CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Tale of Tom Kitten

Beatrix Potter · *1907 · English original, Project Gutenberg #14837*

Once upon a time there were three little kittens, and their names were Mittens, Tom Kitten, and Moppet. So this short complete tale begins. They tumbled about the doorstep and played in the dust, until Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit fetched them indoors, because she expected friends to tea. Beatrix Potter, Project Gutenberg #14837, complete as hosted. For grades K–4, read aloud. Quote this wording. One short tale; do not pad it into a longer book.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read this file as Potter's short complete tale of three kittens washed and dressed for tea, who then go unsteadily into the garden, rather than as a later retelling?

"Once upon a time there were three little kittens, and their names were Mittens, Tom Kitten, and Moppet. They"
Opening

Beatrix Potter's The Tale of Tom Kitten, Project Gutenberg #14837, complete as hosted. It opens: Once upon a time there were three little kittens, and their names were Mittens, Tom Kitten, and Moppet. They tumbled about the doorstep and played in the dust. Tom is very fat, and several buttons burst off. Moppet says, Let us climb up the rockery, and sit on the garden wall. For grades K–4, read aloud. Quote this wording, not a later retelling only.

KEY CHARACTERS

Tom Kitten
Who is very fat, and has grown; several buttons burst off

Mittens and Moppet
His sisters; Moppet says, Let us climb up the rockery, and sit on the garden wall

Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit
Their mother, who expects friends to tea, and fetches the kittens indoors to wash and dress them

HOW TO BEGIN TOM KITTEN

> *"Once upon a time there were three little kittens, and their names were Mittens, Tom Kitten, and Moppet. They"*
> Opening

> *"Let us climb up the rockery, and sit on the garden wall,""*
> In the garden

Grades K–2

Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

Three Little Kittens

OPENING

Once upon a time there were three little kittens, and their names were Mittens, Tom Kitten, and Moppet. The tale names all three at once.

- Keep the three names, in this order.
- K–4, read aloud.
- A complete short tale.
- Quote Potter.

> *"Once upon a time there were three little kittens, and their names were Mittens, Tom Kitten, and Moppet. They"*
> Opening

02

They Tumbled About the Doorstep

THE SAME OPENING

They had dear little fur coats of their own; and they tumbled about the doorstep and played in the dust. Play comes before the washing.

- Keep "tumbled about the doorstep" and "played in the dust."
- K–4.
- Before friends come to tea.
- Quote this wording.

> *"They had dear little fur coats of their own; and they tumbled about the doorstep and played in the dust. But"*
> Opening

03

Several Buttons Burst Off

TOM IS DRESSED

Tom Kitten was very fat, and he had grown; several buttons burst off. The elegant clothes do not hold.

- Keep "very fat" and "several buttons burst off."
- K–4. A comedy of clothes, not unkindness.
- Quote Potter.
- One incident, not a longer book.

> *"Tom Kitten was very fat, and he had grown; several buttons burst off. His mother"*
> Tom is dressed

04

The Garden Wall

IN THE GARDEN

Let us climb up the rockery, and sit on the garden wall, said Moppet. The kittens go out, unsteadily, once they are dressed.

- Keep "climb up the rockery" and "garden wall."
- K–4, read aloud.
- Moppet speaks this line.
- Quote this wording.

> *"Let us climb up the rockery, and sit on the garden wall,""*
> In the garden

05

Potter, Complete as Hosted

THE EDITION

Beatrix Potter, The Tale of Tom Kitten, Project Gutenberg #14837, complete as hosted. For grades K–4, read aloud. Quote this wording, not a later retelling only. A short complete tale; one map can almost walk the whole of it, but should not invent what the file does not say.

- Name Potter and PG #14837.
- K–4, read aloud.
- A complete short tale.
- Quote this English.

> *"Once upon a time there were three little kittens, and their names were Mittens, Tom Kitten, and Moppet. They"*
> Opening

Three kittens, named at the start | Play in the dust | Buttons that burst | A garden wall | A short complete tale

What to watch for as you read

GRADES K–2

1. It opens: "Once upon a time there were three little kittens, and their names were Mittens, Tom Kitten, and Moppet."
2. They "tumbled about the doorstep and played in the dust," until they are fetched in for tea visitors.
3. Beatrix Potter, Project Gutenberg #14837, complete as hosted. For grades K–4, read aloud.
4. Quote this wording, not a later retelling only. A short complete tale; do not invent what the file does not say.

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