The Rock Lion Opens Its Mouth

Exercises: Answer the questions below

1. Look at the title of the story, the picture, and the vocabulary. What do you think the story will be about?

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2. Do you have friends who are honest? How do you know that they are honest?

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Two families lived at the bottom of a mountain. One family was rich. The other family was poor. There was a large forest at the top of the mountain. Every day, the father of the poor family went to the forest to get wood. He sold the wood for food and clothing.

A rock lion lived in the forest. The poor man would put tsamba and butter in the lion’s mouth every day. He would say, “Please eat this, Brother Lion.”

One day, while the poor man was giving the lion food, the lion said, “Thank you, friend. You are a good man.”

The poor man was frightened. He said, “Brother Lion, you don’t have anyone else to give you food. My food is not good because I am poor. I’m sorry.”

The lion said, “You are an honest man. If you come here tomorrow before sunrise, I will give you something.”

The man went home. The next morning he went to the lion. The lion said, “There is gold in my stomach. You can take some before the sun rises. But, be careful. After the sun rises, my mouth will close.”

The man put his hand in the lion’s stomach. He put gold into a small bag. When it was full, the poor man said, “This is enough gold.” He went home.

The poor man became rich. His rich neighbor wanted gold, too. He asked, “Where did you get your gold?”

The poor man said, “I got my gold from a rock lion’s stomach. He helped me because I gave him food.”

The rich man put on old clothes. He got wood from the forest every day. He fed the lion tsamba and butter. One day the lion told the rich man, “Tomorrow morning come here before sunrise. I will give you something.”
The rich man thought, “Now I will become very rich.” The next morning, he went to the rock lion. He was greedy. He filled a big bag with gold. The sun rose and the lion closed his mouth. The man could not take his arm out of the lion’s stomach.
Grammar: Describing Locations Using Prepositions

**Prepositions** are words that describe locations, for example, in, on, under, above. However, it is important to include a noun after using a preposition, so that the reader understands the sentence.

Example: The man put his hand **in the lion’s stomach**.

Preposition noun phrase

Practice: Find all of the sentences that include a preposition and write them below. Label the preposition and noun phrase in each sentence.

Practice: Describe how you prepare for school in the morning, using prepositions for, example, *First, I put my books into my bag.*

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Part 1: Put the events from the story in the correct order.

______Every day, the father of the poor family went to the forest to get wood. The poor man would put tsamba and butter in the lion’s mouth.
______The rich man could not take his arm out of the lion’s stomach.
______One day, while the poor man was giving the lion food, the lion said, “Thank you, friend. You are a good man.”
______The next morning the poor man went to the lion.
______The rich man thought, “Now I will become very rich.”
______The lion said, “There is gold in my stomach. You can take some before the sun rises. But, be careful. After the sun rises, my mouth will close.”
______His rich neighbor wanted gold too.
______The rich man got wood from the forest every day and fed the lion tsamba and butter.
______The sun rose and the lion closed his mouth.
______The lion said, “You are an honest man. If you come here tomorrow before sunrise, I will give you something.”
______The poor man became rich.
______One day the lion told the rich man, “Tomorrow morning come here before sunrise. I will give you something.”

Part 2: Characters

1. In the story, the poor man is honest and the rich man is greedy. What do they do during the story that makes them honest or greedy?
2. Should the poor man have told his rich neighbor about getting gold from the rock lion? How did the poor man feel when he told the rich man about the gold and the rock lion? Write a journal entry from the poor man’s perspective.

Dear Diary,

__________________________________________________________

A Poor Man
Part 3: Meanings and Morals

1. What does this story mean? What lesson does this story teach? Why did the lion’s mouth close on the rich man?

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2. Talk about this question with a partner and write notes below: Did the rich man do anything bad? Why was he punished?

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Simplified English text by Rose Hyson.
The Tibetan version of this text was prepared by G.yang skyabs rdo rje and Bsod nams rin chen rgyal.