

Sports Day in the Jungle

By Libby Ahluwalia

Narrator: It was a hot day as usual in the jungle, and some of the animals were beginning to get bored. Then Cheetah suddenly had a great idea.

Cheetah: I've had a great idea! Let's have some running races for everyone in the jungle, and whoever is the fastest gets a gold medal.

Sloth: Do we have to? I'm perfectly comfortable up here, lazing around. You only want a race because you like running. I like sleeping.

Eagle: It is a great idea – when the starter says 'Go', I'll fly as fast as I can to the finish line and beat you all!

Zebra: No, no, that's not fair, it's a running race. You'll have to stand at the starting line and run along, like the rest of us.

Snake: But if it's a running race, that's not fair to Eagle, because he's only got little legs, and it certainly isn't fair to me, because I haven't got any legs at all. It's only fair if you let it be a running-or-slithering race.

Parrot: Running-or-slithering-or-flying race, you mean. We all get to race in the way we move fastest. That's perfectly fair.

Tiger: No it's not. It's not fair at all. If a race is going to be fair, we all have to be doing the same thing. It's not a fair race unless we all start at the same place and cover the same distance in the same way. Fair means the same rules for everyone.

Ant: But that's not fair to me! I can't fly or slither, but however fast I run I'll never catch up with you because I'm much smaller than you are. I should be allowed a head start. Cheetah, you're about two metres long if we include your tail, so if you run a hundred metres, that's fifty times your body length – and I'm about two centimetres long, so I should just run one metre. That's fair.

Elephant: Oh no it's not! I'm huge, but I'm not very fast. I'd have to start miles away, if the race is fifty times my body size. Everyone knows cheetahs are faster than elephants, so I shouldn't have to start behind cheetah, I should be ahead of him.

Monkey: I've got a good idea. How about all the cheetahs race the other cheetahs, and all the elephants race the other elephants, like that?

Tree frog: That's not fair, I'm a very old frog with creaky frogs'-legs. The younger frogs can hop much faster than me ... I need a head start because of my disability.

Owl: I'm the wisest, so I'll sort it out. Let me measure everyone for height and weight and age and fitness and everything else I can think of, and then I'll work out where everyone

should start and how they should move. Then, and only then, will we have a perfectly fair race.

Narrator: So Owl worked very hard and made a huge spreadsheet and then he marked out a track with different starting places for everyone, to make it exactly fair. The animals all lined up in their places.

Owl: Ready, Steady, Go!

[Animals all make their animal noises for five seconds.]

Animals, all together: I won!

Cheetah: But everyone knows I'm the fastest animal in the jungle! Why should we all finish at the same time? It wasn't fair!