What can you do instead of just getting mad at them?