

Favorite Aesop's Fables and More

Storytelling Show



Presented by Katie Adams' Make Believe Theater

Welcome to the show!

Perseverance... honesty... helping others, Aesop's Fables show us how to make good choices in life. Storyteller Katie Adams will exercise your imagination with her energetic performance and drawings of *The Race of the Tortoise and the Hare*, *The Lion and the Mouse*, *The Boy who Cried Wolf*, and more fables in this fun, storytelling show. This 45-minute show includes live illustrations, and audience participation.

Before the Show

Synopsis of the Stories

There are five fables in today's show. Here is a summary of each one.

The Race of the Tortoise and the Hare

Katie will invite the audience to participate by cheering for the Tortoise and the Hare.

This is Aesop's fable about a fast Hare (rabbit) who liked to make fun of a slow Tortoise. Set in Florida, down at the beach, all the animals are Florida wildlife including Gopher Tortoise. Tired of being teased about his slow pace, Tortoise challenges Hare to a race, with all the nearby animals to cheer them on. Once the race begins, Hare is so sure he will win the race, he stops for a snack, and then for a nap. Meanwhile Tortoise keeps going, keeping his eye on the finish line and letting nothing distract him. Just before Tortoise is about to finish the race, Hare wakes up and with a burst of speed tries to beat Tortoise. But he is too late! Tortoise wins the race. The moral of the story is: *Slow and steady wins the race.*

The Fox and the Stork

The Fox and the Stork live across a pond from each other. Fox likes to play tricks on his friends and one day he decides to ply a trick on his friend Stork. Fox invites Stork to dinner and serves her soup on a flat plate. Stork, with her long beak cannot scoop up any of the soup, and gets nothing to eat. Instead of complaining, Stork graciously invites Fox to her house the next day for dinner. When Fox arrives, she serves him soup from a long, tall jar. Fox, unable to reach the soup inside the jar, doesn't even get a taste. Fox goes home hungry that night. The moral of the story is: *Being kind to others is the right thing to do.*

The Boy who Cried Wolf

Katie will ask the audience to help with the sounds of the sheep and the boy calling wolf.

Aesop's cautionary tale about a young shepard boy is known the world over. The busy villagers of a farming community give a young boy the job of herding their sheep up to the high meadow to graze everyday. They warn the boy of the dangers of wolves and instruct him to call them if he sees any wolves. Bored, the shepard boy decides to test the villagers and see if they really will come when he cries wolf. At his cries, the villagers come running up the hills to protect the boy and the sheep only to find that there are no wolves. The shepard boy thinks the angry villagers are funny and he plays his trick again and again until one day, real wolves come for the sheep. The boy calls to the villagers but the villagers, not knowing the cries are real, don't come. So the wolves take all the sheep as the boy climbs into a tree for safety. At the end of the day, the shepard boy limps home, with no sheep, to his village. The moral of the story is: *No one believes a liar even when they are telling the truth.*

The Lion and the Mouse

Katie will ask the students to participate with the roars of the Lion.

Students all know this famous story of the little mouse who helps the big lion. One day little mouse is tearing through the forest on an errand for her mother, when she accidentally runs up onto a sleeping lion. The lion wakes up and the terrified mouse tries to run away, but the lion easily catches the mouse and starts to pop her into his mouth. The mouse begs for her life saying, "Lion, if you save my life, I promise one day, I will save your life."

The thought of the tiny mouse saving his life amuses the lion and he lets her go. Months later, the mouse finds the lion trapped in a hunter's net. Hearing the hunters approaching, the mouse sets to work gnawing at the ropes of the trap until the lion is able to break free. Both Lion and mouse escape the hunters. The moral of the story is: *You are never too big to need help and you are never too small to be helpful.*

The Rich man and the Storyteller

This last story is not an Aesop's fable, it is a fable by Jean de La Fontaine, a French fabulist who was influenced by Aesop. A long time ago, the rich man and the storyteller were neighbors in a big, bustling city. The storyteller had a noisy house with lots of visitors who laughed and sang and listened to his stories. The rich man was a banker who had a quiet house and did not like to be disturbed. The Storyteller's tales drifting across the street distracted the banker as he was counting his money and kept him awake at night. Finally in frustration, the rich man offered to pay the storyteller to stop his noisy storytelling. When the storyteller refused the money, the rich man offered more and more money until the storyteller could not refuse. As the owner of a big chest full of gold coins, the storyteller began to worry about robbers stealing the gold, and how to spend the money wisely. His worries kept him awake at night and irritable during the day. Finally his wife asked him to give back the gold. The storyteller returned all the gold in return for his storytelling and his peaceful nights of sleep.

Who was Aesop?

Aesop (pronounced EE-sop), was a Greek slave who lived over three thousand years ago. Telling short stories with morals, (fables) he was able to advise and help his master, and in return his master set him free. Aesop traveled through his country and became famous for his stories and wisdom. He never wrote his stories down, but they were easily remembered and people passed along the fables until 600 years later they were written down.

Check out the bibliography at the end of this study guide for some great books with more information about Aesop.

Standards connected to the performance

Language Arts: LAFS.K12.SL.1.2 – Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Theater: TH.2.C.1.2 – Respond to a play by drawing and/or writing about a favorite aspect of it.

Language Arts Activity

Check out these fables from your library and read the stories to, or with, your class.

- The Tortoise and the Hare
- The Boy who Cried Wolf
- The Lion and the Mouse
- The Fox and the Stork
- The Rich Man and the Shoemaker

Have your students name the characters in each story and discuss cause and effect of their actions. Read more than one version of a story. Compare and contrast with your students the differences in the story versions.

LAFS.K12.R.3.7 - Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

LAFS.K12.R.3.9 - Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

LAFS.K.SL.1.2 - *Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.*

LAFS.1.RL.3.9 - *Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.*

LAFS.4.RL.3.7 - *Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.*

LAFS.5.RL.1.3 - *Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).*

The Role of the Audience

This is a reflective exercise for students. Please read and discuss with your students.

- You are the audience - an important part of the performance. You help the performers by pretending and participating with them.
- Seeing a live show is not like watching TV or a movie. The performers are in the same room with you, and can see and hear you, the audience, and interact! What are some other differences? (no commercials, no eating, no lying down or running around...)
- Enter the performance space quietly and listen. Who might be giving instructions?
- The performers need you to watch and listen quietly. Talking to friends disturbs the performers and other members of the audience.
- Your job is to pretend along with the performers. They like it when you laugh if something is funny. They also like to hear you clap at the end of a performance when they bow.
- After the bows the audience stays seated. Who might give instructions on how to leave?

Standards for Theater Etiquette

TH.K.S.1.1-Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior at a live performance.

TH.1.S.1.1-Exhibit appropriate audience etiquette and response.

TH.2.S.1.1-Exhibit the behavior necessary to establish audience etiquette, response, and constructive criticism.

TH.3.S.1.1-Demonstrate effective audience etiquette and constructive criticism for a live performance.

TH.4.S.1.1.-Exhibit proper audience etiquette, give constructive criticism, and defend personal responses.

TH.5.S.1.1-Describe the difference in responsibilities between being an audience member at live or recorded performances.

After the Show

Curriculum connections: Visual Art, Theater arts, Language arts, Character Education

Visual Art

Story illustrations give us pictures to enhance reading comprehension. Katie uses illustrations to encourage imagery in the minds of the audience and to inspire students to add their own illustrations to their writing.

Using the fables listed above, ask your students to create storyboards for the fables: a series of cartoon pictures that tell the story without words. You may want to give them a sheet of paper with the storyboard squares already marked out. Pencils with erasers work well for this.

VA.1.S.1.1: Experiment with art processes and media to express ideas.

VA.3.0.3.1: Use symbols, visual language, and/or written language to document self or others.

Storytelling and Theater

Go over the following theater definitions with your class. Then try some of the storytelling games.

Theater Concepts and Vocabulary

- The storyteller and audience agree to “suspend disbelief”, to pretend together that the action of the performance is real and is happening for the first time. This agreement means the audience members accept the use of theater conventions such as:
- Audience participation - the storyteller talks directly to, and interacts with, the audience. The audience is invited to help act out parts of the story.
- The storyteller plays multiple characters and uses many voices.
- The storyteller sings to provide information, move the action forward and set a mood.
- The storyteller uses mime movements to suggest props and scenery.

Storytelling Activities - Games

Go over the stories from the show with your students. Pick one of the stories (or pick one episode). Be sure to have a beginning, middle, and end.

1. Ask the students to form a circle and let the first child begin telling the story. At a prearranged signal from you, the next child in the circle must take up the story. Keep going until everyone has a turn and the story is told.
2. Turn a favorite fairy tale into a "fractured fairy tale". Example- Make Goldilocks a beauty queen and the three bears farmers.
3. Find an interesting item or photo and invent a story about it.

Learn Stories From Your Own Family

Suggest to your students that they visit an older relative and ask him or her questions. Stories will usually result. Some possible questions are listed below.

1. What were holidays like when you were growing up? How were they different?
2. Who was your best childhood friend and what did you do together?
3. Is there a family event you wish you could do again in a different way?
4. What was your grandmother's house like?
5. Do you remember when I was little? What was I like?

LAFS.K.RL.1.2 - With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.

LAFS.1.RL.1.2 - Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

TH.2.H.1.1 - Read and dramatize stories with similar themes to show developing knowledge of, and respect for, cultural differences.

TH.5.H.3.4 - Act out a character learned about in another content area.

TH.5.H.3.3 - Demonstrate how the use of movement and sound enhance the telling of a story.

Folk Tales - Earliest form of Literature

Folk tales have been handed down, usually by word of mouth, for generations.

- Discuss with your students what can happen to a story passed down in this way.
- You may want to illustrate the point by playing the game “telephone” or “gossip” in which a whispered phrase is passed down the line of students and the beginning and ending phrases are compared to see how different they are.
- Do the students know of a story handed down through their own family or friends this way? (An example would be a story about the size of a fish caught.)

Folk tales contain elements unique to the culture they come from.

- Ask the students to describe something unique from each story, i.e. “What makes this an African story?”

Folk tales also contain elements universal to all people.

- Ask the students to describe something from each story that “all people do”.

Folk tales always contain a message about how to live life.

- Discuss the messages in the three stories - how are they similar and how are they different. In each of the stories, one or more of the characters helps another character. Ask the students to identify these characters and describe how they were helpful. (Good readers always do a text to self connection.)

LAFS.K.RL.1.2 - With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.

LAFS.1.RL.1.2 - Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

LAFS.2.RL.1.2 - Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

LAFS.3.RL.1.2 - Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

Bibliography

I have listed here some great versions of Aesop's fables and more, that inspired me. I hope you will find these and other fables in your library to share with your students. Enjoy!

The Hare and the Tortoise and other Fables of La Fontaine, translated by Ranjit Bolt, Illustrated by Giselle Potter, Copyright 2006 by Barefoot Books, Cambridge, MA

The Classic Treasury of Aesop's Fables, illustrated by Don Daily, Copyright 1999 by Courage Books an imprint of Running Press, Philadelphia, London

Aesop's Fables: More than 60 Stories, retold by Ann McGovern, Copyright 1963 by Scholastic Press, Inc. New York, NY

The Fox and the Stork, by Gerald McDermott, Copyright 1999 by Harcourt Brace and Company, Green Light Readers, NY

Aesop's Fables by Michael Rosin, illustrated by Talleen Hacikyan, copyright 2013 by Michael Rosin, Published by Tradewinds Press, Vancouver, London

The Fables of Aesop, retold by Frances Barnes-Murphy, illustrated by Rowan Barnes-Murphy, Copyright 1993 by Frances Barnes-Murphy, Published by Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books, New York

Aesop's Fox, retold and illustrated by Aki Sogabe, Copyright 1999 by Aki Sogabe, Browndeer Press, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York

The Rich Man and the Shoemaker: a Fable by La Fontaine, retold and illustrated by Bernadette Watts, Copyright 2002 by Bernadette Watts, published by North-South Books, New York

About the Artist

Katie Adams is a puppeteer and storyteller who loves to perform for children and family audiences. In 2000, Katie started her own company, Make Believe Theater dedicated to entertaining, inspiring and enlightening young audiences. Katie tours to schools, libraries, theaters, museums and festivals.

