

## Aesop's Fables – The Fox and the Grapes

A hungry Fox saw some fine bunches of Grapes hanging from a vine that was trained along a high trellis, and did his best to reach them by jumping as high as he could into the air. But it was all in vain, for they were just out of reach: so he gave up trying, and walked away with an air of dignity and unconcern, remarking, "I thought those Grapes were ripe, but I see now they are quite sour."

### Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What does it mean to say that the vine "was trained along a high trellis"?
2. What does the phrase "air of dignity" mean?
3. Why doesn't the fox eat the grapes?
4. What does "it was all in vain" mean?
5. We get the saying "sour grapes" from this fable. Why? How does the phrase relate to this fable?
6. What is the theme or main message?



## Aesop's Fables – The Wolf and the Sheep

### Answer Key

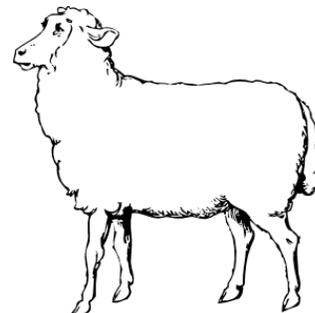
1. What does it mean to say that the vine “was trained along a high trellis”? **A trellis is a lattice, fence or framework for the vine to grow on. The vine had grown too high along the trellis for the fox to reach.**
2. What does the phrase “air of dignity” mean? **A dignified, noble, formal or self-respecting attitude. It was as if he felt he was too good to bother with the grapes.**
3. Why doesn't the fox eat the grapes? **Though he tries, he can't reach the grapes. He tried, “in vain” to reach the grapes.**
4. What does “it was all in vain” mean? **Unsuccessful or without gain or effect.**
5. We get the saying “sour grapes” from this fable. Why? How does the phrase relate to this fable? **The phrase means that after a disappointment, one acts as though he does not care. It is a form of cognitive dissonance, which is discomfort caused by holding conflicting ideas simultaneously.**
6. What is the theme or main message? **Sometimes people pretend not to care for something when they cannot have it.**

## Aesop's Fables – The Wolf and the Sheep

A Wolf, sorely wounded and bitten by dogs, lay sick and maimed in his lair. Being in want of food, he called to a Sheep who was passing, and asked him to fetch some water from a stream flowing close beside him. "For," he said, "if you will bring me drink, I will find means to provide myself with meat." "Yes," said the Sheep, "if I should bring you the draught, you would doubtless make me provide the meat also."

### Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What does the word maimed mean?
2. What does the word draught mean?
3. What does the Wolf mean when he says, "If you will bring me drink, I will find means to provide myself with meat."
4. What does the Sheep mean when he says, "If I should bring you the draught, you would doubtless make me provide the meat also."
5. What is the theme or main message?



## Aesop's Fables – The Wolf and the Sheep

### Answer Key

1. What does the word maimed mean? **Injured, disabled, or disfigured**
2. What does the word draught mean? **A gulp or swallow of liquid - in this case, water**
3. What does the Wolf mean when he says, "If you will bring me drink, I will find means to provide myself with meat." **If you bring me a drink, I will gain enough strength to find food for myself and thus regain my health.**
4. What does the Sheep mean when he says, "If I should bring you the draught, you would doubtless make me provide the meat also." **If I bring you a drink, you will make me your meal.**
5. What is the theme or main message? **It is not difficult to spot a liar and a hypocrite.**

## Aesop's Fables – The Lion and the Mouse



A Lion asleep in his lair was waked up by a Mouse running over his face. Losing his temper, he seized it with his paw and was about to kill it. The Mouse, terrified, piteously entreated him to spare its life. "Please let me go," it cried, "and one day I will repay you for your kindness." The idea of so insignificant a creature ever being able to do anything for him amused the Lion so much that he laughed aloud, and good-humouredly let it go.

But the Mouse's chance came, after all. One day the Lion got entangled in a net which had been spread for game by some hunters, and the Mouse heard and recognized his roars of anger and ran to the spot. Without more ado it set to work to gnaw the ropes with its teeth, and succeeded before long in setting the Lion free. "There!" said the Mouse, "you laughed at me when I promised I would repay you: but now you see, even a Mouse can help a Lion."

### Reading Comprehension Questions

1. The first sentence says that the Lion was, "asleep in his lair." What is a lair?
2. The Mouse "entreated" the Lion to spare his life. What does entreated mean?
3. We are told that "the Lion got entangled in a net which had been spread for game by some hunters." What does the phrase "spread for game" mean?
4. How was the little Mouse able to help the powerful Lion?
5. What is the message of this fable?

**Aesop's Fables – The Lion and the Mouse****Answer Key**

The first sentence says that the Lion was, "asleep in his lair." What is a lair?

- **A home or den**

The Mouse "entreated" the Lion to spare his life. What does entreated mean?

- **To plead, beg or request**

We are told that "the Lion got entangled in a net which had been spread for game by some hunters." What does the phrase "spread for game" mean?

- **The hunters were hoping to catch some game in the net. Game is another word for animals that are hunted for sport.**

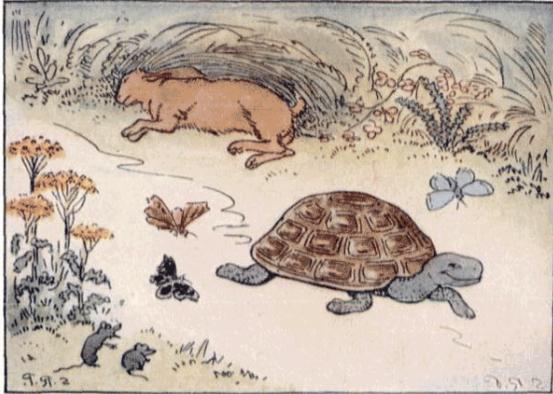
How was the tiny Mouse able to help the powerful Lion?

- **The Mouse chewed a large enough opening in the net to allow the Lion to escape.**

What is the message of this fable?

- **Answers may vary: Everyone has skill and talents, so it is important to value everyone.**

## Aesop's Fables – The Hare and the Tortoise



A Hare one day ridiculed the short feet and slow pace of the Tortoise, who replied, laughing: "Though you be swift as the wind, I will beat you in a race." The Hare, believing her assertion to be simply impossible, assented to the proposal; and they agreed that the Fox should choose the course and fix the goal. On the day appointed for the race the two started together. The Tortoise never for a moment stopped, but went on with a slow but steady pace straight to the end of the course. The Hare, lying down by the wayside, fell fast asleep. At last waking up, and moving as fast as he could, he saw the Tortoise had reached the goal, and was comfortably dozing after her fatigue.

### Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What does the word "ridiculed" mean?
2. What does the word "assertion" mean?
3. What does the phrase "assented to the proposal" mean?
4. What strange thing did the Hare do during the race?
5. What role did the Fox play in this race?
6. Which one was faster, the hare or the tortoise?
7. What is the theme or main message?

## Aesop's Fables – The Hare and the Tortoise

### Answer Key

1. What does the word ridiculed mean?

**Ridicule means to make fun of or to offend. The Hare was making fun of the Tortoise's short feet and slow speed.**

2. What does the word assertion mean?

**An assertion is a statement. The Hare thought the Tortoise's statement that she could win the race was crazy.**

3. What does the phrase “assented to the proposal” mean?

**This phrase means that the Hare agreed to race the Tortoise.**

4. What strange thing did the Hare do during the race?

**He took a nap.**

5. What role did the Fox play in this race?

**The Fox decided where and when they would race.**

6. Which one was faster, the hare or the tortoise?

**The Tortoise was faster because he got to the finish line first. The Hare actually had more speed, but since he did not try hard enough, he did not win.**

7. What is the theme or main message?

♣ **Slow but steady wins the race.**

♣ **Just because a person has talent does not mean he or she will be successful. You must always work hard and try your best.**