

The old turtle stood on the river bank watching the children playing around and enjoying themselves on the other side. Here comes two birds and they stopped in front of the turtle and asked him, "What is the matter? You look like you want to go over to the other side of the river." The turtle told them that he did want to go over to the other side of the river to visit the people, and see the chief of the tribe. The two birds discussed this with each other. Finally they turned to the old turtle and said, "We are going to take you over to the other side, but listen carefully to what we are going to tell you. We are going to tell you how we are going to carry you over there. We are holding a stick on each end and you are going to bite it in the middle and hang on. Whatever you do don't try to talk or say anything. Those people might say something to you but don't answer them." So they made the turtle bite the stick and they flew away with him hanging on to the stick. As they were flying across the children commenced to hollering at the turtle and calling him all kinds of names. They said he was ugly, his eyes were red, his legs were short, his body was round and his nose was sharp. They said, "Look, he's so ugly, and his back is so bumpy and ugly nobody wouldn't have him." The birds said, "Don't say anything. Just keep quiet and hang on tight." But the children continued to laugh at him and to make fun of him. They made a lot of noise and kept teasing him about how he looked. The turtle was so mad his face got red and the children said, "He's changing colors and it makes him uglier than ever." The birds told him to be quiet but the turtle was so mad he finally couldn't stand it any longer. He turned around to say something and as he opened his mouth--down he came. The birds couldn't help him in any way, they were helpless and they didn't want to see what happened so they finally flew away. One of the birds said, "That is what you get for not being able to keep your mouth shut and for being a blabber mouth. And the turtle never got to see the chief."