

Read the Chinese story and answer the following questions.

Grinding an Iron Rod into a Needle

1. Li Bai was a great poet in the Tang Dynasty*. However, he was lazy and afraid of difficulties when he was a young boy. He did not like to study and always ran out to play without finishing his homework. Being absent-minded in class, he made slow progress in his studies.
2. One day, Li Bai met an old woman near a riverbank when he was on his way home. She was grinding a very thick iron rod on a rock. Driven by curiosity, he asked the old woman at once. "Why are you grinding this iron rod? It is thick and hard!"
3. "I want to turn this thick rod into a needle," replied the old woman.
4. Li Bai's jaw dropped. He asked, "How can you turn such a thick iron rod into a needle? This would take many years!"
5. "This doesn't matter. If I am willing to put my effort and continue to work very hard, I will be able to turn it into a fine needle!" The old woman chuckled and answered confidently.
6. Deeply moved by what the old woman had said, Li Bai felt ashamed and made up his mind to study hard since then. With his determination, he accomplished many difficult tasks and made great progress in his schoolwork. He finally became one of the greatest poets in Chinese history. Many of his poems were compiled in the anthology *Three Hundred Tang Poems*.



*The Tang Dynasty refers to a dynasty in ancient Chinese history that ruled from 618 AD to 907 AD.