

The background features a large, stylized number '2' in white on a red, apple-like shape. To the left, a green shape contains the text '1000 Days Journey'. Below the green shape is a yellow shape, and to the right is a large orange shape. The entire design is set against a teal background with abstract, organic shapes.

1000 Days Journey

2

Infant and
young child
feeding

What is The Thousand Day Journey?

The Thousand Day Journey is a flipchart story for all community members who are beneficiaries of projects funded by the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT). The story, which is in two parts, aims to educate and stimulate discussion on key issues related to nutrition. The Thousand Day Journey raises issues such as cultural beliefs about food taboos, information from elders (that is not always accurate), maternal nutrition and infant and young child feeding practices.

The Thousand Day Journey is an illustrated story, which is to be read to a group by a facilitator. The group may include men and women, old and young. During and after each part of the story, the facilitator will ask the participants some

questions. These questions will generate a discussion among participants about the issues raised in The Thousand Day Journey. Please note that throughout the story, you will find additional discussion questions, which are *optional*. If you do not have time, you can skip these questions. Also included in this guide are 'key messages' to help the facilitator guide the discussion among participants. The facilitator should begin by reading the story to a large group of no more than 20 people. When it is time to pose the questions for discussion, the facilitator will break the listeners into smaller groups of four to five people. The small-group format promotes an informal and relaxed atmosphere.

The story is not long, but it is important to plan plenty of time for discussion. The suggested time for the story and discussion is one hour. If you, as facilitator, find that you are only half way through the story after an hour, it is fine to stop the story and set a later date with the participants to come back and finish the story. Each community group will work through the story at different speeds, so the number of community meetings it takes to finish the story may vary.

Objectives

The Thousand Day Journey was developed in order to:

- Fill information gaps among community members in matters related to maternal and child nutrition.
- Encourage community members of all ages and gender to express their own challenges and concerns related to nutrition and to discuss these with their peers.
- Encourage community members to guide each other to seek further information and advice from others if required.

The facilitator's role

The facilitator, using the questions as a guide, should prompt and encourage discussion among group members. The facilitator should talk very little in order to allow community members to speak. It may be necessary to use follow-up questions if group members are reluctant to voice their thoughts, questions or concerns.

Here are some suggestions for the facilitator for all community meetings where the story of The Thousand Day Journey will be discussed.

- Create an informal atmosphere where community members feel free to express their personal opinions honestly
- Respect the opinions of all community members
- Not judge what people say even if information expressed by community members is incorrect
- Give clear instructions and make sure that the community members understand what to do
- Encourage community members to ask questions or request clarification if they do not understand the information presented
- Make sure there is enough space for the group and that the size of the group is appropriate.
- Read the story with excitement and enthusiasm to engage the community members
- Allow adequate time for discussion. When going through the story, make sure that the group has finished the discussion on one section before moving on to the next



Ma San Htwe



Ko Tha Htoo



Daw Thaung Kyi



Ko Aung Myint
(Home Gardening
Teacher)



Ma Thuzar
(Ko Aung Myint's
wife)

Part 2:

Infant and young child feeding

Objectives

to raise awareness about proper infant and young child feeding practices

Materials

- Storybook
- flip chart paper
- pens

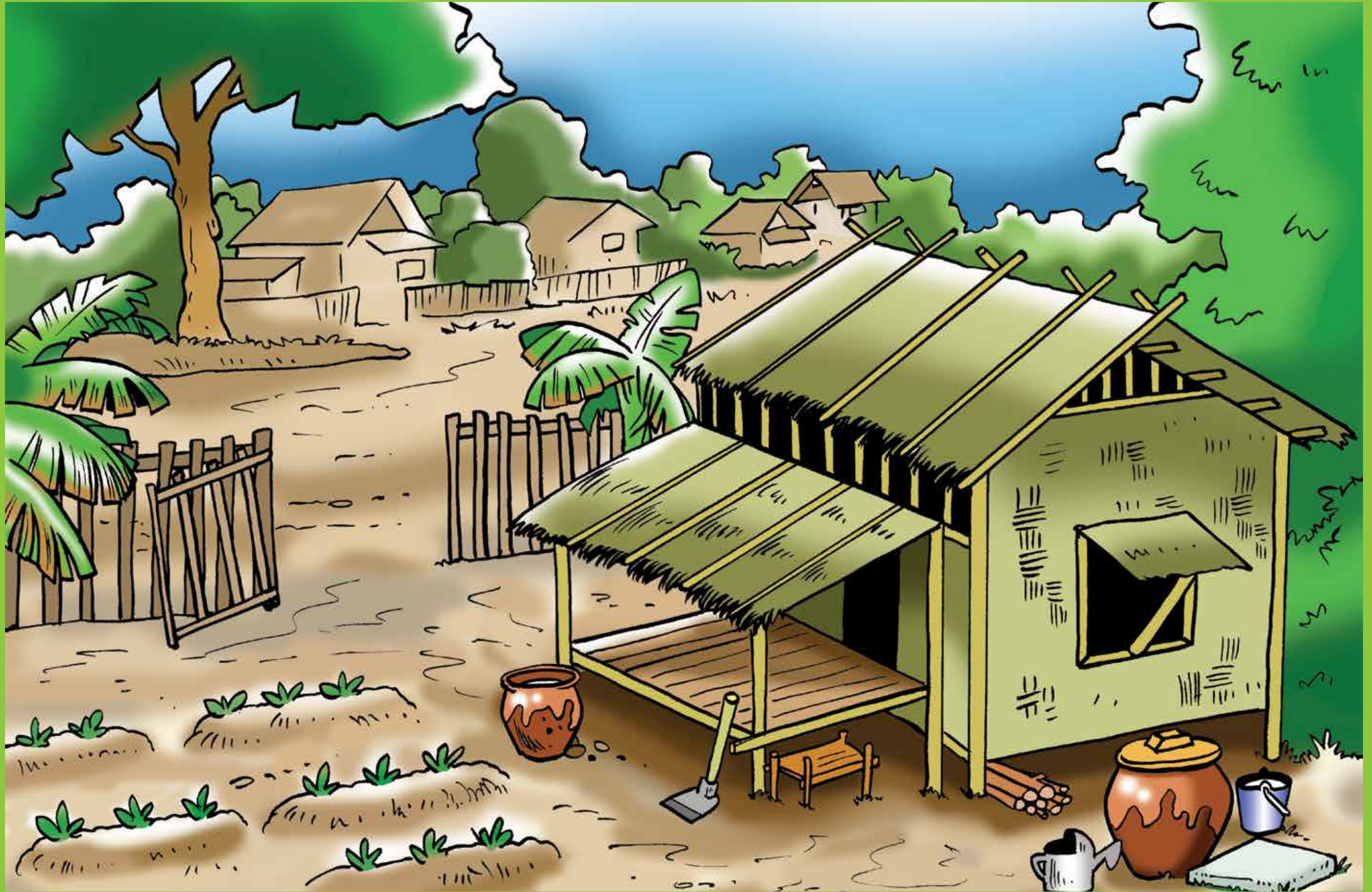


At the end of the story, there is a section of key messages. Please familiarize yourself with these messages and share them during discussions, where relevant. These will also help you to correct any misconceptions or misinformation that may come up during the discussions.

Directions

Explain to the participants that:

1. You are going to read a story called The Thousand Day Journey.
2. Let them know how long the session will last (approximately one hour, but will depend upon the time available).
3. During the story they will be asked some discussion questions
4. There will be both large and small group discussions
5. You, the facilitator, will take notes or write on flip chart paper any key issues that are raised so that you can come back and discuss further at the end of the story



1

Story

Four months have passed since Ma San Htway started eating more diverse, nutritious foods after learning that it is especially important for breastfeeding women. She is feeling healthy and her baby, Phoe Wa Lone, is now almost six months old. Vegetables are growing well in the home garden that her husband, Ko Thar Htoo, has planted.



Read the story out loud

Optional questions:



2

Story

Both her husband and her mother-in-law have been encouraging her to eat vegetables from the garden every day, especially since she is still breastfeeding. Ko Thar Htoo has also been giving her the larger portion of meat or fish on days they can afford it, and beans or lentils on other days since they are less costly. She has even had more energy to work, sometimes selling some of their extra vegetables in the village market.

Optional questions:

- What does dietary diversity look like?
- What are the three food groups? Can you give some examples of foods found in each group?
- Why is it especially important for pregnant and lactating women to eat a diverse diet?
- Are these some foods that breastfeeding mothers do not eat in your community? Do you agree with these practices? Why or why not?



3

Story

Ma San Htway remembers when Phoe Wa Lone was two months old and she was too weak to do all of her household chores. At this time, her mother-in-law started feeding Phoe Wa Lone. As most families did in the community, Daw Thaung Kyi prepared crushed rice with oil and salt to feed to her grandchild in addition to Ma San Htway's breast milk. However, Ma San Htway was not always sure if this was the best food for her baby.

Optional questions:



4

Story

Ever since Ma San Htway started eating a more diverse diet – foods from all three food groups every day – she noticed that although he felt stronger, Phoe Wa Lone still seemed small. He did not seem to be growing as quickly as he should.

Optional questions:

- What are some possible reasons why Phoe Wa Lone is not growing as quickly as he should?



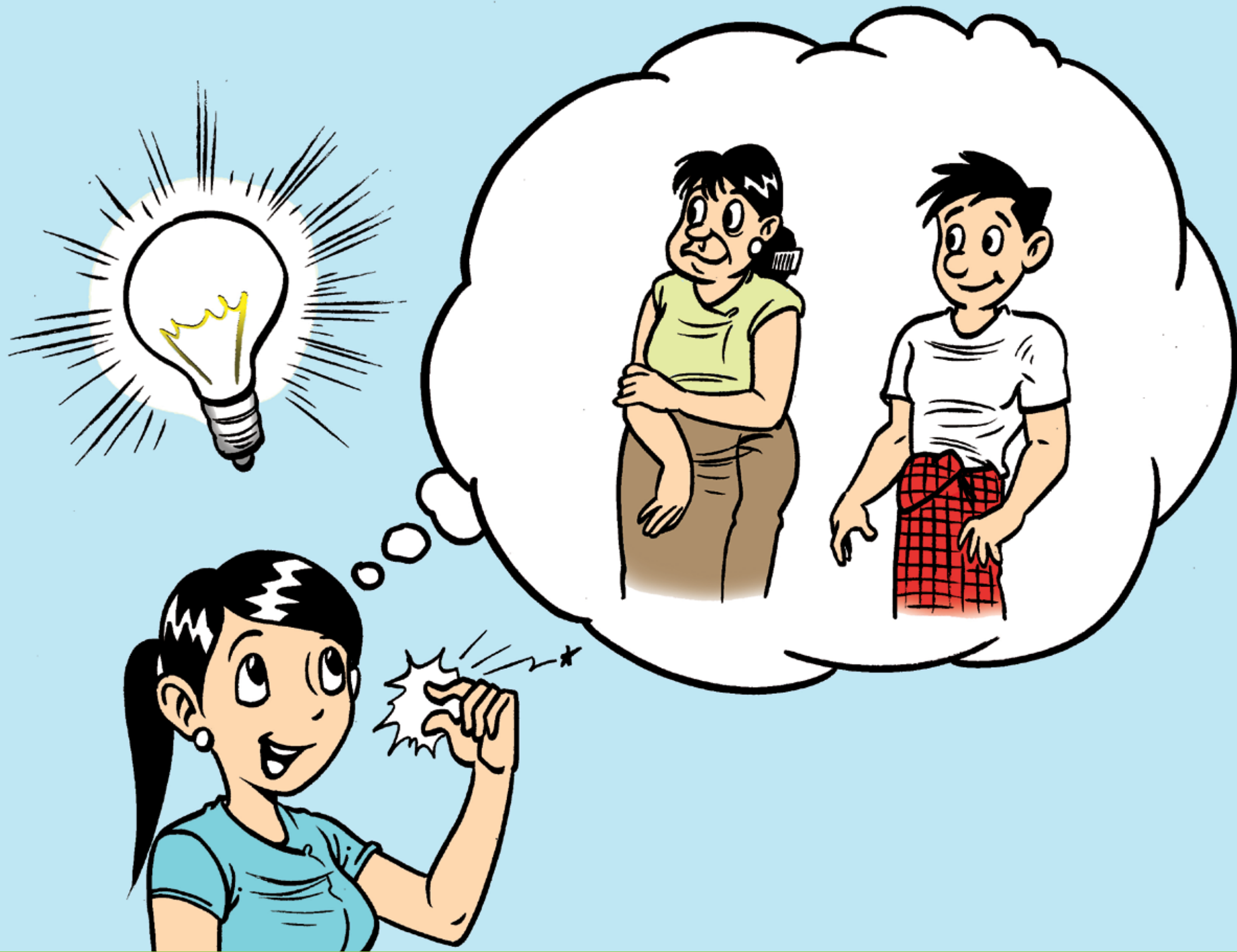
5

Story

Ma San Htway sits down to eat her lunch of rice, watercress from the garden and dried fish. She thinks about the three food groups she's eating. The rice gives her energy from the energy group. She is eating watercress which is a disease prevention food to help prevent disease and help her body function the way it should. And finally, the dried fish is a body-building food to give her strength.

Optional questions:

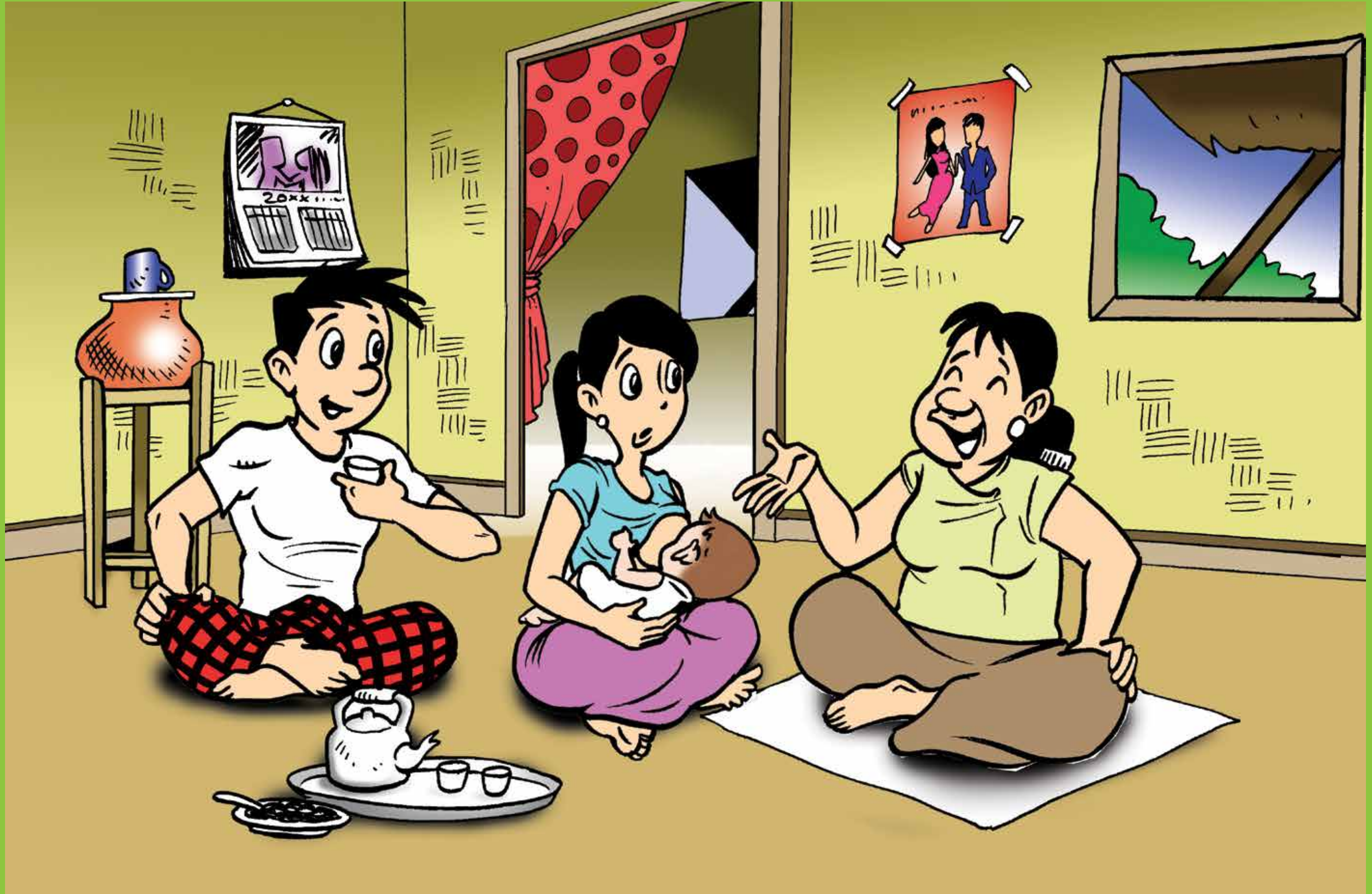
- Who supports/provides encouragement to the mother to eat a proper diet when she is lactating?



6

Story

At the same time, Ma San Htway wonders whether they are feeding the baby the right way. She would like to ask the teacher, Ko Aung Myint, who has already taught her family so much, but decides first to discuss this with her husband and mother-in-law.



7

Story

When Ma San Htway tells them her thoughts, Daw Thaung Kyi tells her not to worry. She admits that she had doubts about Ma San Htway eating diverse foods, and later realized that the teacher was right in giving this advice. But she explains that babies are different. They need breast milk, crushed rice and oil starting at two months in order to be strong. When they are one year old, they can then start to eat some other types of food. Before that, she tells them, they cannot digest adult foods.

Optional questions:

- Should Ma San Htway follow Daw Thaung Kyi's advice? Why or why not?



8

Story

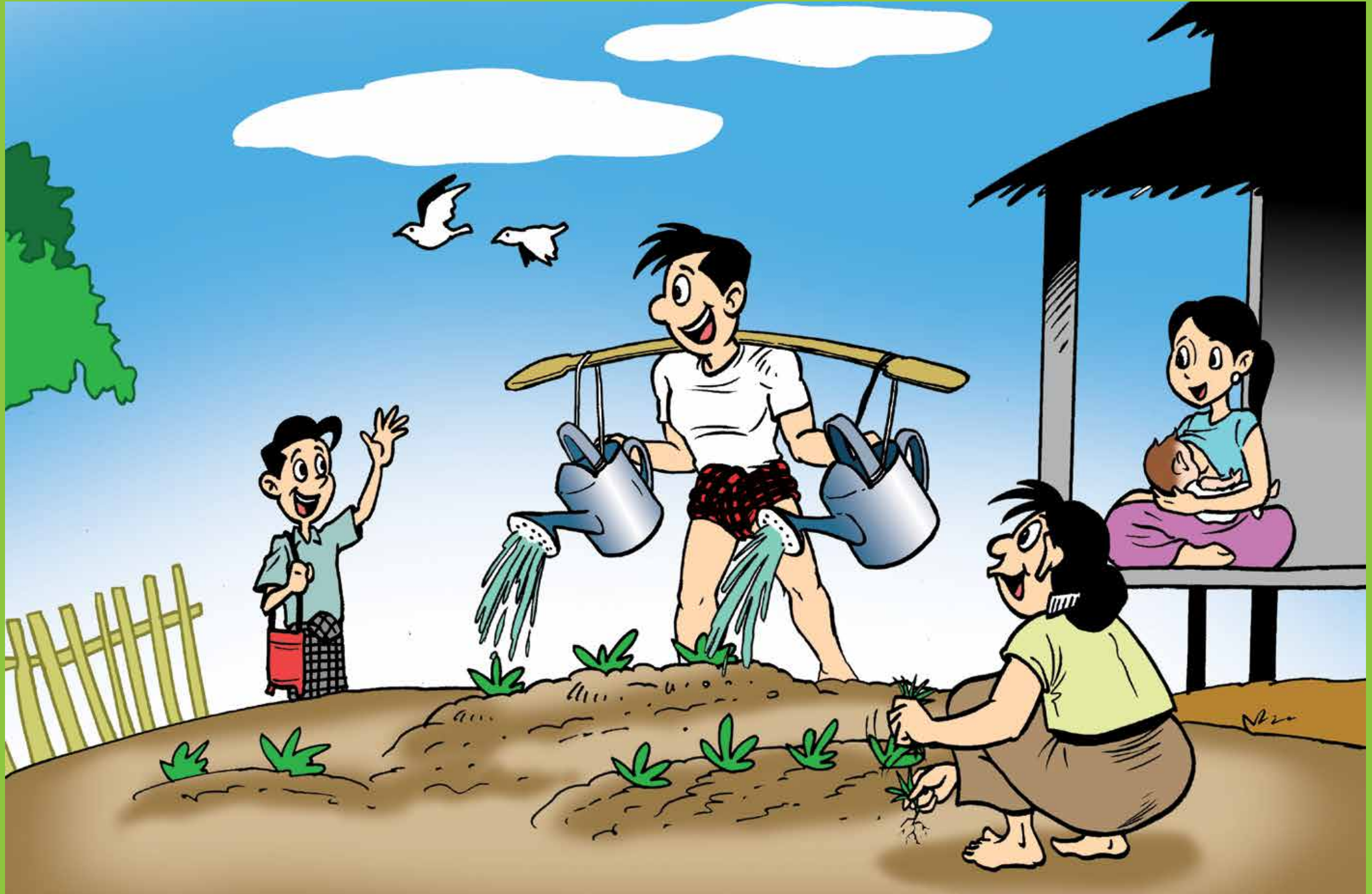
Ma San Htway listens to her mother-in-law. She still has her doubts, but does not want to ask someone else for advice when her mother-in-law has already told her what to do. She does not want to be disobedient nor show disrespect. It was difficult the last time she questioned her mother-in-law, and she doesn't want to do it again.



Stop the story here and have a discussion with the community members. The discussion should last approximately 15-20 minutes. When the discussion is over, continue reading the story.

Optional questions:

- Daw Thaung Kyi started feeding Phoe Wa Lone his first foods when he was two months old. What do you think of this?
- At what age do mothers or caretakers introduce foods to their babies in your community? Why? Who taught this to them?
- In your community, what are the first foods mothers or caretakers feed their babies? Why?
- Do you have children in your community who are not growing well or are smaller than others? Why is this?
- How do you think the story will continue?



9

Story

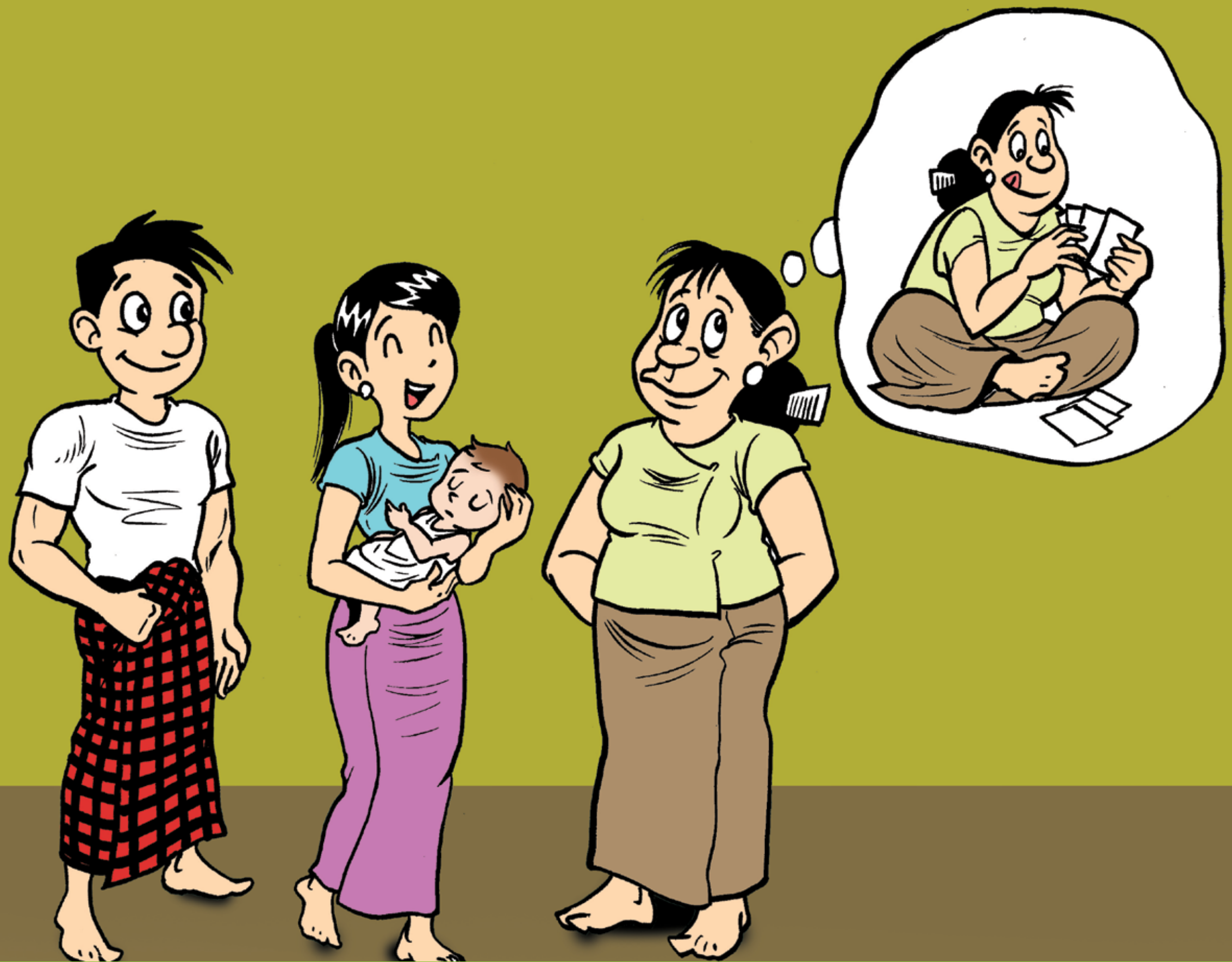
The next day Ko Aung Myint, the home gardening teacher who is working with a local organization teaching new agriculture skills, comes to their house to check up on the garden and to visit the family. Ma San Htway is breastfeeding Phoe Wa Lone and Ko Thar Htoo is watering the vegetable garden while Daw Thaung Kyi is pulling up weeds.



10

Story

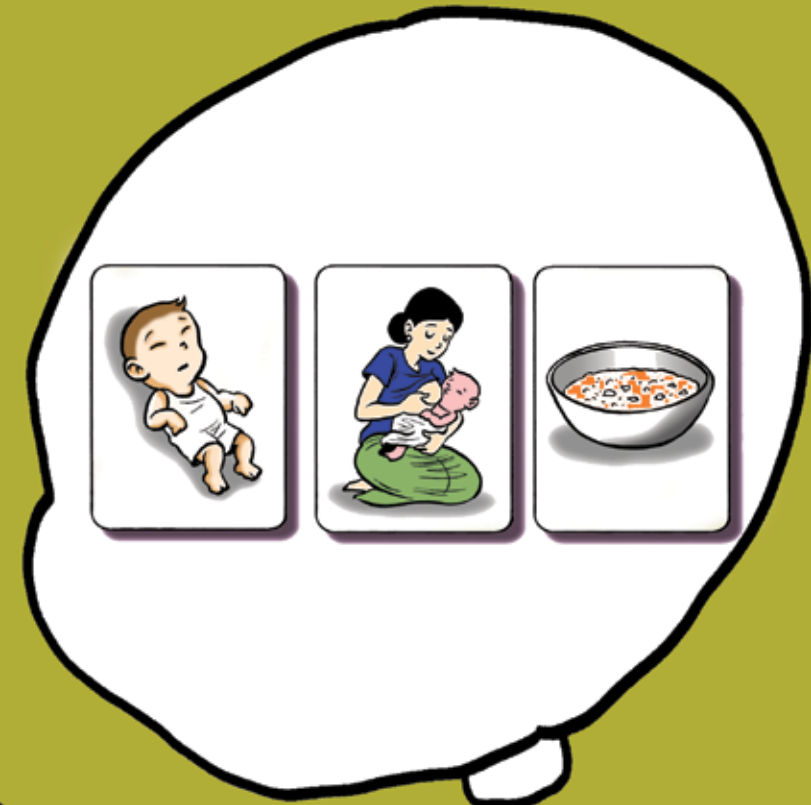
The teacher admires their vegetables and congratulates them for the way they have taken care of the garden. He asks about everyone's health. Ma San Htway thanks him and tells him that her health has improved since she has changed her diet. She tells him that the baby is breastfeeding well, although he still seems small for his age. Before he leaves he invites the family to a community card game with prizes for the whole family where they will also discuss the best way to feed a baby. Ma San Htway is relieved that Ko Aung Myint will teach them about this.



11

Story

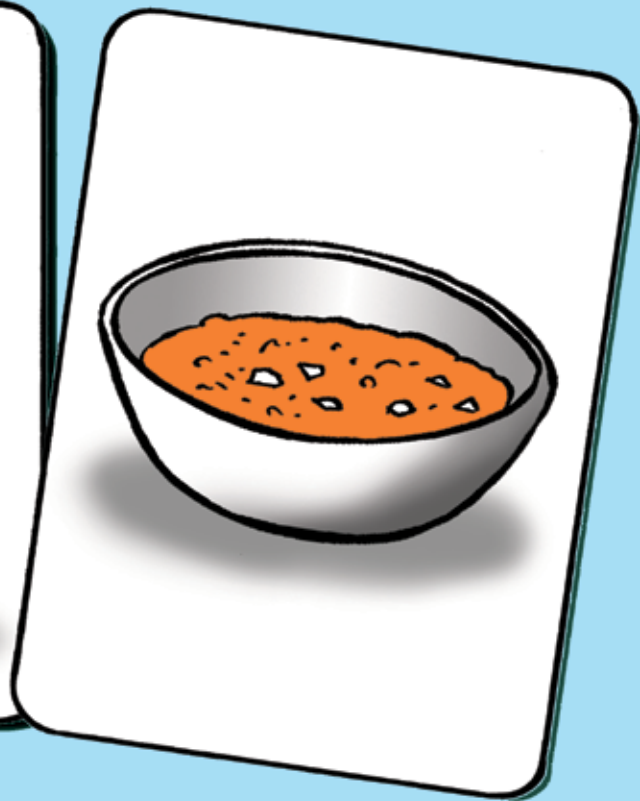
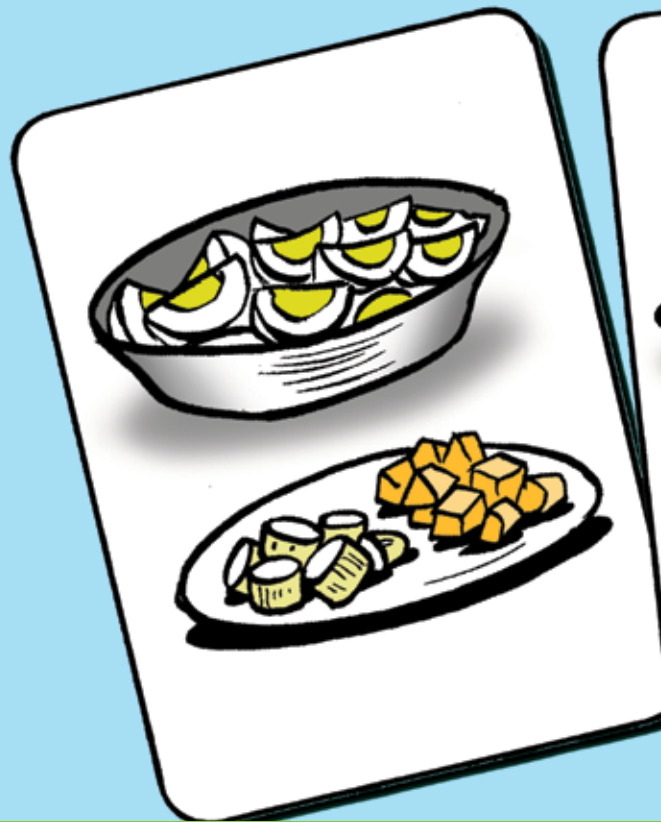
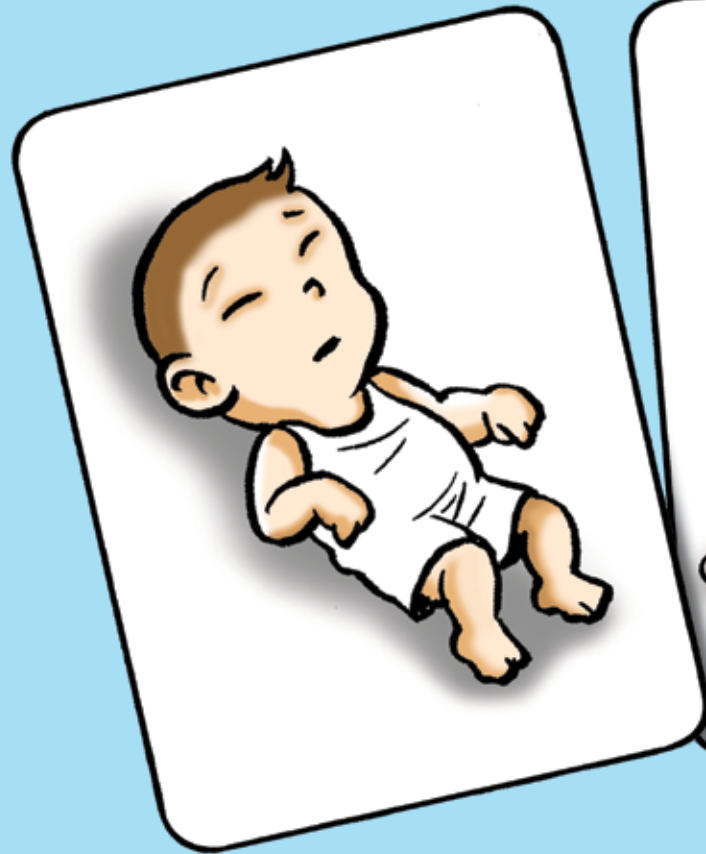
After the teacher leaves, Ma San Htway suggests that they all attend the event together. Daw Thaung Kyi agrees. After all, she replies, she loves a good card game and this is her lucky month! Ma San Htway is relieved that her mother-in-law has agreed to come to the event. She is looking forward to hearing what Ko Aung Myint will teach them!



12

Story

Four women, including Daw Thaung Kyi, are playing in the card game competition. She is looking forward to winning! After all, it is her lucky month.

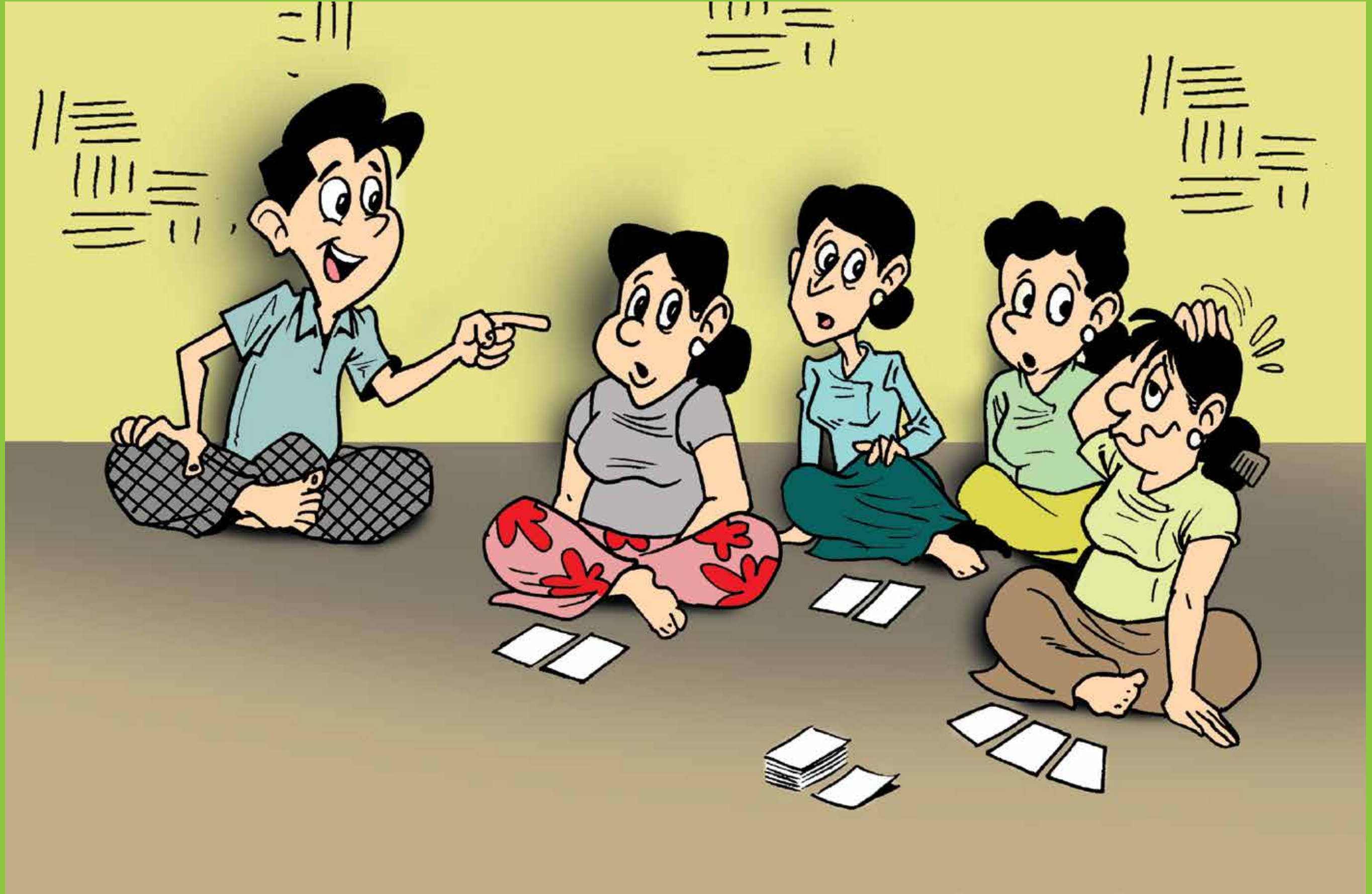


13

Story

The cards have pictures of babies at different ages – 4 months, 6 months, 9 months and 12 months – and other cards with pictures of different types of food. The object of the game is to match the pictures of the babies with the food that they should be eating at the different ages.

Daw Thaug Kyi selects a card that shows a four month-old baby. She looks at the different cards with pictures of different foods. There is also a card that shows a mother breastfeeding. She chooses the breastfeeding card as well as the card that shows rice and green vegetables and puts them next to the picture of the baby and looks up confidently, expecting to win a point.



14

Story

To her disappointment, the teacher tells her that she has picked the wrong card. Although Daw Thaung Kyi is unhappy that she has not won, she is curious to hear the teacher's explanation.



15

Story

The teacher explains to the group that babies should only be given breast milk (and no other liquids or foods) for the first six months of life since it contains everything that the baby needs to grow strong and be healthy. This is called exclusive breastfeeding.



ពេល: ខ្សែក្រវាត់
បាយ (៦) ល

16

Story

During this time, a mother should breastfeed her child 10 times per day (including day and night). She is surprised to hear this information and is unsure what to think. Has she been wrong all this time? Had she fed her own children incorrectly?



17

Story

At home, Ma San Htway is worried because they started feeding Phoe Wa Lone rice porridge when he was two months old. Daw Thaung Kyi sighs and admits that even if this is the way that people have been doing it for generations, the teacher is educated and maybe it is best to follow his advice if they want Phoe Wa Lone to grow as well as possible since he still seems small for his age. She thinks of the teacher's son who was at the card game competition. He was only fed breast milk until he was six months old and now he's a tall and healthy four year-old boy.



18

Story

Daw Thaung Kyi reassures her daughter-in-law that it is not too late to improve the baby's diet. Ma San Htway should continue only breastfeeding at least ten times per day until he is six months. They will talk to the teacher once again to make sure they start feeding him the right way when he reaches six months-old.



19

Story

Ma San Htway, Daw Thaug Kyi, and baby return to visit the teacher in preparation for his six month birthday. They are eager to hear the wise teacher's advice. v

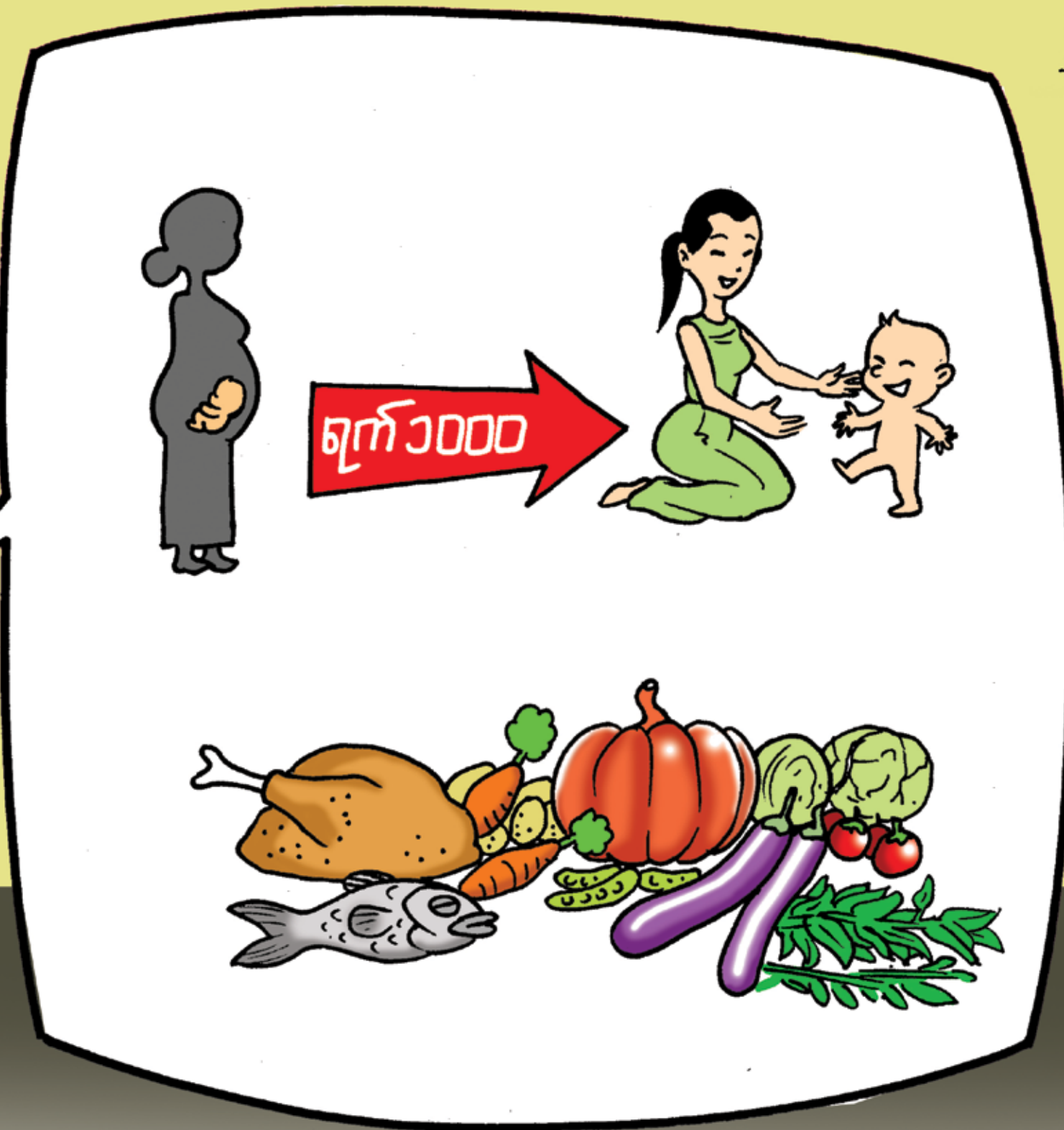


20

Story

He tells them how healthy they look and thanks them for their visit.

He explains that when the baby turns six months old, they should start feeding him small meals in addition to breast milk. This is called complementary feeding, he explains. Since the baby's stomach is very small it is important to give him healthy, nutritious foods.



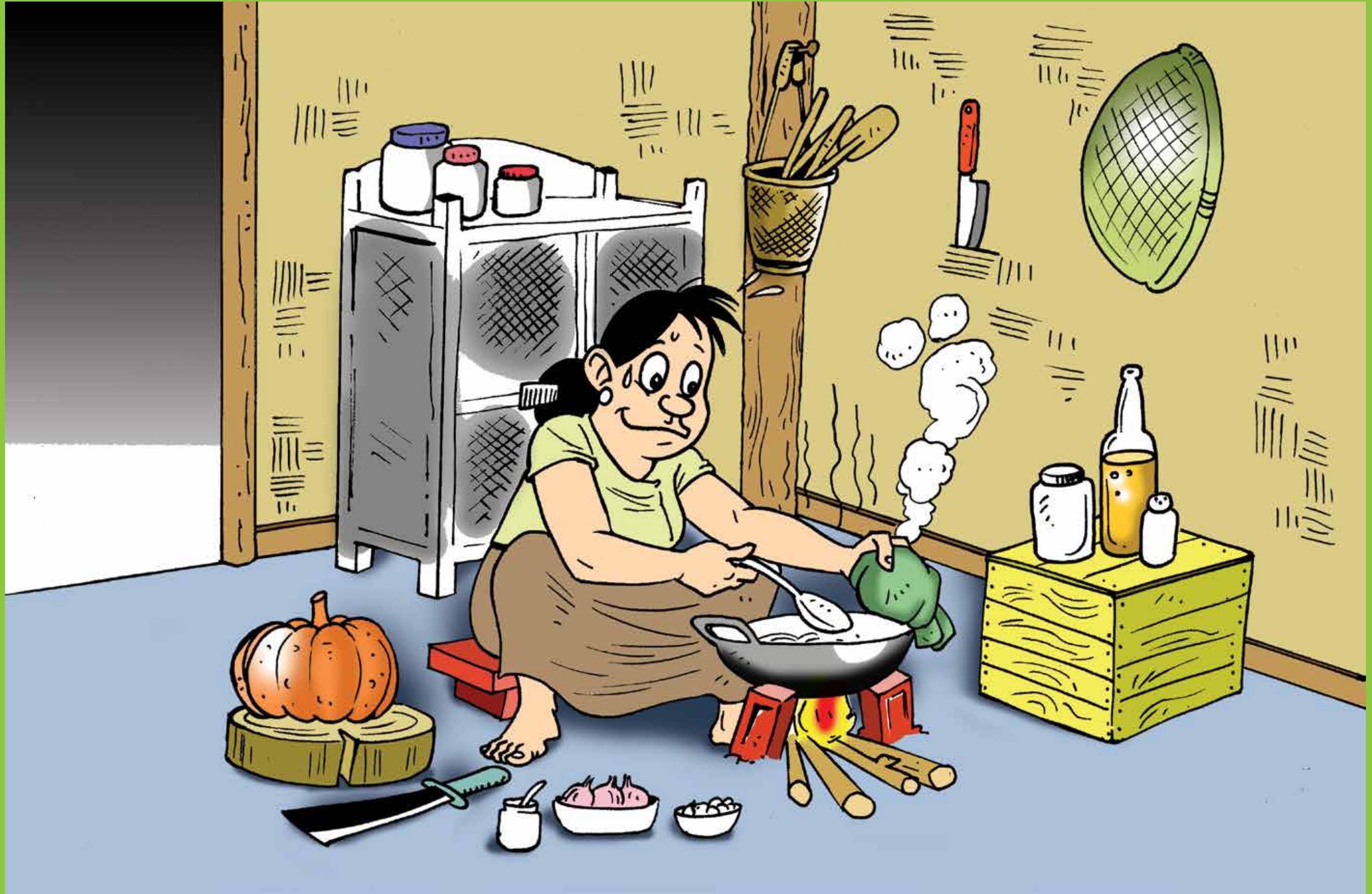
21

Story

This means giving him many different kinds of vegetables as well as meat, fish or beans in addition to rice. They must puree or mash the food until it is soft as he still doesn't have teeth to chew the food. He describes The Thousand Day Journey – from when a woman first gets pregnant until the baby is two years old – as the most important time for the baby's development when a variety of foods are needed in the diet.

Optional questions:

- What do you think is the significance of the title of this flip chart story, "The Thousand Day Journey"?
- If you were writing this story, how would you end it?



Story

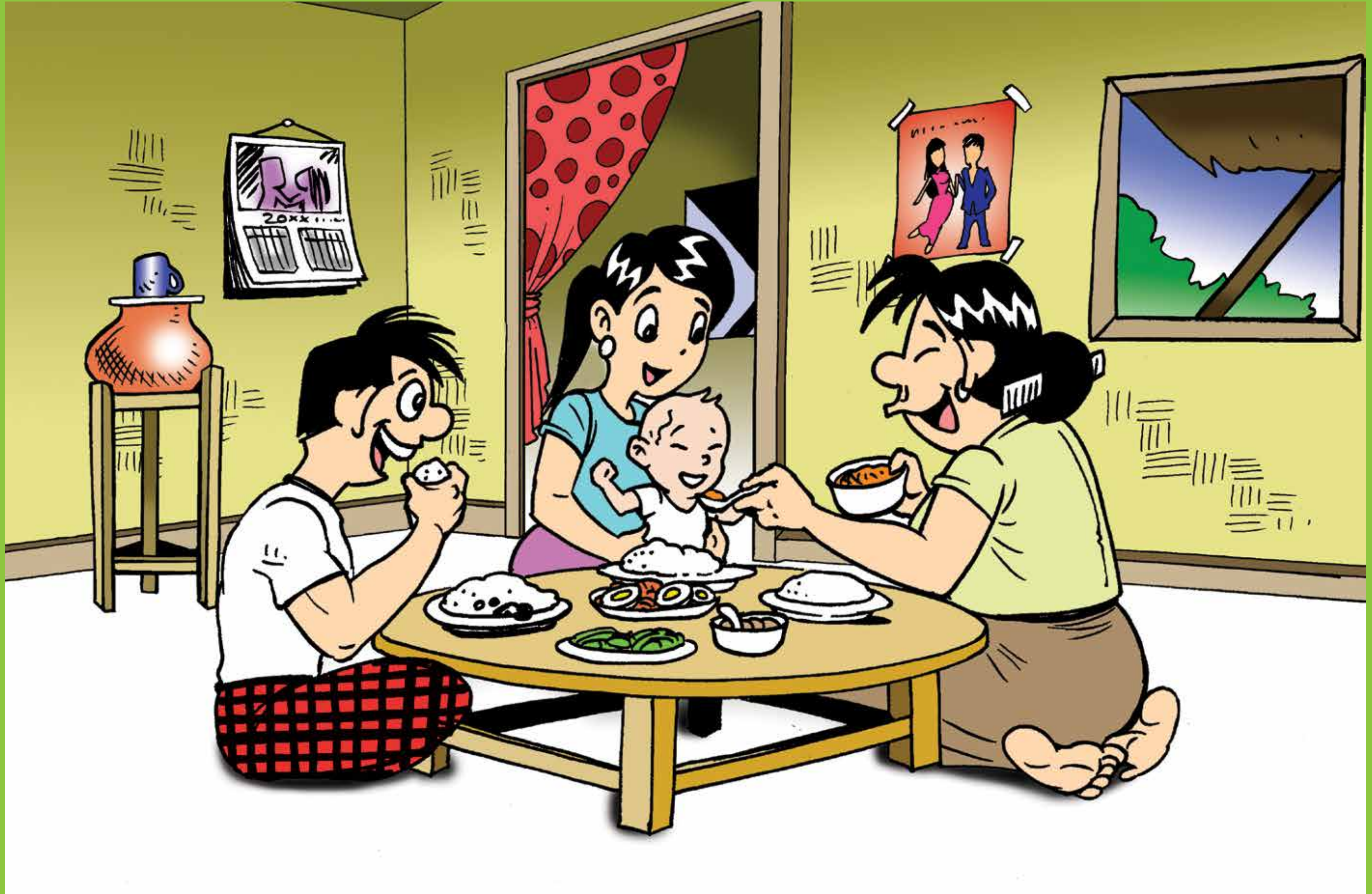
A few weeks have passed and Phoe Wa Lone is turning six months old today. To celebrate this day, Daw Thaung Kyi has surprised them by getting up early and cooking some pumpkin from their garden, which she has pureed and mixed with a little oil to feed to her grandson. She has also prepared a meal for the rest of the family of rice, pumpkin, and egg curry.



This is the end of Part Two. Have a discussion with the community members. The discussion could last 15-20 minutes.

Optional questions:

- What does it mean when we say exclusive breastfeeding up to six months?
- Are there women in your community who practice exclusive breastfeeding until six months? Why or why not?
- In your community do women give babies less than six months old water? If yes, why? And when? What is the danger in doing this?
- What types of foods do young children (under two years old) traditionally eat in your village?
- Is this story realistic? Do you think this could happen in your village?



23

Story

Everyone sits down together for a family meal and is delighted by this surprise. As Daw Thaung Kyi feeds the baby a spoonful of pumpkin, Ma San Htway looks up and smiles. How lucky she is to have a mother-in-law who is willing to learn new ideas!

Optional questions:

- Do you prepare a diverse meal for your family? What are the challenges?



Ask the participants to reflect upon the lessons they have learned over the course of the story.

Reflections:

- Ask the participants to break into small groups of four to five people. Ask each group to discuss interesting or important lessons they have learned over the course of the story. Tell the groups that after a few minutes of discussion they will be asked to share two of the lessons they discussed with the larger group.
- As the groups share their lessons, the facilitator records them on the flip chart. If groups suggest similar lessons which are differently worded, the facilitator can combine them as one lesson.
- Once all groups have presented their ideas, the facilitator can open a large group discussion. What do people think of the lessons discussed? Do they agree? Do they have any questions? Are there any important lessons which have not been mentioned?
- After a group discussion, ask each person to think about which lesson they think is most important or meaningful for them or their family. Ask them what they can do individually to help themselves or their families. Ask each person to find a partner and share with their partner at least one thing they plan to do.

When one partner has finished, allow the other partner to share his or her idea.

- The facilitator can ask for volunteers to share what actions they plan to take with the larger group.

Key messages on maternal and young child nutrition

1. To help the baby grow strong, enrich the mother's diet with at least three different types of foods at each meal.
 - Add colorful foods to enrich the meal including orange and red vegetables and fruits (such as carrots, orange fleshed sweet potatoes, ripe mango and ripe papaya), green leafy vegetables (such as kale, chard), avocado, eggs, beans, peanuts, peas or lentils.
 - Add animal foods (meat, liver, chicken, fish) whenever available. If this is not possible use beans, peanuts, peas or lentils.
2. Practice exclusive breastfeeding, which means feed your baby only breast milk for the first six months, not even giving water, for the baby to grow healthy and strong.
 - Breast milk provides the best and complete nourishment for the baby
 - Until a child is six months old, the child's body is unable to properly digest any other food, which can lead to illness and poor growth.

- Babies do not need to drink water or any other liquids during their first six months of life. Even during very hot weather, breast milk will satisfy the baby's needs. If the baby takes water or other liquids, it may cause the child to suck less on the breast, leading to poor growth.
 - Feeding a baby only breast milk protects the baby from diarrhoea and respiratory infections.
 - Never use a bottle to feed your baby, as these are hard to keep clean and will cause diarrhoea.
3. Exclusive breastfeeding also means breastfeeding a baby on demand, at least ten times day and night, to produce enough milk for the baby to grow.
- Frequent breastfeeding helps the milk to flow and ensures that a baby grows well. If you think that you don't have enough milk, increase the breastfeeding frequency and be sure to empty one breast before switching to the other.
 - Exclusive breastfeeding until six months, if menses are not back, can help protect the mother from getting pregnant.
 - Ensure proper positioning and attachment so the baby gets adequate breast milk and to avoid breast problems such as sore and cracked nipples.
 - Advise mothers with nipple and breast problems to seek immediate care from a Health Worker.
4. Continue to breastfeed your baby until two years and beyond to help the child become healthy and strong

- During the first and second year of life, breast milk is still an important source of nutrients for your baby.
 - After six months of age, continue to breastfeed your child on demand, day and night, until two years and beyond to maintain your child's strength.
 - Continuing breastfeeding will help protect your child from diseases such as diarrhoea.
5. When a child reaches six months of age, introduce complementary foods such as enriched, porridge and other soft foods two to three times a day for your baby to grow healthy and strong.
- Babies have small stomachs and therefore can only eat small amounts at each meal. So it is important to feed them frequently throughout the day.
 - As children get older, increase the quantity and variety of food the child consumes.
 - At six months, start with pureed, mashed and semi-solid food such as porridge and mashed banana or avocado.
 - At eight months children can start eating finger foods, which the baby can pick up and eat by him or herself.
 - By twelve months, infants can eat foods consumed by the family.
 - Foods given to the child must be handled and stored in clean/hygienic conditions to avoid diarrhoea and illness.

Produced by



A consortium of



Through the generous support of



Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund

