Dear Educator,

Welcome to the Center for Puppetry Arts and Red Herring Puppets’ production of The Lion, the Mouse and Other Aesop’s Fables. Founded in 1978, the Center is a cherished cultural and educational resource in Atlanta. We value your patronage and are delighted that you have chosen us as a teaching resource. Your students are in for a big treat!

This study guide was designed to enhance student learning before and after your visit to the Center for Puppetry Arts. The Lion, the Mouse and Other Aesop’s Fables is an original adaptation of selected classic fables by Aesop presented in rhyme with music and songs inspired by the fables’ ancient Greek origins. These timeless stories are simple to understand and address topics relevant to school age children such as bullying, selfishness, competition, ingenuity, and the affirmation that little beings can achieve great things. This imaginative show is told with large table top puppets and is the perfect accompaniment to a thematic unit on fables and folklore, Ancient Greece, animals, character education, storytelling, puppetry or classic children’s literature.

All three areas of programming at the Center for Puppetry Arts (performance, puppet-making workshops and Museum) meet Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards (GA QCCs) and Georgia Bright From the Start Pre-K Program Standards. To access the GA Performance/QCC standards that have been correlated to each programming area according to grade level, click the links below:

To access a complete list of GA Performance/QCC Standards for all grades and subjects, please visit [www.glc.k12.ga.us](http://www.glc.k12.ga.us).

Thank you for choosing the Center for Puppetry Arts for your study trip. We hope that your students’ experience here will live on in their memories for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Alan Louis
Director of Museum and Education Programs
Bibliography


• Thompson, Gare. The Lion and the Mouse. Steck Vaughn, 1998.


Internet Resources

http://www.redherringpuppets.com/
Visit Red Herring Puppets of Asheville, North Carolina, online.

http://www.dusklight.com/aesop/
Read 82 of Aesop's Fables online for free.

http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html
Visit this comprehensive database of international folklore and mythology brought to you by the University of Pittsburgh.

http://www.darsie.net/talesofwonder/
Visit Tales of Wonder, a collection of folk and fairy tales from around the world.

http://www.qesn.meq.gouv.qc.ca/folklore/index.htm
Teachers will like this informative Web site Teaching with Folklore.

http://www.nfws.org.uk/
Are you a fan of foxes? Visit the Web site of the National Fox Welfare Society of Great Britain to learn about foxes and play fox games online.

http://www.arba.net/
Visit the American Rabbit Breeders Association Web site to learn all about rabbits.

http://www.americanfolklore.net/animal-stories.html
Read animal stories at this unique American Folklore Web site.

Read animal stories written by children at Stone Soup.com, a companion Web site to the popular magazine for young writers and artists.

http://oaks.nvg.org/lg4ra2.html
Read folk tales from Norway online at this Web site called Norwegian Folk Tales: The Classics Collection.

“The Lion and the Mouse”
What is a Fable?

A fable is a story that uses made up characters, humor and wit to teach a moral lesson. The goal of a good fable is to improve human conduct without the reader being aware that they are being instructed in such a manner. Fables are constructed of narration, the moral lesson and the individual attributes of the characters involved. Fables are most often simple and to the point without a lot of unnecessary detail.

Who was Aesop?

The exact story of Aesop’s life is a bit of a mystery but most scholars agree that he was born a slave in ancient Greece around 620 B.C. He was a clever man always making up stories that helped people understand how to get along with each other. His second master gave him liberty as a reward for his learning and his wit. As a free man, Aesop took an active interest in public affairs and traveled throughout the republics of Greece engaging in conversation with philosophers, politicians, wise men, and royalty. He settled in Sardis and earned a position of high renown as an ambassador to the monarch Croesus. In his new post, Aesop visited many Greek cities in order to reconcile the citizens with the administration. To do this he often narrated his wise fables.

During one of his missions to Delphi he was to distribute a large sum of gold among the citizens. He found the people so greedy and rude that he sent the money back. In anger, they executed him as a public criminal. They were strongly reproached by the monarch until they made a public apology. “The blood of Aesop” became a widespread saying that meant wrong deeds would be punished. A statue of Aesop was erected in Athens to honor his memory.

What are Aesop’s Fables?

Aesop is credited with some 400 fables. Not all of these were actually written by Aesop himself. Some date back to an earlier time and many were composed after his death – some by Babrias, a Greek writer who lived some time between 250 B.C. and 235 A.D., and some by monks and scholars during the Middle Ages. They all bear his name because it was Aesop who composed such a large number of fables and it was he who established and refined the form. Planudes, a monk of Constantinople made a collection of about 150 fables which gained attention among learned circles. At the beginning of the Italian Renaissance when scholars were rediscovering classical authors, Aesop’s Fables enjoyed a revival. Planudes’ collection was one of the first books to be circulated with the invention of the printing press (along with the Bible) and appeared in the English language as early as 1485. In 1546 a new addition appeared with additional stories. In 1610 “Mythologia Aesopica” appeared with over two hundred new fables and quickly spread throughout the world with translations in many languages. The stories of Aesop are very much alive today and have become a standard in moral education worldwide.
Style of Puppetry

The design concept for the puppets in this show began with a phone call from Morgen Cobb (age 8), a student of Red Herring Puppets founder Lisa Sturz. He invited her to see “Dante,” a puppet he had made from cardboard tubes and old clothes. Morgen’s puppet creation was manipulated by inserting some fingers in the top of two long tubes which extended up to the puppet’s head. Morgen and Lisa played with the table top puppet to find out how it moved and what its limitations were. Lisa modified Morgen’s idea to withstand the rigors of live performance, increase the movement vocabulary, and add a Greek feel. She used this style for this production because the tubes are similar to the elegant columns used in Greek architecture. She extended the idea into the set as well. The result is a simple folk art style that young audiences can understand and create themselves.

Adaptation by Red Herring Puppets

Lisa Sturz, Artistic Director of Red Herring Puppets has created an original rhymed version of Aesop’s Fables with music and song inspired by its ancient Greek origins. She read several hundred stories and selected those that addressed issues relevant to school age children such as bullying, selfishness, competition, ingenuity and the affirmation that little creatures can achieve great things. She chose fables with animals as the subject to create a forest community removed from gender, race, nationality and social strata. The script has many references to classical Greek heroes and places to add texture and increase the educational value. Each of the characters was given a Greek name that echoes their earlier counterpart.

Original Music by Cathy Haas Riley

Cathy Haas Riley has created “themes” for each animal in the forest quite like the musical structure of Sergei Prokofiev’s Peter and the Wolf (1936). Cathy researched ancient Greek music and its elegant modal harmonies. She selected a different mode for each of the characters based on their character traits and the actions in the show. The music was recorded at Ashman Studios. Many “sampled” sounds were used to enhance the final score.
The Lion and the Mouse
Once when a Lion was asleep a little Mouse began running up and down upon him; this soon awakened the Lion, who placed his huge paw upon him, and opened his big jaws to swallow him. “Pardon, O King,” cried the little Mouse: “forgive me this time, I shall never forget it: who knows but what I may be able to do for you one of these days?” The Lion was so tickled at the idea of the Mouse being able to help him that he lifted up his paw and let him go. Some time after the Lion was caught in a trap, and the hunters who desired to carry him alive to the King, tied him to a tree while they went in search of a wagon to carry him on. Just then the little Mouse happened to pass by, and seeing the sad plight in which the Lion was, went up to him and soon gnawed away the ropes that bound the King of the Beasts. “Was I not right?” said the little Mouse.

Moral: Little friends may prove great friends.

The Tortoise and the Hare
The Hare was once boasting of his speed before the other animals. “I have never yet been beaten,” said he, “when I put forth my full speed. I challenge any one here to race with me.”

The Tortoise said quietly, “I accept your challenge.”

“That is a good joke,” said the Hare, “I could dance round you all the way.”

“Keep your boasting till you’ve beaten me,” answered the Tortoise. “Shall we race?”

So a course was fixed and a start was made. The Hare darted almost out of sight at once, but soon stopped and, to show his contempt for the Tortoise, lay down to have a nap. The Tortoise plodded on and plodded on, and when the Hare awoke from his nap, he saw the Tortoise just near the winning-post and could not run up in time to save the race.

Moral: Slow and steady wins the race.

The Owl and the Grasshopper
An owl who was sitting in a hollow tree, dozing away a summer’s afternoon, was very much disturbed by a rogue of a Grasshopper singing in the grass beneath. Far from keeping quiet, or moving away at the request of the Owl, the Grasshopper sang all the more, and called her an old blinker that only came out at night when honest people were in bed.

The Owl waited in silence for a time, and then artfully addressed the Grasshopper as follows: “Well, my dear, if one can not be allowed to sleep, it is something to be kept awake by such a pleasant voice. And now I think of it, I have a bottle of delicious nectar. If you will come up, you shall have a drop.” The silly Grasshopper, came hopping up to the owl, who at once caught and killed him, and finished her nap in comfort.

Moral: Flattery is not a proof of admiration.
The Fox and the Crow
A Fox once saw a Crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree. "That's for me, as I am a Fox," said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree. "Good-day, Mistress Crow," he cried. "How well you are looking today: how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds." The Crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by Master Fox. "That will do," said he. "That was all I wanted. In exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future:

Moral: Do not trust flatterers.

The Crow and the Pitcher
A Crow, half-dead with thirst, came upon a Pitcher which had once been full of water; but when the Crow put its beak into the mouth of the Pitcher he found that only very little water was left in it, and that he could not reach far enough down to get at it. He tried, and he tried, but at last had to give up in despair. Then a thought came to him, and he took a pebble and dropped it into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped it into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. At last, at last, he saw the water mount up near him, and after casting in a few more pebbles he was able to quench his thirst and save his life.

Moral: Necessity is the mother of invention.

The Stork and the Fox
At one time the Fox and the Stork were on visiting terms and seemed very good friends. So the Fox invited the Stork to dinner, and for a joke put nothing before her but some soup in a very shallow dish. This the Fox could easily lap up, but the Stork could only wet the end of her long bill in it, and left the meal as hungry as when she began. "I am sorry," said the Fox, "the soup is not to your liking."

"Pray do not apologize," said the Stork. "I hope you will return this visit, and come and dine with me soon." So a day was appointed when the Fox should visit the Stork; but when they were seated at the table all that was for their dinner was contained in a very long-necked jar with a narrow mouth, in which the Fox could not insert his snout, so all he could manage to do was to lick the outside of the jar.

Moral: Treat others as you would like to be treated.
Learning Activities

P-K & K: Making Connections between Spoken Word and Print: Create a Language Experience Chart

Georgia Bright from the Start Pre-K Content Standards covered: Language and Literacy Development: LD 3 c. (Connects new vocabulary with prior educational experiences). Georgia Performance Standards covered: Kindergarten, English/Language Arts (Concepts of Print): ELARI a,b,c,d,e,f; (Comprehension): ELAKR6 h; (Phonics): ELAKR3 a,b,c,d,e.

Objective: After attending a performance of The Lion, the Mouse and Other Aesop’s Fables at the Center for Puppetry Arts, students will dictate their observations to the teacher who will record what they say on chart paper. Then the students will read the written version of what was spoken, connecting speech and writing.

Materials: Chart paper and a black magic marker for the teacher.

Procedure:

1. Gather students around an easel with a pad of chart paper and a black magic marker. Label the paper “Our Trip to the Center for Puppetry Arts.”
2. Ask students, one at a time to recall one thing that they remember from the performance of The Lion, the Mouse and Other Aesop’s Fables at the Center for Puppetry Arts, or ask each child to dictate what he or she liked best about the show.
3. Record what the students say preceded by their names: Joshua said, “My favorite part was____” or Latisha said, “I liked the________.” This will demonstrate to the children that 1) anything that can be expressed orally can be written in words and 2) human speech in print is written using quotation marks.
4. After you have recorded all of the comments, read the chart from beginning to end with your class.

Assessment: Keep the Language Experience Chart posted in the room. Re-read the chart after one month has passed.

“The Tortoise and the Hare”
Learning Activities

1st & 2nd Grade: Create a Favorite Fables Bar Graph

Georgia Performance Standards covered: Grade 1, Mathematics (Process Standards): M1P5 a,c; (Data Analysis and Probability): M1D1 a,b. **Grade 2**, Mathematics (Process Standards): M2P3 a,b,c,d; (Data Analysis and Probability): M2D1 a,b.

**Objective:** Students will choose their favorite fable from three possible choices featured in *The Lion, the Mouse & Other Aesop’s Fables* to construct a class bar graph.

**Materials:** Aesop’s Fables images (see reproducible sheet), a marker for the teacher, crayons or markers for students, tape chart paper.

**Procedure:**

1. Have students recall the following fables from their visit to the Center for Puppetry Arts: *The Fox and the Crow, The Tortoise and the Hare and The Lion and the Mouse*. To do this activity before your field trip, read each of the fables to your students (see Bibliography section).

2. Make a copy of the reproducible sheet for each student. Have students color each picture and cut them out.

3. Post a sheet or two of chart paper on the board or (on an easel) in the front of the classroom. Divide the paper into three rows (horizontal graph) or columns (vertical graph). Title your graph “Our Favorite Fables” and label each row or column with the title of a fable.

4. Ask students to choose one of the three illustrations that represents their favorite fable and put a piece of tape on the back of it. Ask each student to come up to the graph with her/his illustration and place it in the corresponding row or column. Adults in the room may also participate.

5. When everyone has placed her/his illustrations on the graph, ask students if they can tell just by looking at the bar graph which of the three stories was the most popular, the second most popular and the least popular. Are any two bars on the graph equivalent? Encourage students to use the following comparison terms: equal, same as, fewer than, more than, etc.

6. Ask individual students to count the number of illustrations in each row or column, or do this together as a class. Record the numbers for each bar on the graph.

7. Display bar graph in classroom or hallway.

**Assessment:** Monitor student participation. Ask individual students to interpret the results of this and other graphs. Keep bar graph posted in the classroom.
The Tortoise and the Hare

The Lion and the Mouse

The Fox and the Crow
Learning Activities

3rd & 4th Grade: Animal Research: Discovering the Difference between Rabbits and Hares


Objective: Students will consult a variety of sources to report on the similarities and differences between rabbits and hares.

Materials: Books from a public library or school media center, computers with Internet access, pencils and paper (or word processing software), crayons and markers.

Procedure:

1. Many people use the words “rabbit” and “hare” interchangeably, but there are important biological differences between the two. Survey your students to find out their prior knowledge of rabbits and hares. View a summary here: http://www.madsci.org/posts/archives/dec99/946002744.Zo.r.html

2. Ask students to use any available reference material they can find to gather information on how rabbits and hares are alike and different. Ask them to identify and report on at least five differences.

3. Have students employ the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing) to compose a finished report with illustrations to share with a class of younger students to teach them the difference between rabbits and hares.

Assessment: Check to see if students have followed the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing. Save finished reports for student writing portfolios. Have them quiz the younger students on the difference between rabbits and hares to assess how effective their reports were in transmitting information.

The puppets from The Lion, the Mouse and Other Aesop's Fables
Learning Activities

5th and 6th Grade: Fox Facts - A Word Search Puzzle

Georgia Performance Standards covered: Grade 5, English/Language Arts (Writing): ELA5W1, ELA5W2. Georgia Performance Standards covered: Grade 6, English/Language Arts (ELA), Writing: ELA6W1, ELA6W2.

Objective: Students will read a paragraph about foxes and complete a word search puzzle featuring vocabulary words from the article.

Materials: Copies of word search puzzle handout, pencils or highlighters.

Procedure:

1. Have students read the paragraph about foxes at the bottom of the word search puzzle handout paying special attention to the words in bold face. Students will encounter some unfamiliar words, but most words are explained in the reading.
2. After they read the paragraph, ask them to locate the bolded words in the puzzle. Students should circle or highlight each word as they find it. Words are hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

Assessment: Check for completion of activity and retention of information. Remediate content from article if necessary.

The Center for Puppetry Arts is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization and is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts; the Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly (GCA is a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts); and contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations. Major funding for the Center is provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners under the guidance of the Fulton County Arts Council. Major support is provided by the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs. The Center for Puppetry Arts is a participant in the New Generations Program, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation/The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and administered by Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American Theatre. The Center is a constituent of TCG and member of the Atlanta Coalition of Performing Arts. The Center also serves as headquarters of UNIMA-USA.
Fox Facts Word Search Puzzle

Directions: Read the paragraph below about foxes. Locate all 17 bolded words in the puzzle. Circle or highlight each word as you find it. Words are hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backward.

Foxes are beautiful and fascinating creatures. The five most common types of foxes in North America are Gray Foxes, Red Foxes, Arctic Foxes, Kit Foxes and Swift Foxes. Foxes are not large animals. They are a little larger than the average housecat. Foxes have pointy muzzles, large ears, long thin bodies, long legs and long bushy tails. Foxes are good hunters. They can run fast – about 35 miles per hour. They are also able to swim. Gray Foxes can even climb trees! A fox’s home is called a den. A group of foxes is called a skulk. A male fox is known as a dog, while a female fox is called a vixen. Baby foxes are known as cubs, pups or kits. An average litter is four kits. Foxes have a keen sense of hearing but very poor eyesight. Foxes are omnivorous. They eat meat (like rabbits or chickens), but they also eat nuts, berries, fruits and grains. Like most wild animals, foxes don’t make good pets. If you see a fox, don’t try to pet it; just admire it from a distance.
Study Guide Feedback Form

The following questions are intended for the teachers and group leaders who make use of the Center for Puppetry Arts’ study guides.

1. In what grade are your students?

2. Which show did you see? When?

3. Was this your first time at the Center?

4. Was this the first time you used a Study Guide?

5. Did you download/use the guide before or after your field trip?

6. Did you find the bibliography useful? If so, how?

7. Did you find the list of online resources useful? If so, how?

8. Did you reproduce the activity sheet for your grade?

9. Additional information and/or comments:

Please fax back to the Center for Puppetry Arts at 404.873.9907. Your feedback will help us to better meet your needs. Thank you for your help!