



Soon, we are going to see The Sorcerer's Apprentice at the Northern Stage.

Do you know what this story is about?

What is a sorcerer? What is an apprentice?

The Sorcerer's Apprentice is a story with a moral...



You should always respect learning and experience, and never meddle in things that you do not understand.

It is an ancient tale, that goes back to Greek and Egyptian times.

The oldest known version is by the Greek writer, Lucian, who made the sorcerer a priest of the Egyptian god Isis. It has been told in verse by the German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. But the most famous modern version is by Walt Disney, from his fabulous film, Fantasia. The Disney sequence uses the music of the French composer, Paul Dukas.

Today, we are going to read and explore the story, and will watch the Disney version later.

Let's read the story together...

Long ago there lived a man who knew many secrets. He lived in Egypt's sacred city of Memphis and he was a priest of the goddess Isis. He had spent twenty-three years down in the tombs and catacombs beneath the city. During his underground life, he had learned many spells and magical rituals. When he emerged from his long period of study, people soon understood that he was a master of the mysterious arts. His greatest trick was to ride on the back of crocodiles, using them as his personal ferry across the great River Nile. He was never short of work; people came to him when they had problems with money, love, health, family or farming. He performed services for both the rich and the poor, and he asked clients to pay him only for what they could. He himself became both wealthy and famous. His name was Pancrates, but most people knew him merely as The Sorcerer.

 <https://www.storynory.com/the-sorcerers-apprentice/>

Now, this famous sorcerer had a magic helper. It was an ordinary broom which he dressed in clothes; including a hat and a linen smock. It spent most of the me propped up in the corner of his kitchen, but when Pancrates muered a secret charm, it suddenly became alive. The broom strued about on two legs and grew arms to perform tasks like fetching buckets of water from the well or cleaning the floor. It would even go to the barrel and pull a tankard of beer for its master. When he had no further use for the magic helper, the sorcerer would snap his fingers and the helpful broom would go back to corner and turn back into an ordinary sck with some brushes on the end.

As you can imagine, the magic broom was a trick that impressed almost everyone. It was indeed extremely useful, but not much company for its master. The sorcerer lacked a human companion. He did not marry, and as he grew older, he began to fret that his secrets would die with him. He decided to look for a young apprentice. His friend the school master told him of a bright young boy who was looking for a career that would take him far. When the boy left school, he became the sorcerer's apprentice.

He promised to teach the boy all his secrets in as short a time as ten years. Meanwhile, the boy should be his helper. There was plenty of work for him to do; including collecting ingredients from the fields and river banks, and mixing potions in the house. In this way he became familiar with many of the strange contents of magical preparations; including mouse droppings and spider's eggs, poppy seeds, juniper berries, vinegar and donkey's milk.

He learned how to measure the parts exactly, heat them up and mix them. But during all this practice, the sorcerer always held something back - He did not yet feel ready to give the boy the magic words that would bring his spells to life. The actual spells, he promised, would be revealed in the tenth and final year of his apprenticeship.

The boy was fascinated by his work and study, but he longed to learn to try out some magic for himself. Eventually, he came up with a plan. One night, instead of going to bed, he hid in a cupboard in the kitchen. He heard the sorcerer come in and speak to the broom.

"Come now broom and stand to aenon.
Listen carefully to the tasks I menon.
Your first job tonight is to clean the floor.
But hold on a minute for there's one more
I fancy a rest in a nice hot tub
Heat a bath while the floor you scrub
That's it for now you've heard my spell
Hurry up and do it all well."

When the boy in his hiding place heard these words, he thought "Is that it? Is that all that he has been keeping from me?" He heard the broom working, sweeping up, fetching water and scrubbing the floor. All the while the boy sat silently. Eventually, when the bath was ready, the sorcerer went to soak his old limbs. The apprentice slipped out of the cupboard and off to bed. He could not sleep for he was thinking to himself, "A young boy can say a few verses just as well as an old fraud, no matter how rich and famous he might be."

A few days later, the sorcerer had business to attend to away from the house. Before he left, he gave the apprentice instructions to make sure that everything was spic and span. The boy thought to himself, "I certainly will do my duties, but I shall use some simple magic to help me." When the old man was safely gone, the apprentice went into the kitchen to give orders to the broom. He spoke the exact same words that he had heard the sorcerer say. The broom immediately stood to attention and set to work. Soon it was marching around the house, fetching and heating water, filling the bath, and scrubbing the floor. If anything it worked even faster and harder than usual. The boy was delighted.

"So this is how it feels to be a sorcerer," he chuckled to himself. "Nothing in life is hard when you know the secret. Of course, when I am rich and famous, I too will make a big mystery of my art. I will be sure to tell everyone how long I have studied to get where I am. If everyone knew how easy it was to do magic, they would all be at it!"

He went to the bathroom to enjoy the tub that had been prepared for him by the broom. It was already too full and water was starting to trickle over the side. The broom came in and threw another bucket into the bath. Now the water was gushing.

"Stop!" Commanded the boy. "Can't you see that you are causing a flood?" But the broom took no notice and rushed out to fetch more water at an alarming speed. The boy followed after it frantically trying to speak in verse.

"Hey you broom, there's no need to run
You can stop now that your work is done."

"Oh dear, that doesn't seem to do the trick... How about this?
Stop stop stop, it's me to quit — er what rhymes with quit? Ah yes,
I don't like what you're doing, no I don't, not one bit.
No? Doesn't work Oh!
Just stop please
I'm on my knees
See me beg
On one leg
Ah!!! This rhyming thing is just ridiculous. Can't you obey orders, broom?"

But the broom was already emptying water willy-nilly and not even bothering to aim for the bath. The flood was running down the stairs. The boy was more vexed than ever, "If you don't stop I'll, I'll... I'll get an axe, that's what I do. You'll be sorry!"

The apprentice ran out to the shed to fetch the weapon. He came back and chased the broom around the house. He took several swipes at the disobedient sck but missed, and instead smashed a vase and a precious statue of Isis. Eventually he backed the broom into a corner of the living room and hewed it in two.

"By Osiris, I'm glad for that," said the apprentice, mopping his brow with relief. But he spoke too soon for the broom, instead of dying, split now into two new brooms and set about fetching water at twice the rate.

All the boy could do was to use his own bucket and bail the flood out of the window - but however fast he worked, the two brooms worked faster. He stopped for a moment in despair to look at the broken statue which was now floating in pieces.

"Oh Isis, If only, if only the master would come home and put a stop to this magical madness. He can be furious with me, he can sack me, but just let this end before the whole house looks like the River Nile in full flood."

A minute or two after he made this prayer the sorcerer appeared in the room as if by magic – well to tell you the truth it probably was by magic, but the boy was far too exhausted and confused to be sure what exactly happened. The master of enchantment merely snapped his fingers and the two brooms stopped and stood to attention.

“Now without any more duress, set to work and clean up this mess,” he commanded, and the two brooms did as they were told.

It looked so simple and so easy, but the apprence now knew that the work of a master of his cra is far from easy. It takes years of pracce to do something well; you should always respect learning and experience, and you should never meddle in something that you do not understand. The sorcerer did not punish his apprence because he knew that this was one lesson he had learned well.



Answer the following questions with your partner, in full sentences. Find the piece of the text that gives the answer and underline it first

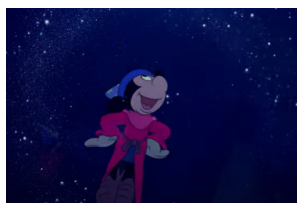
- What was Pancrates greatest trick once he emerged from the underground?
- Who or what was the sorcerer's helper before the boy?
- Why did he look for a young apprentice?
- Who recommended the boy for the job of apprentice, and why?
- Find and copy the word that shows us that the sorcerer started to worry.
- Name three ingredients that the sorcerer used in his potions.

Let's watch the Disney version of the story. It is set to the music of the French composer, Paul Dukas, who wrote the symphony in 1897, based on the poem about the Sorcerer's Apprentice by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

Part 1



Part 2



Part 3



Finally, here is some background information about the Northern Stage production that we are going to see:

