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The Adventures of Pinocchio

Carlo Collodi · *1881-1883 (Italian; book 1883)* · *Carol Della Chiesa translation*

A poor woodcarver makes a marionette that can run, lie, and suffer. Pinocchio wants to be a real boy and will not take the Talking Cricket's advice. Collodi's tale is sharper than later soft retellings: disobedience has costs, lies lengthen a nose, and idleness can turn a child into a donkey.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

What must a willful marionette learn—about truth, work, and a father's love—before he can become a real boy?

"Tomorrow you will cease to be a Marionette and will become a real boy."

the Fairy with Azure Hair · A promise made when Pinocchio seems ready to be good

The promise is delayed by flight, fraud, and the Land of Toys. The Talking Cricket had warned him; the Fox and the Cat rob him; his nose grows when he lies to the Fairy. He is hanged, nearly drowned, turned into a donkey, and at last swallowed, with Geppetto, by a great shark. When he works and cares for his father, the change comes. Being "real" is not a costume; it follows repentance and duty.

KEY CHARACTERS

Pinocchio
A marionette who can feel and choose; he lies, runs, suffers, and at last works for his father.

Geppetto
The poor carver, mocked as Polendina, who loves his son through hunger and search.

the Talking Cricket
A wise counselor Pinocchio silences early and hears again too late, then later still.

the Fairy with Azure Hair
A merciful, firm figure who nurses, promises, and punishes lying with a growing nose.

the Fox and the Cat
Rogues who play at being lame and blind in order to steal.

Lamp-Wick
The schoolmate who leads Pinocchio to the land of play and shares his donkey fate.

Fire-Eater
The showman of the marionette theater, terrible at first and not without pity.

LIES ARE FOUND OUT

> *"At this second lie, his nose grew a few more inches."*
> The Fairy's questioning

> *"Tomorrow you will cease to be a Marionette and will become a real boy."*
> **the Fairy with Azure Hair** · The delayed promise

Grades 3–5
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01
A Marionette Is Born
CHAPTERS 1–5

Master Cherry's log frightens him; Geppetto carves Pinocchio, who runs away at once. The Talking Cricket is struck down for giving advice.

- Geppetto is poor, and he makes the marionette with a father's hopes.
- Pinocchio sells his primer almost as soon as it is given.
- The Cricket has lived in the room more than a hundred years and is not heeded.

> *"I am the Talking Cricket and I have been living in this room for more than one hundred years."*
> **the Talking Cricket** · Chapter 4

02
Theater, Fox, and Cat
CHAPTERS 6–17

Pinocchio is nearly burned, sold, and hanged. The Fox and the Cat lead him toward the Field of Wonders; he is wounded and then tended by a maiden who is a Fairy.

- Fire-Eater at the marionette theater is fierce and then strangely kind.
- The Field of Wonders is a fraud; assassins hang Pinocchio from a great oak.
- The Fairy with Azure Hair sends help; Pinocchio is not done running.

03
Lies, and a Nose
CHAPTERS 16–18

Nursing and promises follow the hanging. When Pinocchio lies about the gold pieces, his nose grows. He is still not steadfast.

- He refuses medicine until the undertakers appear, then drinks it.
- He tells the Fairy he lost the gold; "at this second lie, his nose grew a few more inches."
- A growing nose is this translation's punishment for lying, not a casual joke.

> *"At this second lie, his nose grew a few more inches."*
> While the Fairy questions him about the gold pieces

04
Toyland, and Donkey-Skin
CHAPTERS 19–33

School, a return to Geppetto, and fresh temptations: Lamp-Wick leads him to a land without books or work. He becomes a donkey and is sold.

- The Fairy's promise of becoming a real boy is close, then lost again.
- Toyland (or the land of play) has a hidden cost: donkey ears, then a donkey's body.
- A circus and a cruel buyer show what idleness was always heading toward.

05
The Shark, and a Real Boy
CHAPTERS 34–36

Pinocchio is thrown into the sea, swallowed, and finds Geppetto in the shark's body. He works, cares for the old man, and wakes as a real boy.

- The search for Geppetto had begun long before; the shark is the last trial.
- Pinocchio's labor and love, not another wish only, accompany the change.
- Geppetto's poverty and faithfulness are honored at the end.

Truth and Lies · Obedience and Work · A Father's Love · Repentance · Mercy

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 3–5

1. The hosted text is Carol Della Chiesa's translation (Project Gutenberg #500). It says "Marionette," "Talking Cricket," and "Fairy with Azure Hair," not later film names only.
2. This tale is harsher than many children's retellings: the Cricket is struck, Pinocchio is hanged, and boys become donkeys. Do not soften the plot when you map it.
3. The nose grows in this wording: "At this second lie, his nose grew a few more inches."
4. The Fairy's promise is "Tomorrow you will cease to be a Marionette and will become a real boy." Tomorrow is delayed by fresh disobedience.
5. Collodi's moral is not that puppets are charming; it is that a child must learn truth, work, and gratitude.

Quotations are verbatim from the Carol Della Chiesa translation, Project Gutenberg #500, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/the-adventures-of-pinocchio/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.