

Aesop's Fables



Age 5 - 9

Aesop's Fables online:

Further information about these resources is available at the School Radio website. Log on to:

www.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio

and follow the links to Aesop's fables.

You'll find a transcript of each story, notes to accompany each story and an image to display.

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Introduction

Aesop c. 620-564 BC

Aesop was a writer from Ancient Greece, who is thought to have lived around 600 years BC, and is credited with having written a number of well-known fables. Accounts of his life often refer to him having been a slave, who gains his freedom through the strength of the advice he gives to his masters.

However, it is not certain whether he actually existed at all, or whether he is simply a legendary figure to whom a group of thematically similar folk tales were attributed. Some of the tales are known to have been told before Aesop is thought to have lived, whilst others are not recorded until many years after his supposed death.

The fables generally communicate some kind of moral message, often through the depiction of animals, who speak or otherwise take on human characteristics.

The features of fables

Theme:

Although they use many of the typical themes, characters and settings of traditional stories, fables have a very specific purpose that strongly influences their content. A fable sets out to teach the reader or listener a lesson they should learn about life. The narrative drives towards the closing moral statement, the fable's theme: the early bird gets the worm, where there's a will there's a way, work hard and always plan ahead for lean times, charity is a virtue. The clear presence of a moral distinguishes fables from other folk tales.

Plot and structure:

Plot is overtly fictitious as the point of the story is its message, rather than an attempt to convince the reader of a real setting or characters. There is a shared understanding between storyteller and audience that the events told did not actually happen. They are used as a means to an end, a narrative metaphor for the ethical truth being promoted.

For this reason, fables do not carry any non-essential narrative baggage. There are usually few characters and often only two who are portrayed as simple stereotypes rather than multidimensional heroes or villains. Narrative structure is short (sometimes just a few sentences) and simple and there is limited use of description. Action and dialogue are used to move the story on because the all-important moral is most clearly evident in what the main characters do and say.

Character:

The main characters are often named in the title (*The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*, *The North Wind and the Sun*, etc) and they are also frequently animals, another subtle way of signalling the fictional, 'fabulous' nature of the story and its serious purpose. Animal characters speak and behave like human beings, allowing the storyteller to make cautionary points about human behaviour without pointing the finger at real people.

Style:

Many fables use the rich vocabulary, imagery and patterned language common in traditional tales but generally speaking, the shorter the fable, the more simple its use of language. In these short texts, use of vocabulary is often pared down and concise.



Fables tend to use:

- formulaic beginnings that establish setting and character very quickly - e.g. 'One day a farmer was going to market...' 'A hungry fox was sitting by the roadside...' 'In a field, one spring morning...'
- connectives to explain or show cause and effect - e.g. 'If you will give me...' 'So the wolf...'
- temporal connectives that hold the narrative together and give it a chronological shape - e.g. 'One morning...as he was... first he saw...then he saw...' 'When winter came...' 'And then the grasshopper understood...'
- simple dialogue between two main characters, often questions and answers - e.g. 'Why do you howl so loudly?'; or statements that reflect on a situation - e.g. 'You seem to have a wonderful life here in the town.' 'My feathers may not be beautiful but they keep me warm in winter.'

Tips for writing your own fables:

Create characters that are simple stereotypes rather than multidimensional heroes or villains. Make the main characters animals, and have them behave like human stereotypes: a brave little ant, a wise old turtle, a cunning fox, a lazy donkey.

Use the names of the main characters to give the fable a title: *The Ant and the Elephant*.

State the moral of the fable clearly at the end: a wise person always plans ahead.

Establish the setting in the first line and introduce the main characters as soon as possible.

Give clues to the reader about what might happen: a greedy but impatient fox was watching the chickens from behind a tree.

Keep description to a minimum and use dialogue only to help tell what happens.

Use connectives when characters talk to one another to explain or show cause and effect - e.g. ' "If you will give me your hand, I will help you over the river," said the Wolf.' Or ' "I can't possibly eat you because I'm a vegetarian," lied the bear.'

Connectives are used to show the reader quickly and easily when things happen and how time passes - e.g. 'One morning...as he was...first he saw...then he saw...' or 'When winter came...' or 'And then the grasshopper understood...'

Use questions when one character introduces themselves to another - e.g. 'Why do you howl so loudly?' or 'What are you writing so busily in your book, little bird?'

Assessment focuses for speaking and listening Levels 1-5, selected for relevance to the texts:

AF3 – Talking within role-play and drama

Create and sustain different roles and scenarios, adapting techniques in a range of dramatic activities to explore texts, ideas and issues.

Level 1

In some contexts

- engage in imaginative play enacting simple characters and situations using everyday speech, gesture, or movement

Level 2

In some contexts

- extend experience and ideas, adapting speech, gesture, or movement to simple roles and different scenarios

Level 3

In most contexts

- show understanding of characters or situations by adapting speech, gesture, and movement, helping to create roles and scenarios

Level 4

- convey straightforward ideas about char-



acters and situations, making deliberate choices of speech, gesture, and movement in different roles and scenarios

Level 5

- show insight into texts and issues through deliberate choices of speech, gesture, and movement, beginning to sustain and adapt different roles and scenarios

AF2 – understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text

Level 1

In some reading, usually with support:

- some simple points from familiar texts recalled

Level 2

In some reading:

- some specific, straightforward information recalled, e.g. names of characters, main ingredients

Level 3

In most reading:

- simple, most obvious points identified, though there may also be some misunderstanding, e.g. about information from different places in the text
- some comments include quotations from or references to text, but not always relevant, e.g. often retelling or paraphrasing sections of the text rather than using it to support comment

Level 4

Across a range of reading:

- some relevant points identified
- comments supported by some generally relevant textual reference or quotation, e.g. reference is made to appropriate section of text but is unselective and lacks focus

Level 5

Across a range of reading:

- most relevant points clearly identified, including those selected from different places in the text

- comments generally supported by relevant textual reference or quotation, even when points made are not always accurate

AF3 - deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts

Level 1

In some reading, usually with support:

- reasonable inference at a basic level, e.g. identifying who is speaking in a story
- comments/questions about meaning of parts of text, e.g. details of illustrations, diagrams, changes in font style

Level 2

In some reading:

- simple, plausible inference about events and information, using evidence from text e.g. how a character is feeling, what makes a plant grow
- comments based on textual cues, sometimes misunderstood

Level 3

In most reading:

- straightforward inference based on a single point of reference in the text, e.g. 'he was upset because it says "he was crying"'
- responses to text show meaning established at a literal level e.g. "walking good" means 'walking carefully'" or based on personal speculation e.g. a response based on what they personally would be feeling rather than feelings of character in the text

Level 4

Across a range of reading:

- comments make inferences based on evidence from different points in the text, e.g. interpreting a character's motive from their actions at different points
- inferences often correct, but comments are not always rooted securely in the text or repeat narrative or content

Level 5

Across a range of reading:

- comments develop explanation of inferred meanings drawing on evidence across the



text, e.g. 'you know her dad was lying because earlier she saw him take the letter'

- comments make inferences and deductions based on textual evidence, e.g. in drawing conclusions about a character's feelings on the basis of their speech and actions

AF4 - identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level

Level 1

In some reading, usually with support:

- some awareness of meaning of simple text features, e.g. font style, labels, titles

Level 2

In some reading:

- some awareness of use of features of organisation, e.g. beginning and ending of story, types of punctuation

Level 3

In most reading:

- a few basic features of organisation at text level identified, with little or no linked comment, e.g. 'it tells about all the different things you can do at the zoo'

Level 4

Across a range of reading:

- some structural choices identified with simple comment, e.g. 'he describes the accident first and then goes back to tell you why the child was in the road'

Level 5

Across a range of reading:

- comments on structural choices show some general awareness of author's craft, e.g. 'it tells you all things burglars can do to your house and then the last section explains how the alarm protects you'

AF5 - explain and comment on writers' use of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level

Level 1

In some reading, usually with support:

- comments on obvious features of language, e.g. rhyme and refrains, significant words and phrases

Level 2

In some reading:

- some effective language choices noted, e.g. "'slimy' is a good word there'
- some familiar patterns of language identified, e.g. once upon a time; first, next, last

Level 3

In most reading:

- a few basic features of writer's use of language identified, but with little or no comment, e.g. 'there are lots of adjectives' or 'he uses speech marks to show there are lots of people there'

Level 4

Across a range of reading:

- some basic features of writer's use of language identified, e.g. 'all the questions make you want to find out what happens next'
- simple comments on writer's choices, e.g. "'disgraceful' is a good word to use to show he is upset'

Level 5

Across a range of reading:

- various features of writer's use of language identified, with some explanation, e.g. 'when it gets to the climax they speak in short sentences and quickly which makes it more tense'
- comments show some awareness of the effect of writer's language choices, e.g. "'inked up" is a good way of describing how the blackberries go a bluey black colour as they ripen'

AF6 - identify and comment on writers' purposes and viewpoints, and the overall effect of the text on the reader

Level 1

In some reading, usually with support:



- some simple comments about preferences, mostly linked to own experience

Level 2

In some reading:

- some awareness that writers have view-points and purposes, e.g. 'it tells you how to do something', 'she thinks it's not fair'
- simple statements about likes and dislikes in reading, sometimes with reasons

Level 3

In most reading:

- comments identify main purpose, e.g. 'the writer doesn't like violence'
- express personal response but with little awareness of writer's viewpoint or effect on reader, e.g. 'she was just horrible like my nan is sometimes'

Level 4

Across a range of reading:

- main purpose identified, e.g. 'it's all about why going to the dentist is important and how you should look after your teeth'
- simple comments show some awareness of writer's viewpoint, e.g. 'he only tells you good things about the farm and makes the shop sound boring'
- simple comment on overall effect on reader, e.g. 'the way she describes him as "ratlike" and "shifty" makes you think he's disgusting'

Level 5

Across a range of reading:

- main purpose clearly identified, often through general overview, e.g. 'the writer is strongly against war and wants to persuade the reader to agree'
- viewpoint in texts clearly identified, with some, often limited, explanation, e.g. 'at the end he knows he's done wrong and makes the snake sound attractive and mysterious'
- general awareness of effect on the reader, with some, often limited, explanation, e.g. 'you'd be persuaded to sign up because 25p a week doesn't seem that much to help someone see'

AF7 – relate texts to their social, cultural and historical traditions

Level 1

In some reading, usually with support:

- a few basic features of well-known story and information texts distinguished, e.g. what typically happens to good and bad characters, differences between type of text in which photos or drawing used

Level 2

In some reading:

- general features of a few text types identified, e.g. information books, stories, print media

Level 3

In most reading:

- some simple connections between texts identified, e.g. similarities in plot, topic, or books by same author, about same characters
- recognition of some features of the context of texts, e.g. historical setting, social or cultural background

Level 4

Across a range of reading:

- features common to different texts or versions of the same text identified, with simple comment, e.g. characters, settings, presentational features
- simple comment on the effect that the reader's or writer's context has on the meaning of texts, e.g. historical context, place, social relationships

Level 5

Across a range of reading:

- comments identify similarities and differences between texts, or versions, with some explanation, e.g. narrative conventions in traditional tales or stories from different cultures, ballads, newspaper reports
- some explanation of how the contexts in which texts are written and read contribute to meaning, e.g. how historical context influenced adverts or war reports from different times/places; or how a novel relates to when/where it was written

Primary Literacy Framework Links

These tales can be listened to and enjoyed in their own right and/or integrated into a unit of literacy.

As part of an ongoing unit of literacy, these tales could be used to support the following Primary Literacy Framework units of work:

Year 1 Narrative Unit 3 – Traditional and fairy stories

Year 2 Narrative Unit 3 – Different stories by the same author

Year 3 Narrative Unit 3 – Myths, legends, fables, traditional tales

Year 4 Narrative Unit 4 – Stories which raise issues/dilemmas

Year 5 Narrative Unit 2 – Traditional stories, fables, myths, legends

Primary Framework for Literacy - Learning Objectives for Years 1-5, selected for relevance to the texts

The following learning objectives could be delivered through use of this audio series of Aesop's Fables. These tales could be used in whole or in part across the whole primary range, but the following strands are relevant to using the recordings. Other strands could be delivered through a unit of literacy work, further developed from the text, available in the episode transcripts.

1 Speaking

Y1

- Retell stories, ordering events using story language
- Tell stories and describe incidents from their own experience in an audible voice

Y2

- Tell real and imagined stories using the conventions of familiar story language

Y3

- Choose and prepare poems or stories for performance, identifying appropriate ex-

pression, tone, volume and use of voices and other sounds

Y4

- Tell stories effectively and convey detailed information coherently for listeners

Y5

- Tell a story using notes designed to cue techniques, such as repetition, recap and humour

4 Drama

Y1

- Explore familiar themes and characters through improvisation and role-play
- Act out their own and well-known stories, using voices for characters
- Discuss why they like a performance

Y2

- Adopt appropriate roles in small or large groups and consider alternative courses of action
- Present part of traditional stories, their own stories or work drawn from different parts of the curriculum for members of their own class
- Consider how mood and atmosphere are created in live or recorded performance

Y3

- Present events and characters through dialogue to engage the interest of an audience
- Use some drama strategies to explore stories or issues
- Identify and discuss qualities of others' performances, including gesture, action and costume

Y4

- Create roles showing how behaviour can be interpreted from different viewpoints
- Comment constructively on plays and performances, discussing effects and how they are achieved

Y5

- Perform a scripted scene making use of dramatic conventions
- Use and recognise the impact of theatrical effects in drama



7 Understanding and interpreting texts

Y1

- Identify the main events and characters in stories, and find specific information in simple texts
- Make predictions showing an understanding of ideas, events and characters
- Recognise the main elements that shape different texts

Y2

- Draw together ideas and information from across a whole text, using simple signposts in the text
- Give some reasons why things happen or characters change

Y3

- Infer characters' feelings in fiction and consequences in logical explanations
- Identify and make notes of the main points of section(s) of text

Y4

- Deduce characters' reasons for behaviour from their actions and explain how ideas are developed in non-fiction texts
- Explain how writers use figurative and expressive language to create images and atmosphere

Y5

- Make notes on and use evidence from across a text to explain events or ideas
- Explore how writers use language for comic and dramatic effects

8 Engaging and responding to texts

Y1

- Visualise and comment on events, characters and ideas, making imaginative links to their own experiences

Y2

- Explain their reactions to texts, commenting on important aspects

Y3

- Empathise with characters and debate moral dilemmas portrayed in texts

Y4

- Interrogate texts to deepen and clarify

understanding and response

Y5

- Compare how a common theme is presented in poetry, prose and other media

Drama techniques to support activities for Aesop's Fables

Hot seating:

A character is questioned by the group about his or her background, behaviour and motivation. Even done without preparation, it is an excellent way of fleshing out a character.

Characters may be hot-seated individually, in pairs or small groups. The technique is additionally useful for developing questioning skills with the rest of the group. The traditional approach is for the pupil playing the character to sit on a chair in front of the group (arranged in a semi-circle), although characters may be hot-seated in pairs or groups.

It is helpful if the teacher takes on the role of facilitator to guide the questioning in constructive directions however the teacher could take on the role of the character themselves.

Freeze-frame:

Working in small groups or a whole class, the children create a moment that shows the action in a narrative frozen in time, as if the pause button has been pressed. This allows them to think about what is going on for each of the characters in the frame, or to consider what is happening from different points of view. The moment itself may be the interesting thing, or they may be asked to think about what has just happened or is about to happen.

Make sure children have sufficient background knowledge of the context for the freeze-frame to understand their own role in the action or to discuss it.



Thought tapping:

When the freeze-frame has been created, the teacher moves quietly and slowly between the characters in the scene. At the teacher's given signal to an individual child, that child – in character – voices their thoughts aloud in a few words. This allows all the children to hear what some or all of the characters are thinking at that very moment. It gives clues about the role each child has chosen and can raise issues about different viewpoints. It also deepens children's engagement with the learning context being established.

Slow motion:

Select one of the characters in the freeze-frame and ask the child to begin the action again, showing what happened next for that person, but moving slowly so that the rest of the class, still 'frozen', has time to think not only about what is happening but why. Another option is for the teacher or a child to narrate the slow-motion action that is taking place for one character.

Thought tracking:

Similar to thought tapping, this approach allows the class to follow one character's train of thought through the action for longer. For example, one or two children move through the freeze-frame in slow motion, speaking their thoughts aloud as they continue to reveal their feelings, viewpoints and/or motivation. Alternatively, other children track the freeze-frame players' thinking by speaking their thoughts aloud for them.

Role on the wall:

A character is depicted and developed in a visual way using a large format note making strategy. The teacher can use a flipchart, whiteboard, large screen or a big piece of paper displayed 'on the wall'. A simple character

shape such as a stick person is drawn. The character may already be partly developed, for example through reading the first chapter of a class novel (What do we already know about this person?), or the children may be creating the character from scratch (What do we want this character to be like?). As children contribute their own ideas, the teacher adds brief notes to the visual in an appropriate position. Encourage children to talk and think about different dimensions of the character. For example, if they focus on physical description ask them what kind of person this might be.

Collective voice:

The class sits in a circle and the teacher takes on the role of one speaker in a conversation. The whole class takes on the role of a single, second speaker. The teacher begins the conversation, talking to the 'other person' (the class) and any child can speak to continue the dialogue. A common purpose is for the children to find out some information from the first speaker or for them to give advice.

This sounds complicated but is a powerful teaching convention and most children quickly adopt the strategy to take turns at speaking. If more than one child speaks at once, the teacher decides how to answer one or both.

Children usually manage the 'corporate role' well because they are focused on what the first character (the teacher) has to say and they want to find out more. Once children are familiar with this convention, the class can take on the more responsible role of the character with information to pass on.

Overheard conversations:

The children hear a conversation that they would not usually have access to and can use this extra information to consider its impact on a narrative or a situation. For example,



they have been using conscience alley to explore two different sides of an argument. The teacher introduces two or more characters who are in some way connected with whatever the situation is, and the class is able to listen to a conversation they have. For example, when the main character reaches the end of the conscience alley, the children all sit down and 'accidentally overhear' the conversation between two people walking along the road.

An overheard conversation often needs to include specific information that impacts on the situation. The teacher can ensure that the right information is included, by taking part in the dialogue.

Conversations can also be overheard to provide a range of different viewpoints about the same issue.

Generic activities for use with any of the fables

Speaking and listening:

- Orally tell and retell the story using props, puppets, masks etc.
- In pairs/small groups, retell the story as fast as you can.
- Orally retell the story from the point of view of a different character, e.g. a minor character.
- Play 'Word Tennis' – in pairs, retell the story one word at a time, each child saying the next word in the sentence.
- Play 'Who Am I?' – take turns to provide clues about one of the characters in a story; the others have to guess who it is.
- Listen to a fable and make brief notes of the main events. Use as the basis for orally retelling or reinventing the story.
- Retell the story around a circle, each member of the group adding the next part.
- Research a fable and present the information to a specified audience.

- Identify features common to the different fables, or versions of the same fable.
- Take on the role of 'Theatre Critics' and comment constructively on performances of the fables.
- In pairs, create a dialogue for some or all of a fable.

Drama:

- Use drama as a 'talk for writing' strategy. Drama activities can be used to support discussion and oral/written outcomes of a unit of work.
- Use drama techniques to promote discussion about the fables and/or to prepare for the writing of these/your own fables.
- Hot seat the characters. Video Conferencing may be used to hot seat characters across, or between, schools.
- Prepare and present a monologue in role.
- Play 'Author's Chair'. Take on the role of Aesop and answer questions in role.

Reading:

- Make multiple copies of the transcript and use as a whole-class/guided reading text.
- Additional suggestions for using the transcripts include:
 - Listen to the audio version alongside the transcript
 - Read part of the story and predict what might happen next.
 - Chop up the text and rearrange in correct order
 - Compare and contrast the tales: settings and characters, and investigate the language used
 - Take on the role of one or more of the characters and write about them using information that you have gathered from reading the story.
- Find the real fable – note the differences – why do you think the original fable has been changed in this way?



Writing:

- Use the fables as the basis of a unit of literacy work. Outcomes may include:
 - creating a class anthology of fables (re-told or reinvented);
 - developing your own class/school radio station, record your fables and enjoy;
 - constructing multimedia/interactive fables using multimedia presentation software such as PowerPoint or similar.
- Rewrite a fable using different types of animals.
- Rewrite the story as a playscript and act out in groups. Alternatively, create theatre programmes, tickets, posters etc. and put on a show.
- Produce animated fables using simple stop-frame animation software.
- Create contemporary adaptations of the fables.
- Create character profiles.
- Create a cartoon depicting one of the tales.
- Create 'mixed-up' fables, selecting elements from across the tales to create a 'new' fable.
- Re-write a fable in the first person – from the point of view of one character, then the other.
- Write in role: postcards, letters, emails, notes, messages in bottles, songs.
- Write poems around a tale.
- Write a non-chronological report/biography/first-person autobiography about Aesop.
- Summarise the tale. Extend to summarising in 100 words.
- Write other anthropomorphic tales.

1: The Hare and the Tortoise**Synopsis:**

A hare boasts to the other animals about how fast he can run. When none of them responds initially to his challenge for a race, he taunts them that they are too scared even to try. When the tortoise then speaks up, the hare scoffs that he won't even waste his time racing the slowest creature in the world. The tortoise returns the taunt, claiming that the hare must be scared of being beaten. When some of the animals laugh at this, the hare agrees to a race, to take place a week later.

The tortoise spends the week in training, but continues to move very slowly, and the other animals wonder if the race is a good idea. Nevertheless, there is a large crowd of animals on the day of the race.

As the race starts, the hare roars off. When he stops to look back, the tortoise has barely crossed the starting line. The hare taunts the tortoise that he will be able to stop for a rest and still beat him. However, when the hare goes to sleep in the sun, he sleeps for so long that the tortoise is able to overtake him. As the tortoise nears the finishing line, the animals cheer. This wakes up the hare, who runs as fast as he can to catch up again, but the tortoise just makes it to the finish in time.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Hare challenges animals to a race
- Tortoise responds to challenge
- Tortoise spends a week in training
- Race starts, hare is so far ahead that he stops for a rest and falls asleep
- Tortoise overtakes the hare whilst he sleeps



- Cheering wakes up the hare, who races to catch up
- Tortoise finishes just in time

Characters:

- Hare; Tortoise; Fox; Badger; Crow; Rabbit

Theme(s):

- Doing things quickly doesn't necessarily mean doing them well
- Defeat of arrogance and over-confidence
- Courageous underdog

Moral:

- Don't be over-confident – even if you think you should succeed, you may not if you do not put in sufficient effort
- Even if you do not think you can succeed, it is still good to put in the best effort that you can
- Doing things quickly does not necessarily mean doing them well

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why do you think the hare was showing the other animals how fast it could run?
- Why didn't most of the animals want to race the hare?
- How do you think the tortoise felt when the hare laughed at him?
- How do you think the hare felt when the tortoise suggested that he was scared of being beaten?
- What makes it possible for the tortoise to win the race, despite being very slow?
- Why does the hare stop for a rest in the middle of the race?
- What makes the hare wake up?
- Why won't the animals listen to the complaints of the hare at the end of the race?

2: The Frogs and the Ox**Synopsis:**

A young frog sees an ox by the pond. Excited, he calls for his mother to come and see the 'monster'. The mother frog, who is very fat, does not believe that any creature in the pond can be bigger than she is, but agrees to come and see it.

Being so fat, she is unable to move very far without breathing heavily. This extra air makes her blow up like a beach ball. Still not wanting to admit that any creature in the pond could be bigger than her, she asks the young frog whether the monster is as big as this. When she hears that it is still bigger, she sucks in more and more air, until flying off like a balloon does when you let go of it.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Young frog tells his mother about 'monster'
- Mother complains about her son being over-excited
- Mother expresses disbelief that any creature in the pond is bigger than her
- Mother agrees to come and see 'monster'
- Mother struggles to move, and wheezing, starts to inflate
- Mother inflates so far that she flies off like an escaped balloon

Characters:

- Stanley Frog; Mother Frog; Ox

Theme(s):

- Pride
- Laziness



Moral:

- Don't try to pretend to be something you are not
- Don't let pride blind you to reality
- If you are too big-headed it may be your downfall

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is the little frog so excited about seeing the 'monster'?
- Why does the little frog think the ox is a monster?
- How does the mother frog forget her son's name?
- Why doesn't the mother frog like to see her son jiggling around?
- Why is it so difficult for the mother frog to go to see the 'monster'?
- What makes the mother frog blow up like a balloon?
- What is the lesson that is the mother's rather than Stanley's?

3: The Fox and the Crow**Synopsis:**

A crow is sitting in a tree with a piece of cheese in its beak. A passing fox would like to eat the cheese and tries to persuade - and then trick - the crow to bring the cheese down or drop it. The crow does not fall for this, so the fox tries flattery instead.

He tells the crow how lovely his feathers are, and how fine-looking his head. Then, the fox says how much he would like to hear the crow sing. Tricked by the flattery, the crow opens his beak to sing, dropping the cheese to the ground, where the fox gobbles it up.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Fox smells cheese, and sees crow sitting in the tree with it
- Fox tries, unsuccessfully, to get the crow to come down from the tree
- Fox tries, unsuccessfully, to get the crow to drop the cheese
- Fox flatters crow about its appearance
- Fox asks crow to sing, and crow does so, thereby dropping the cheese
- Fox eats the cheese

Characters:

- Fox; Crow

Theme(s):

- Flattery
- Cunning
- Pride

Moral:

- Don't trust people who flatter you, particularly if you have something that they want
- Pride comes before a fall

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- How does the fox know that there is some cheese around?
- Why doesn't the crow come down from the tree when asked to by the fox?
- Why does the fox say that the cheese is mouldy?
- How does the crow know that the fox is lying about the cheese being mouldy?
- What makes the crow drop the cheese?
- Why doesn't the fox want the crow to sing after all?



4: The Monkey as King

Synopsis:

There is a great competition amongst the animals to be named King of the Beasts. Each animal gets a chance to explain why they should be King. Fox says that he should be King because he is clever enough to know how to avoid traps laid by Man, but his speech is boring. Monkey is chosen, because he dances around and makes funny faces.

Fox does not like it that the silly Monkey has been chosen as King ahead of him, so plays a trick. He takes Monkey into the forest, saying that he wants to show him a present fit for a king. Fox shows Monkey beautiful, ripe banana on the forest floor, and when Monkey runs to pick it up, he falls into a trap.

Fox can help Monkey escape from the trap, but will only do so if the Monkey agrees not to be King. The other animals agree that the King of Beasts should be clever enough not to fall into traps.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Fox speaks – his speech is clever but boring
- Monkey dances around and pulls faces – he is chosen as King
- Fox takes Monkey into the forest to give him a present
- Monkey goes to grab the present, but falls in a trap
- Fox agrees to free Monkey if he agrees not to be King

Characters:

- Fox; Monkey; other animals

Theme(s):

- Pride
- Cunning

Moral:

- Don't take on a task without first thinking about whether you can do it properly

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why don't the animals choose the Fox to be King?
- What makes the animals choose Monkey?
- Why does the Fox decide to give the Monkey a present?
- Why can't the animals find their king?
- How does the Fox get the Monkey to give up his crown?
- How does the Fox show that being clever is useful?

5: The Bundle of Sticks

Synopsis:

Mrs McKenzie has six sons, but they are always fighting amongst themselves, which makes it hard to get any work done.

She shows them the error of their ways by asking each one in turn to snap a bundle of sticks in two. It is too difficult for any of them to snap the whole bundle, but when she unties the bundle and gives them one stick each to snap, it is easy. The sons realise the value of working together, and by doing so, win the top prize in a building competition.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Sons argue about where to dig a hole
- Sons argue about the direction in which to row a boat
- Sons argue about who will win the competition
- Each son in turn fails to snap the bundle of sticks
- Each son snaps an individual stick when mother unties the bundle
- Sons agree to enter the competition together

Characters:

- Mrs McKenzie; Peter McKenzie; Paul McKenzie; Patrick McKenzie; Philip McKenzie; Frankie McKenzie; Fred McKenzie

Theme(s):

- You can achieve more by working together than by fighting
- You are stronger as a team than as individuals

Moral:

- Unity is strength

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why can't the six brothers dig a well?
- Why can't the six brothers row their mother across the river?
- What makes the six brothers stop arguing?
- How do the brothers break the bundle of sticks?
- What helps the brothers to win the competition?

6: The Gnat and the Lion**Synopsis:**

A gnat claims that he can outwit a lion, despite the disparity in their size and strength. When the lion attacks, the gnat jumps out of the way, buzzes around, and the flies up the lion's nose, where he begins to bite. The gnat only stops biting when the lion agrees to call it the King of the Beasts.

The gnat is very pleased with itself, and looks for somewhere suitably soft and comfortable to make a new home. It wraps itself in what looks like a lacy shawl, realising too late that it is a spider's web. Despite the gnat's complaint that it is the King of the Beasts, the spider eats it for supper.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Lion's roar wakes gnat
- Gnat challenges lion
- Lion attacks gnat, but gnat evades him by buzzing around
- Gnat flies up the lion's nose and bites
- Lion agrees to call the gnat 'King of the Beasts'
- Gnat looks for new home
- Gnat gets caught in spider's web, and eaten by spider

Characters:

Gnat; Lion; Spider

Theme(s):

- Pride comes before a fall
- Defeat of arrogance and over-confidence
- Courageous underdog



Moral:

- Don't be over-confident – even if you think you should succeed, you may not if you do not put in sufficient effort

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- What wakes up the gnat?
- Why isn't the gnat afraid of the lion?
- How does the gnat defeat the lion?
- Why does the gnat look for a new home?
- How does the gnat get caught?
- How does the gnat try to stop the spider from eating him?

7: The North Wind and the Sun**Synopsis:**

The Sun is annoyed to see the North Wind causing chaos with its icy blasts, so challenges it to a contest to see which of them is strong enough to take the coat off a young man who is walking through the mountains.

The Wind thinks this will be easy, so blows with all its might, but this only serves to make the man pull his coat on more tightly. When the Sun has its turn, it shines so warmly that the man wants to take off his coat.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Sun watches ships sailing
- North wind rips up the sails of the ships
- Sun challenges wind to contest of strength
- Wind tries, unsuccessfully, to blow the winter coat off young man
- By shining warmly, the sun gets the man to remove his coat

Characters:

- Sun; North Wind; Young Man

Theme(s):

- A gentle approach can be more effective than a forceful one
- Pride comes before a fall

Moral:

- Don't make empty boasts

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why does the sun want to take its time travelling across the sky?
- Why does the wind want to blow the ships off course?
- What challenge does the sun put to the wind?
- How does the wind try to get the coat off the young man? Why does it fail?
- How does the sun try to get the coat off the young man? Why does it succeed?

8: The Fox and the Grapes**Synopsis:**

The fox is very fond of itself, knowing itself to be both clever and handsome. Although the farmer chases it with a gun, the fox knows how to avoid it. Although the farmer locks up the hens and ducks each night, the fox always finds something else to eat.

One night the fox finds a bunch of juicy grapes, which are just out of its reach. Even though the fox can normally get what it wants, on this occasion the grapes remain out of its reach. So, it pretends that it didn't want them anyway, claiming that they would be sour.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Fox waits for farmer go in for tea
- Fox thinks about how clever and handsome it is
- Fox tries to reach grapes
- Fox goes away disappointing, pretending that it didn't want the grapes anyway

Characters:

- Fox; Farmer

Theme(s):

- Pride
- Narcissism
- Boastfulness

Moral:

- Sometimes, when we can't get what we want, we pretend we never wanted it anyway

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is the end of the day the fox's favourite time of day?
- Which part of its appearance does the fox like best, and why?
- Why does the farmer shoo his ducks onto an island?
- How do the geese make life difficult for the fox?
- Why can't the fox eat the grapes?
- Why does the fox pretend it doesn't want the grapes?

9: The Dog, the Cockerel and the Fox**Synopsis:**

A cockerel and a dog live on a farm, where they are very good at their respective jobs – waking everyone up in the morning, and letting everyone know when there was someone at the gate. One day they decide to go on an adventure, although the cockerel needs some reassurance from the dog that it will be protected against foxes. At sunset they come to a wood, and find a hollow tree. The dog can sleep inside the tree, and the cockerel can roost in the branches.

The dog reassures the cockerel that no fox will find him in the tree unless he crows. However, in the morning the cockerel forgets himself and crows, attracting a fox, who tries to trick the cockerel into letting him up onto the branch. The cockerel tricks the fox in his turn, by saying that his porter will let him in at the bottom of the tree. The porter is, of course, the dog, who scares the fox away.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Dog proposes adventure
- Dog reassures cockerel about foxes
- Journey begins
- Friends find hollow tree as a place to sleep
- Cockerel crows, attracting a fox
- Fox tries to trick its way up the tree
- Cockerel tricks fox into stumbling onto the dog
- Friends return home

Characters:

- Dog; Cockerel; Fox



Theme(s):

- Friendship and mutual assistance
- The importance of good preparation

Moral:

- Be prepared

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- What jobs do the dog and cockerel do in the farmyard?
- Why is the cockerel reluctant to go on an adventure?
- How does the dog persuade the cockerel to go on an adventure?
- Why is the hollow tree a particularly good place for the two friends to sleep?
- How does the fox know that the cockerel is in the branches?
- Why does the fox want to be invited up the tree?
- Why does the fox run away?

10: The Miller, His Son and the Donkey**Synopsis:**

A miller and his son are taking their grumpy donkey to sell at the market. They decide to lead it, rather than riding it, so that it might arrive not tired, and thereby fetch a higher price. Some people laugh at them for not riding the donkey – after all, that is what a donkey is for. So the son rides the donkey for while, until some merchants criticise him for not allowing his master to ride. So, they swap places, and the miller rides the donkey.

When they arrive at the town, a group of girls criticise the miller for not letting his son ride as well, so they both ride the donkey, but then a woman says that this is too heavy a

load and they really ought to be carrying the donkey themselves. So they tie its legs to a pole and carry it between them. When they do this they are laughed at, which causes the donkey to free itself but fall into a river in doing so, and get swept away. So, the miller and his son have nothing to sell.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Miller and son lead the donkey to market
- They are criticised for not riding the donkey – son climbs on
- The son is criticised for not letting his master ride – they swap places
- Girls criticise the master for not letting his son ride – they both climb on
- Woman criticises them for giving the donkey too heavy a load – they tie up the donkey and carry it themselves
- They are laughed at, which causes the donkey to loosen its bonds
- Donkey falls into the river and is swept away

Characters:

- Miller; Son; Donkey; Man; Merchant; Girl at town gates; Townswoman

Theme(s):

- Differing opinions
- Conflicting advice
- The difficulty of pleasing everyone

Moral:

- You can't please all of the people all of the time – stick to what you think is right

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why are the miller and his son taking the donkey to market?
- Why do they decide not to ride the donkey?
- What causes the son to start riding the donkey?
- What causes the miller to swap places with his son, and start riding the donkey?
- What causes the miller and his son to ride the donkey together?
- What causes the miller and his son to start carrying the donkey themselves?
- How does the donkey come to fall in the river?

11: The Wolf and the Heron**Synopsis:**

A greedy wolf gets a fish bone stuck in his throat. Seeing the long beak of the heron, he asks for help. The heron is reluctant, but agrees to help on being promised a reward. Having safely removed the bone, the heron requests its reward, but the wolf states that not having its head bitten off is reward enough.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Wolf finds and eats fish
- Bone sticks in wolf's throat, wolf is unable to dislodge it
- Wolf asks heron for help in removing bone
- Heron agrees to help on being promised reward
- Heron removes bone
- Wolf states that not biting the heron's head off was its reward

Characters:

- Wolf; Heron

Theme(s):

- Trust
- Flattery
- Cunning

Moral:

- Do not expect someone who you know to be untrustworthy to keep their promises
- Do not expect any reward if you do favours for evil people

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- What words would you use to describe the wolf?
- How does the wolf come to have a bone stuck in its throat?
- Why does the wolf think the heron will be able to help?
- Why do you think the heron is reluctant to help?
- How does the wolf persuade the heron to help?
- What reward does the wolf give the heron?

12: The Donkey in the Lion's Skin**Synopsis:**

Tired of being laughed at by the other animals, a donkey wishes it was something else. Its wish seems to be granted when it finds a lion costume. When it puts it on, it starts to inspire respect in the other animals. When it comes across a fox it becomes over-confident, thinking it will sound like a lion if it tries to roar. The resulting bray gives it away, and the fox pulls off its costume, making the other animals laugh at the donkey again.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Donkey finds lion costume
- Giraffe runs away from donkey, mistaking it for a lion
- Hippo sinks away from donkey, mistaking it for a lion
- Crocodile slips away from donkey, mistaking it for a lion
- Donkey decides to try and roar at the fox
- Fox recognises donkey's bray and tears off the costume

Characters:

- Donkey; Giraffe; Hippo; Crocodile; Fox

Theme(s):

- Beware of over-confidence
- You may look the part, but if you can't do the job properly you will be found out

Moral:

- A fool's words will give him away
- Be confident in yourself
- Be happy with what you are

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why does the donkey wish it was something else?
- How does the donkey suddenly start getting respect from the other animals?
- Why is the donkey pleased that the other animals don't agree to stroll with him?
- What gives the donkey away when he meets the fox?
- Why does the fox laugh at the donkey?

13: The Ant and the Grasshopper**Synopsis:**

A grasshopper lazes around in the sunshine, eating and playing music with its wings. It makes fun of a passing ant for working so hard, dragging food back to its nest. The ant is preparing for winter, but the grasshopper can't be bothered to do that kind of work.

When the winter comes, the grasshopper is starving. Coming across the ant, he asks for something to eat. Remembering the grasshopper's jibes during the summer, the ant refuses and hurries back to its nest.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Grasshopper enjoys food and sunshine
- Ant is working hard, storing food for winter
- Grasshopper makes fun of ant for working hard
- Winter comes, grasshopper is cold and starving
- Grasshopper asks ant for some of its stored food
- Ant refuses

Characters:

- Ant; Grasshopper

Theme(s):

- Preparation
- Balancing work and leisure time

Moral:

- Plan carefully for the future
- Complete your work before you play



- Don't complain if you later need something you haven't prepared

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why doesn't the grasshopper want to work, like the ant is working?
- Why doesn't the ant want to laze around, like the grasshopper is doing?
- Why is the ant dragging food to its nest?
- When winter comes, how come the ant is not starving like the grasshopper?
- Why won't the ant share its food with the grasshopper?
- What do you think will happen to the grasshopper next?

14: The Vain Jackdaw

Synopsis:

A king and queen cannot agree on which bird is more beautiful, the peacock or the swan, so they decide to hold a beauty competition. Unlike the other birds, the jackdaws are not bothering to enter, because they know they are not beautiful. However, one jackdaw thinks he might be able to win by borrowing feathers discarded by all the other birds.

When the competition comes, the strange but beautiful new bird does indeed win, but when the feathers start to fall off, the jackdaw is recognised for who he is, and has the other feathers pulled off by the other birds. He is humiliated, and subsequently ignored by the other jackdaws.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- King and Queen order beauty contest

- Chief Jackdaw decides not to enter
- Young Jackdaw dresses up in other birds' feathers
- Jackdaw's borrowed feathers fall off, or are ripped off
- Jackdaw is scorned by other Jackdaws

Characters:

- King; Queen; Chief Jackdaw; Young Jackdaw; Swan; Parrot; Peacock

Theme(s):

- Pretending to be something you are not
- Appearances being deceptive
- Vanity

Moral:

- Don't pretend to be something that you are not
- Be confident in who you are

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is the bird beauty contest taking place?
- For what reason does the Chief Jackdaw decide not to take part in the contest?
- How does the young Jackdaw manage to win the competition?
- How is the Jackdaw's identity revealed?
- Why is the young Jackdaw ignored by the other jackdaws?

15: The Frogs who wanted a King

Synopsis:

Even though they have good reason to be happy and content, the frogs decide that they need a king. They ask Jupiter, the King of all the Gods, for a king, and to keep them quiet he sends down a log. For a while the frogs are in awe of their king, but after a while they decide he is too quiet, and doesn't move enough, to be a king.

Hearing the frogs complaining, and thinking them ungrateful, Jupiter decides to teach them a lesson, and sends down a stork, which starts to eat them. The frogs ask again for help, but have to live with the consequences of their actions.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Frogs discuss their need for a king
- Bullfrog petitions Jupiter for a king
- Jupiter sends down a log
- Frogs wait for the king to do something
- Frogs complain about the king
- Jupiter, angry, sends a stork
- Frogs plead for help, but Jupiter refuses

Characters:

- Bullfrog; Little Frog; Other frogs; Jupiter; Stork

Theme(s):

- Freedom
- Gratitude
- Being content with what you have
- Lusting after more than you have, unnecessarily

Moral:

- Be careful what you wish for
- Be thankful for what you have

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- What makes the frogs believe that they need a king?
- Why does Jupiter send down a log to be a king for the frogs?
- What makes the frogs think that the log is not a good king?
- Why is the Jupiter angry with the frogs?
- Why is the stork not a good king for the frogs?

16: The Cat and the Mice

Synopsis:

Three mice are hiding under the kitchen skirting board, wondering how to steal the cheese from under the nose of the cat that guards it. Their first plan, to simply rush out and steal it, had failed miserably.

The cat, bored with waiting for them to try again, notices that its fur resembles the material of a sack hanging on the wall. So, the cat hangs itself on the wall, hoping that the mice will think it is a sack, and venture out again. They are tempted initially, but the mice notice that the sack has eyes, and speaks – so stay where they are!

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Mice try to steal cheese, cat chases them back
- Mice decide to stay in their hole



- Cat hangs itself on the wall, pretending to be a sack
- Mice are tempted to try again
- Mice notice that the sack is not what it seems

Characters:

- Cat; Mighty Mouse; Mildred Mouse; Mini-Mouse

Theme(s):

- Temptation
- Deceit through disguise
- Discretion being the better part of valour

Moral:

- 'Once bitten, twice shy'

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- What is the cat guarding from the mice?
- Why does Mighty Mouse's first plan fail?
- Why is Mini Mouse so keen to get the cheese?
- Why is Mildred Mouse not as keen as the other mice to get the cheese?
- Why does the cat hang itself on the wall?
- What gives the cat away as it hangs on the wall?
- What do you think would have happened if the mice hadn't noticed the cat?

17: The Lion and the Mouse**Synopsis:**

A mouse happens upon a sleeping lion in the forest. Unwisely, he climbs up onto the lion and boasts about how mice need not be scared of lazy lions. The lion, by now not asleep, grabs the mouse and prepares to eat it.

The mouse pleads for its life by claiming that one day it will be able to help the lion. The lion, finding this ridiculous thought very funny, lets the mouse go.

The next day, the mouse is indeed able to help the lion, who is trapped in a hunter's net. The mouse gnaws through the rope to save the lion, who thanks him and praises his bravery.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Mouse climbs onto lion, and boasts
- Lion catches mouse
- Mouse pleads for its life, claiming it will be able to help the lion one day
- Lion, amused, releases mouse
- Mouse finds lion trapped in hunter's net
- Mouse gnaws through net to free lion
- Lion thanks and praises mouse

Characters:

- Mouse; Lion

Theme(s):

- Bravery
- Mutual kindness and favours
- Size not necessarily equating to effectiveness

Moral:

- Friends can be very useful, even if they are very small

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why does the mouse climb onto the lion?
- How does the mouse persuade the lion not



to eat him?

- Why does the lion choose not to eat the mouse?
- Why is it such an amusing thought for the lion that the mouse could ever help him?
- How does the lion end up needing the mouse's help?
- How is the mouse able to help?

18: The Caged Bird and the Bat

Synopsis:

A songbird lives trapped in a cage outside the cottage window of a hunter. The bird can sing beautifully but never does so during daylight hours, having been caught by the hunter because of her song. The hunter wants the bird to sing for him, but during the day she pretends to be asleep, only singing at night.

One night a bat flies past and asks the bird why she only sings at night. She explains that this is her plan not to get caught by a hunter again. The bat responds that there's no use following this plan now that she's already been caught.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Bird refuses to sing during the day
- Hunter complains to bird about lack of song
- Bird sings sweetly at night
- Conversation between bat and bird

Characters:

- Songbird; Hunter (Fergus Fowler); Bat

Theme(s):

- Taking precautions

Moral:

- There's no point locking the stable door after the horse has bolted – (i.e. no point taking precautions against something which has already happened).

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why does the hunter keep the bird caged?
- Why does the songbird only sing at night?
- For what reason is Fergus described as a 'really terrible hunter'?
- What causes the bat to come and speak to the songbird?
- What does the bat think is wrong with the songbird's plan?

19: The Fox and the Goat

Synopsis:

A fox is running along one day. Not looking where it is going, it falls down a well, and cannot climb out. When a goat sticks its head over the side of the well, and asks the fox what it is doing, the fox realises this is its chance to escape.

Claiming that the water is the best in the world, the fox invites the goat to come down and share it. The goat, feeling thirsty, does so, and enjoys a drink, but then realises that she too can't climb out. The fox climbs on the goat's back and manages to get out.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Fox runs along
- Fox falls down the well
- Fox fails to climb out of the well
- Goat asks Fox what he's doing down the well
- Fox persuades Goat to join him down the well
- Fox climbs on Goat's back to get out – Goat is now stuck down the well

Characters:

- Fox; Goat

Theme(s):

- Cunning
- Carelessness

Moral:

- Think first before you do something you regret

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- How does the fox come to be trapped down the well?
- Why can't the fox escape from the well, to begin with?
- How does the fox persuade the goat to come down into the well?
- Why does the goat let the fox climb on to its back?
- What should the goat have done before going down into the well?

20: The Lion and the Elephant**Synopsis:**

A lion is awoken each morning by the crowing of a cockerel. The lion comes to be afraid of the noise of the cock's crow, and is ashamed of himself for this, given that he is so big.

The lion canvasses opinion amongst other animals, but none confess to being afraid of the cock's crow. However, the elephant does admit to being afraid of a small insect – it fears that it will be done for if the insect flies inside its ears. For this reason, the elephant is constantly shaking its head around.

The lion finds it hard to believe that such a large animal should be afraid of such a small one, and thereby realises its own fear is irrational.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Lion develops fear of cock's crow
- Lion asks other animals about whether they share the fear
- Lion speaks to elephant
- Elephant explains its fear of the insect flying inside its ears
- Hearing about the elephant's feat, the lion realises its own is irrational

Characters:

- Lion; Monkeys; Hippo; Crocodile; Elephant

Theme(s):

- Small things can be very powerful
- Irrational fears

Moral:

- Don't let yourself be afraid of something for no good reason

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- How does the lion come to be afraid of the cock's crow?



- Why is the lion ashamed of its fear?
- What does the crocodile claim to be afraid of?
- Why does the elephant shake its head so much?
- Why is the elephant afraid of the insect?
- How does the lion realise that there is no need to be afraid of the cock's crow?

21: The Crow and the Pitcher

Synopsis:

An old crow is known to be clever at solving problems – for example breaking open shellfish by dropping them from a height, and opening nuts by getting cars to drive over them. The Sparrow Sisters sing about how clever he is. One day, after a spell of hot weather which has dried up all the streams and ponds, the crow fears it will die of thirst.

Coming upon a pitcher of water left in a garden, the crow tries to drink from it, but there is only a little water left in the bottom, and his beak can't reach it. Having thought for a while, the crow hits upon the solution of dropping in pebbles until the water level rises sufficiently for him to drink.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Crow introduced as being a clever problem-solver
- Crow dying of thirst, unable to find water
- Crow finds pitcher containing a small amount of water
- Crow cannot reach the water inside the pitcher
- Crows drops pebbles into the pitcher so that the water level rises, and he can drink

Characters:

- Crow; Sparrow Sisters

Theme(s):

- Problem solving
- Patience

Moral:

- Take the time to think through a problem and you might find a solution

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- How does the clever old crow break open a tightly shut shellfish?
- How does the crow break open walnuts?
- Why has all the water dried up in the ponds and streams?
- Why can't the crow drink the water from the pitcher, to begin with?
- How does dropping pebbles into the pitcher help the crow get something to drink?

22: The Fox and the Stork

Synopsis:

A stork arrives in the forest, and is looking to make new friends. The small birds advise him not to make friends with the fox, but the fox is charming, showing him round the woods and then inviting him round for supper.

At supper, the fox plays a cruel trick. He serves soup on a shallow dish, which the stork cannot eat from using his long beak. The stork gets its revenge by inviting the fox for supper in return, and serving it inside a tall, thin jar into which the fox cannot get its snout. Eventually the fox gets the jar stuck on its snout. The stork pulls it off...and the fox apologises for having played the original trick.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Stork arrives in forest
- Stork meets fox
- Stork is advised against befriending fox, but does so anyway
- Fox invites Stork to supper
- Fox serves soup on shallow plate. Stork cannot eat it
- Stork invites Fox to supper in return
- Stork serves meal in long, narrow jar. Fox cannot eat it and gets the jar stuck on its nose
- Stork removes jar – fox apologises

Characters:

- Fox; Stork; Small birds

Theme(s):

- Trickery
- Contrition (of the fox having had his own trick played back on him)
- Getting a taste of ones own medicine
- Mutual forgiveness
- Friendship

Moral:

- If you are going to play tricks on people, expect them to be played on you in return

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is the stork looking for new friends?
- For what reason do the little birds advise the stork against befriending the fox?
- Why do the little birds boo and hiss the fox?
- What trick does the fox play on the stork over supper?

- Why is the stork unable to eat the soup?
- How does the stork play the fox's own trick back on him?
- Why does the fox end up with a jar stuck to his face?

23: Two Travellers and a Bear**Synopsis:**

Two men are travelling on foot together. Entering a forest as night falls, one of the men expresses concern about the danger of encountering a bear. The other laughs at this, claiming to have successfully fought off bears in the past. The first man is reassured by this, so they continue into the forest, where they do indeed encounter a bear.

The man who claimed to be able to fight bears climbs into a tree to escape, but refuses to help his friend climb up too. So, the first man pretends to be dead. The bear does not eat him, as he does not want to eat prey that is already dead. As the bear bends over him, it appears to whisper in his ear, (although in fact it is sniffing). When the coward who climbed the tree comes down, he asks what the bear said. The first man, angry, says that the bear warned of supposed friends who desert you in times of danger.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Two friends, travelling together, enter forest at nightfall
- One is concerned about danger of bears, but the other claims to be able to fight them
- They encounter a bear
- Boastful man climbs tree
- Boastful man refuses to help his friend

into the tree

- Man on the ground plays dead
- Bear refuses to eat supposedly dead meat
- Man on the ground expresses anger at boastful man who climbed tree

Characters:

- Friend #1 - the man who is worried about meeting a bear; Friend #2 - the man who claims to be able to fight them; Bear

Theme(s):

- Friendship
- Cowardice
- Empty boasting

Moral:

- A friend who does not help you when you are in trouble is not a true friend

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is one of the travellers reluctant to go into the forest?
- How does the second traveller persuade his friend that there is no need to be scared of bears?
- Why don't both men climb the tree to escape the bear?
- Why doesn't the bear eat the man on the ground?
- How is it that the bear appears to whisper in the man's ear?
- What gives one friend cause to be angry at the other?

24: The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs

Synopsis:

A farmer has fallen into poverty and is starving. He had been rich, having inherited the farm and many possessions, but sold them all to avoid having to work. Now he only has one goose, which he plans also to sell. However, the goose lays a golden egg, which the farmer is able to sell for a lot of money.

Further golden eggs follow, and the farmer becomes rich again. Consumed with greed, the farmer wants to get all the golden eggs at once, and cuts the goose open to get at them. There are no eggs there, and now that the goose is dead, no more eggs to come. The farmer is soon poor again.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Farmer sells off all possessions except goose
- Goose lays golden egg
- Farmer regains wealth thanks to golden eggs
- Farmer cuts open goose in an unsuccessful attempt to have all the golden eggs at once
- Farmer ends up with nothing, having killed the goose

Characters:

- Farmer (Atticus Greeb); Goose

Theme(s):

- Greed / avarice
- Being thankful for what you have

Moral:

- If you are greedy for too much you risk losing what you already have

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is Atticus Greeb so poor?
- Why doesn't Atticus sell his goose?
- How does Atticus become rich? How does he end up being poor again?
- What makes Atticus cut open his goose?

25: The Kid and the Wolf**Synopsis:**

A kid (young goat) is warned to avoid the edge of the field near the forest, because of the danger posed by a wolf. As it grows older, the kid thinks that it need not heed the advice. One day it goes to eat the grass there, which is particularly sweet. It does not notice the rest of the herd, with its guard dogs, leaving.

Left alone in the field, the kid is cornered by the wolf. The kid flatters the wolf into thinking it has a beautiful singing voice. In fact, the wolf makes a terrible noise when it sings, and attracts the attention of the guard dogs, who return to save the kid. The wolf curses itself for not eating the kid when it had the chance.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Mother goat warns kid not to eat at the edge of the field
- Kid eats at edge of field anyway
- Kid left alone in field
- Kid encounters wolf

- Kid persuades wolf to sing
- Wolf's howling attracts attention of dogs
- Dogs scare off wolf, which curses itself

Characters:

- Kid; Mother goat; Other goats; Wolf; Guard dogs

Theme(s):

- Taking advantage of opportunities
- Being wary of flattery
- The importance of heeding good advice

Moral:

- Take advantage of opportunities when they arise, they may not arise again
- 'Make hay while the sun shines'

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is the kid advised against eating at the edge of the field?
- Why does the kid ignore the advice and eat at the edge of the field?
- How does the kid come to be left alone in the field with the wolf?
- What stops the wolf from eating the kid straight away?
- What causes the dogs to return and save the kid?
- Why does the wolf curse itself for being daft?

26: The Old Lion and the Fox**Synopsis:**

A lion has grown so old that it can no longer catch its prey. It comes up with the idea of using trickery, claiming to be sick, then catching animals that show sympathy and come to help, and putting them in a sack to eat later.

A fox does not fall for the lion's trick, noticing that tracks lead into the lion's den but not out again. Instead, it gets the lion to close its eyes, then steals the sack. The fox frees the animals that were caught in the sack, and advises them to be more careful in future.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Lion is old and unable to catch its prey
- Lion catches a bird by claiming to be sick, putting it in a sack
- Lion tries same trick with a monkey, and puts this in the sack
- Lion tries same trick with fox, but fox runs away with sack
- Fox frees the trapped animals

Characters:

- Old Lion; Bird; Monkey; Fox

Theme(s):

- Trickery
- Cunning

Moral:

- Be wary of things that you know to be dangerous, even if they appear not to be

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why can't the lion hunt for prey?
- Why does the lion pretend to be sick?
- How does the lion catch the bird?
- How does the lion catch the monkey?
- Why does the lion put the animals it catches in a sack?
- How does the fox realise that the lion is playing a trick?

- What trick does the fox play on the lion?

27: The Eagle and the Jackdaw

Synopsis:

A jackdaw is impressed by a soaring eagle. Her husband thinks that he is just as good as the eagle, but she complains that he only ever brings back trinkets to the nest, rather than anything useful.

The male jackdaw then watches an eagle fly off with a lamb which had become separated from a nearby flock. He thinks he will prove his worth to his wife by doing something similar, but tries to fly off with the prize ram rather than a lamb. Unable to lift the ram, his talons get tangled in the wool, and he is caught by the shepherd, who clips his wings to stop him causing more trouble. Both the shepherd and the jackdaw's wife ridicule it for trying to behave like an eagle.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Female Jackdaw is impressed by eagle
- Female Jackdaw complains that male Jackdaw does not do anything useful
- Eagle swoops and flies off with a lamb
- Male Jackdaw tries to copy the eagle, by swooping down on a ram
- Male Jackdaw gets tangled in ram's wool
- Male Jackdaw caught by shepherd and has wings clipped

Characters:

- Mr Jackdaw; Mrs Jackdaw; Eagle; Ram; Shepherd; Shepherd's children

Theme(s)

- Pretending to be something you are not
- Pride / vanity

Moral:

- Don't try to pretend that you are something that you are not
- Do not try to take on a task which you know you will not be able to complete

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is the female jackdaw impressed by the eagle
- Why does the male jackdaw think that the female should consider herself a lucky bird?
- What does the eagle do that the jackdaw decides to copy?
- What is the difference between the sheep that the eagle catches, and the sheep that the jackdaw tries to catch?
- Why does the jackdaw try to catch the ram?
- How is the shepherd able to catch the jackdaw?
- Why does the shepherd clip the jackdaw's wings?

28: The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing**Synopsis:**

A wolf would like to catch a sheep for its supper but is finding it difficult to do so. It tries to disguise itself by wrapping itself in a sheepskin rug and making noises like a sheep.

To begin with the plan works well – the sheep don't seem to notice the difference, and nor do the farmer and his dog when the sheep are herded into their pen in the evening.

One lamb notices a funny smell about the disguised wolf but is told not to be rude by its mother.

However, before the wolf can snatch the lamb, he gets hooked by the shepherd, who is looking for the biggest and juiciest sheep for his own supper. The wolf wriggles out of the rug and escapes, but does not get a sheep for supper.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Wolf struggles to catch sheep
- Wolf visits his aunt and borrows sheepskin rug
- Wolf disguises himself in the rug, and practices sheep noises
- Wolf infiltrates sheep
- Wolf is herded into sheep pen
- Lamb notices wolf smell
- Farmer extracts wolf
- Wolf escapes but without catching a sheep

Characters:

- Wolf; Farmer Foggarty; Lamb; Mother Sheep

Theme(s):

- Things are not always what they seem
- Danger of judging by first appearances
- Having the courage of your convictions (e.g. the lamb was right about the smell)

Moral:

- Appearances can be deceptive
- Do not judge by appearances



Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Where does the wolf find the sheepskin rug?
- For what reason does the wolf disguise itself?
- What makes the lamb suspect the wolf?
- Why does the wolf decide to eat the lamb first?
- Why does the farmer hook the wolf out from the flock?

29: The Goatherd and the Wild Goats**Synopsis:**

A herd of wild goats, with a wise leader called Sherpa, are often hungry and cold. Sherpa observes a flock of tame goats being tended by a goatherd, and provided with food and a warm sleeping place. Following Sherpa's plan, the wild goats join the flock so that they too can have food and warmth.

The goatherd notices that the wild goats have joined the flock, but is pleased because he will have more milk and cheese to sell. He looks after the new goats to try and ensure that they stay with him, but in doing so neglects the goats he had already. Sherpa is concerned that he will neglect the wild goats similarly, should more new goats come along, so when spring arrives, the wild goats leave.

The goatherd is angry, but Sherpa points out that he should have treated all of his goats fairly.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Sherpa observes tame goats being looked after
- Sherpa explains his plan for the wild goats to join the tame ones
- Goatherd looks after the wild goats, treating them more kindly than the tame ones
- Sherpa explains his concerns that they will be neglected too in due course
- Wild goats leave in spring
- Goatherd is angry, Sherpa explains his mistake

Characters:

- Sherpa; Other wild goats; Goatherd; Tame goats

Theme(s):

- Fair and equal treatment
- Friendship

Moral:

- Don't neglect your old friends in favour of new ones

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- How is the life of a wild goat different from that of a tame one?
- Why does Sherpa suggest that the wild goats should join the tame ones?
- Why does the goatherd not mind having the wild goats in the flock?
- Why does the goatherd treat the wild goats more kindly than the tame ones?
- Why does Sherpa think that the wild goats should not stay with the tame ones?
- How do the wild goats escape?
- Why is the goatherd angry? Does he have any right to be angry?



30: The dog in the manger

Synopsis:

A dog is tired on a hot day. He finds a comfortable, cool spot in a manger full of hay, inside a cattle barn. Before he can go to sleep, the cattle come in, wanting to eat the hay. When they ask him to get out of the manger, he is first rude, then threatening, even though he does not want to eat the hay himself. The cattle leave the barn again, and end up wandering around the farm. This causes the farmer to storm in angrily, rousing the dog from the manger.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Dog is hot and tired
- Dog finds cool spot to sleep, in manger of hay
- Cattle enter barn and find dog
- Cattle ask dog to vacate manger, he refuses
- Dog threatens Bull
- Cattle leave barn
- Farmer enters and rouses dog

Characters:

- Dog; Bull; Queeny Cow; Farmer John

Theme(s):

- Selfishness
- Spitefulness
- Greed

Moral:

- Don't begrudge others what you do not want for yourself

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why does the dog go into the barn?
- Why does the dog climb into the manger?
- Why do the cattle need the dog to get out of the manger?
- What causes Queeny Cow to be offended?
- Where does the bull go to hide, and why?
- Why is the farmer angry?

31: Androcles and the Lion

Synopsis:

Androcles, a slave, is mistreated by his master, so attempts to escape by running away into a forest. After a while, he stops to rest, but encounters a fiercely roaring lion. Androcles fears that he will be eaten, but in fact the lion is roaring from the pain of a thorn in its paw. Androcles helps the lion by pulling out the thorn and washing the wound.

Soon afterwards, Androcles is recaptured by his master, and imprisoned. His punishment will be to be fed to a lion in the big arena, watched by the Emperor and a large crowd. However, the lion turns out to be the same one that Androcles had helped, and therefore greets the slave in a friendly way. The Emperor, impressed by the power of their friendship, frees both Androcles and the lion.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Androcles escapes into the forest
- Androcles stops to rest and encounters a wounded lion
- Androcles removes thorn from the lion's paw; the lion is grateful
- Androcles is recaptured and imprisoned

- Androcles is thrown into arena, to be eaten by a lion
- Lion, helped previously by Androcles, greets him
- Emperor frees both Androcles and the lion

Characters:

- Androcles; Master; Lion; Emperor

Theme(s):

- Slavery and the desire to escape from cruelty
- The power of friendship

Moral:

- Do someone a good turn and they may do the same for you in return One good turn deserves another

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why does Androcles run away into the forest?
- Why is the lion roaring when Androcles meets it?
- How does Androcles help the lion?
- What do you think would have happened if the lion hadn't had a thorn in its paw?
- Why does Androcles end up in prison?
- How is Androcles to be punished?
- Why does the Emperor free Androcles?

32: The Dog and his Reflection**Synopsis:**

Patch the dog lives on a farm. He is cute as a puppy, but grows up into a fierce and badly-behaved dog. He bullies the other dogs and steals their food. One day he steals the joint of meat from the farmer's table and runs away with it.

Coming to a bridge across a river, he stops to eat the meat. He spots his own reflection in the water. Thinking that this is another dog, with another piece of meat, he decides that he wants both pieces of meat. However, in opening his mouth to growl at his reflection, he drops the meat in the river and it is swept away. He loses the meat but realises that he would be better off not being so nasty in future.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Patch behaves nicely as a puppy
- Patch misbehaves as a grown-up dog, and becomes known as Bad Dog
- Bad Dog bullies other dogs for their food
- Bad Dog steals meat from the farm kitchen and runs away with it
- Bad Dog sees his reflection in the water, and thinks it is another dog
- Bad Dog drops the meat into the water and loses it

Characters:

- Patch / Bad Dog; Farmer and family; Other farm dogs

Theme(s):

- Greed
- Bullying
- Realising the error of one's ways

Moral:

- Be thankful for what you have
- If you are too greedy you risk losing what you already have



Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- How does Patch come to be known simply as Bad Dog?
- In what ways is Bad Dog bad?
- How does Bad Dog bully the other dogs on the farm?
- Why does Bad Dog run away from the farm?
- Why is Bad Dog wrong to think he has met another dog on the bridge?
- How does Bad Dog lose the piece of meat?

33: The Heron and the Fish**Synopsis:**

A heron walks along a riverbank, behaving as if he is a king. The other animals and birds feign respect but laugh at him behind his back.

The heron hunts fish by standing very still in the water, on one leg, and waiting for fish to swim past. He cannot hunt when the other animals are there, making a noise and splashing around. He waits until they have finished, then wades out into the river. However, he refuses to catch the various small and medium-sized fish that swim past, thinking that only a great salmon is good enough for him. No salmon comes, so he ends up with nothing to eat.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Heron acts like a king, other creatures feign respect
- Heron waits for the other creatures to stop making noise, so that he can hunt
- Heron starts to hunt, but refuses to catch

any fish, thinking those that come not to be good enough for him

- Heron ends up with nothing to eat

Characters:

- Heron; Otter; Water vole; Kingfisher

Theme(s):

- Thinking yourself better than you are
- Pride coming before a fall
- Greed
- Fussiness

Moral:

- Be thankful for what you have, or you may end up with nothing
- If you are too fussy about what you eat you may end up being hungry

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why do the other creatures pretend to show respect to the heron?
- Why does the heron think it is better than the other creatures?
- How do herons hunt for fish, and how is this different to how other animals do so?
- Why does the heron refuse to catch the small fish?
- How does the heron end up being hungry?

34: The Eagle and the Tortoise**Synopsis:**

Tod the tortoise struggles to get his share of scraps that are thrown into the garden where it lives – he is too slow. His friend Milly Mouse brings some back for him. Seeing an eagle flying in the sky, Tod expresses to Milly his wish to be able to fly.



The eagle comes down and offers to teach Tod to fly. Tod promises the eagle anything it wants in return. Up in the sky, the Eagle demands Milly Mouse, who it wants to eat. When Tod is unwilling to betray his friend, the Eagle drops him. However, Tod lands in a pile of lettuce leaves which his friends in the garden had stacked up to save him. Tod realises that he is happy as himself.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Tod struggles to get any scraps in the garden
- Milly brings him some lettuce
- Tod expresses desire to fly
- Eagle offers to teach Tod to fly
- Tod offers eagle anything it wants in return
- Eagle takes Tod up into the air
- Eagle demands Milly Mouse in return for the flying lesson
- Eagle drops Tod when he refuses to give Milly away
- Tod lands in pile of lettuce leaves and is saved

Characters:

- Tod Tortoise; Milly Mouse; Racy Rabbit; Old Mrs Mumbles; Eagle

Theme(s):

- Friendship
- Being content with the simple things in life
- Unrealistic aspiration

Moral:

- Learn to love yourself for what you are
- Be content with what you have
- Be careful what you wish for

- Do not promise what you can't deliver

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why does Tod struggle to get any food in the garden?
- Why does Tod think he would like to fly?
- Why does the Eagle offer to help Tod to fly?
- What does the Eagle ask for in return from Tod, and why?
- Why does the Eagle drop Tod?
- How does Tod manage to survive his fall?

35: The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

Synopsis:

Town Mouse visits his cousin in the country. Country Mouse has collected lots of food ready for the visit, but Town Mouse turns his nose up at it. Town Mouse claims that the food and lifestyle in town is much better, so Country Mouse agrees to travel back with him.

Country Mouse finds out that the house where Town Mouse lives is indeed warm and comfortable and full of beautiful food. However, it is also full of people, one of whom wants to suck the mice up in a vacuum cleaner. Despite the luxurious food, Country Mouse runs back to his home, where he can eat in safety.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Town Mouse travels to the country
- Country Mouse prepares for his cousin's visit
- Town Mouse scorns the surroundings and

the food

- Town Mouse persuades Country Mouse to come back to town
- Country Mouse enjoys the surroundings and the food in town
- People arrive and try to suck up the mice in a vacuum cleaner
- Country Mouse returns to the country

Characters:

- Town Mouse; Country Mouse; Chef and Servants

Theme(s):

- Simplicity and safety as preferable to luxury and danger
- The simple things in life can be the best
- Putting on airs and graces
- Happiness and security as preferable to material possessions

Moral:

- Be thankful for what you have
- Be careful what you wish for
- Material possessions are not everything

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- How would you summarise the differences between Town Mouse and Country Mouse?
- Why does Town Mouse not want the food that Country Mouse offers?
- Why does Country Mouse travel into town?
- How come all the nice food is available to the mice in town?
- What is the noise that scares Country Mouse?
- Why do the mice have to run away under the floorboards?
- Why does Country Mouse choose to go home?

36: Belling the Cat

Synopsis:

A group of mice live happily on a farm, since the farm's cat is too old and lazy to bother trying to catch them. Things change for the worse when a new cat arrives – she is young and a keen hunter, and as a result mice start disappearing.

The mice have a meeting to discuss the matter. They agree that the problem is that cat's ability to sneak up on them unheard. A young mouse proposes a plan to tie a bell around the cat's neck. All the mice agree that this is a great plan, until they find that none of them wants to take on the task of placing the bell on the cat.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Mice live happily, unmolested by old cat
- New cat arrives
- Mice start disappearing, caught by the new cat
- Mice hold a meeting to discuss the cat
- Solution of 'belling the cat' is proposed
- A suitable bell is found
- No mouse volunteers to place the bell on the cat

Characters:

- Old Cat; Young Cat; Old Mouse; Young Mouse; Other Mice

Theme(s):

- Unrealistic aspirations
- Bravery



Moral:

- Don't suggest a solution which is impossible
- Don't ask others to do something which you're not prepared to do yourself

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is life so good for the mice to begin with?
- How and why does the arrival of the new cat change life for the mice?
- What makes the new cat such a good hunter?
- What solution does the young mouse propose?
- From where do the mice find a bell?
- What is the problem with the young mouse's plan?

37: The Too Fat Fox**Synopsis:**

In the course of a harsh winter, a fox becomes thinner and thinner until he fears that he will starve. One day he comes across a large amount of food inside a hollow tree, this having been hidden there a short while previously by a man who believes the hole in the trunk to be too small for any animal to get through.

The fox can get through the whole having become so thin. He eats all the food, but finds himself too fat to get out. He has to wait for a few days until he is thin again before he can get out again.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Fox, starving, searching in vain for food
- Farmer leaves food inside hollow tree
- Fox, being very thin, is able to squeeze into the tree
- Fox eats the food
- Fox, now fat, is unable to squeeze out again
- Fox has to wait until he has become thin again before escaping

Characters:

- Fox; Farmer Tom Cobbler; Mrs Cobbler

Theme(s)

- Starvation
- Forgetfulness
- Patience, (fox needing to wait until he is thin again)

Moral:

- Problems can disappear by themselves if you wait for a while

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is the fox so hungry? Why can't he find anything to eat?
- How come the fox finds food inside a hollow tree?
- Why is the fox unable to get out of the hollow tree?
- How is the fox able to get out of the tree in the end?



38: The Rat and the Elephant

Synopsis:

A rat is used to people reacting with fear when they see him, and is rather pleased with this effect. One day he comes across a crowd of people, and is upset when they seem to ignore him. They are too busy admiring a great elephant, on which a king is riding, carrying a cat.

The rat says the people shouldn't be so impressed with an elephant, seeing as how it is only an animal with four legs, two eyes and a nose, just like him. The king's cat jumps down from the elephant and demonstrates how the rat is not as impressive as the elephant, since the cat could not pin down or threaten to eat the elephant. The people, now noticing the rat having been caught by the cat, are no longer frightened of him.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Rat encounters crowd of people
- People do not react to the rat with fear, as they would normally do
- Rat sees the elephant being ridden by the king
- Rat draws comparisons between the elephant and himself
- Cat pins down the rat and threatens to eat it, thereby demonstrating that the rat is nothing like the elephant
- People are no longer frightened of the rat

Characters:

- Rat; Cat; Elephant; Townspeople; King

Theme(s):

- Pride coming before a fall
- Contrasts in size
- Humility

Moral:

- Just because you might look like something in some ways does not mean you are like that thing in all ways
- Being a bit like someone really great does not make you great as well

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- What makes the rat believe himself to be so frightening?
- Why does the crowd of people ignore the rat?
- What do the people find so impressive about the elephant?
- What similarities does the rat point out between himself and the elephant?
- How does the cat demonstrate differences between the rat and the elephant?
- Why are the people no longer as frightened of the rat as they used to be?

39: The Ant and the Dove

Synopsis:

An ant is dying of thirst, due to all the water in the forest having been dried up in hot weather. The only source of water is the river, so the ant decides to drink from that, despite knowing how dangerous it is. Sure enough, the river sweeps him away, and he cries desperately for help.

A dove helps the ant to safety by helping him climb on to a leaf, and disappears before the ant can thank her. However, the ant is able to return the favour when two hunters come

with the aim of catching the dove. He bites the feet of the hunters, preventing them from catching the doves and causing them to run away.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Ant, dying of thirst, decides to risk drinking from the river
- Ant swept away by water
- Ant is saved by a dove, who helps it climb on to a leaf
- Ant sees hunters preparing to catch the dove
- Ant bites the hunters' feet to save the dove

Characters:

- Dove; Ant; Hunters

Theme(s):

- Mutual kindness and favours
- Size not necessarily equating to effectiveness

Moral:

- Do someone a good turn and they may do the same for you in return
- One good turn deserves another

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- Why is it dangerous for the ant to drink from the river?
- Why does the ant need to drink from the river?
- How does the ant manage to get out of the river?
- Why are hunters trying to catch the dove?

- Why does the ant bite the feet of the hunters?

40: The Boy who Cried Wolf

Synopsis:

A boy has the job of protecting a flock of sheep from wolves. If a wolf comes, he is to ring a bell and cry out "wolf", so that the men from the village will come with their guns. After a few days with no wolf, the boy is getting bored, so he pretends that a wolf is attacking. The men come running, and praise the boy even when they find no wolf, believing his story of the wolf having run off.

The boy enjoys the attention, so repeats the trick. This time he is not praised – the men do not believe that there was a wolf. When a wolf really does attack, and the boy rings his bell and cries "wolf", the men do not come, thinking that he is playing the trick again. The wolf takes one of the fattest sheep.

Sequence of events:

Suggestions for use include: cues for oral storytelling, support for storyboarding, story planning/writing etc.

- Boy takes job watching over sheep
- Boy becomes bored, and pretends a wolf is attacking
- The villagers come, and the boy is praised for saving the sheep
- Boy pretends a wolf is attacking again
- The villagers come, but do not believe that a wolf was attacking
- A wolf really does attack
- The villagers do not come, so a sheep is eaten

Characters:

- Boy; Shepherd; Villagers

Theme(s):

- Practical jokes
- Truth and lies

Moral:

- If you tell lies people won't believe you, even when you are telling the truth

Understanding, interpreting and responding to texts:

- What is the boy's job with the sheep? What is he supposed to do?
- Why does the boy pretend that a boy is attacking?
- How do the shepherd and the villagers react the first time the boy does this trick? Why?
- How do the shepherd and the villagers react the second time the boy does this trick? Why?
- Why do the shepherd and the villagers not come when the wolf attacks?

