

The Gingerbread Prince

- 1, 2. Once upon a time, there was a Gingerbread Prince. He lived in the Gingerbread Castle with his mom and dad, the King and Queen.
- 3, 4. In the Castle, the King and Queen had three rules for the Gingerbread Prince. 1) Be kind to others. 2) Always have good manners. 3) Clean up your mess. One day, without telling the Queen where he was going, the Gingerbread Prince dashed out of the Gingerbread Castle. He was in a naughty mood, and off he ran.
5. After some time, the Gingerbread Prince came across a cow. The cow was happily grazing in a field.
6. Just as the cow was beginning to smile at him, the Gingerbread Prince jumped in a puddle and splashed the cow with mud!
- 7, 8. The cow was so upset! She mooed and ran after the Prince. But the Prince just laughed and ran away singing "I splashed a cow with mud and sludge, but I am clean without a smudge. I'm away from the Queen and ever since, you can't stop me. I'm the Gingerbread Prince!" The cow chased after him.
9. He bounced along, and the Gingerbread Prince came to a group of kids playing soccer. The kids saw the Prince and asked if he wanted to play with them.
10. Instead of playing, the Prince yelled, "I don't want to play soccer!" He kicked the soccer ball as hard as he could, and it flew up into the trees.
- 11, 12. The kids were so upset that they yelled and ran after the Prince. But the Prince just laughed and ran away singing, "I took their ball and kicked it far, if I liked soccer I'd be the star. I'm away from the Queen and ever since, you can't stop me. I'm the Gingerbread Prince!" The kids and the cow chased after him.
13. The Gingerbread Prince skipped along the path and came across an old man. He was selling apples at his table.
14. Instead of saying hello, the Prince quietly snuck up behind him. Boo! He scared the old man, and all of the apples scattered on the road.
- 15, 16. The old man yelped and ran after the Prince. But the Prince just laughed and ran off singing, "I can sneak and scare anyone around, you see the apples, all over the ground? I'm away from the Queen and ever since, you can't stop me. I'm the Gingerbread Prince!" The old man, the kids and the cow chased after him.
17. The Gingerbread Prince followed the path to a village. He saw a girl hanging laundry up to dry.
18. Instead of helping her, the Prince dashed through the clothes and pulled on the line. He made everything fall into the dirt.
- 19, 20. The girl cried out and ran after the Prince. But the Prince just laughed and ran off singing, "I jump and hop and knock things down, I am the funniest boy in town. I'm away from the Queen and ever since, you can't stop me. I'm the Gingerbread Prince!" The girl, the old man, the kids and the cow chased after him.
21. The Gingerbread Prince continued on through the village to a great big wall. He bounced to the top and stood with a big smile on his face.
22. But then the Prince looked down at the crowd below him. Oh no, what had he done? As he looked at the cow, the kids, the old man, and the girl, the Gingerbread Prince started to feel bad inside.
23. The Prince thought of his mother's three rules: Be kind to others, always have good manners, and always clean up your mess. He had not followed any of these rules today.

24. The Prince apologized to everyone. Then he had an idea! He would go back the way he came and fix the things he had done. He asked everyone if he could go back with them. They agreed, and off they went together.
25. The Gingerbread Prince picked up all the clothes that he had knocked down. He shook out the dust and dirt to make them clean again. He carefully hung them back up to dry.
26. The girl smiled as the Prince sang, "I was naughty and now profess, be kind, have manners, and clean up your mess. I've remembered the rules and ever since, I'll make things better I'm the Gingerbread Prince."
27. The Prince continued down the path and found the apples he had spilled. He used his cape to wipe them clean, and put them neatly back on the table.
28. The old man smiled as the Prince sang, "Such simple rules for such success, be kind, have manners, and clean up your mess. I've remembered the rules and ever since, I'll make things better I'm the Gingerbread Prince."
29. The Prince climbed a tall tree by the soccer field. He knocked the ball down from the branches.
30. He took a gumdrop off of his jacket and gave it to a boy. The kids smiled as he sang, "These rules are important, as you can guess. Be kind, have manners, and clean up your mess. I've remembered the rules and ever since, I'll make things better. I'm the Gingerbread Prince."
31. The Prince walked with the cow to the meadow. He filled a bucket with water and washed and combed all the mud off the cow.
32. The cow smiled as the Prince sang, "I've learned so much and cannot stress: Be kind, have manners, and clean up your mess. I've remembered the rules and ever since, I'll make things better. I'm the Gingerbread Prince."
- 33, 34. The Gingerbread Prince sang all the way back to the Gingerbread Castle. The Queen was waiting for him at the front gate. He ran up and jumped into her arms to give her the biggest hug and kiss! He told her that he was sorry that he left the castle without telling her and had broken the rules.
35. The Gingerbread Queen hugged the Prince tightly. He smiled as she sang, "I know what you did and I'm proud of you son. You fixed everything and made good manners fun. But learn from this lesson, and learn from your rhyme. Don't forget the rules. Be good all the time!" And from that day on the Gingerbread Prince followed the Queen's rules.

Option: detachable page with the three rules for posting at home or in the classroom.

Option: Continue the Gingerbread Prince's story into real life! Cut out this two-sided Gingerbread Prince and decorate him. Find a mess or disaster (like a dirty kitchen or a beach with litter) and photograph the naughty version of the Prince. Then clean it up or fix it, and take a new photograph with the happy prince showing off his good deed. Submit your photos to CritterCrew.com for a chance to be posted on the site!