

The Hare and the Tortoise

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)

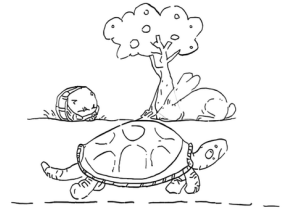
WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Hare · fast, proud, sure he will win

Tortoise · slow and steady, never stops

Fox · draws the line and judges the race

Crow · laughs first, then cheers loudest



WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a field, a stream, long grass and a green hill

THE PROBLEM

1

The proud hare laughs at the slow tortoise. The tortoise says, race me and I will show you.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

The hare runs far ahead, then lies down for a short rest and falls asleep. The tortoise walks on, step by step, and passes him.

HOW IT ENDS

3

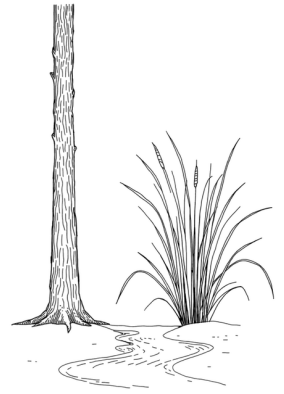
The hare wakes and runs as fast as he can, but the tortoise crosses the line first. The tortoise does not laugh at him. He only nods.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

If you keep going, slow and steady can still win.

The Oak and the Reeds

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Oak · huge, old, too proud to bend

Reeds · small and thin, bow to every wind

Wind · patient, never grows tired

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

beside a slow stream at the edge of a field

THE PROBLEM

1

The proud oak feels sorry for the little reeds because they bow to every breeze. He says he has never bowed to a storm.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

A great autumn storm comes. The reeds bow down flat and the wind passes over them, but the oak will not bend and pushes back all evening.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The oak falls beside the stream. In the morning the reeds stand up again and speak kindly to their old neighbor.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Sometimes bending a little is stronger than standing stiff.

The Lion and the Mouse

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Lion · huge and strong, laughs at a tiny promise

Mouse · small, brave, keeps her word

Hunter · left a net in the woods

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a warm forest clearing and a wet, low corner of the woods

THE PROBLEM

1

A mouse runs over a sleeping lion, and he catches her under his paw. She begs him to let her go and promises to help him one day.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

The lion laughs and lets her go. Later he is caught in a hunter's net, and the mouse hears his roar and runs to him. She chews the thick rope, strand by strand, until the net falls open.

HOW IT ENDS

3

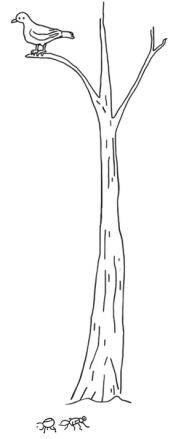
The lion is free. After that night he walks more gently and steps around small things.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Even someone very small can help someone very big.

The Ant and the Dove

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Ant · small and busy, never forgets a kindness

Dove · gentle, quick to help, building a nest

Man · creeps up quietly with a stone

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

the crumbly bank of a small stream

THE PROBLEM

1

An ant falls into a stream, and the water carries her away. She is too small to get out.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

A dove drops a dry straw beside her, and the ant climbs on and reaches the bank. Weeks later a man creeps up to throw a stone at the dove, and the ant bites his bare heel.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The stone misses and the dove flies away safe. The man never knows what stung him, and the dove never knows who saved her.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

A kindness still helps, even if nobody ever finds out about it.

The Boy Who Cried Wolf

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Shepherd boy · bored, tells lies for fun

Villagers · run to help, then stop believing

Wolf · real, gray, comes out at dusk

Old shepherd · kind, tells the boy the truth

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a green hillside pasture above a small village

THE PROBLEM

1

A boy watching sheep on a hill is bored. For fun, he shouts that a wolf is coming when there is no wolf.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

The villagers run up the hill twice and find only a laughing boy. When a real wolf comes and he shouts for help, nobody believes him and nobody comes.

HOW IT ENDS

3

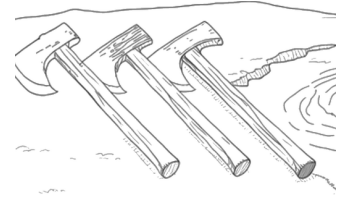
The sheep are scattered and some never come home. An old shepherd sits beside him and says gently that the boy taught them not to believe him.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

If you tell lies, people may not believe you when you tell the truth.

The Honest Woodcutter

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Woodcutter · poor and tired, always tells the truth

Spirit of the pool · old, calm, with deep-water eyes

Neighbors · greedy, pretend to lose their axes

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a deep, dark pool at the edge of a forest

THE PROBLEM

1

A poor woodcutter's axe slips from his hands and falls into a deep pool. Without it he cannot work.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

A spirit rises with a gold axe, then a silver one, and asks if each one is his. He says no each time, and says yes only to his own plain iron axe.

HOW IT ENDS

3

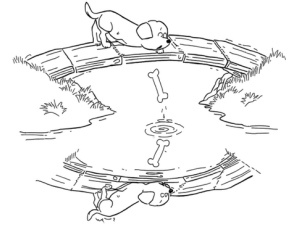
The spirit gives him all three axes. Greedy neighbors lie to get gold, and they lose their own axes instead.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Telling the truth is worth more than gold.

The Dog and His Reflection

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Dog · a good dog who wants more

Coble · the butcher who tosses him bones

The stranger · only the dog's own reflection

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a small village and a narrow footbridge over a still stream

THE PROBLEM

1

A dog is carrying the finest bone he has ever had. On a footbridge he sees another dog in the water with a bone that looks bigger.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

He opens his mouth to grab the bigger bone. His own bone falls into the stream, and he falls in after it.

HOW IT ENDS

3

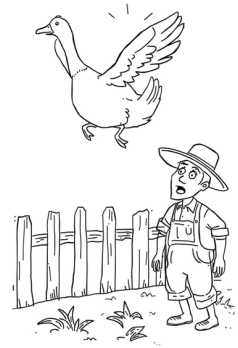
Both bones are gone, because the other dog was only his reflection. He walks home wet and never again looks down from that bridge with a bone.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Be glad of what you have instead of always wanting more.

The Goose and the Golden Egg

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Farmer · lucky, then impatient and greedy

Goose · ordinary gray and white, lays golden eggs

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a small farmyard with a nest, a shed and a fence

THE PROBLEM

1

A farmer's ordinary goose lays one golden egg every morning. He grows rich, but he becomes impatient for more.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

One gray morning he shakes the nest and shouts for all the gold at once. The frightened goose flies over the fence and away.

HOW IT ENDS

3

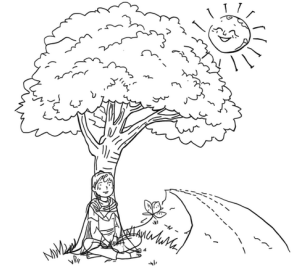
She never comes back. He keeps the last golden egg on a shelf and knows he once had enough.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

If you grab for everything at once, you can lose the good thing you had.

The North Wind and the Sun

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

North Wind · loud, boastful, believes in force

Sun · quiet, patient, gentle and warm

Hesk · a traveler in his father's cloak

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a long, straight, dusty road between two hedges

THE PROBLEM

1

The wind and the sun argue about who is stronger. They agree that whoever gets the traveler's cloak off is the winner.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

The wind blows as hard as he can, but the man only holds his cloak tighter. Then the sun shines gently, and the man grows warm.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The man takes off his cloak all by himself and rests in the shade of a tree. The wind is puzzled, and the sun has won.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Being gentle and warm can work better than pushing hard.

The Fox and the Goat

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Fox · clever, tricky, stuck in a well

Goat · big, bearded, very thirsty

Farmer · talkative, pulls the goat out

Boy · carries the bucket, helps the farmer

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a deep well on an old farm

THE PROBLEM

1

A fox falls into a well and cannot climb out. He needs someone to help him.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

A thirsty goat asks if the water is good, and the fox says it is the finest water in the country. The goat jumps in, and the fox climbs up his back and horns and gets out.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The goat waits all day until the farmer pulls him up with a rope. After that, he always asks how to get out before he goes in.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Before you jump into something, think about how you will get out.

Belling the Cat

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)

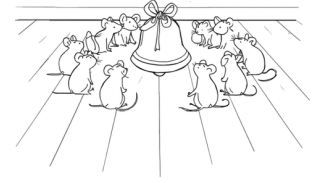
WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Young mouse · eager, proud of his bright plan

Old mouse · gray, wise, asks the hard question

The cat · silent, never heard coming

The eldest · calls the great meeting



WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

an old stone house, in the hollow under the stairs

THE PROBLEM

1

The mice live in fear of a cat they can never hear coming. They hold a big meeting to find a plan.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

A young mouse says they should hang a bell on the cat so they can hear her. Everyone cheers, until an old mouse asks who will put the bell on the cat.

HOW IT ENDS

3

Nobody answers, and the plan is put away on a high shelf. But every mouse remembers the old mouse's question.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

A plan is only good if someone can really do it.

The Crow and the Pitcher

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Crow · thirsty, tired, cleverer than she looks

Sparrow · watches from the wall, then drinks

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

an abandoned garden in a dry summer valley

THE PROBLEM

1

In a dry summer a thirsty crow finds water at the bottom of a tall pitcher. Her beak cannot reach it.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

She pushes and knocks, but nothing works, so she sits and thinks. She drops pebbles in, one by one, and slowly the water rises.

HOW IT ENDS

3

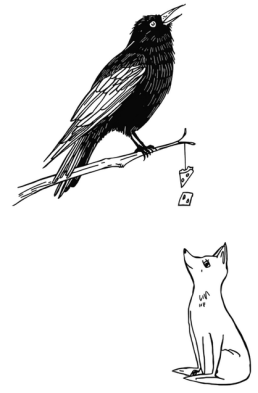
At last she drinks, and she lets the sparrow drink too.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

When strength does not work, stop and think, and keep trying a little at a time.

The Fox and the Crow

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Crow · proud, fond of praise, holding cheese

Fox · polite, clever, full of flattery

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

an old crooked oak by a kitchen garden wall

THE PROBLEM

1

A crow sits high in a tree with a piece of cheese. A fox below wants it, but he cannot jump that high.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

The fox praises her shiny feathers and then says it is a shame she has no voice. She opens her beak to prove she can sing, and the cheese drops.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The fox catches the cheese and leaves. After that, the crow always swallows her food before she says thank you for praise.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Be careful of people who praise you to get something from you.

The Jackdaw and the Borrowed Feathers

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Jackdaw · plain black bird who wants beauty

Peacocks · grand, calm, never fooled

Old jackdaw · kind, makes room, speaks gently

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a royal palace lawn and the jackdaws' tree

THE PROBLEM

1

A jackdaw sees beautiful peacocks and suddenly feels plain and invisible. He wants to look like them.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

He tucks fallen peacock feathers among his own and walks among the peacocks. But he bounces when he walks and says 'kraa', and two peacocks calmly pull the borrowed feathers out.

HOW IT ENDS

3

He flies home, and his flock does not laugh but makes room for him. In the low sun he sees his own feathers shine green and violet.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Be yourself, because your own feathers suit you best.

The Frog and the Ox

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Old frog · biggest in the pond, a proud aunt

Smallest nephew · muddy, honest, loves his auntie

Ox · huge and calm, only came to drink

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a small reedy pool at the bottom of a meadow

THE PROBLEM

1

A little frog sees a huge ox and says it is the biggest thing ever. The proud old frog wants to show she is just as big.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

She puffs herself up bigger and bigger, asking if the ox was as big as this. Each time the little frogs say the ox was much bigger.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The air rushes out with a whoosh and she lands in the mud, her own size again. She is still the biggest frog in the pond.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

You do not need to be bigger than everyone; your own size is just right.

The Miller, His Son, and the Donkey

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Miller · kind, unsure, listens to everyone

Son · obedient, goes red to the ears

Donkey · patient until he is carried

People on the road · full of different opinions

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

the road to market and a bridge over a river

THE PROBLEM

1

A miller and his son take their donkey to market to sell. Everyone they meet tells them they are doing it wrong.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

They change each time: the boy rides, then the father, then both, and at last they carry the donkey on a pole. On the bridge the donkey kicks free and falls into the river.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The donkey swims out and goes home, and no donkey is sold. After that the miller does what suits him and lets people talk.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

You cannot please everyone, so do what you know makes sense.

The Two Travelers and the Bear

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

The talker · big words about friendship, runs first

The quiet man · steady, honest, lies still as stone

Bear · huge, sniffs, then walks away

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a path through a deep autumn forest

THE PROBLEM

1

Two friends travel the roads selling tinware. One of them always boasts that he will be brave when trouble comes.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

A bear comes out of the trees. The talker climbs an oak without a word, and the quiet man lies very still on the ground while the bear sniffs at his ear and then leaves.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The quiet man says the bear told him to watch what a man does, not what he says. The talker admits he was afraid, and they walk on together as friends.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

What you do matters more than what you say.

The Leap at Rhodes

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Traveler · home from far away, full of stories

Cobbler · old, quiet, mends the village's boots

Villagers · crowd into the inn to listen

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a village inn beside a warm fire

THE PROBLEM

1

A traveler comes home and tells everyone about a great leap he made in Rhodes. Each time he tells it, the leap gets bigger.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

He says half of Rhodes saw it, but Rhodes is very far away. The quiet cobbler draws a chalk line on the floor and says, let the inn be Rhodes, show us the leap right here.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The traveler talks about his boots and his supper and the cold, and does not jump. The room only waits, and then the evening goes on as before.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

If you say you can do something, be ready to show it.

The Ants and the Grasshopper

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Grasshopper · cheerful fiddler who plays all summer

Ants · busy, always carrying grain home

Old ant · wise and fair, offers a bargain

Young ant · wants to turn him away

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

a green meadow and the ants' storerooms under the bank

THE PROBLEM

1

All summer the grasshopper plays his fiddle while the ants store food. When winter comes, he is cold, hungry and afraid.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

He knocks at the ants' door and asks for food. The old ant offers a bargain: he can eat with them and help, and play music in the evenings.

HOW IT ENDS

3

All winter he works a little and plays every evening. In spring he gathers seed in the mornings and fiddles in the evenings.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Work and play both matter, and each one needs its own time.

The Farmer and His Sons

A story from Ancient Greece (Aesop)



WHO IS IN THE STORY?

Old farmer · wise, quiet, loves his land

Three sons · dreamers who hope for easy gold

Neighbors · lean on the fence and watch

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

an old family farm with fields, a well and a vineyard

THE PROBLEM

1

An old farmer's three sons dream of the city, the sea and easy riches. He worries they will not care for the land.

WHAT HAPPENS

2

Before he dies, he tells them a treasure is hidden in the fields. They dig every foot of ground looking for it, find nothing, and then plant seed in the soft earth.

HOW IT ENDS

3

The farm gives its richest harvest ever. The sons understand the treasure was the work, and they dig the fields every spring after that.

WHAT THE STORY TEACHES

Hard work is a treasure that comes back every year.