

Aesop's Fables

retold by Ann McGovern

Classroom Favorites

Teacher's Guide by Lucille Zaleski



A Perma-Bound Production

BACKGROUND

Aesop's Fables is a collection of stories attributed to a Greek slave named Aesop, who lived about 3000 years ago. Each of his brief tales teaches a moral and offers useful advice. Most of the characters in *Aesop's Fables* are animals that talk and act like human beings. They illustrate the failings and virtues of human nature in a simple, humorous way. Each fable ends with a proverb that sums up the fable's moral and advice.

Aesop's Fables has provided many popular expressions. For example, an enemy who pretends to be a friend is sometimes called "a wolf in sheep's clothing." It's called "sour grapes" when someone despises what he cannot have.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ann McGovern was born in New York City. She is married and the mother of four children. She has worked as an editor for many different book clubs, and has served on various editorial boards. She was named author of the year in 1974 by Scholastic Book Services. She enjoys traveling with her family, pursuing hobbies of scuba diving and underwater photography.

Ann McGovern feels that her books reflect her life in three parts: 1) ideas she strongly believes in; 2) desire for knowledge; and 3) exciting personal experiences. She also tries to dispel damaging stereotypes, and she concentrates on the reinforcement of humanistic values such as love, individuality, and honesty to each other. She is a prolific writer. Some of her children's books are -

Why It's A Holiday
Story of Christopher Columbus
If You Lived In Colonial Times
Who Has a Secret?
Where Are You?
Runaway Slave: The Story of Harriet Tubman
Black is Beautiful
The Defenders
Eggs On Your Nose
If You Grew Up With Abe Lincoln
and many more

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To relate character to plot
2. To apply literal, interpretative, and critical thinking to a selection
3. To understand and identify cause and effect
4. To find reasons for a character's actions
5. To infer a character's feelings from speech and action
6. To explore problem solving methods
7. To examine a generalization
8. To understand words from context

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the universality of human traits and characteristics that transcend all ages and cultures
2. To understand the metaphor of animals displaying human characteristics
3. To relate the moral lessons in *Aesop's Fables* to the students' own life experiences

"The Fox and the Grapes" (p. 5)

Vocabulary:

1. A hungry fox stole into a vinyard one day.
2. He jumped up to seize the nearest bunch of grapes

Moral: It is easy to despise what you know you cannot possess.

A fox tries to get grapes that are too high for him to reach. He leaves claiming they are sour and he really doesn't want them.

Relate to - Have you ever felt this way? "I'm glad I didn't get an A on that test like you did."

Discuss - Why might someone despise what he could not have?

"The Donkey in the Lion's Skin" (p. 6)

Vocabulary:

1. . . . as the fox heard the donkey bray

Moral: Clothes may disguise a fool until he opens his mouth.

A Donkey dresses up like a lion and scares all the animals. A Fox hears him bray and uncovers the deception.

- Discuss -**
1. Why might most animals be afraid of a lion?
 2. Why might Aesop have had the Fox discover the charade?
 3. How can clothes disguise a fool?
 4. How can opening one's mouth let people know you are a fool?

"The Hunter and the Woodsman" (p. 7)

Moral: A hero must be brave in deed as well as in word.

A Hunter asks a Woodsman if he knows where the Lion is. The Woodsman offers to take the Hunter to the Lion's den, but the Hunter is afraid and doesn't really want to find the Lion.

- Discuss -**
1. Why did the Hunter search for the Lion's tracks and not the Lion itself?
 2. This is a good place to talk with the students about real bravery. Have them compare true bravery with "dare" taking.

"The Falconer and the Partridge" (p. 8)

Vocabulary:

1. I will lure many other Partridges into your nets.
2. . . . you well deserve your fate.
3. . . . to save oneself is a vile crime.

Moral: To betray one's friends to save oneself is a vile crime.

A Partridge gets caught in a Falconer's nets and tries to buy his freedom by promising to lure others into the nets.

Relate to - Are there some times when you should "betray" a friend?

Discuss - In which circumstances would it be all right to turn in a friend? What if he were abusing drugs or cheating in school?

"The Man and the Lion" (p. 8)

Moral: How a story ends often depends on the storyteller.

A Man and a Lion argue over who is stronger and each gives the point of view from his own perspective.

- Discuss -**
1. Tell about a time you viewed something in a different way than a friend, or a parent, or a teacher.
 2. Write or tell which you believe to be stronger, a man or a lion. Why do you feel this way?

"The Hare and the Hound" (p. 9)

Vocabulary:

He called out scornfully, "You call yourself a hunter?"

Moral: Fear lends wings to the feet.

A Hound pursues a Hare. The Hare escapes and a Shepherd ridicules the Hound. The Hound reminds him that the Hare had much more to lose, his life, than he himself did.

Relate to - Tell/write about a time you did something you never thought you could do because something really bad would happen to you if you didn't.

"The Stag at the Pool" (p. 10)

Vocabulary:

1. . . . then he said with despair, "But my legs and my feet are another matter! Oh, how weak, how slender they are!"
2. It seemed as if the Stag would escape his pursuer, for as long as he was on the open plain, he was able to outrun the Lion.
3. And the more he tried to free himself, the more entangled his antlers became.
4. Too late the Stag reproached himself: "Woe is me! How I have deceived myself!"
5. I scorned the feet which would have saved me

Moral: Too often we despise what we should value most.

The Stag scorns his slender legs, but takes great pride in his antlers. He is pursued by a Lion and could have escaped by outrunning the Lion, but his antlers get caught in the trees.

Relate to - 1. Tell of a time you got angry with your mother about some rule or decision, and she was later proved right.

2. Tell of a time you got angry because you had to study, but then got a good grade.

"The Farmer and the Stork" (p. 12)

Moral: Birds of a feather flock together.

A Stork gets caught with a group of corn-stealing cranes by the farmer. The Stork disassociates himself from the Cranes, but the farmer refuses to let him go.

Relate to - 1. Did you ever get involved with a group and get in trouble because of the things they did?

2. Tell ways that you can get in trouble if you hang around with kids who do drugs, or who don't do their school work, or who hang around unsafe places.

"The Ant and the Grasshopper" (p. 13)

Moral: It is best to prepare today for the needs of tomorrow.

The Ant prepares for winter storing food; the Grasshopper idles his days away singing. The Ant has food for the winter; the Grasshopper starves.

Relate to - Tell about a time you gave up a fun activity to study for a test. Write about how you can prepare yourself now for the future.

“The Donkey, the Rooster, and the Lion (p. 14)

Vocabulary:

1. But just as the Lion was about to pounce on the Donkey, the Rooster began to crow.
2. And the Donkey felt so bold that he began to chase the Lion.

Moral: False confidence often leads to misfortune.

A Rooster crows to chase away a Lion that is going to pounce on a Donkey. The Donkey gets over-confident, believing the Lion to be afraid of him, and chases the Lion. The Lion turns and gets him.

Relate to - Have you ever not studied for a test because you felt you knew all the work, then didn't get a good grade?

“The Fox Without a Tail” (p. 16)

Moral: Misery loves company.

A Fox loses his tail in a trap and tries to get his friends to get rid of their tails.

- Relate to -*
1. Was there ever a time something bad happened to you and you felt better when you found out others had the same problem?
 2. Look up the words “sympathy” and “empathy.” Discuss situations when you could have sympathy for, or empathy with someone.

“The Lion and the Boar” (p. 17)

Moral: In the face of common danger, small differences are best forgotten.

A Lion and a Boar settle their differences and avoid a battle when they see vultures ready to descend upon the loser.

Relate to - Has there been a time you had to forget your differences and work with someone with whom you had a problem?

“Jupiter and the Bee” (p. 19)

Vocabulary:

1. Jupiter was shocked that the Queen Bee would wish to revenge the theft of her honey in this way.
2. And when you attack anyone who takes your honey, the wound shall be fatal.

Moral: Evil wishes have evil consequences.

Jupiter promises to give the Queen Bee anything she requests. She asks Jupiter to give her a sting to kill whoever would steal her honey. Jupiter is shocked by such a request, but he keeps his promise. However, he makes the sting fatal to the Queen Bee.

Discuss - Compare the story of King Midas to the Queen Bee.

“Dog in the Manger” (p. 20)

Moral: There are always those who begrudge to others what they themselves cannot enjoy.

A Dog keeps an Ox from getting to his food even though the Dog does not want it.

Relate to - Have you ever felt “I'm glad I didn't get straight ‘A's’ on my report card. I wouldn't want to be considered a nerd?”

“The Crow and the Pitcher” (p. 22)

Moral: When force fails, patience will often succeed.

A Crow tries to get a drink from a pitcher. He cannot reach the water so he tries to knock over the pitcher, but he fails. He drops 100 pebbles in until the water rises and he can drink.

Relate to - Remember a time you had to be patient so you could achieve something.

“The Porcupine and the Moles” (p. 23)

Vocabulary:

It is well to know one's guest before offering him hospitality.

Moral: It is well to know one's guest before offering him hospitality.

A Porcupine is offered shelter in a cave by a family of Moles. The cave is crowded, but the Porcupine will not leave. So the Moles must find a new home.

Relate to - Has this ever happened to you? You are home and a stranger comes to the door and tells you he is there to fix something. Your mother is not at home. What should you do?

“Hercules and the Wagoner” (p. 24)

Moral: Try to help yourself before you ask help of others.

A Wagoner gets stuck in the mud. He calls on Hercules to help. Hercules tells him to try to get it out himself before he prays to the gods for help.

Relate to - Let's say you are having trouble in math class with word problems. You raise your hand and ask the teacher for help, but she tells you to draw out the problem, calculate, and label your answer to see if it makes sense. Why did she do this instead of showing you how to do it?

“The Wolf and the House Dog” (p. 24)

Vocabulary:

1. . . . burdens you with so heavy a collar?
2. Half a meal in freedom is better than a full meal in bondage.

Moral: Half a meal in freedom is better than a full meal in bondage.

A Wolf meets a House Dog who is well-fed, but who wears a heavy collar. The Wolf tells the Dog that he would not change places with him because the weight of the collar would spoil his appetite.

Discuss - 1. Why do people want to be free?

2. What have various people done throughout the ages to gain personal freedom?

“The Two Travelers and the Ax” (p. 26)

Moral: If you do not want to share the prize, then do not expect to share the danger.

Two men are walking along and find an ax. One man claims it and does not share ownership with his friend. The angry owner of the ax comes after the two and the friend who could not share ownership refuses to share blame.

Relate to - Imagine this - your little brother is with you when you take cookies before dinner. You eat all the cookies and when you get caught, only you get punished.

“The Boastful Traveler” (p. 26)

Vocabulary:

There he boasted of the marvelous feats he had performed

Moral: Deeds are far more convincing than boasts.

A braggart talks constantly about his great feats, but never performs any.

Relate to- Do you know these people?

1. A person who says he is a great student, but won't show anyone his grades
2. A person who boasts about what a great athlete he is, but won't join a team

“The Fox and the Goat” (p. 27)

Moral: Look before you leap.

A Fox, who has fallen into a well, tricks a Goat into jumping in so he can climb on him to escape from the well.

Relate to - Has this ever happened to you?

1. A friend asks you to pass a note while the teacher is talking. You get caught doing it and are punished.
2. You are on your way home from school and a friend invites himself over. Your mother is at work and has told you that you are never to have friends over until she gets home. Your friend spills juice on your living room rug, then leaves you to clean up and explain.

“The Fox and the Woodcutter” (p. 28)

Moral: There is as much mischief in a wink as in a word.

A Fox asks for shelter from a Woodcutter. The Huntsman pursuing him stops and the Woodcutter tells him he has not seen the Fox, but he indicates where the Fox is by winking and gesturing.

Discuss - The many things body language indicates.

“The Shepherd and the Wolf” (p. 30)

Moral: If you teach evil, you must expect evil.

A Shepherd finds and cares for a Wolf. He teaches it to steal and it steals one of his own flock.

Relate to - Did you ever teach your younger brother or sister to sneak into the cookie jar? And then he/she ate all the cookies, leaving none for you?

“The Dog and the Shadow” (p. 30)

Vocabulary:

Grasp at the shadow and lose the substance.

Moral: Grasp at the shadow and lose the substance.

A Dog with a piece of meat sees his reflection in the water and thinks it is another dog who has a larger piece of meat. He opens his mouth to attack, and he loses his own meat in the water.

Relate to - What if you watch a tv movie instead of reading the book for a report, what do you miss by doing this?

“The Hares and the Frogs” (p. 31)

Vocabulary:

. . . poor creatures more timid than we.

Moral: There is always someone worse off than ourselves.

The Hares believe everyone is their enemy. They decide to drown themselves to end their misery. They change their minds when they see how the frogs fear them.

Discuss - Compare yourself with someone -

1. Who lives in a country with little personal freedom.
2. Who has just lost everything in a flood or hurricane.
3. Who lives in a poor country and cannot receive an education.
4. Who lives in a poor country and does not have proper medical care.

“The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf” (p. 33)

Moral: There is no believing a liar even when he speak the truth.

For excitement a Shepherd Boy yells “Wolf” so the townsfolk will come running. He does this twice, and the third time when a wolf actually does appear, they don't believe him and the sheep are lost.

Relate to - 1. Your friend has told you a lie. How do you feel the next time your friend tells you something?

2. You are supposed to be home at 6:00 p.m. for dinner. You are late several times. Why might your mother not believe you the next time you promise to be home on time?

“Jupiter, Neptune, Minerva, and Momus” (p. 34)

Moral: He who is envious can see no greatness in the achievements of others.

Momus is appointed by Jupiter to decide which is the most perfect: a man, a bull, or a house. Having no talent himself, Momus finds fault with all of them so Jupiter takes away his right to judge.

Relate to - Have you ever felt this way?

1. They won that game because the P.E. teacher let them cheat.
2. She gets good grades because the teacher likes her.

“The Ant and the Dove” (p. 35)

Vocabulary:

... saw the Ant's desperate plight.

Moral: One good turn deserves another.

A Dove saves an Ant, and later the Ant saves the Dove.

Relate to - Remember a time someone did something nice for you and you returned the kindness.

“The Farmer and His Sons” (p. 36)

Vocabulary:

The two young men bent down to catch their father's feeble words.

Moral: Hard work can often yield great riches.

A dying farmer tells his sons that there is great treasure in the field. The sons hunt for the riches digging in the soil. This produces the richest crop of grapes ever. The sons realize how wise their father was.

Relate to - You study hard in school, get a scholarship for college, and eventually get a great job. In what ways are you rich?

“The Lark and Her Young Ones” (p. 38)

Vocabulary:

When a man does his work himself instead of leaving it to others, he is in earnest.

Moral: If you want a job well done then do it yourself.

A Lark and her young live in a wheat field. The young birds hear the farmer saying that he must send for his neighbors to help him cut the wheat. The mother Lark does not move until the young ones tell her that the farmer has said he is going to come and see that it is done himself.

Relate to - Let's say you have a paper route and you have someone else deliver the papers because you have something else to do. The papers are not delivered to all your customers, and they are mad.

“The Wolf, the Lion, and the Lamb” (p. 39)

Moral: You have no right to what is not rightfully yours.

A Wolf steals a lamb. Then a Lion steals the lamb from him. When the Wolf complains, the Lion tells him it was really not his as he, himself, had stolen it.

Relate to - What if you find something that does not belong to you? What should you do?

“The Miser” (p. 40)

Vocabulary:

1. Once there was a miser who sold all his possessions and with the money bought a great lump of gold.
2. When the Miser found that his gold was gone, he tore his hair and cried aloud in despair.

Moral: To a miser, what he has is no more use than what he has not.

A Miser sells all his possessions and buys a great lump of gold which he buries. A workman finds out and steals it. When the Miser cries to his neighbor about his loss, the neighbor tells him to bury a stone in the hole because it would serve his purpose as well as the gold did.

Relate to - What if you have a toy that you do not let anyone play with because you are afraid something might happen to it?

“The Lion and the Mouse” (p. 42)

Moral: In time of need the weak may help the strong.

A Lion spares a Mouse only to have the Mouse save him in return when he gets trapped.

Relate to - Imagine that your parents are sick and you help them by running errands, taking care of little brothers or sisters, or getting things for them.

“The Horse and the Groom” (p. 43)

Vocabulary:

He who steals with a smile is none the less a scoundrel.

Moral: He who steals with a smile is none the less a scoundrel.

A Groom brushes a horse, but steals his grain and sells it.

Relate to - Do you ever do this?
You are kind to your friend when he's around, but you say unkind things about him when he's not there.

“The Miller, His Son, and Their Donkey” (p. 44)

Moral: When you try to please everyone, you end up by pleasing no one.

A Miller and his sons are on the way to a fair to sell the donkey. Along the way, they are criticized by various groups about who, if

anyone, is riding the Donkey. When they are criticized because they are both on the Donkey, they get off and carry the Donkey who gets so frightened by the laughter of the townspeople that he tumbles into the river and is lost.

Relate to - Was there ever a time you tried to please your parents, friends, and yourself, and you ended up not pleasing anyone, especially yourself?

“The Oxen and the Driver” (p. 46)

Vocabulary:

At last the Driver cried out in exasperation, “Wagon, why do you make so much noise?”

Moral: Those who suffer least often cry out loudest.

The Driver admonishes the wagon for groaning and creaking because the Oxen are doing all the work, not it.

Relate to - Imagine your parents do a great deal for you and rarely complain. You are asked to take out the garbage or clean up your room and you complain.

“The Wizard” (p. 46)

Moral: It is far easier to be wise for others than for ourselves.

A wizard gets robbed and the townspeople want to know why he could not foresee this occurrence.

Discuss - Why do people ask others for advice?

“The Mischievous Dog” (p. 47)

Vocabulary:

1. At first the Dog was irked by the noisy bell.
2. Don't you realize it is a disgrace - a sign to all men to avoid you?

Moral: To be widely known is not necessarily to be admired.

A Dog who is mischievous has a bell placed around his neck to warn people. He becomes very proud of the bell, then an old Hound told him that it was a disgrace, not an honor.

Discuss - Someone who is widely known, but not admired:
1. a world leader past or present
2. criminals
3. someone you personally know

“The Old Woman and the Physician” (p. 48)

Moral: Those who are so ready to take what is not their own must be prepared to lose what is theirs.

A blind old woman makes a deal with a physician. She will pay him only if she is cured. The physician steals all her possessions while giving her salve that does not cure her. After he steals everything, he

cures her and demands payment. The woman wins her case in court because she is unable to see any of her fine furniture and goods.

Relate to - Let's say you take a pencil or other item off of a classmate's desk. You get caught and lose your recess time.

“The Playful Donkey” (p. 50)

Vocabulary:

1. . . . laughed and praised his amusing performance.
2. Why do you beat me so severely?

Moral: What is right for one may be quite wrong for another.

A Monkey amuses the owner of a building by dancing on the roof. A Donkey sees this and does the same thing and breaks a large part of the roof. The Donkey does not understand why he is punished.

Discuss - Some people like to play sports, some like to play the piano, etc. Discuss various interests and why everyone should decide what is best for him instead of going along with what everyone else does.

“The Fox and the Stork” (p. 51)

Vocabulary:

1. “I am so sorry,” said the Fox with a crafty smile.
2. The Fox consented and arrived at the Stork's house

Moral: He who tricks others must expect to be tricked.

A Fox serves a Stork thin soup in a shallow dish she cannot drink from. She gets her revenge when she serves him soup in a long, narrow jar.

Relate to - 1. Remember a time you tricked someone, and they tricked you back.

2. Can you think of a time you tried to trick someone, and you got caught in your own trick?

“The Lion and the Bulls” (p. 52)

Moral: United we stand, divided we fall.

Four Bulls are being stalked by a Lion. They repel him by using their horns together. After they quarrel and separate, the Lion is able to get them, one by one.

Discuss - 1. If you and all your friends join together, you could keep drugs out of the schools and the neighborhood.
2. You and your classmates could all join together to make your classroom a clean and attractive place where learning takes place.
3. How you and everyone on the team can pull together to win a big game.

“The Milkmaid and Her Pail” (p. 53)

Vocabulary:

1. I will sell the eggs to the parson's wife.
2. I will buy myself a new frock and bonnet.

Moral: Do not count your chickens before they are hatched.

A Milkmaid carries a large pail of milk on her head to take to market to sell. She thinks about all the things she will buy instead of being careful and she spills the milk.

- Relate to* - 1. I always get “A’s” on my spelling test, so I don’t have to study for tomorrow’s test.
2. I know I’m really good at (a sport or activity), so I don’t have to worry about getting a good night’s sleep.

“The Wolf and the Lamb” (p. 54)

Vocabulary:

1. . . . a lamb who had strayed from the fold.
2. The Wolf resolved not to kill the Lamb without a good excuse
3. Seizing the Lamb, the Wolf snarled
4. . . . even though you deny every one of my accusations!

Moral: Any excuse will serve a tyrant.

A Wolf resolves not to kill a Lamb until he can come up with a good excuse to kill it. He is frustrated by his failure and kills the Lamb anyway.

- Relate to* - Has this ever happened to you?
1. I hit him because he gave me a mean look.
 2. I took his book because someone took mine.

“The Mice in Council” (p. 55)

Vocabulary:

. . . how they might best outwit their enemy, the Cat.

Moral: Many things are easier said than done.

The mice meet to discuss how to outwit the cat. They decide to hang a bell around her neck, but then they realize that they don’t have any way of hanging it on her.

- Relate to* - Have you ever thought this?
1. I’m going to get all “A’s” on my next report card. What will I have to do to reach this goal?
 2. I’m going to save my allowance so I can buy that new bike I want.

“The Trumpeter Taken Prisoner” (p. 56)

Vocabulary:

1. He cried out to his captors
2. He who incites others to war

Moral: He who incites others to war is worse than he who fights.

A Trumpeter is captured and when he pleads for mercy saying he is just a Trumpeter and not a fighter, he is shown no mercy.

Discuss - A “friend” tells you that another friend said he doesn’t like you. What do you think of this “friend”?

“The Horse, the Hunter and the Stag” (p. 57)

Moral: Freedom is too high a price to pay for revenge.

A Horse does not want to share his land with a Stag. He enlists a passing Hunter’s help. The Hunter tells the Horse that he needs to bridle and saddle him to more effectively chase the Stag away. They are successful in their mission, but the Hunter will not free the Horse.

Relate to - What if you and your brother/sister/friend do something wrong? You get mad at your accomplice and you tell on him/her. Then you get in trouble also.

“The Sick Lion” (p. 58)

Vocabulary:

And one by one the Lion devoured them.

Moral: The wise can learn from the misfortunes of others.

An old Lion is not able to provide food for himself so he invites guests in whom he devours. A Fox sees the tracks going in, but not coming out.

Relate to - What if your older brother/sister did not get good grades on his/her report card? Your parents were disappointed and restricted them. What can you learn from this?

“The Salt Peddler and the Donkey” (p. 59)

Vocabulary:

. . . for much of the salt had dissolved in the water.

Moral: Two can play the same game.

A Donkey learns that by stumbling in a stream, the salt he carries dissolves and his load will be lighter. The peddler realizes this and puts sponges in the baskets.

Relate to - Think of this: you are asked to clean up the kitchen after dinner. You don’t do it. The next time you ask your mom to take you to the mall, she refuses.

“The Hare and the Tortoise” (p. 60)

Moral: Slow and steady wins the race.

The Hare challenges all the animals to race him. The Tortoise accepts the challenge and wins the race due to the Hare's carelessness.

Relate to - You study on a daily basis and get “A's.” Your friend only studies for a test the night before and gets “D's.”

“The Bundle of Sticks” (p. 62)

Moral: In union there is strength.

A Father teaches his quarreling sons a lesson about getting along by having them try to break a bundle of sticks as opposed to each individual stick.

Relate to - 1. Have you ever been walking home from school in a group when the bully of the school walks by, but he doesn't bother you?
2. Let's say you are playing in the playground by yourself. A stranger comes up. He appears to want to talk, but he leaves when your friends come over.

“The Travelers and the Bear” (p. 63)

Moral: In time of trouble one learns who his true friends are.

Two men are accosted by a Bear. One leaves the other behind as he gets away.

Relate to - Pretend you have had a bad morning. Everything has gone wrong. You came to school in a terrible mood and have yelled at all your friends. They all stay away except for one friend who comes to eat lunch with you.

“The Lion in Love” (p. 65)

Moral: Those in love really take leave of their senses.

A Lion wants to marry the Woodsman's daughter. The Woodsman tricks the Lion into having his teeth and his claws removed.

Discuss - A mother/father who runs into a burning building to save the children still inside.

“The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing” (p. 66)

Vocabulary:

So well did the sheepskin disguise him that no one was suspicious

Moral: Those who intend harm often come to harm themselves.

A Wolf disguises himself as a Sheep to get his dinner. The Shepherd mistakes him for a real Sheep and kills him for his dinner.

Relate to - Pretend you have played a mean trick on one of your friends. You get caught and are sent to the principal's office.

“The Fisherman and the Little Fish” (p. 66)

Vocabulary:

. . . I gave up today's certain gain for tomorrow's uncertain profit.

Moral: A small fish caught is better than a large one in the sea.

A small fish begs for his life when caught claiming he will get bigger and be better later. But the fisherman keeps him.

Discuss - When is it better to have several small reachable goals than one large one that you might not be able to attain?
Tell about small goals you may have and any large ones you are striving toward.

“The Fox and the Crow” (p. 67)

Vocabulary:

The Crow who was very vain believed every word spoken by the Fox.

Moral: Remember not to trust those who praise you falsely.

A Crow has a piece of cheese which a Fox tricks her into letting go by flattering her.

Relate to - Let's say you have a friend who always tells people what they want to hear. Why might you not always believe this person?

“The Trees and the Ax” (p. 68)

Moral: If we want our own lives protected, we must protect the lives of others.

Larger trees sacrifice a little tree to a Woodsman. He uses the little tree to cut a handle for an ax to cut down the big trees.

Relate to - Let's say a student from another class has had a bad day and he picks a fight with your friend. What do you do?

“The Boy and the Nuts” (p. 69)

Moral: It is better to be content with half than to lose all.

A greedy boy couldn't get his hand out of a jar because he had too many nuts in it.

Relate to - You have been busy and have not studied as you should. Instead of trying to learn some of the information for the test, you decide you are too far behind and you do no studying.

“The Boy Who Swam in the River” (p. 69)

Moral: Advice without action is useless.

A boy is drowning and a passerby lectures him instead of trying to rescue him.

Relate to - What if your little brother/sister wants to learn how to read? You tell him/her to practice every day, but do not sit down and help.

“The Frogs Who Desired a King” (p. 70)

Moral: Let well enough alone.

The Frogs requested that Jupiter give them a King. They are not content with a log he sends. It does not rule over them. So he sends a Stork who eats them.

Relate to - Your friend has done something minor that bothers you. Instead of just ignoring it, you do something back and cause a big problem.

“The Goose With the Golden Eggs” (p. 72)

Vocabulary:

1. ... a Farmer was astonished to discover that his Goose had laid an egg of solid gold.
2. He seized the precious egg
3. Every day thereafter

Moral: Those who are greedy for too much sometimes lose all.

A Farmer has a Goose that lays one golden egg a day. He becomes greedy and kills the Goose to get all the gold at once. He gets nothing.

Relate to - What happens when you join three after-school groups. You have too much to do and you can not enjoy any of them.

“The Wolf and the Crane” (p. 73)

Moral: When one serves the wicked, one should expect no reward.

A Wolf promises a Crane that he will reward him for pulling out a bone stuck in his throat. He does so and when he asks for his reward, he is told that the reward is getting his head out of the Wolf's mouth.

Relate to - Let's say you hang around with a “bad group.” They do something wrong and you get blamed. They let you take the punishment, and they do not admit their guilt.

“The Rooster and the Jewel” (p. 74)

Moral: What has value for one is useless to another.

A Rooster finds a jewel, but would rather have a kernel of corn.

Relate to - you see a key on the ground and leave it there. The person who lost it cannot get into his house after school.

“The Gnat and the Bull” (p. 75)

Vocabulary:

... has my weight been a burden to you?

Moral: We are not always as important as we think we are.

A Gnat settles on the horn of a Bull and asks the Bull if that bothers him. The Bull replies that he didn't even know the Gnat was there.

Discuss - We are important, but we must prove our importance by doing things that are of value.

“The Oak and the Reeds” (p. 75)

Moral: It is better to bend than to break.

An Oak is uprooted by the wind while the Reeds are not. They are able to bend in the wind.

Relate to - Has this ever happened to you? You get into an argument with a friend in school. Your teacher tells you to apologize or he will have to send you to the office. You are mad and refuse to do so, and you are sent to the office. You find yourself in more trouble.

“The Monkey and the Dolphin” (p. 77)

Vocabulary:

1. A sailor, embarking on a voyage
2. A Dolphin saw the Monkey struggling in the water, came to his assistance
3. ... I am descended from one of the noblest families of Athens.
4. ... leaving the Monkey to flounder helplessly in the sea.

Moral: Those who tell falsehoods sooner or later find themselves in deep water.

A Dolphin saves a Monkey who lies to him. The Dolphin abandons the Monkey in the water when he finds out that he lied.

Relate to - What if you do not have your homework finished? You tell your teacher you do. She finds out the truth and punishes you for not having it and for lying.

“The Lioness” (p. 78)

Vocabulary:

... has the most offspring.

Moral: Value is in worth, not in number.

The animals are arguing about what animal produces the most offspring. The Lion says she only produces one, but it is a LION!

Relate to - Let's say you are not doing well in a certain subject. You ask the teacher for an extra assignment. She tells you that instead of doing extra work, you need to do the assigned work well.

Androcles and the Lion retold by Quail Hawkins. New York: McCann, Inc., 1970.

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The Tsar's Riddles, or The Little Girl by Guy Daniels. New York: McGraw Hill, 1962.

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GENERAL QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Why did Aesop tell fables?
2. All of Aesop's fables were told as stories. Why might someone have decided to write them down?
3. Why do we still study these fables today?
4. What characteristics in Aesop's fables do we all share?
5. What was your favorite fable? Why?
6. Did you find yourself or anyone you know in any of the fables?
7. Tell about a fable that reminded you of something that has happened to you.
8. Retell a fable relating it to your personal experience.
9. Dramatize a fable.
10. Illustrate a fable.

HIGHER LEVEL ACTIVITIES

1. The "Seven Deadly Sins," a classification of sins found in the works of spiritual writers and theologians: pride, avarice, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth, can be identified in *Aesop's Fables*. Classify each of Aesop's fables and/or their morals under the seven headings.
2. Discuss the change in the focus of allegories from having moral or religious significance, as in *Aesop's Fables*, to explaining the meaning of man's existence, as in such works as Golding's *Lord of the Flies* or Melville's *Moby Dick*.

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Aesop: The Fables of Aesop, retold by Joseph McMillian, 1966. (The history of these selected fables is traced.)

Aesop in the Afternoon by Albert Cullum. New York: Citation Press, 1975. (This is a dramatization of fables.)

TEST

Vocabulary (20 points)

Match each italicized word with its definition listed below. Write the letter of the definition in the space provided.

- _____ 1. I will *lure* many of her Partridges into your nets.
- _____ 2. For to betray one's friends to save oneself is a *vile* crime.
- _____ 3. It seemed as if the Stag would escape his *pursuer* for, as long as he was on the open plain, he was able to outrun the Lion.
- _____ 4. The snow lay on the field. The ant was *content*. In his house there was food to last all winter.
- _____ 5. And the Donkey felt so *bold* that he began to chase the Lion.
- _____ 6. You shall have your sting. And when you attack anyone who takes your honey, the wound shall be *fatal*.
- _____ 7. The Moles *endured* the discomfort as long as they could.
- _____ 8. It is well to know one's guest before offering him *hospitality*.
- _____ 9. Who is it that feeds you so well, yet *burdens* you with so heavy a collar?
- _____ 10. There he *boasted* of the marvelous feats he had performed in the places he had visited.
- _____ 11. See, here are other poor creatures more *timid* than we.
- _____ 12. When the Miser found that his gold was gone, he tore his hair and cried aloud in his *despair*.
- _____ 13. Though you brush my coat you steal my food, and he who steals with a smile is none the less a *scoundrel*.
- _____ 14. Don't you realize it's a sign of *disgrace* - a sign to all men to avoid you?
- _____ 15. I will buy myself a new *frock* and a bonnet.
- _____ 16. One day a Wolf met a Lamb who had strayed from the *fold*.
- _____ 17. One day the mice called a meeting to discuss how they might best *outwit* their enemy, the Cat.
- _____ 18. And one by one the Lion *devoured* them.
- _____ 19. The Crow, who was very *vain*, believed every word spoken by the Fox.
- _____ 20. He left the Monkey to *flounder* helplessly in the sea.

- A. ate completely
- B. hopelessness
- C. villain
- D. group of animals (sheep)
- E. get the better of
- F. shy
- G. dishonor

- H. dress
- I. struggle awkwardly
- J. attract
- K. put up with
- L. neighborliness
- M. deadly
- N. very bad; evil

- O. satisfied
- P. one who chases
- Q. proud
- R. full of confidence
- S. bragged
- T. gives you a problem; heavy load to bear

Situation Match (20 points)

Match each situation with a moral. Write the letter of the situation next to the appropriate moral.

- _____ 1. Birds of a feather flock together.
- _____ 2. It is best to prepare today for the needs of tomorrow.
- _____ 3. Misery loves company.
- _____ 4. Try to help yourself before you ask help of others.
- _____ 5. Look before you leap.
- _____ 6. There is always someone worse off than ourselves.
- _____ 7. One good turn deserves another.
- _____ 8. In union there is strength.
- _____ 9. If you want a job well done, then do it yourself.
- _____ 10. To be widely known is not necessarily to be admired.

- A. I will study every day so I can get a good job in the future.
- B. I'm going to work on this problem until I get it right so I don't have to ask the teacher.
- C. I scratched my arm in the accident, but Mario's leg was broken.
- D. I'll help you with math if you help me with my story.
- E. If we all work together, we can accomplish our goal.
- F. Everyone's talking about Sue who was sent to the office yesterday.
- G. Poorly behaved people associate with each other.
- H. I'm glad I'm not the only one who failed the test.
- I. I'm going to find out more about that bike before I buy it.
- J. I'll work on my project by myself so I can be sure it's done right.

Character Match (20 points)

Match the following descriptions with the characters being described. Choose your answers from the list of characters.

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| _____ 1. His grain was sold. | A. Dog |
| _____ 2. He buried his gold. | B. Miser |
| _____ 3. He did not prepare for winter. | C. Horse |
| _____ 4. He cried "Wolf" too many times | D. Mice |
| _____ 5. He won the race. | E. Goose |
| _____ 6. She laid golden eggs. | F. Shepherd Boy |
| _____ 7. He dressed up like a sheep. | G. Grasshopper |
| _____ 8. He wanted to be let go so he could grow bigger. | H. Wolf |
| _____ 9. He wore a heavy collar. | I. Fish |
| _____ 10. They wanted to hang a bell on the cat. | J. Tortoise |

Essay Questions (40 points)

Choose two of the following and fully explain their meanings.

1. That's just "sour grapes."
2. He was a "wolf in sheep's clothing."
3. He fired the "goose that laid the golden eggs."
4. He "counted his chickens before they were hatched."
5. He didn't "look before he leaped."

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Test (20 points)

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. J | 11. F |
| 2. N | 12. B |
| 3. P | 13. C |
| 4. O | 14. G |
| 5. R | 15. H |
| 6. M | 16. D |
| 7. K | 17. E |
| 8. L | 18. A |
| 9. T | 19. Q |
| 10. S | 20. I |

Situation Match (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. G | 6. C |
| 2. A | 7. D |
| 3. H | 8. E |
| 4. B | 9. J |
| 5. I | 10. F |

Character Match (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. E |
| 2. B | 7. H |
| 3. G | 8. I |
| 4. F | 9. A |
| 5. J | 10. D |

Essay Questions (40 points)

Answers will vary.

TEACHER'S NOTES



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