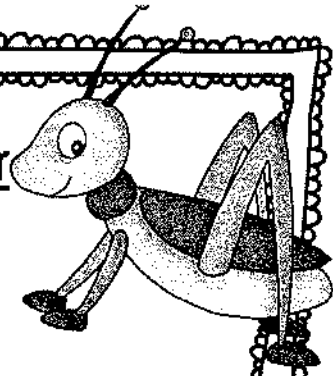


The Ant and the Grasshopper

(adapted from the fable by Aesop)



"Ahhh.... This is the life," sighed the grasshopper contentedly as he lounged in the thick, summer grass. The warm sun shone on him, and he gazed through the tall stalks of grass at the blue sky. After a relaxing rest, the grasshopper leapt off across a flowery meadow, chirping and singing with delight. Before long, the grasshopper happened upon an ant that was headed toward his nest. The ant was bent over with a large kernel of hard corn upon his back. The ant trudged along, determined but weary from the heavy weight of the corn.

"Why are you working so hard?" questioned the grasshopper. "Come and leap with me! It is summer, and the weather is perfect!"

The ant replied, "I am storing up food for the winter, and I recommend that you do the same."

"Why bother about winter?" said the Grasshopper as he rolled his eyes. "You worry too much, little ant! There's plenty of food right now!" But the ant went on its way and continued its toil.

Winter arrived with its icy winds, heavy snow, and hard frozen ground. There were no tiny insects to eat, no seeds, no corn, no food at all. The foolish grasshopper found himself dying of hunger. He saw the ants sharing the corn and grain they had spent all summer collecting.

Then the Grasshopper knew:

It is best to prepare while you have the chance.