

talk
to
me!

LET'S TALK EMPOWERMENT. LET'S TALK ENGLISH

Moments

2. The Adventures of Toto

by

Ruskin Bond

1. Summary

Toto was a little red monkey who the author's Grandfather bought from a tonga-driver for five rupees. He was a pretty monkey, but was very mischievous. He troubled all the other animals in the house, and caused a lot of damage. The family was not very rich, and could not afford the frequent loss of dishes, clothes, curtains and wallpaper. So Grandfather found the tonga-driver, and sold Toto back to him — for only three rupees.

Please do watch this video to learn if it is right to keep a pet monkey. Click on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxfqpg103Ro>

2. Vocabulary

1. **Tonga-driver** – the Tonga is a light carriage drawn by one horse; the driver who drives the carriage sits in front, while the passengers sit behind
The **tonga-driver** was driving the tonga very rashly around the town.
2. **Feeding-trough** – a long narrow container in which food is placed for animals, especially horses and pigs
The stable boy filled the **feeding-trough** with fresh hay for the horse.
3. **Out of place** – not comfortable in or not suitable for a situation
Ranjit felt **out of place** in his new school.
4. **Sparkled** – shone brightly because of reflected light
Her eyes **sparkled** with excitement as she got down from the bus.
5. **Mischief** – causing trouble in a playful way.
It was very quiet, but I was sure that the children were up to some **mischief**.

6. **Deep-set** – usually used to indicate facial features such as eyes, which are set far back in the bones of the face
The angry man glared at Ramesh out of **deep-set** eyes.
7. **Displayed** – arranged something or a collection of things so that they can be seen by everybody
All the prizes won by Asha were **displayed** on the shelf.
8. **Pickled** – vegetables or fruits preserved by adding oil and spices or vinegar and putting them out in the sun
The **pickled** raw mangoes were very tasty.
9. **Wicked** – morally wrong or bad
In the end, the **wicked** man was caught by the police and punished.
10. **Scooping up** – lifting something or someone with your hands or arms in a quick movement
The children were **scooping up** the ice-cream from the tub and enjoying themselves.
11. **Delicacy** – something especially rare or expensive that is good to eat
Cream cakes are a **delicacy** that Rahul loves to eat.
12. **Fussed** – showed anger, worry or excitement that was unnecessary or more than the situation deserved.
The mother **fussed** over the little baby because she had stopped drinking milk.
13. **Presence** – the fact that someone or something is in a place
The little girl was scared in the **presence** of so many people.
14. **Particularly** – especially, or more than usual
The boy has been **particularly** mischievous because school is shut and he has nothing to do.
15. **Closet** – a cupboard or a small room with a door, used for storing things, usually clothes
When the children were playing hide and seek, Priya hid in the **closet**.
16. **Securely** – in a way that avoids someone or something being harmed by any risk, danger or threat
At night she locked all the doors of the house **securely**.

17. **Peg** – a small stick or hook that sticks out from a surface and from which objects, usually clothes, can hang
He took off his raincoat and hung it on the **peg** behind the door.
18. **Fastened** – became firmly fixed together, or in position, or closed
After sitting in the car she first **fastened** her seat belt.
19. **Release** – to give freedom or free movement to someone or something
She ran to **release** the bird from the cage.
20. **Ornamental** – beautiful rather than useful
This is an **ornamental** bowl made of wood.
21. **Plaster** – a substance that becomes hard as it dries; used especially for spreading on walls and ceilings, in order to create a smooth surface
The wall was covered with **plaster** but not painted.
22. **Wrenched** – pulled or twisted something suddenly or violently from its position
Rama **wrenched** the book out of her brother's hand.
23. **Socket** – the part of a piece of equipment, especially electrical equipment, into which another part fits
I plugged the electric iron into the **socket** so that I could iron my school uniform.
24. **School Blazer** – a type of formal coat, worn as part of the school uniform, and usually in a different colour from the trousers or skirt that are worn with it
His teacher has asked him to wear his **school blazer** to school tomorrow.
25. **Shreds** – small amounts of something
In anger, she tore the book into **shreds**.
26. **Performance** – the action of entertaining other people by dancing, singing, acting or playing music
The entire audience stood up and clapped at the end of the **performance**.
27. **Escape** – to get free from something, or to avoid something
The bird tried its best to **escape** from the cage where it was kept.

28. **Transferred** – moved someone or something from one place, vehicle, person, or group, to another
The teacher was **transferred** from our school to a school in a nearby town.
29. **Servants' Quarters** – place where house help or servants in the house live
Krishna lived in the **servants' quarters** of the house and cleaned and cooked for his master.
30. **Sociably** – meeting and spending time with other people
People from all parts of India lived **sociably** together in the colony.
31. **Tame** – not wild or dangerous, especially animals; either naturally or because of training or living with humans
The parrot was so **tame** that it flew and sat on Raju's shoulder.
32. **Companions** – persons you spend a lot of time with often, because you are friends or are travelling together
I had a good time with my **companions** while travelling to Rajasthan.
33. **Pension** – an amount of money paid regularly by the government or a private company to a person who does not work anymore for them because they are too old or have become ill
The retired school teacher had to go to the government office to collect his **pension** every month.
34. **Unfortunately** – sad, disappointing, or has a bad effect
Everyone suffered as the work was **unfortunately** not completed on time.
35. **Accompany** – to go somewhere with someone
Sunil asked his father to **accompany** him when he went for the job interview.
36. **Afterwards** – at a later time, after something else has happened
We must study hard for our exams so that we don't have to repent **afterwards** when our results are not good.
37. **Kit-bag** – a bag in which things are stored for a particular use
The soldier kept his shoes and uniform in the **kit-bag**.
38. **Abode** – a home
The homeless beggar found an **abode** in the ruined temple.

39. **Canvas** – strong cloth used for making tents, bags, etc.
We covered the box with **canvas** to protect it from rain.
40. **Effect** – a change, reaction, or result that is caused by something
The scolding had no **effect** on the little boy and he continued to run around noisily.
41. **Occasionally** – not happening often
Occasionally my mother makes parathas for breakfast
42. **Exhibition** – showing things to the public
The school put up a beautiful **exhibition** of the students' paintings.
43. **Attracted** – made people come to a place or made to do something by making it interesting, enjoyable, etc.
The little girl was so **attracted** to the colourful balloons that she left her mother and ran after the balloon seller.
44. **Curious** – wanting to know or learn about something
I was **curious** to know how he had done so well in the exams.
45. **Onlookers** – people who watch something happening without becoming involved in it
The **onlookers** stood by and watched as the injured man lay on the road bleeding.
46. **Producing** – showing, making or growing something
The factory stopped **producing** this shampoo some time ago.
47. **Turnstile** – a mechanical gate consisting of revolving horizontal arms fixed to a vertical post, allowing only one person at a time to pass through
To enter the zoo, we had to show our tickets and then go through a **turnstile**.
48. **Poked** – appeared through or from behind something; also pushed, jabbed
The little child suddenly **poked** his head out from behind his mother.
49. **Wide grin** – to smile a big smile
When Usha heard that she had won the first prize, she gave a **wide grin**.
50. **Taken aback** – to be very surprised or shocked
I was very **taken aback** when the shopkeeper spoke to me rudely.

51. **Annoyance** – the feeling of being slightly angry
She stamped her feet with **annoyance** when she missed the bus.
52. **Accordingly** – in a way that is suitable
This dress is made from the finest material and is priced **accordingly**.
53. **In vain** – without any success
In vain she tried to open the door, but it was shut tight.
54. **Prove** – to show that something is true
He had to **prove** that the mobile phone belonged to him before the security guard gave it to him.
55. **Qualify** – to be allowed to do something, or have something, or to achieve something
She did not pass the exam and so could not **qualify** as a nurse.
56. **Quadruped** – any animal that has four legs
The cow is a **quadruped** animal.
57. **Classified** – divided things or people into groups with the same characteristics
We have **classified** all the people into two groups depending upon whether they are married or single.
58. **Prodded** – pushed something or someone with your finger or with a pointed object
My father **prodded** the bundle with a stick to see if any rats were hiding under it.
59. **Forefinger** – the finger next to the thumb
He pointed his **forefinger** at the old woman to show who had stolen his box.
60. **Triumphant** – having achieved a great victory or success or feeling very happy and proud because of an achievement
The **triumphant** team ran around the stadium waving our flag.
61. **Accepted** – satisfactory or right, to believe, to agree to take
The orphan was immediately **accepted** as a family member.
62. **Comfortable** – a pleasant feeling, without any physical discomfort
She lives in a **comfortable** home and is loved by everyone there.

63. **Stable** – a building in which horses are kept
We went to the **stable** to see the horses.
64. **Apparent** – able to be seen or understood
It was **apparent** that she had not prepared at all for the competition.
65. **Halter** – a rope or strap placed around the head of a horse or other animal, used for leading or tethering it
He placed the **halter** around the horse's head and led it away from the stable.
66. **Bundle** – a number of things that have been fastened or held together
There was a **bundle** of sticks lying near the fire-place for burning.
67. **Haunches** – back legs of an animal
The dog sat back on its **haunches** and watched the child eating an ice-cream.
68. **Jerked** – made a short sudden movement or made someone or something do this
He **jerked** his hand away when his mother tried to hold it.
69. **Dragging** – moving something by pulling it along a surface, usually the ground
The little child roamed all over the house **dragging** his toy train behind him.
70. **Cunningly** – in a cleverly planned way, especially when it involves tricking other people, or making things for a particular purpose
He **cunningly** made up a sad story to convince the old woman that he needed money.
71. **Temperature** – measurement of heat or cold
The **temperature** outside is very high, so drink lots of water before going out.
72. **Gradually** – slowly over a period of time
She gradually got used to the way of teaching in her new school.
73. **Feelings** – emotion
Her **feelings** of sadness slowly disappeared as she watched the comedy show.

74. **Refuse** – to not do or accept something
The shopkeeper **refused** to give change for a two thousand rupee note.
75. **Succeeded** – achieved something that you had been aiming for, or getting the results that you wanted
I finally **succeeded** in fitting all the clothes into the suitcase.
76. **Kettle** – a container for boiling water, that has a lid, handle and a spout and is made from metal
My grandmother put the **kettle** on the stove to boil water for making tea.
77. **Hopping** – jumping about on one foot or moving about in this way
The children were playing a game in the garden, **hopping** around on one foot.
78. **Hauled** – pulled something heavy slowly, and with difficulty
She **hauled** the heavy box up the stairs.
79. **Especially** – very much; more than usual or more than other people or things
This warning is **especially** for those boys who have not obeyed their teacher.
80. **Devoted** – extremely loving and loyal
The **devoted** father worked hard to look after all the family members.
81. **Largely** – almost completely
Our English teacher **largely** covered the syllabus by December.
82. **Developed** – grown or changed into more advanced, larger or stronger form
The little boy has **developed** into a handsome young man.
83. **Stuffing** – completely filling a container with something
The boy was busy **stuffing** the papers into his overfilled school bag.
84. **Screamed** – cried or said something loudly and usually on a high note, especially because of strong emotions such as fear, excitement or anger
The old woman **screamed** at the children playing in the garden as they were making too much noise.
85. **Exit** – act of leaving something or somewhere
When the woman was caught stealing from the shop, she quickly made her **exit** through the nearest door.

86. **Determined** – wanting very much to do something, not allowing anyone or any difficulties to stop you
He was **determined** to do well in his exams, so he studied very hard.
87. **Chattered** – made quick repeated noises
The monkeys **chattered** and jumped from branch to branch.
88. **Delight** – great pleasure, happiness or satisfaction
There was a smile of **delight** on her face when she saw the beautiful doll.
89. **Realised** – understood the situation
I **realised** how dangerous the road was, when I saw a number of people slipping and falling in the mud.
90. **Well-to-do** – having a lot of money
She belonged to a **well-to-do** family and could afford to buy expensive sarees.
91. **Frequent** – happening often
There are **frequent** showers of rain during the monsoon season.
92. **Curtains** – a piece of material, especially cloth, that hangs across a window or opening to make a room or part of a room dark or private
The pretty **curtains** in the window were fluttering in the breeze.
93. **Wallpaper**- a thick, often decorative, paper used for covering the walls and sometimes ceilings of a room.
The walls of the bedroom were covered with **wallpaper** with a flowery pattern.

3. Questions

1. How does Toto come to grandfather's private zoo?
2. "Toto was a pretty monkey." In what sense is Toto pretty?
3. Why does grandfather take Toto to Saharanpur and how? Why does the ticket collector insist on calling Toto a dog?
4. How does Toto take a bath? Where has he learnt to do this? How does Toto almost boil himself alive?
5. Why does the author say, "Toto was not the sort of pet we could keep for long"?

4. Talk About it

Do you have a pet? Is your pet mischievous? Tell the class about it.

5. Suggested Reading

- *My Family and Other Animals* by Gerald Durrell
- 'Grandfather's Private Zoo' by Ruskin Bond
- *Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling