

Critical Thinking & Classic Tales

FABLES

REM 452A

A TEACHING RESOURCE FROM...



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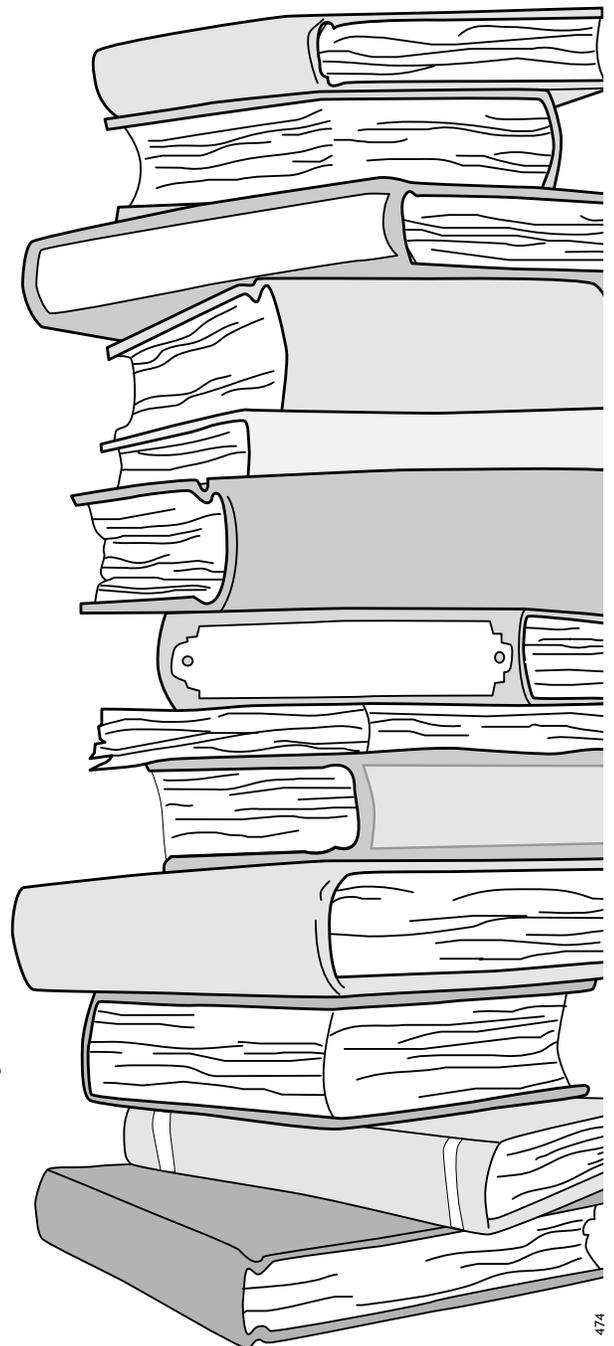
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ABOUT THIS BOOK

A fable is a special kind of folktale. Folktales are stories handed down by word of mouth. Many are eventually written down. Like folktales, fables are found in cultures all over the world, from India to Africa to Eurasia. Aesop's Fables, credited to a Greek slave, are some of the earliest and most famous.

Each fable has a number of interesting characteristics. It always teaches a lesson, or *moral*. Usually the characters are animals that are given human traits, which is an example of *personification*. A fable is *fiction*. It is also *fantasy*—always in the realm of the impossible or improbable. Finally, a fable is a form of *allegory*—a fictional story whose symbolic meaning is more important than its literal meaning.

The twelve fables in this book are each followed by a crossword puzzle that tests literal comprehension, as well as a set of comprehension questions based on the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Since the exercises range from simple to complex, they are ideal for the *differentiated classroom*.

The following is a more detailed explanation of the types of thinking skills involved at each level of Bloom's Taxonomy. It will help you understand why the comprehension and critical thinking questions are labeled and worded as they are. Keep in mind that these categories will overlap and intertwine. You will also find that many skills apply to more than one level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

- **Knowledge:** reading for details, finding facts, recalling information
- **Comprehension:** identifying the main idea, summarizing, determining sequence. Higher level comprehension skills include classifying, identifying cause and effect, making inferences, drawing conclusions, and predicting consequences of behavior.
- **Application:** applying story content to real life or to personal experience, converting abstract content to concrete situations, making use of knowledge learned
- **Analysis:** completing analogies, using logic, identifying the unstated moral of a story, recognizing patterns of behavior, breaking a whole into its component parts, seeing how parts relate to the whole, classifying
- **Synthesis:** predicting outcomes, drawing conclusions, comparing/contrasting, relating knowledge from several different areas, generalizing from given facts, combining parts of a whole in a new and different way
- **Evaluation:** making judgments, forming/expressing personal values, expressing/justifying an opinion, discerning fact from opinion, evaluating facts for accuracy

In addition to fables, crossword puzzles, and questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy, this book features several literature response activities: The Venn Diagram Compare/Contrast Chart, the Story Map, Story Sequence, and a challenge activity called About This Story.

- **Venn Diagram Compare/Contrast Chart:** to help students increase their comprehension of a story by showing similarities and differences between characters (either in the same story or in two different stories) or between stories (for example, comparing or contrasting story plots, morals, or recurring themes)
- **Story Map:** to help the teacher assess the student's ability to recall the main events in the plot that move the story toward its resolution
- **Story Sequence:** to help students understand the most important events in a story and that those events happen in a certain sequence. The "time-order" words will help students organize their thoughts.
- **About This Story:** to help those students who are capable of exploring the elements of a story, such as, characters, plot, setting, theme, recurring themes, personification, author's purpose, etc.

The high-quality **audio CD**, which may be found inside the back cover of this book, follows each story word for word.

You will find the **Chart of Skills** (inside the front cover) to be a valuable teaching tool. It shows precisely which skills are targeted in every story. The chart will enable you to choose a selection according to the skills it covers, or to simply be informed about the skills you will be teaching with each story.

Suggestions For Using This Book:

- Use the stories and follow-up activities with individual students or with small groups of students who are reading at the same level. They make an excellent at-home practice or partner reading activity. Oral discussion of work as it is completed will increase the level of student understanding.
- The audio CD is ideal for use with students who are experiencing reading difficulties. By listening to the story or following along as it is being read, those students will have a greater chance at comprehension success.

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THE CITY MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE

One day a mouse who lived in the big city went to visit his cousin who lived out in the country. The country mouse was very happy that his favorite cousin was on his way. He had not seen him for a long time.

The country mouse worked very hard to clean his den and find lots of good food. There were bits of cheese, bacon, bread, and beans.

The city mouse ate the food which his country cousin had for him. Soon the mouse from the city began to brag about his way of life. He told his cousin that the food in the city was much better. He said there were many different fancy kinds of foods where he came from. He invited the country mouse to come to the city to taste the wonderful food.

The two mice went to a big house in the city. The people who lived there had finished a huge feast. The mice began to taste all the food that was left on the table.



They were eating cakes, pies, jam, roast beef, and other fine food.

Suddenly, the two big dogs that lived in the house came barking into the room and chased the mice away. The country mouse was very afraid and decided to go back to his own home right away.

The country mouse had learned the lesson that it is better to live a simple life where it is safe than to live a fancy life in a dangerous place.

MAIN IDEA—COMPREHENSION

I. Write what this story was mainly about in one or two sentences.

Name _____

THE CITY MOUSE AND
THE COUNTRY MOUSE

READING FOR DETAILS—KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION

1. What did the country mouse do to prepare for the city mouse's visit?

2. What did the city mouse brag about to his cousin the country mouse?

3. Why did the city mouse invite the country mouse to come home with him?

4. What happened as the two mice were eating the fancy city food?

5. What is the moral of this story?

SEQUENCE—COMPREHENSION

6. Number these events in the order they happened:

_____ The country mouse decided to return to the country.

_____ The country mouse went to visit the city mouse.

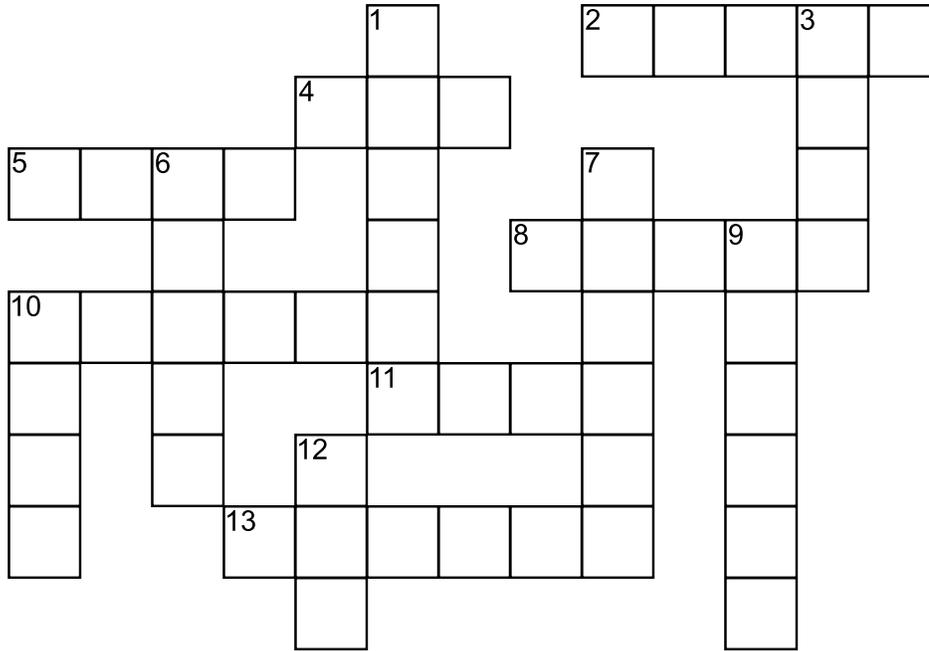
_____ The city mouse visited the country mouse.

ANALYSIS

7. What are the two main settings, or scenes, of this story (where it takes place)?

EVALUATION

8. Do you think the city mouse should have bragged about how much better city food was than country food? Why or why not? (You may use another sheet of paper.)



ACROSS

- 2. The people in the city had just finished a huge ____.
- 4. One of the things the mice ate in the city was ____.
- 5. This story is about two ____.
- 8. The mice went to a big ____ in the city.
- 10. One thing the mice ate in the country was ____.
- 11. Two of these chased the mice away from the table: ____.
- 13. The country mouse learned a ____.

DOWN

- 1. The dogs did this to scare the mice: ____.
- 3. The country mouse felt this way in his den: ____.
- 6. The country mouse made sure his den was ____ for his visitor.
- 7. The country mouse said that the city mouse was his favorite ____.
- 9. The country mouse decided it was better to live a ____ life where it was safe.
- 10. The country mouse went back to the big ____ with the city mouse.
- 12. The country mouse lived in a ____.