

Small hands, generous hearts

Three stories about giving, belonging and friendship, with room to draw and think together.

English edition · Free family activity pack

1. Krishna and the fruit seller
 2. Rama and the little squirrel
 3. Krishna and Sudama's little gift
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Make room for a little time together

Choose one story per sitting. Read aloud together, talk about the questions, then draw or write on its worksheet. Younger readers can tell their answers to a grown-up.

You need paper, a pencil and optional colours. Each story includes a family activity; allow extra time for it. Answers to the open questions can differ. There is no score or certificate.

Print on A4 at actual size, or choose Fit for another paper size. Print only the pages you need. The text and worksheets work in black and white. Personal, family and classroom printing is welcome; retain the source notes and attribution. Third-party videos are not included.

Original retellings and activities by SanatanJr. Traditions differ; source and family notes accompany each reading. Illustrations use AI-generated artwork. This is not an educator endorsement.

sanatanjr.com/en/collections/small-acts-of-kindness

Krishna and the fruit seller

Krishna brings grain to buy fruit, but most of it slips through his fingers. The fruit seller has a choice to make.

3 minutes of reading · Take your time



A call outside

A woman selling fruit called out as she made her way through Krishna's neighbourhood. Young Krishna heard her. Fruit sounded delicious, and he wanted some. He had seen the grown-ups exchange grain for things they needed. Now he would try to make an exchange of his own.

Krishna gathered grain in his little hands and hurried towards the seller. But hands are not a basket. As he moved, grains slipped between his fingers and fell away. The closer he came to the fruit, the less grain he had to offer for it.

More than a fair exchange

At last Krishna reached the woman. He held out his hands, but most of what he had carried was gone. Before her stood a small child with very little to exchange. It would have been easy to think only about the missing grain. The woman looked at Krishna with affection.

She gave him fruit, filling the small hands that had lost their grain. Her choice did not depend on receiving a large payment first. She had fruit to give and a child before her who wanted it. The brief Bhagavata episode pauses on that generous action: hands with almost no grain became hands full of fruit.

A surprising basket

Then came the miracle. The basket that had held her fruit was filled with jewels. In the sacred story, Krishna's grace answered her loving gift in an extraordinary way. The scene changes from a familiar village exchange to a moment of wonder, with treasure where ordinary fruit had been.

We cannot promise ourselves treasure whenever we share. We can notice what another person needs and decide what we are able to offer with care. When we finish the story, let us remember both baskets and hands: the miraculous treasure, and the simple gift of fruit that came before it.

For the grown-up

The jewels are part of the sacred narrative, not a promise that generosity produces wealth. Children may choose what they are comfortable sharing; generosity does not require giving away a treasured possession.

An original expanded retelling of Bhagavata Purana 10.11.10–11. The brief episode supplies the fruit seller's call, grain slipping from Krishna's hands, her gift and the basket filled with jewels. Our observations and reflections give families space to explore those events; they are not additional verses. The seller is not named in these verses, and we do not invent a biography for her.

[Bhagavata Purana 10.11.10 · Sanskrit and English reference](https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/10/11/10/)

<https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/10/11/10/>

[Bhagavata Purana 10.11.11 · Sanskrit and English reference](https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/10/11/11/)

<https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/10/11/11/>

<https://sanatanjr.com/en/stories/krishna-and-the-fruit-seller>

Talk, draw and try

Krishna and the fruit seller

Wonder together

Why does it matter that the fruit seller gave the fruit before seeing the jewels?

What could you share that would help someone without costing money?

Make it your own

Draw two moments: the fruit seller offering fruit, and someone offering kindness in your own day. What can be given that is not bought?

Choose a useful gift · 5 minutes

Think of someone you know. Your gift can be time, help or a drawing.

1. Ask what would be useful or enjoyable for that person.
2. Choose something you can comfortably give or do, with a grown-up's help if needed.
3. Afterwards, talk about the person's experience without counting a reward for yourself.

Rama and the little squirrel

A bridge needs great stones. A squirrel can carry only a little sand. Is there a place for such a small helper?

4 minutes of reading · Take your time



An enormous task

At the edge of the sea, Rama and his companions had work to do. Sita was in Lanka, across the water, and they needed a way to reach her. The vanaras, Rama's monkey-like companions, were building a bridge. Strong workers brought stones while others helped place them. The task was much bigger than any one pair of hands.

Nearby, a little squirrel watched the work. Each stone looked enormous beside its paws. It could not lift what the vanaras were carrying, and the sea seemed wider still. But the squirrel wanted to help Rama too. It looked at the shore and found something it could carry: a little sand.

In this telling, the squirrel dampened its fur at the water's edge and rolled on the sandy ground. Grains clung to its coat. It carried them towards the bridge and shook them off. Then it went back for more. There was no great crash when its load arrived, only a small scattering beside the stones.

A little sand, again and again

Back to the water, across the sand, out to the work: the squirrel repeated its journey. The vanaras could bring in one trip more than it could bring in many. Yet the squirrel was using the strength it had. It did not need to become a different creature before it could care about the task.

Some of the workers noticed and laughed. Such a tiny load! What difference could that possibly make beside a boulder? Their laughter hurt. The squirrel's work had seemed worth doing until someone measured it only against the largest loads. It paused, unsure whether there was room for it among these powerful companions.

Rama noticed the little helper and listened. The squirrel wanted to serve, but it could only carry what its small body allowed. Rama did not ask it to lift a stone beyond its strength. He saw the willingness in its repeated journeys and asked the others to value that effort too.

Room for a small helper

A shared task needed care as well as strength. The larger workers could make space for a smaller helper instead of laughing at it. The squirrel's contribution was small; the affection behind it was not. Rama's attention changed the moment from one of embarrassment into one of belonging.

Rama gently stroked the squirrel's back. In the traditional story, the touch of his fingers left three stripes along its fur. Those stripes became a remembered sign of his blessing. With its effort recognised, the little squirrel could take its place among the helpers again.

The bridge was still a great task, and great stones still had to be carried. The squirrel did not suddenly become the strongest worker. What changed was how its companions saw it. There could be different kinds of help in the same work, and nobody had to be the biggest to be treated with respect.

For the grown-up

Some companions laugh at the squirrel. This reading omits the rough physical treatment in some tellings. The three stripes are part of a devotional folk story, rather than an explanation of animal biology.

An original retelling of a popular Rama-squirrel tradition. The wet-fur-and-sand detail follows the telling in the selected Hindi video; other versions use pebbles. The NIOS lesson is a comparison source and includes rough treatment omitted here. We have not established a verse for this episode in Valmiki's Ramayana. Scene-setting and reflections are our own.

[NIOS · How the Squirrel Got His Stripes](https://digital.nios.ac.in/content/202en/L_2.pdf)

https://digital.nios.ac.in/content/202en/L_2.pdf

<https://sanatanjr.com/en/stories/rama-and-the-squirrel>

Talk, draw and try

Rama and the little squirrel

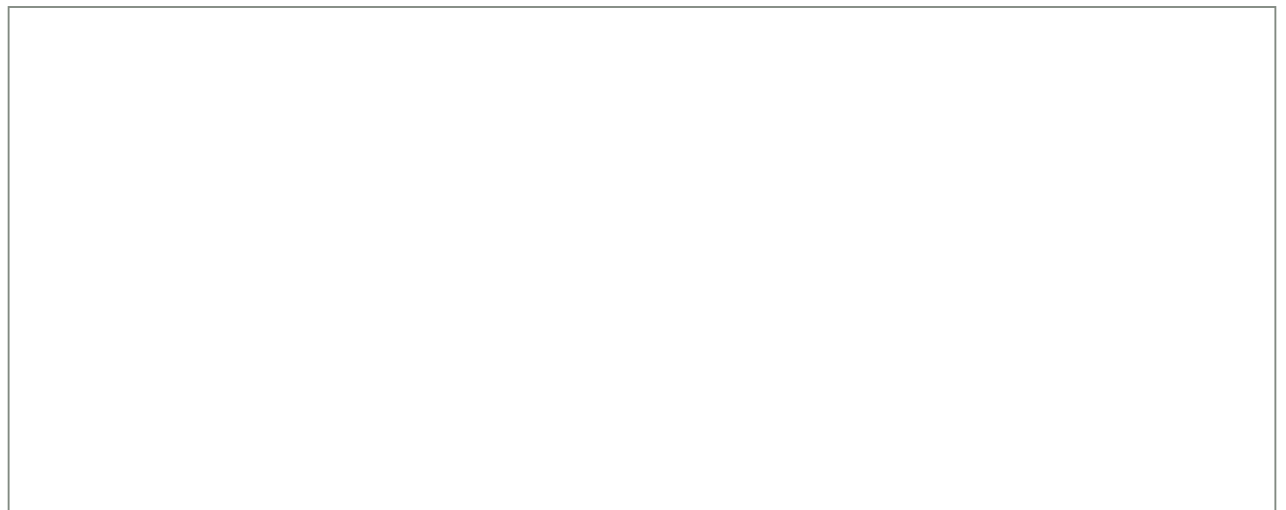
Wonder together

If you were one of the big workers, what could you change so the squirrel could join in?

Can a task be made easier without making the person doing it feel less important?

Make it your own

Draw a shared task with room for different helpers. Show a small contribution and a large one. How can everyone have space without being ranked?



Build something together · 5–10 minutes

Use paper or toy blocks on the floor to make a bridge. It only needs to cross an imaginary river.

1. Ask each person which job they would like: folding, placing, decorating or trying out the bridge.
2. Build together. If a job is awkward, change the job or offer a tool instead of taking over.
3. At the end, name one specific thing each person contributed.

Krishna and Sudama's little gift

Sudama reaches a palace with a small bundle of rice. Will his old friend still have room for him?

4 minutes of reading · Take your time



A bundle for an old friend

Long before Krishna lived in Dvaraka, he and Sudama had been students together in their teacher's home. They had shared lessons, work and the ordinary days from which a friendship grows. Now their lives looked very different. Krishna lived among palaces. Sudama and his wife struggled to find enough food for their household.

Sudama's wife encouraged him to visit his old friend. Krishna cared for those who came to him; perhaps he would help them too. Sudama wanted to see Krishna, but he did not want to arrive with nothing. His wife obtained a little flattened rice, called poha or chivda, and tied it in a cloth. It was a modest gift, prepared when they had very little themselves.

Sudama set out with the bundle. What would it feel like to meet after so many years? When he reached Krishna's residence, his worn clothes and small offering seemed very plain beside its splendour. He had come a long way carrying something that could fit in a hand. Then Krishna saw him.

A welcome without counting

Krishna rose to greet Sudama and embraced him. He offered his friend a seat and washed his feet as an honoured guest. Rukmini attended to Sudama too. Those nearby saw the care with which Krishna welcomed this visitor. Krishna was not waiting for finer clothes or a grander present. His friend was already important to him.

They sat together and remembered their days as students: their teacher, their work and the time they had spent together. For Sudama, the palace became a place where he could be known again. Krishna asked about the gift he had brought. Sudama hesitated. How could this little rice be enough for someone who seemed to have everything?

Krishna welcomed the bundle with delight and ate some of the rice. The love behind the offering mattered to him. Sudama stayed that night, receiving food, rest and affection. Although he had left home in great need, he did not find the words to ask Krishna for wealth. Their meeting had filled his thoughts with the joy of seeing his friend.

The journey home

On the way back, Sudama remembered the embrace, the conversation and the honour Krishna had shown him. He was returning without having asked for the help his household needed. Yet the visit had given him something he could already feel: his old friendship had not disappeared just because their circumstances were different.

When Sudama reached home, he scarcely recognised the place. In the devotional account, his humble dwelling had become a beautiful, prosperous home. His wife came out to meet him, and he understood the change as Krishna's grace. Their hardship had been relieved, though Krishna had said nothing about such a gift during the visit.

Sudama remained devoted to Krishna. The story's wonder is not a price list in which a handful of rice purchases a palace. Its heart is a friendship in which someone is welcomed fully, and a gift offered with love is received with love. We can begin that kind of welcome long before we have anything grand to give.

For the grown-up

Includes a family struggling for food and a miraculous change in fortune. Asking for help is welcome in real life; children do not need to stay silent or expect others to guess their needs.

An original family retelling of Bhagavata Purana 10.80–81. Sudama's poverty, Krishna and Rukmini's welcome, the flattened-rice offering and the changed home belong to that account. The descriptive framing and questions are SanatanJr's, not quotations. Selected videos add their own dialogue and details; neither this retelling nor the videos replace the source text.

[Bhagavata Purana 10.80 · VedaBase](https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/10/80/)

<https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/10/80/>

[Bhagavata Purana 10.81 · VedaBase](https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/10/81/)

<https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/10/81/>

<https://sanatanjr.com/en/stories/krishna-and-sudama>

Talk, draw and try

Krishna and Sudama's little gift

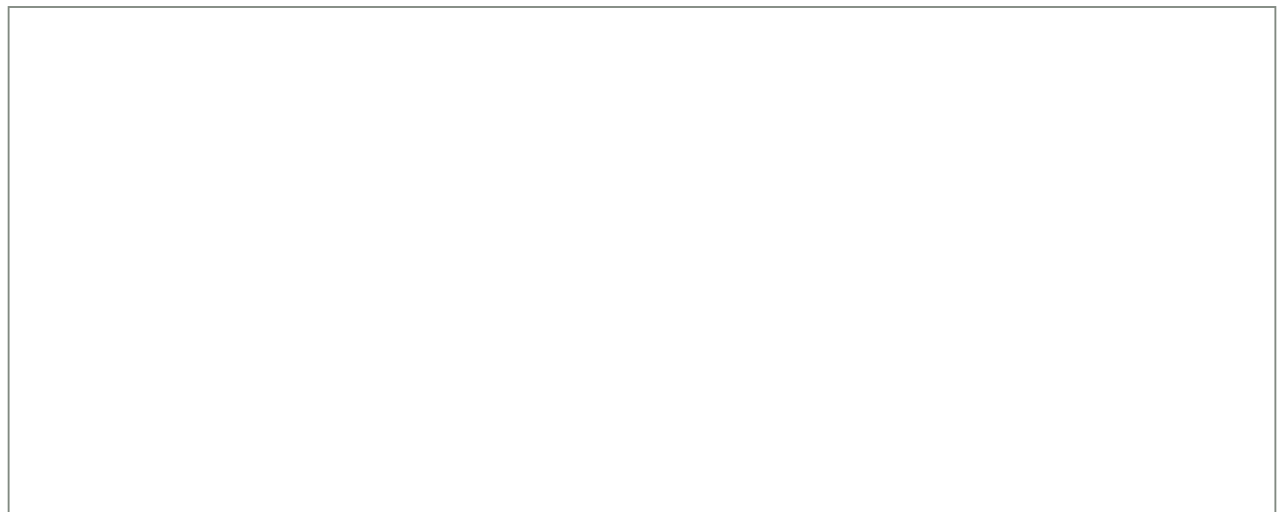
Wonder together

Before any miracle happened, what had Krishna already given Sudama?

If a friend had nothing to bring to your home, how could you help them feel welcome?

Make it your own

Draw a welcome that needs no expensive gift. Add one thing a host can say and one thing they can do to help a guest feel included.



A gift that costs no money · 5 minutes

Think of someone you know. Choose something that would matter to that person.

1. Choose a shared memory, a drawing or an offer to spend time together.
2. Make your gift and add a sentence: 'I thought of you because...'
3. Give it without asking for a gift in return. Let the other person respond in their own way.

Bring the stories together

Compare the fruit seller, the squirrel and Sudama. What did each bring? How was each welcomed? Draw or describe one small act of care you would like to offer, without expecting a reward.



One thing to carry into our day

Choose one small idea to try together. You may change your mind or ask for help. Return to a favourite story whenever you like.

Read in either language and find selected companion videos online:

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