

MOTHER MELANIA'S MONTHLY MISSIVE - February 2024

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

Today's Reflection - Nobody's Perfect!

This month's Beatrix Potter book is *The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies*. The Flopsy Bunnies are the children of Benjamin and Flopsy Bunny, whom Potter describes as improvident and cheerful. My first thought was, "Sure, they can afford to be cheerful because others always provide for them." (See the synopsis for more details). So, I was thinking of their cheerfulness as a fault, not a virtue. But as I thought more about it, it seemed to me that their cheerfulness was a true virtue. Unfortunately, though, it probably exacerbated their improvidence and their inconsiderateness of those who helped them.

That got me thinking of how tempting it is to focus so much on people's faults that we lump their virtues in with the faults! For example, we probably all know someone who combines religious earnestness with judging the rest of us, and we lump it all together as hypocrisy. Yes, there may well be some hypocrisy there. Yet, if we discount the possibility that the earnestness is real, we will make that person's faults worse, not better. To make matters worse, we find ourselves judging them for judging us. So, how are WE any better?! Alas! What to do?

I'm reminded of the advice to be like a bee, taking the pollen and turning it into honey, instead of being like a fly, who focuses on what is rotting.

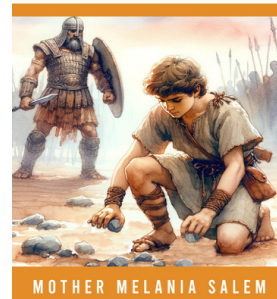
So, next time we're tempted to write off someone altogether, let's look for their virtues and emulate them. We may just find that they are a lot more virtuous than we are!

Mother Melania's Book Update

I've finally finished *I Samuel (I Kingdoms)*! It is available as a Kindle book through the end of February for \$0.99 or as a printed booklet from the monastery for \$2.99. Hopefully, *II Samuel* will be out NEXT month! I haven't gotten very far on the *Monastery Birds Coloring Book*, but maybe I'll get THAT done, too! Hope springs eternal!

QUIZ YOURSELF ON
I SAMUEL (I KINGDOMS)

Quizzes from Easy-Peasy to Mega-Master



Classic Kids' Books:

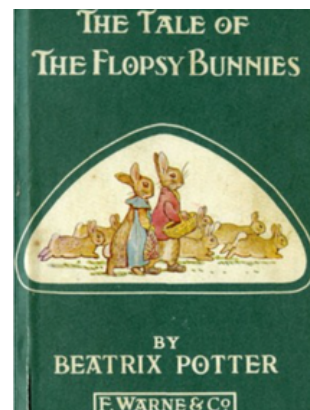
The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies

Benjamin Bunny, his wife Flopsy, and their children (the Flopsy bunnies) are improvident but cheerful. So, when the long-suffering Peter Rabbit has no cabbages to spare, Benjamin and the bunnies decide to raid Mr McGregor's rubbish heap. To their delight, they find a lot of lettuce, which they love, but which also puts rabbits to sleep.

Mr. McGregor finds them asleep and his intentions aren't exactly benevolent. How do they escape? Do they learn their lesson at last?

Join us and find out!

For a free copy of *The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies*, click [here](#)



What's in the Back Pages?

- *Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies* worksheets
- Scripture verse coloring page



THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES - Discussion Questions

- Who in these stories showed up in previous books?
 - Benjamin Bunny, Flopsy Bunny, Peter Rabbit, Mr and Mrs McGregor
- How are they the same or different from the previous books?
 - Answers will vary
- Who are the parents of the Flopsy Bunnies?
 - Benjamin Bunny and Flopsy
- How does Benjamin Bunny usually get food when there isn't enough for his family?
 - Peter Rabbit gives him cabbages from his nursery garden
- Why do you think Peter helps him?
 - Benjamin is his cousin, Flopsy is his sister, and the Flopsy bunnies are his nieces and nephews. So, he probably feels some responsibility for them
- When Peter doesn't have any food to spare, where do Benjamin and the Flopsy Bunnies go to find food, and what kind of food do they find?
 - Mr McGregor's rubbish heap
 - A lot of overgrown lettuce
- What happens to Benjamin and the Flopsy Bunnies after they eat the lettuce? Why?
 - They fall asleep because lettuce is soporific (sleep-causing) for rabbits
- Who discovers the sleeping Benjamin and the Flopsy Bunnies, and what does she do?
 - Thomasina Tittlemouse, she wakes up Benjamin
- What happens when Mr McGregor comes by?
 - Thomasina hides in a jam pot. Benjamin hides under the paper bag he had put over his head to protect himself from flies
 - Mr McGregor pours out lawn clippings onto the sleeping Flopsy Bunnies
 - He sees the tips of their ears sticking out
 - He puts them all in a sack, ties it up, leaves the sack on the wall, and goes off to put his mower away
- Who comes by after McGregor leaves? What happens then?
 - Flopsy
 - Benjamin and Thomasina come out of hiding and tell her what happened
 - Flopsy and Benjamin try to untie the sack, but can't
 - Thomasina nibbled a hole in the bottom of the sack
 - They pull the bunnies out and pinch them to wake them up
 - Benjamin and Flopsy stuff the sack with marrows, turnips, and a blacking-brush
 - They hide and wait for Mr McGregor to come back, then follow at a distance when he takes the sack to his house

THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES – Discussion Questions continued

- What does Mr. McGregor plan to do with the Flopsy Bunnies? What does Mrs. McGregor want to do instead?
 - Mr. McGregor wants to sell them to buy baccy (tobacco).
 - Mrs. McGregor wants to skin them to line her cloak
- What happens when Mrs. McGregor opens the sack and finds that the bunnies aren't there?
 - She gets mad at Mr. McGregor because she thinks he had just made up a story
 - Mr. McGregor gets mad, throws one of the marrows, and (without knowing it) hits the youngest bunny
 - Benjamin and Flopsy decide it's time to go home.
- What does Thomasina get next Christmas? Why do you think the bunnies gave it to her?
 - Enough rabbit wool to make herself a cloak, a hood, a muff, and a pair of mittens
 - The bunnies were grateful that she saved the little bunnies
- What does 'improvident' mean? How does the improvidence of Benjamin and Flopsy cause trouble for their family?
 - Not providing for the future
 - They run out of food a lot and have to borrow from Peter Rabbit
 - When Peter doesn't have enough food, Benjamin and family raid Mr. McGregor's rubbish heap, which is dangerous
 - The Flopsy Bunnies get put in a sack and would have been sold or killed if they hadn't been rescued.
- What was your favorite picture? Why?
 - Answers will vary
 - This is an opportunity to look closely at the pictures for details
- What lessons do you think the bunnies learned (or should have learned) from their adventure?
 - It's better to work for your living than to beg your family or raid a rubbish heap!
 - Being greedy for food or anything else can have bad consequences you didn't think of
 - If you get into a bad situation, don't lose heart
- What do you think this means? "A friend in need is a friend indeed." Who shows herself to be a friend indeed in this story? How?
 - You can tell who your true friends are when you're in trouble
 - Thomasina Tittlemouse gnaws a hole in the sack to save the bunnies, instead of running away

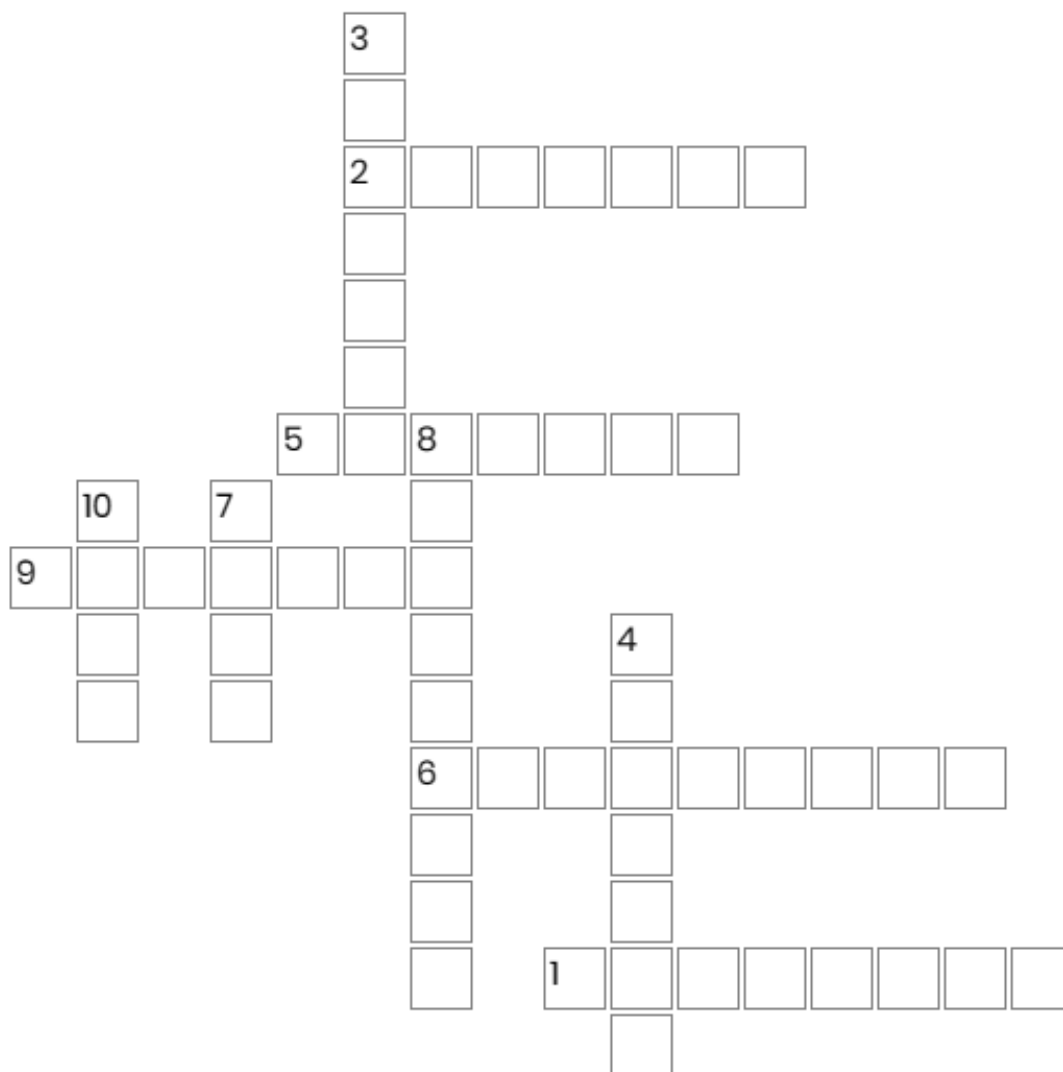
THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES - Vocabulary

1. Apologize: To say sorry for doing something wrong.
2. Blacking Brush: A brush used for making shoes shiny.
3. Bluebottle: A big, noisy fly.
4. Clackety: Making a sharp sound like hard objects hitting each other.
5. Decayed: Rotted or broken down.
6. Doleful: Looking or feeling sad.
7. Improvident: Not planning for the future.
8. Marrow: A type of squash.
9. Nursery Garden: A place where young plants are grown.
10. Overcome: To successfully deal with.
11. Profusely: A lot or in large amounts.
12. Resourceful: Good at solving problems.
13. Rustle: To make a sound like leaves moving or paper rubbing together
14. Separate: Different or individual
15. Shrink: To become smaller or to make something smaller.
16. Slumber: To sleep.
17. Soporific: Making you feel sleepy.
18. Sufficiently: Enough or adequately.
19. Tread: A step in walking or the sound of a step.
20. Window Sill: The flat part at the bottom of a window

THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES - Matching

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Apologize | a. make a sound like leaves moving or paper rubbing together |
| 2. Blacking Brush | b. Different or individual. |
| 3. Bluebottle | c. Enough or adequately. |
| 4. Clackety | d. Not planning for the future. |
| 5. Decayed | e. A type of squash. |
| 6. Doleful | f. Rotted or broken down. |
| 7. Improvident | g. Making you feel sleepy. |
| 8. Marrow | h. To successfully deal with. |
| 9. Nursery Garden | i. The flat part at the bottom of a window. |
| 10. Overcome | j. A brush used for making shoes shiny. |
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| 12. Resourceful | l. To say sorry for doing something wrong. |
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| 18. Sufficiently | r. To become smaller or to make something smaller. |
| 19. Tread | s. Looking or feeling sad. |
| 20. Window Sill | t. A lot or in large amounts. |

THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES - Crossword



Across

- [1]** Flopsy married _____ Bunny.
- [2]** Benjamin and Flopsy's children were generally called the Flopsy _____.
- [5]** Benjamin and family found _____ in Mr. McGregor's rubbish heap.
- [6]** Eating too much lettuce has a _____ on rabbits.
- [9]** Mr. McGregor wanted to sell the bunnies to buy _____.

Down

- [3]** Benjamin Bunny would often borrow _____ from Peter Rabbit.
- [4]** Peter Rabbit was Flopsy's _____.
- [7]** Mr. McGregor put the Flopsy bunnies in a _____.
- [8]** _____ Tittlemouse chewed a hole in the sack to save the Flopsy bunnies.
- [10]** Thomasina got a gift of rabbit _____ the next Christmas.

THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES - Word Search



BENJAMIN
BUNNIES
CHEERFUL
FLOPSY
LETTUCE
NURSERY
PETER
RUBBISH
SOPOFORIC
TURNIP

BLUEBOTTLE
CABBAGE
CLOAK
IMPROVIDENT
MARROW
OVERGROWN
RABBIT
SLUMBER
THOMASINA
WOODMOUSE

THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES - Scramble

LACKO

ODOH

TIURNP

BIUENNS

WOMOSDOUE

BJANIEMN

FPSOLY

ETREP

ACKS

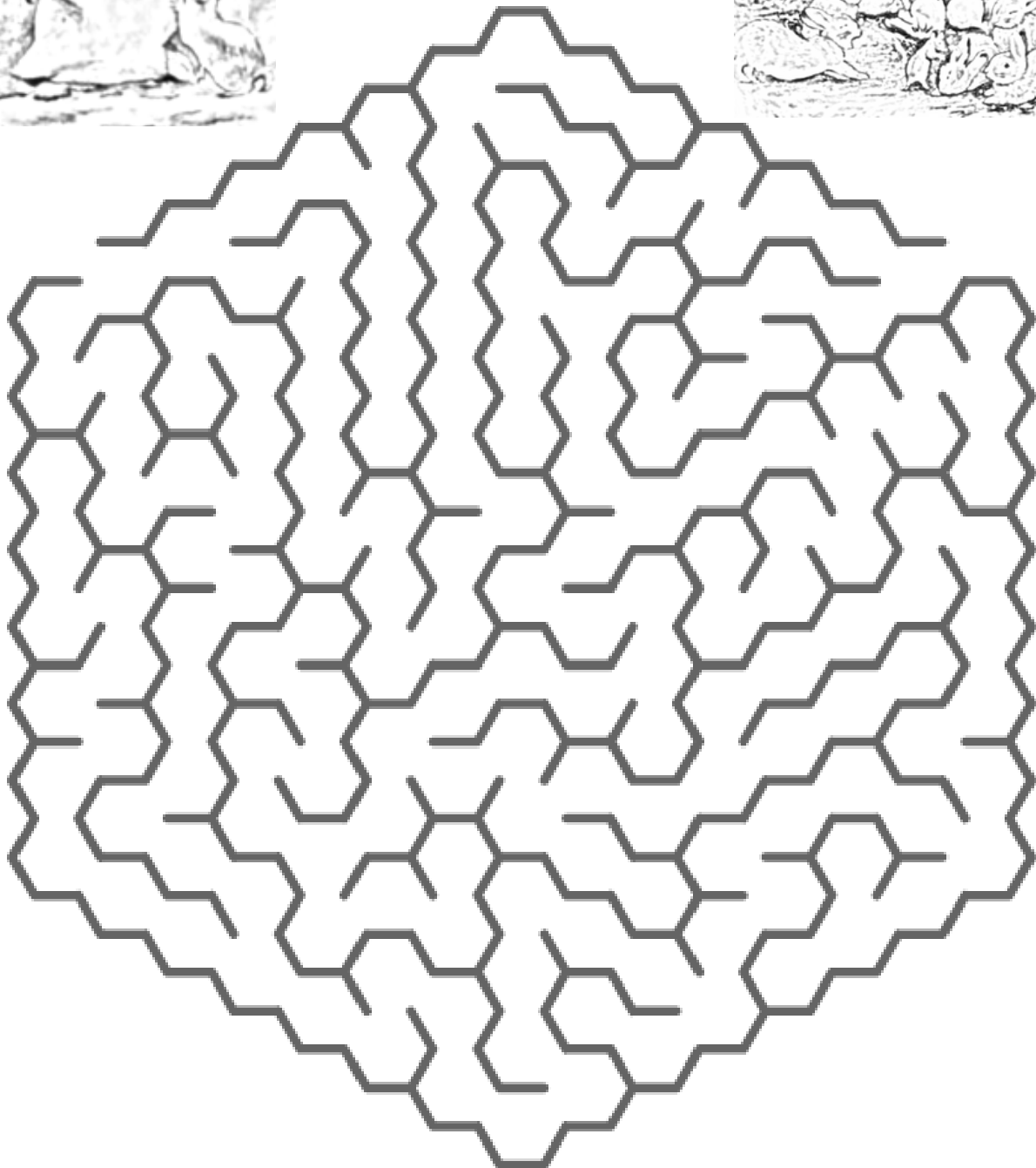
IVRONDMPIET

LTUCETE

FILMAY

THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES - Maze

Help Thomasina Tittlemouse rescue the Flopsy Bunnies



THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES

- Coloring Page



THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES

- Coloring Page

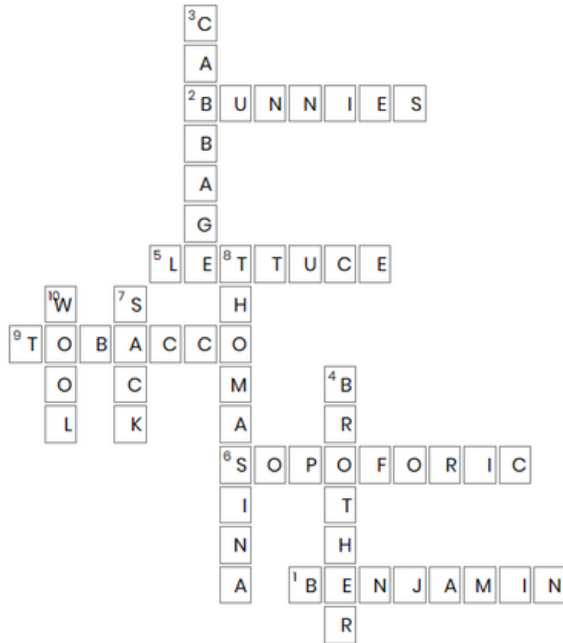


SOLUTIONS - THE TALE OF THE FLOPSY BUNNIES

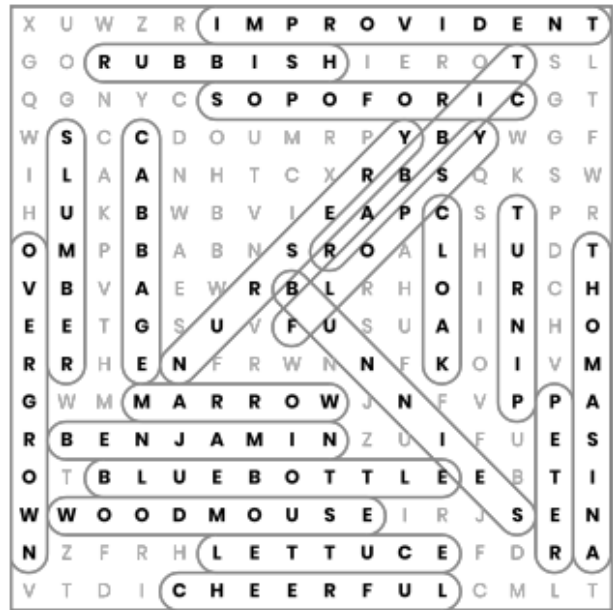
Matching

1-l, 2-j, 3-p, 4-k, 5-f, 6-s, 7-d, 8-e, 9-n, 10-h,
11-t, 12-o, 13-a, 14-b, 15-r, 16-m, 17-g, 18-c, 19-q, 20-i

Crossword



Word Search



Scramble

- ODOH H O O D
- TIURNP T U R N I P
- BIUENNS B U N N I E S
- WOMOSDOUE W O O D M O U S E
- BJANIEMN B E N J A M I N
- FPSOLY F L O P S Y
- ETREP P E T E R
- ACKS S A C K
- IVRONDPIET I M P R O V I D E N T
- LTUCETE L E T T U C E
- FILMAY F A M I L Y

Maze



Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep;
and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

Proverbs 19:15



Have you ever gotten into trouble for being slothful (lazy)?

What helps you to do your work when you don't want to?