

Read the Chinese story and answer the following questions.

## **Borrowing Light through Boring a Hole in the Wall**

1. During the Western Han Dynasty\*, there was a prime minister named Kuang Heng, who was a well-known scholar. At that time, the tuition fees were extremely expensive. Only rich people were able to afford them, so there was no chance for kids from the grass-roots families to study. When Kuang Heng was a child, he was from a poor peasant family and could not afford to go to school, but he was very eager to read and learn.

2. Sometimes, Kuang Heng would sneak in the school to listen to the teacher's lectures after helping his parents at the farm. One day, the teacher came over to Kuang Heng and said, "You are here again." Kuang Heng said, "Yes, sir, I really want to learn. May I ask you, sir... can I acquire all the knowledge after listening to your lectures on these books?" The teacher shook his head, "No, no, no, these books are just a small part in the vast sea of books. If you want to be a really useful person, you must read more books and bear what you have learnt in mind. I really appreciate your learning attitude. You can borrow a book from me every day and read it when you get home. If you don't understand, just ask me." Kuang Heng was very grateful to the teacher. In the old days, books were very valuable, and people with books would not easily lend them to others.

3. After a few years, Kuang Heng grew up and became the sole income earner in his family. He had to work in the field all day long, and only when he rested at noon did he have time to do some reading. Therefore, it took him at least half a month to finish reading a book. Kuang Heng was very anxious about his learning progress and thought to himself, "I grow crops during the day and don't have time to read books. I have to spend more time on reading at night."

4. However, Kuang Heng's family was so poor that they could not afford lamp oil or candles. Although there were financial difficulties, the young boy never stopped pursuing his dream of studying. One night, while Kuang Heng was sitting on the bed reciting the book he had read during the day, he found that there was a ray of light coming through the wall. He stood up, walked to the wall and took a closer look. Ah! The neighbour's light came through the crack of the wall! Kuang Heng was overjoyed and thought of a way – he took a knife and dug the crack in the wall a bit bigger. In this way, more light shone through and he could read the books in this ray of light.

5. Thanks to the light coming through the wall, Kuang Heng could read a huge number of books to prepare for the imperial exams. Year by year, he passed each level, impressed the officials, and achieved his dream of becoming an imperial officer. Over the years, he held many prestigious titles and eventually became a famous scholar in Chinese history.

\*The Western Han Dynasty refers to a dynasty in ancient Chinese history that ruled from 206 BC to 8 AD.

