

Tikki Tikki Tembo

Based on a Chinese Fable

Long ago, two boys were born in a small village in China. Their parents named their first-born son Tikki Tikki Tembo Nosaremba Merry Berry Tip Top Silly Billy Flip Flop Bush Berry Bembo. When their second son was born, they had one favorite name left—Chen.

At last, the brothers were old enough to play outside by themselves. But their mother warned them, “Do not go near the deep well, or you will trip and fall in.”

One day, when the brothers were chasing a kite, Chen tripped and fell into the well. *Splash!* His older brother raced to tell their mother what had happened.



Unit 55 Week 2

“Mother, Mother,” Chen’s brother cried. “Chen has fallen into the well!”

“We must rescue him,” cried his mother. “Run and find the housepainter. Tell him to come quickly and bring his long ladder.”

So the young boy raced to the village and found the housepainter, who was standing on top of his long ladder.

“Chen has fallen into a deep well,” he cried, “and only your long ladder can save him.”

Together they ran back to the well. Then the housepainter climbed down his long ladder into the water. When he came back up again, he was carrying Chen. After that, the brothers did not play near the well for a long time.

But one day Tikki Tikki Tembo Nosaremba Merry Berry Tip Top Silly Billy Flip Flop Bush Berry Bembo ran to catch a ball. He jumped high in the air and fell right into the well. Down, down, down he went. *Splash!* went the water.



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Chen ran to tell his mother. "Mother, Mother," he cried. "Tikki Tikki Tembo Nosaremba Merry Berry Tip Top Silly Billy Flip Flop Bush Berry Bembo has fallen into the well." But his mother couldn't believe her ears!

"What did you say? Tell me again."

So Chen took a deep breath and said, "Tikki Tikki Tembo Nosaremba Merry Berry Tip Top Silly Billy Flip Flop Bush Berry Bembo has fallen into the well."

"We must rescue him right away!" Chen's mother said. "Quick, find the housepainter. Tell him to bring his long ladder."

So Chen raced to the village to find the housepainter. By the time he found him, he could barely speak. "Oh Honorable Housepainter," Chen cried. "Tikki Tikki . . . Merry . . . Berry." Chen stopped and took a very deep breath. Then he started again.

"Tikki Tikki Tembo . . . Bush . . . Flip . . . Hop." Chen stopped and started to cry. He could not say his brother's long name.

"What are you trying to tell me?" asked the housepainter.



Unit SS Week 2

This time, Chen took a very, very deep breath and said, "Tikki Tikki Tembo Nosaremba Merry Berry Tip Top Silly Billy Flip Flop Bush Berry Bembo has fallen into the well."

"What?" cried the housepainter. "Why didn't you say so at once? We must save him right away."

So Chen and the housepainter ran to the well. The housepainter used his tall ladder to climb down to the bottom. Soon he climbed up, carrying Tikki Tikki Tembo Nosaremba Merry Berry Tip Top Silly Billy Flip Flop Bush Berry Bembo.

Because of his long name, the boy had been in the water much longer than had his brother Chen. He had to rest in bed for several days. When he opened his eyes, ready to play again, his parents were sitting next to him smiling.

"We have something to tell you," they said. "From now on, we will call you only by your first three names."

And so, from that day on, he was known only as Tikki Tikki Tembo.

