

The Stone Soup Folktale

Stone Soup Friends of All Abilities Version

Not so long ago, during the American Revolutionary War, three patriot soldiers were walking to return to their home and came to a small village. Because food was scarce, the people hid what food they had, including from their neighbors and friends. The soldiers were hungry and stopped at the first house in the village to ask for some food to eat.

"I have no food for you, and there is little in the whole village," said the woman of the house. So on to the next houses they went and again were told that there was no food in the whole village.

"Why this is time for us to make some stone soup!" shouted one of the soldiers to the other two. They readily agreed and marched to the center of the village announcing to all along the way that they would make some stone soup.

Soon everyone came to the village green to see the soldiers make stone soup, which they had never heard of before. The soldier asked that a big kettle be filled with fresh spring water and a fire built under it to heat the water.

Then, with great ceremony, he pulled a small velvet bag from inside his coat and took out three round stones and dropped them into the kettle of boiling water. The villagers watched with amazement and anticipation as the soldier took a sip of the broth. "Mmmm, it is very tasty stone soup," said the soldier. "Of course, it would taste so much better if it had a little cabbage."

An old woman left and soon returned with a couple of small heads of cabbage and quickly tossed them into the kettle of stone soup. "Marvelous!" cried the soldier. Sipping the broth again he said, "Why this soup would be fit for a general if it had . . . carrots." Soon some carrots appeared . . . and on it went, with potatoes, corn, mushrooms, onions, and greens being brought by the villagers to add to the stone soup.

"Ahhh," said the soldier as he tasted the soup again. "If it just had a little chunk of smoked beef, why it would be stone soup fit for General George Washington himself!" Quickly the village butcher managed to find a chunk of beef to add to the

stone soup. By now the villagers, from young to old, could smell the soup and brought tables and chairs and bowls to have a great feast.

Everyone in the village had plenty to eat and they thanked the soldiers for making stone soup. The soldier reached down into the now empty kettle and took out the three round stones, put them back into the velvet bag and then into his great coat. The soldiers thanked the villagers and marched happily toward home, leaving the people wiser and making plans for their own stone soup.



Stone Soup - Friends of All Abilities brings together “friends of all abilities” to build and transform a community and everyone benefits.

Founded in 2003 by Lynn McGary, Stone Soup is an outreach effort hosted by local churches and community friends. In 2005, the Stone Soup Festival was held at the Nashville Convention Center at the invitation of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Annual Meeting Crossover Event, with over 1,000 in families attending the festival from the local Nashville area. In addition to its popular Holiday Camp @ Christmas, it offers program support for outreach with Stone Soup Friday Night and Stone Soup on Sunday for host local churches, nationally.

History of the Folktale

The folktale dates from the 1600’s.

The Stone Soup folktale was popularized by a version written in 1947 by Marcia Brown (b. 1918), a pastor’s daughter, for which she won a Caldecott Medal for children’s literature. Bob Keeshan (aka, Captain Kangaroo) read the story annually on his children’s television show. The story is a popular children’s play in schools today.

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***Building a Community of Friends
with Families of Children and Young Adults
with Special Needs***