

I'm going to need lots of people to help me with my talk today...

This is a story about a Bedouin who had three children. The Bedouin was wise, tall, grey haired—I think we should have [choose an adult here] be the Bedouin, don't you?

[Adult comes forward]

As I said, the Bedouin had three children. [Chosen adult], do you want to pick three children to help us?

(Adult picks three children to come up front)

The Bedouin had worked hard all his life, but all he had to show for all his work was a herd of seventeen camels. Now, you three need to get us some people to be camels. You pick six people, you pick six, and you pick five. Off you go.

(children go and retrieve seventeen people, who stand behind or next to them in a group)

The Bedouin was very old, he knew that that he was about to die. So when that day came he said to his children:

(Adult speaks)

‘My children, I’m about to die. Please, look after each other and live in peace. I leave my herd of seventeen camels, which I want you to divide in the following way. You, my eldest child, take one half of the herd. You, my middle child, take one third of the herd. And you, my little one, since you are very young, take one ninth part of the herd.’
With these words the old man died.

(Adult pretends to die and leaves the front)

Now, let’s try to follow the Bedouin’s will. Who here wants to try to divide up these camels? What’s half of seventeen? What’s

a third of seventeen? What's a ninth of seventeen?

(some attempts to divide into parts)

So, what were the children to do? You can't divide seventeen into half, or a third, or a ninth. They started arguing amongst themselves, and soon the whole village had taken sides. So they asked the wisest woman to help out.

Who is our wisest woman? Of course, it must be [choose another adult]. Could you join us?

(Chosen adult comes up front)

The wise woman listened to the problem of dividing the herd. She knew what to do. So she went and got her own camel. Do you want to fetch a camel?

(Adult chooses and brings up another person)

The camel was placed into the herd, giving eighteen camels. So can we now divide up the camels? What's half of eighteen?

(nine are chosen and return to seats)

What's one third of eighteen?

(six are chosen and return to seats)

Finally, what's a ninth of eighteen?

(two are chosen and go to seats)

And what are we left with? The eighteenth camel, who can go back to where she came from.

Sometimes we need to look outside the box to find a creative solution to a problem.