

# Aesop

## encore



### Séries C

The Lark and Her Young Ones

The Frog and the Ox

The Bundle of Sticks

The North Wind and the Sun

The Bat, the Birds and the Beasts

Wanda's Versions



## Teacher's Notes

Wanda loves words! Sometimes she goes a bit overboard but she has a great time doing it. Her scripts add an element of linguistic “play” to the play.

Students will enjoy dressing up and playing the roles themselves or staying behind the scenes to present the stories with puppets.

The scripts can also be used as materials for:

- vocabulary extension
- studying common expressions / figures of speech  
similies, metaphors
- devices -alliteration, personification, humour, exaggeration
- *over-use of clichés etc.*
- discussions/debates over the morals
- examples for student writing  
(give students one of the simple ESL versions of a fable to compare to Wanda's version; then challenge students rewrite one of the other fables)
- integrate the fables into your music program by having students compose their own music for the chants, create theme melodies for each character or use orff instruments to create background music and sound effects for the play
- integrate the stories into a science study of insects etc. - how has Aesop drawn upon the true characteristics of the natural world for his stories ..

Note:

As with the original fables, the character's generic animal name becomes his personal name, therefore, the articles “a’ and “the” are not always used when the character is mentioned by the narrator or when he is addressed by another character.

e.g. NARRATOR: One day, *Grasshopper* was out for his usual hop ....

ANT: Not now *Grasshopper*. I have to collect

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## THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES

NARRATOR

Lovely Lark is nesting in a field of spring wheat. The tall swaying stalks have been keeping her babies safe while they grow into fine young birds.

LARK  
*(Cooing proudly)*

Ah! my beautiful little fledglings are almost adults.  
Their plumage is finally full and ready for flight.

NARRATOR

Farmer strolls into the field and proudly surveys his golden grain.

FARMER  
*(Grunting to himself)*

My wheat is ripe and ready to gather. Such a lot of work!  
I know, I'll get my neighbours to help me harvest this huge crop.

LITTLE BIRD #1  
*(Chirping frantically)*

Mama! Mama! We'd better move out of here, fast or we'll be chopped and left for chaff!

LARK  
*(Warbling soothingly)*

Relax, it's not urgent yet, my son. His friends won't be arriving any time soon.

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NARRATOR

In a few days, Farmer strides into his unharvested field once again.

FARMER  
*(Sighing in resignation)*

Well, the wheat is still perfect today, but soon it'll be past its prime!  
It's now or never, so tomorrow I had better harvest the grain myself!

NARRATOR

Hearing the resolute tone in Farmer's voice, Lark calls to her youngsters.

LARK

Hop to it, my precious little ones. Now is the time for action!

LITTLE BIRD #2  
*(Peeping timidly)*

Why the rush Mama? What's different this time?

LARK

Farmer isn't waiting on someone else to do his work.  
He has decided to do the job himself!

LITTLE BIRD #3  
*(Twittering excitedly, taking charge)*

No time to waste. C'mon everyone, take flight! Take flight!

NARRATOR

The moral of the story: Self-help is the best help.

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## THE FROG AND THE OX

NARRATOR

Squatting in the reeds at the edge of a still pond, the grand-daddy of all bullfrogs is just about to doze off for his afternoon nap. He slowly opens one eye, then the other as his youngest frog son bounds up to him, barely controlling his long fly-paper tongue.

LITTLE FROG  
*(Ribbiting excitedly)*

Oh Daddy, there is a horrendously huge monster up on the hill! He's a mountainous fur-covered lump with two tapering horns on his head, a bug-swatter on the rear and his feet are frog-squashing split hooves!

NARRATOR

Lumpy, leather-skinned old Bullfrog let his vanity show as he answered his unworldly young son.

BULLFROG  
*(Croaking arrogantly)*

Tsk, tsk, my child, it is merely the Farmer's Ox. That matted creature is somewhat larger than I only when I've let out all my air to bathe in the sun.

LITTLE FROG

But, Daddy! He is a lumbering behemoth!

BULLFROG

Watch me! I can be a moth as big as he is!

NARRATOR

Bullfrog sucks in two big gulps of air and inflates himself to twice his size.

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BULLFROG  
*(Trying not to exhale)*

Is Ox as big as I am?

LITTLE FROG

You'll have to get bigger than that, Daddy.

NARRATOR

Bullfrog inhales again, drawing in enough air to become three times his normal size.  
Through pursed lips, he asks the same question.

BULLFROG

Is Ox as big as I am?

LITTLE FROG

You'll have to get much bigger than that , Daddy.

NARRATOR

Once more bulging Bullfrog draws in as much air as possible,  
barely managing to ask the question once more.

BULLFROG

..... Ox ..... big ..... as... I..?

NARRATOR

With his last word, ballooned Bullfrog burst!  
The suddenly liberated air from the deflated ego whooshed  
the dismayed little Frog to the ground.

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LITTLE FROG

Oh Daddy, what a depressing sight! You went from fat to flat!

NARRATOR

The moral of the story: Self-conceit may lead to self-destruction.

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## THE BUNDLE OF STICKS

NARRATOR

Lying on his deathbed, Father calls his children to him.  
He has one last life lesson to teach.

FATHER  
*(Weakly)*

Come here, my children.  
I have one more bit of advice to give before I must leave you.

SONS  
*(Respectfully)*

We're here, Father, ready to listen and learn.

FATHER

My good Sons, I offer you this bundle of sticks.

ELDEST SON

Father, a common bundle of sticks is of no importance to us!

FATHER

Perhaps. One of you pick up the bundle and break it for for me.

ELDEST SON

Yes, Father. I can surely do that simple task for you.

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NARRATOR

The muscular boy grasps the collection of sticks and attempts to bend and break the stubborn bundle.

ELDEST SON  
*(Ashamed)*

Sorry, Father, I am unable to do as you ask.  
Even using all my might, I can't do it. It's impossible!

SECOND SON

I'm sure I can do it. Let me break the bundle!  
*(Grunts with the effort, gives up in disgust)*

YOUNGEST SON

Maybe I have the right technique. Give me a turn!  
*(Unable to lift the bundle he tries a karate chop)*

NARRATOR

All three boys are distressed because they cannot fulfill this one simple request made by Father.

FATHER

All of you failed to do the job on your own.  
Now, untie the bundle and each of you take a single stick.

NARRATOR

The three obedient youngsters followed Father's instructions once more.

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FATHER  
*(confidently)*

Now, break the sticks!

NARRATOR

To their great surprise and relief, each boy snaps his stick with ease.

SONS

Incredible! That way is really easy!

FATHER

Remember, trying to accomplish something on your own can be difficult.  
Working together, my Sons, you are powerful!

NARRATOR

Moral of the story: Unity gives strength.

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## THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN

NARRATOR

Powerful North Wind tried to chill blazing Sun's heated words  
as they debated which of them was strongest.

NORTH WIND  
(Blustering)

Without a doubt, I am mightier than you!

SUN  
(Beaming)

Not so, my friend, my warming rays are more potent than your most Arctic blasts!

NORTH WIND

We need a test to prove ourselves! Look, there's a traveler.  
Whichever one of us can force him to take off his coat  
wins the argument.

SUN

Agreed. I will surely be able to encourage him to remove his coat.  
But please, you go first. Give it your best gust!

NARRATOR

Wind bombards the traveler with his iciest blasts of air.

TRAVELER

Good grief! This frigid crosswind is very nasty!

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NARRATOR

The unfortunate man shudders and draws his coat lapels up to his chin  
in an effort to fend off hostile North Wind .

NORTH WIND  
*(Disgusted)*

I don't believe it! It's not working! I guess I blew it.  
O.K. Sun, it's your turn. Give it your best burn!

SUN  
*(Chilled by the thought)*

I don't think I'll have to go as far as a burn!

NARRATOR

The Sun smiles with gentle rays on the shivering traveler below him.

TRAVELER

What odd weather! Now it's so warm I don't even need my coat!.

NARRATOR

Relieved, the traveler happily removes his coat.

NORTH WIND

Well Sun, I'm convinced. You have proven your strength!

NARRATOR

The moral of the story: Persuasion works better than force.

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## THE BAT, THE BIRDS AND THE BEASTS

NARRATOR

The Birds, masters of the air, and the Beasts, rulers of the land,  
were on the brink of a terrible war.

BIRDS

Squawk! Squawk!  
Bow down you lowly Beasts, prowlers of the earth below!

BEASTS

Grrr! Grrr!  
Don't set foot on our terrain you haughty high-fliers!

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, Bat swings like a pendulum in confusion over  
which group should receive his allegiance.

BAT

*(Flitting back and forth chanting)*

What to do, what to do?  
Birds or Beasts  
A choice of two.

BIRDS

Squawk! Squawk!  
Don't be blind, Bat. You are a winged creature.  
Can't you see you are one of us?

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BAT

What to do, what to do?  
I think I'm a Beast.  
I'm different from you!

BEASTS

Grrr! Grrr!  
Bite the bullet Bat. Get your teeth into our cause!  
Can't you see you are one of us?

BAT

What to do, what to do?  
I think I'm a Bird.  
I'm different from you!

NARRATOR

During the early stages of the war, the Birds appear to have the advantage.

BAT

What to do, what to do?  
You Birds look good  
I'm with you!

NARRATOR

Soon the tide changes and the Beasts seem to be routing the Birds.

BAT

What to do, what to do?  
You Beats look good  
I'm with you!

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NARRATOR

Fortunately, the combatants see that war is futile and make peace with one another.

BAT

Now I know what to do.  
You Birds are great  
I'm with you!

BIRDS

Squawk! Squawk!  
Don't be batty, we don't need you!

NARRATOR

The Birds all fly away, squawking mockingly.

BAT

*(undeterred)*

Now I know what to do.  
You Beasts are my friends  
I'm with you!

BEASTS

*(Angrily)*

Grrr! Grrr!  
Go away, Bat the betrayer, we don't need you!

NARRATOR

The outraged Beasts banish Bat from their territory.

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BAT

What did I do, what did I do?  
I should have decided  
Between the two!

NARRATOR

The moral of the story: He that is neither one thing nor the other has no friends.