

Grade 3 Playlist: Recount Stories

Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY RL.3.2:

- Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures.

Welcome

Not all stories are written down. Some stories are told aloud and passed along by word of mouth. Many of these stories have been handed down from parents to children. The stories might tell about people and places around the world. Today people still retell stories from countries around the world.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- recount fables, folktales, and myths.
- describe how stories are linked to the cultures they come from.

Review

Key Terms

- A **fable** is a short story that teaches a lesson, or moral. It may have magical elements or animals with human traits.
- A **folktale** is a story usually passed by word of mouth. Folktales come from a certain culture or country.
- A **myth** is a traditional story that describes the early history of a culture. Myths often use magic to explain laws of nature that people once did not understand.
- **Culture** describes the customs and traditions of a nation or group of people.
- A **moral** is a lesson to show right from wrong.

Exploring the Standard

When listening to and retelling myths, fables, and folktales, readers should try to understand why each story was important to the culture it came from.

A Closer Look: Stories, Culture, and History

Many myths, fables, and folktales were made up long ago. They were made before people knew much about science. That is why many myths and folktales try to explain things in nature by using magic or animals. For example, a folktale might explain why we have day and night or why the seasons change. It might explain why a leopard has spots or a skunk has a stripe.



Some folktales give hints about what is important in a culture. They might tell the reader or listener about the importance of respecting nature or being kind to others. Some animal characters might display traits that humans have.

Example 1

This folktale from South Africa, explains why the jackal has a stripe down its body. The story states that it got the stripe because it tried to carry the Sun on its back. The story uses natural features such as the sun's heat to explain other parts of nature, such as the appearance of animals.

Why Has Jackal a Long Stripe On His Back?

¹The Sun, it is said, was one day on earth, and the men who were travelling saw him sitting by the wayside, but passed him without notice. Jackal, however, who came after them, and saw him also sitting, went to him and said, "Such a fine little child is left behind by the men." He then took Sun up, and put it into his awa-skin (on his back). When it burnt him, he said, "Get down," and shook himself; but Sun stuck fast to his back, and burnt Jackal's back black from that day.

The reader can understand from the characters and events that the story did not really happen. However, the story helps readers understand the culture. Readers can guess that people in this culture lived in an area where jackals were common. Readers also can guess that people in this culture saw the Sun and the jackal as having human qualities.

Watch!

This video tells a Japanese folktale called *The Stonecutter*. What do the characters and setting of this story show about ancient Japanese culture?

- <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/vtl07.la.rv.genre.stonecutt/the-stonecutter/#.Wp2NSJPwaIM>

A Closer Look: Recounting Stories

Recounting a fable, myth, or folktale means telling the story to others. In a way, this means passing it along, much like storytellers do. One of the most famous storytellers is a Greek man named Aesop. He told so many stories that people are not even sure if he was a real person. The stories were retold and passed on for centuries. They have become a collection of famous tales for children called Aesop's fables.



Example 2

Read one of Aesop's fables, "The Ant and the Grasshopper."

¹One fine day in winter some Ants were busy drying their store of corn, which had got rather damp during a long spell of rain. Presently up came a Grasshopper and begged them to spare her a few grains, "For," she said, "I'm simply starving." The Ants stopped work for a moment, though this was against their principles. "May we ask," said they, "what you were doing with yourself all last summer? Why didn't you collect a store of food for the winter?" "The fact is," replied the Grasshopper, "I was so busy singing that I hadn't the time." "If you spent the summer singing," replied the Ants, "you can't do better than spend the winter dancing." And they chuckled and went on with their work.

There are several ways to recount, or retell, a story. One way is to summarize it:

In the story, the ants were busy preparing for winter, and they did not stop to play or waste time. They were serious about their task because they knew they would not be able to find food during the long, cold winter. The grasshopper was not thinking about the future and spent his time singing and having fun. When winter came, the grasshopper was no longer happy and singing because he did not have the food he needed. The lesson of the story is to be prepared.

Another way to retell the story is to take on the role of the storyteller. A storyteller tells the events as if they really happened:

The ants were busy collecting food for winter. They worked all day and never rested. At the same time, Grasshopper sang and danced, never worrying about a thing. When the cold winter finally came, the ants were snug and warm, with a great supply of food for everyone. Grasshopper came to their door, cold and hungry. "Do you have any food for me?" he asked. The ants laughed and scolded the Grasshopper. They told him that if he spent the summer singing he can expect to spend the winter dancing to beg for food.

Hint!

When retelling a tale, focus on the main idea and include just some of the best and most interesting details. These details will help the reader or listener understand the characters' special traits.

Watch!

Watch the video of "The Ant and the Grasshopper." How is it different from the version of the story above?

- http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/english/aesops_fables/9-16/ant_and_grasshopper

Listen!

Listen to the fable *Why Tiger and Stag Fear Each Other*. Retell the main parts of the fable to a partner.

- <https://goo.gl/u3E2EX>



Listen!

Listen to some of Aesop's most popular fables. Then retell some of the tales to a partner.

- <https://librivox.org/aesops-fables-volume-1-fables-1-25/>

Applying the Standard

Think of a tale you know well, such as "Cinderella," or "Goldilocks and Three Bears." Retell the story to a partner using gestures and sounds to make the story more interesting for the listener.

Watch!

Watch this video about Anansi, a trickster character in many West African folktales. The story does not have words. Watch what is happening carefully and then retell the story using words.

- <https://www.opened.com/video/anansi-stories-on-vimeo/74567>



Self-Check: RL.3.2

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Excerpt from “Why the Tail of the Fox Has a White Tip”

By: Mabel Powers

- 1 “I must have a boy to watch my sheep and my cows,” thought an old woman, and so she went out to look for a boy. She looked first in the fields and then in the forest, but nowhere could she find a boy. As she was walking down the path to her home, she met a bear.
- 2 “Where are you going?” asked the bear.
- 3 “I am looking for a boy to watch my cows and my sheep,” she answered.
- 4 “Will you have me?”
- 5 “Yes, if you know how to call my animals gently.”
- 6 “Ugh, ugh,” called the bear. He tried to call softly, but he had always growled before, and now he could do nothing but growl.
- 7 “No, no,” said the old woman, “your voice is too loud. Every cow in the field would run, and every sheep would hide, if you should growl like that. I will not have you.”
- 8 Then the old woman went on till she met a wolf.
- 9 “Where are you going, grandmother?” he asked.
- 10 “I am looking for a boy to watch my cows and my sheep,” she answered.
- 11 “Will you have me?” asked the wolf.
- 12 “Yes,” she said, “if you know how to call my animals gently.”
- 13 “Ho-y, ho-y,” called the wolf.
- 14 “Your voice is too high,” said the old woman. “My cows and my sheep would tremble whenever they heard it. I will not have you.”
- 15 Then the old woman went on till she met a fox.
- 16 “I am so glad to meet you,” said the fox. “Where are you going this bright morning?”
- 17 “I am going home now,” she said, “for I cannot find a boy to watch my cows and my sheep. The bear growls and the wolf calls in too high a voice. I do not know what I can do, for I am too old to watch cows and sheep.”



- 18 “Oh, no,” said the cunning fox, “you are not old, but any one as beautiful as you must not watch sheep in the fields. I shall be very glad to do the work for you if you will let me.”
- 19 “I know that my sheep will like you,” said she.
- 20 “And I know that I shall like them dearly,” said the fox.
- 21 “Can you call them gently, Mr. Fox?” she asked.
- 22 “Del-dal-halow, del-dal-halow,” called the fox, in so gentle a voice that it was like a whisper.
- 23 “That is good, Mr. Fox,” said the old woman. “Come home with me, and I will take you to the fields where my animals go.”
- 24 Each day one of the cows or one of the sheep was gone when the fox came home at night. “Mr. Fox, where is my cow?” the old woman would ask, or, “Mr. Fox, where is my sheep?” and the fox would answer with a sorrowful look, “The bear came out of the woods, and he has eaten it,” or, “The wolf came running through the fields, and he has eaten it.”
- 25 The old woman was sorry to lose her sheep and her cows, but she thought, “Mr. Fox must be even more sorry than I. I will go out to the field and carry him a drink of cream.”
- 26 She went to the field, and there stood the fox with the body of a sheep, for it was he who had killed and eaten every one that was gone. When he saw the old woman coming, he started to run away.
- 27 “You cruel, cunning fox!” she cried.
- 28 She had nothing to throw at him but the cream, so she threw that. It struck the tip of his tail, and from that day to this, the tip of the fox’s tail has been as white as cream.



1. Select the correct option for each sentence.

I. This story could be considered a folktale.

- Yes
- No

II. This story explains why an animal has a specific characteristic.

- Yes
- No

III. One moral of this story is:

- Never trust a fox.
- Bears and wolves are more trustworthy than foxes.
- Old women cannot take care of animals well.
- Be careful about who you trust with your loved ones.

2. Which sentence **best** explains how a moral of the story is conveyed through details?

- A. The old woman's decision to accept the fox's help because he compliments her and its outcome teaches the following moral: do not be fooled by compliments.
- B. The description of the fox as a cunning animal teaches the following moral: all animals are cunning creatures.
- C. The description of the fox eating the sheep and its outcome teaches the following moral: people cannot be tricked.
- D. The old woman's decision to look for a boy to watch her cows and sheep teaches the following moral: help is always available to those who need it.



Read the passage. Then answer the question.

Title: "The Two Millers"

Author: Augusta Stevenson

SCENE I

TIME: morning.

PLACE: Peter's mill.

PETER, THE STUPID MILLER.

PETER'S WIFE.

THE FOX.

[The FOX enters. He knocks at the mill door. PETER opens the door and comes out. He is covered with meal.]

1 FOX. Good-morning, Peter.

2 PETER. What do you want, sir?

3 FOX. I am hungry. I want to eat Jacob's chickens.

4 PETER. Ah, that is fine! I do not like Jacob. Do you know that?

5 FOX. Oh, yes, I know! Now will you help me to get his chickens?

6 PETER. What can I do?

7 FOX. Put meal on me, till I am white. Then the chickens will think I am a miller.

8 PETER. Ah, that is fine! I will get meal. Wait here.

[Peter enters the mill.]

9 FOX. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

10 PETER. Now I will make you white. You shall look just like a miller.

(He covers the Fox with meal.)

Ha, ha! Jacob's chickens will think you are Jacob. Now go! Go and eat Jacob's chickens.

(The Fox goes.)

Ah, this is fine! I do not like Jacob. I do not like Jacob's chickens. I am glad the fox will eat them. Ha, ha, ha!

[Peter enters the mill. Soon his WIFE comes running.]

11 WIFE. Peter! Peter! Come out! Come out! Peter!

[PETER comes running from the mill.]



- 12 PETER. What is it? What is it?
- 13 WIFE. The fox has killed your chickens!
- 14 PETER. Oh, no! He has killed Jacob's chickens, dear wife. Ha, ha, ha!
- 15 WIFE. No, no! He has killed your chickens! They lie there on the grass. Look and you will see them.
- [Peter runs to the fence and looks over.]
- 16 PETER. What is this? What is this? Ah, my pretty chickens! My pretty chickens!
- [He weeps bitterly.]

SCENE II

TIME: the next day.

PLACE: Jacob's mill.

JACOB, THE WISE MILLER.

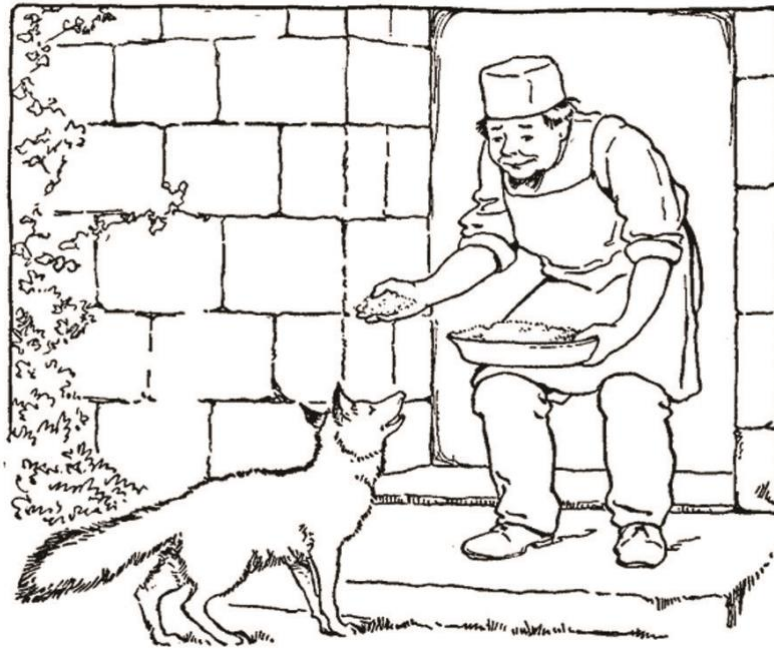
THE FOX.

[The FOX enters. He knocks at the mill door. JACOB opens the door and comes out. He is covered with meal.]

- 17 FOX. Good-morning, Jacob.
- 18 JACOB. What do you want, sir?
- 19 FOX. I am hungry. I want to eat Peter's chickens.
- 20 JACOB. Why do you come to me?
- 21 FOX. You do not like Peter.
- 22 JACOB. Oh, you know that, do you?
- 23 FOX. Oh, yes, I know! Now will you help me to get his chickens?
- 24 JACOB. What can I do?
- 25 FOX. Put meal on me, till I am white. Then the chickens will think I am a miller.
- 26 JACOB. Ah, that is fine! Wait here.
- [He enters the mill.]



- 27 FOX. He has gone for meal! Ha, ha, ha, ha!
- [JACOB comes out with a club.]
- 28 JACOB. Now go! Go, sir!
- 29 FOX. Why, what is this? I said I would eat Peter's chickens.
- 30 JACOB. Yes, but you mean to eat mine. Now go! Go, or I will beat you!
- [The Fox runs quickly away.]



3. Which **two** sentences are central messages from “The Two Millers?”
- A. Never rely on animals.
 - B. Revenge is never the answer.
 - C. Millers are hard workers.
 - D. Be careful of trusting strangers.
 - E. It is easy to make a fox look like a miller.