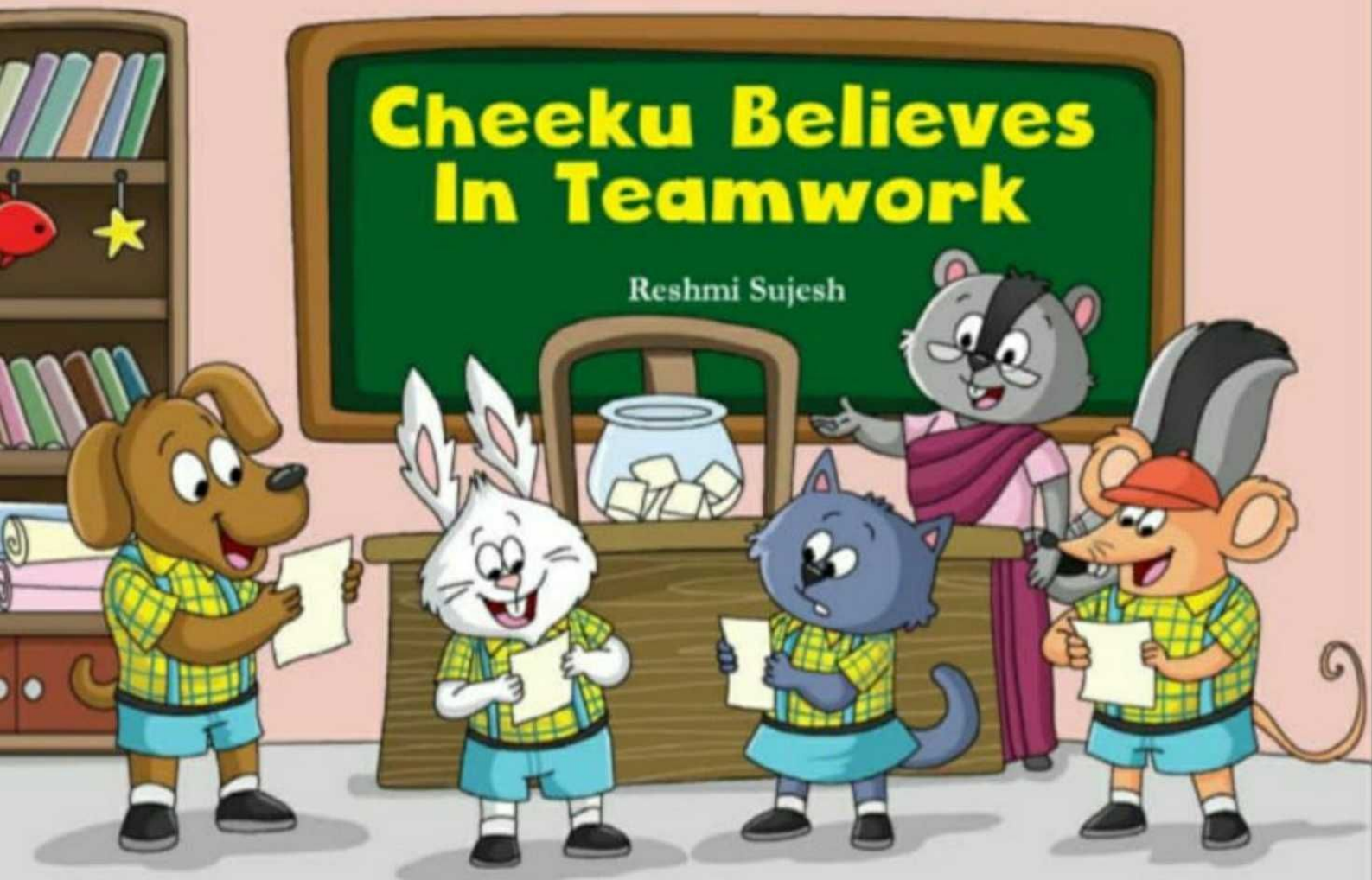


# Cheeku Believes In Teamwork

Reshmi Sujesh



“Drrriinnnnggg... Drrriinnnnggg,” the school bell rang. Ms. Moli squirrel, the English teacher walked into the class.

“Good morning, students! It’s time to pick your chits for the project on jobs. Group leaders, please come up here and pick up a chit.”

Cheeku rabbit, Tintu dog, Meenu cat, and Meeku mouse walked up to the teacher’s desk to pick the chits. Cheeku got writer, Tintu, astronaut; Meenu, actor; and Meeku, politician.

“I want each group leader to discuss with the team and pick one person who matches the job you have picked,” said Ms. Moli.

She saw some of the students looking puzzled. “Let me explain. Meenu has picked a chit with the job of an actor. Now, someone in Meenu’s team may be an actor. He or she could have acted in school plays. The team must stick that person’s photo on a chart and write interesting facts about the job and the person.”

“Will we get marks for this?” asked Meeku.

“Yes, of course. This is an important project. You will be given marks on presentation, execution, research, and knowledge. Each of these carries 25 marks. That means the entire project will be for a total of 100 marks,” explained Ms. Moli.

The teams began to gather around the leaders.



“Now remember!” said Ms. Moli loudly. “This is a group activity. Next week, when the presentations are made, the team leaders will present the project, but the teams have to answer all questions. That will be the knowledge section. Good luck, class.” Saying that, Ms. Moli left the room.

“Well, that seems easy!” exclaimed Meeku.

“My dad is also a team leader in his company,” said Cheeku. “He always says a team that works together is the team that is successful. I’m going to try that! But dad always says team projects involve planning.”

“What is there to plan?” asked Tintu. “I’ll tell the team to do the work. I’m the leader and I plan to enjoy myself for a week!”

“I will work with a small team and make sure the work is done well. But I will choose only a few people that I like,” said Meenu.

The next few days were busy for most of the students in the class. Tintu’s team tried to put the project together but did not have anyone to guide or lead them. Each one of them was doing their own work.







Meeku was so casual about his job, the team began fighting and split into two groups. They managed to come together only a day before the deadline, and their project was last minute.

Most of Meenu's team had no work because she worked on the project with only two other cats. The other students roamed around with nothing to do.

Meanwhile, Cheeku's team was busy working on different elements of the project. They worked well together, and Cheeku was always around to help or lead. The team finished well in time, and they had time to check the chart carefully before submitting it.

Finally, it was the day of the presentations. Each team leader presented their team's work, while the teams answered questions. When all the teams had finished, Ms. Moli stood up to tell them how they had done.

"Meenu, you had a good chart, but your team did not know what was going on. This was supposed to be a group activity. Instead, only three of you had worked on the project, while the rest sat idle. That's why you scored poorly. If you had done this project with the entire team involved, this team would have scored much more," she said.

Meenu looked sad. "I understand, Ms. Moli," she said. "I should have taken the effort to work with everyone, instead of choosing my close friends. I will do better next time!"

"Now, Meeku," continued Ms. Moli. "You and your team lost precious time in fighting! If you had worked through the week instead of the last day, your results would have been very different!"

Meeku nodded. "I know. I thought it was an easy project and took it too casually. If I had been more aware, we would not have fought so much."



“Now Tintu’s team worked together. But the result was shabby. The team fumbled and could not answer simple questions. And the work was not your best. Why do you think this happened?”

“I think we did so badly because I was not there. I left all the work to the others and did not take any interest in what they were doing.”

“I’m glad you have realised that Tintu,” said Ms. Moli. “If you had taken interest and really lead the team, the results would have been very different!”

Cheeku’s team was getting tense. What would the teacher say about them? Ms. Moli turned to them finally.

“I noticed that this team worked well together. You seemed to know what each

one was doing and there was no confusion. The result is an excellent project and a team that was able to answer all questions. Cheeku, what did you do that was different from the other team leaders?”

Cheeku came forward. “We planned the project on day one. And every day, we met during the lunch break and discussed our tasks. We each took one task and did it to our best ability. Also, we made sure that we all had time to research and study so that we could answer any questions!”

“Yes, it’s clear this was a team effort,” said Ms. Moli. “I also noticed that Cheeku was always there to help anyone in the team. Being involved is a good part of leading a team. Excellent leadership and teamwork,” she said, patting Cheeku and the team on their backs while the rest of the class cheered ●

