

When Turtle Grew Feathers

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Characters (6):

Narrator (N1)

Narrator (N2)

Turtle

Rabbit

Turkey

Little Bitty Turtles (LB Turtle)

N1	Most everybody knows about the race between Turtle and Rabbit. But the Choctaw people tell the story differently. They say that the reason Rabbit couldn't outrun Turtle was that he wasn't racing a turtle at all. He only thought he was. It all took place on the day when Turtle grew feathers.
N2	Turkey was walking in the grass by the lake. He was stretching his long skinny neck, not watching where his feet fell. Turkey didn't see Turtle napping in the grass. <i>Currrr-rack! Currrr-rack!</i>
Turtle (yelling)	You stepped on my back! My shell is shattered like glass!
Turkey	I'm not to blame. You sleep too low in the grass.
Turtle (yelling)	My shell is my home. You broke my beautiful shell!
Turkey	That's your fault, not mine. I'm tired of hearing you yell!
N1	Turkey lifted his wings to fly away.
Turtle(forgiving)	Wait! Let's call a truce and not fight.
Turkey(happy)	Let's do what we know to be right.
N2	Just then an army of ants paraded by.
Turkey	Friends, help us mend this shell. Then I'll help you gather your dinner till your little bellies swell.
N1	So the ants went to work. With threads of silk from the cornfield, they sewed Turtle's shell together.

N2	Turtle climbed into his shell. It was as good as new.
Turkey	I'm sorry for your trouble. But I like your shiny shell.
Turtle	Want to try it on? I think you would look just swell.
Turkey	I believe I would.
N1	Turtle shimmied out of his shell, and Turkey climbed in. He stuck his long neck out the front. He pushed his wings through the sides. He poked his long skinny legs out the back of Turtle's shell.
N2	About that time, five Little Bitty Turtles came huffing and puffing and running down the path.
LB Turtle	Everybody hide!
Turtle	What is it?
LB Turtle	Here comes Rabbit. Rabbit wants to race, and he won't be denied.
N1	Turkey pulled his wings and legs into Turtle's shell. He drew his head inside and peeked out the front. In the flick of an eye, Rabbit burst into the clearing.
Rabbit	I feel real fast! I'm ready to race. Who wants a little mud in his face?
N2	He spotted Turtle's shell laying on the ground.
Rabbit	How about you, Turtle? How about a little race?
N2	Turkey lay hidden in Turtle's shell and didn't say a word. Rabbit moved closer.
Rabbit	I said, how about you, Turtle? How about a little race?
N1	Finally, from where he hid in the grass...
Turtle(yelled)	Get it on!
N1	Rabbit jumped back. He had never been talked to like that! He scratched a line in the dirt, puffed his chest out, and said...
Rabbit	You've made me mad, my slowpoke friend. Your racing days are about to end!
N2	Turkey waddled to the starting line. He seemed to take forever.
Rabbit	Once around the lake when I say "Go!" Careful not to run too slow!

N1	Turkey poked his head out and looked around. Rabbit had never seen a turtle like that before! While he watched, that neck kept growing, and growing, and growing! Rabbit was beginning to get a little worried.
Rabbit	On your mark...
N2	Long, skinny legs grew out of the turtle shell. Rabbit couldn't believe what he was seeing.
Rabbit	G-g-g-g-get set...
N1	But the strangest thing was yet to come. All of a sudden, wings popped out of the turtle shell - long, slow flapping wings!
N2	Rabbit was downright scared by now. He stuttered. He stammered. He finally shouted,
Rabbit(scared)	G-g-g-g-go!
N1	Turkey took off in an explosion of dust. His legs were churning and his wings were flapping. Rabbit stayed behind, choking in the dust. Just as he was about to take off, he heard a sound behind him. <i>Screech!</i> Turkey was coming in for a landing! He had already circled the lake.
N2	Turkey glanced over a Rabbit. He adjusted his shell till it fit properly. He dusted himself off with his feathers, then he strutted across the finish line. Rabbit looked on, unable to speak. His eyes were as big as Little Bltty Turtle shells.
N1	For the first time ever, Rabbit couldn't think of a thing to say. He hung his ears and went <i>hip-hoppity, hip-hoppity</i> , off to where rabbits hide. Rabbit never challenged Turtle again. That's why you never see them racing today. That's the way the Choctaws tell the story. It all took place, they say, on the day when Turtle grew feathers.
N2	It was a day of great learning as well. Turtle learned you don't have to be the biggest, or the fastest, or the best. But it sure is nice to be friends with those that are!
ALL	<i>Chata Haptia Hoke!</i> Now the story is yours.