

The Fox and the Stork

Fiction

Content domain focus:

- 2b** retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction
- 2d** make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text
- 2h** make comparisons within the text

Text summary

The Fox and the Stork is one of Aesop's many fables. The purpose of fables was to deliver a message or lesson, and animals generally feature as the main characters rather than humans. In fables, use is made of the perceived qualities of certain animals, such as the cunning fox and the wise owl.

In *The Fox and the Stork*, the fox tries to outwit the stork by serving soup in a shallow bowl, but she gets her own back and serves him soup in a tall narrow jug. At the end of the story, the fox slinks away, embarrassed and hungry.

Unit summary

Through the questions, the children explore some of the straightforward information given in the fable and then move on to explore some of the reasons for the characters' behaviour. They make comparisons within the text by considering how the character of Fox has changed and the lesson that he has learned.



Teaching prompts

- Activate the children's prior knowledge of fables. Remind them, if necessary, of fables they have read and heard. Check that they understand the notion of a fable delivering a message or one of the characters learning a lesson.
- Remind the children that when they make inferences, they should try to make links with what they already know, or try thinking about how they would feel or what they would do if they were in the story.

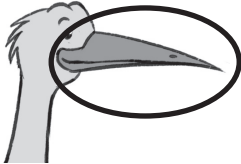
Revisiting the text

Ask the children to:

- create a 'role on the wall' for both the fox and the stork by drawing an outline of the characters. Then add words and phrases that describe their appearance around the *outside* of the outline and words and phrases to describe their characters *inside* the outline. Display these and encourage the children to add to their banks of vocabulary
- work in pairs to dramatise the fable
- create thought or speech bubbles for the stork as she plans how to get her own back on the fox
- read the fable aloud using expression – particularly for the dialogue.

✓ Answers

Links to content domain requirements are in brackets after the answer.

1. A fox and a stork. [2b]
2. delicious [2b]
3.  [2d]
4. The stork was so hurt by the fox's behaviour [2b]
5. He couldn't get his tongue inside the jug./He couldn't reach the soup because of the shape of the jug. [2d]
6. I've got my own back on you. [2d]
7. Accept either 'Yes' or 'No' as long as the explanation supports the answer, e.g. 'Yes' because the stork was hurt by what the fox had done and she wanted to get her own back; or 'No' – just because the fox had played a trick doesn't mean the stork should do the same thing. [2d]
8. Kind because he has made soup specially for the stork. [2d]
9. The fox felt embarrassed. [2d]
10. The fox learned that it wasn't kind to play tricks on/make fun of other people. He learned that he didn't like other people playing tricks on him. [2h]

✓ Assessment

The children will be secure in their understanding if they can find information efficiently and effectively using the clues in the questions, e.g. looking for, and visualising, key words and phrases.

The children can demonstrate that they are able to make inferences by thinking about what they are told about a character, what that character says and does, and by making links with what they think they would do in similar circumstances.

The children are able to make comparisons within the text if they can identify that a character has changed during a story, how the character has changed, and why.

Next steps

Develop the children's scanning skills by giving them brief passages and challenging them to find specific words and phrases. Encourage them to visualise the overall shapes of words and to look for specific spelling patterns, such as double vowels.

Challenge them to carry out speedy searches, e.g. find three nouns; two adjectives; two words starting with a specific letter.

Develop inference by encouraging the children to make connections with their own experiences (actual and experienced through viewing/reading) to help them make sense of what they read and to empathise with characters.

Encourage the children to make comparisons when they read, by plotting a character's behaviour or thoughts on an emotions graph as the story unfolds. In *The Fox and the Stork*, the fox's graph could start by showing a high level of confidence, which decreases and turns into a distinct lack of confidence, or embarrassment, by the end of the story.