



# Aesop's Fantastic Fables

This teacher guide is designed to provide both teachers and students with a more comprehensive understanding of theater and live performance.

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Guide



## Performance Specifics

**Show Length:** 45 minute show, includes behind the scenes demonstration

**Audience:** Pre-K thru 5th grade and families for audiences of up to 300

**Technical Support:** Lighting and sound support provided by the puppeteer

**Staging Requirements:** Requires indoor space at least 15ft square and close proximity to an electrical outlet.

# Show Synopsis

And they're off! Through a magical leap of the imagination, it's another exciting day at the races and three fantastic fables are headed your way. Will THE LION AND THE MOUSE win, or will THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF race ahead of THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE?

Imagination soars as the timeless teachings by the Master of Morals leap to the stage through the innovative use of glove puppets, moving-mouth hand puppets and rod puppets. You'll experience the "depth of human drama, the thrill of victory, the agony of defeat"...or maybe just enjoy a little good old-fashioned family entertainment! So join in the fantastic fable fun with this remarkable one-man, "tour-de-farce" created especially for puppet theatre.



## Curriculum Connections

The Aesop's Fantastic Fables show includes content from these Common Core and Georgia Performance Learning Standards. (click to view):

\* [Language Arts](#)

\* [Theatre](#)

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- \* Students will gain an understanding of live performance and puppetry arts.
- \* Students will learn about different puppet types, including rod and hand puppets.
- \* Students will experience what a fable is and how it is different from other types of stories.



## Vocabulary

- fable** - a narration intended to enforce a useful truth, especially one in which animals speak and act like human beings
- moral** - a passage pointing out, usually in conclusion, the lesson to be drawn from a story
- compassion** - to be aware of others distress together with a desire to alleviate it
- choice** - choosing one possibility and rejecting another
- tortoise** - a slow-moving land-dwelling reptile with a large dome-shaped shell into which it can retract its head and limbs
- Hare** - a fast-running animal that resembles a rabbit but is larger, has longer ears and large hind legs, and does not burrow

# Internet Resources

<http://www.puppetguy.com>

Visit this site for more information about “That Puppet Guy” Lee Bryan and his many performances. Also, be sure to check out the “Glue & You” Puppet kits!

<http://www.dusklight.com/aesop>

Read 82 of Aesop’s Fables online for free.

<http://www.darsie.net/talesofwonder/>

Visit Tales of Wonder, a collection of folk and fairy tales from around the world.

<http://www.americanfolklore.net/animal-stories.html>

Read animal stories at this unique American Folklore Web site.

<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html>

Visit this comprehensive database of international folklore and mythology brought to you by the University of Pittsburgh.



## Reading Recommendations

The Boy Who Cried Wolf

By B.G. Hennessy and Boris Kulikov

The Wolf Who Cried Boy

By Bob Hartman and Tim Raglin

Wolf! Wolf!

By John Rocco

The Lion & The Mouse

By Jerry Pinkney

Hare and Tortoise Race to the Moon

By Oliver J. Corwin

The Rabbit and The Turtle

By Eric Carle

Tortoise and Hare Hop to the Pond-  
The Rematch!

By George & Molly Gadanidis

Friends: True Stories of  
Extraordinary Animal Friendships

By Catherine Thimmesh

The McElderry Book of Aesop’s Fables

By Michael Morpurgo &  
Emma Chichester Clark

Zack Files 19: The Boy Who  
Cried Bigfoot

By Dan Greenburg & Jack E. Davis

The Tortoise and the Hare Race Again

By Dan Bernstein & Andrew Glass

The Really Groovy Story of the  
Tortoise and the Hare

By Keistyn Crow and Christina Forshay

The Big Race Starring Tommy Tortoise  
and Harry Hare

By Shirley Glaser

You Read to Me, I’ll Read to You:  
Very Short Fables to Read Together

By Mary Ann Hoberman & Michael  
Emberley

Fables

By Arnold Lobel



Hare and the Tortoise and  
Other Fables (Children’s Classics)

By Aesop

Hare and the Tortoise

By Paul Galdone

M.C. Turtle Hip-Hop Hare

By David Vozar



# Grade Level Ideas



# Activities

## Preschool

- ◆ Click [here](#) to be directed to That Puppet Guy's website with learning extensions for this age group.

## Kindergarten & First Grade

- ◆ Using popsicle sticks, cotton balls and green foamies, have the children make their own Tortoise and Hare stick puppets.
- ◆ Talk as a class about favorite animals. Keep a short list of the most popular animals. Lead the class in a discussion about how each animal might behave like a person. Next, discuss how people sometimes behave like animals. Focus on things like eating, napping, playing, working, etc.
- ◆ Using your class rules as a guide, have the children draw an illustration of a rule either being followed or broken. Rather than people, instruct the students to draw animals in the picture instead.

## Second & Third Grade

- ◆ What is a Fable? Use examples from your classroom bookshelves to discuss with the class what constitutes a fable. Can a story have a moral lesson without being a fable? What stories have your students read that they might consider a fable?
- ◆ Make lists of harmless and harmful tricks. Discuss each of the activities or behaviors you have listed. What is the difference between harmful and harmless tricks? Why do some people consider harmful tricks funny?
- ◆ **Aesop's Eight** - Writing Exercise ([page 8](#))

## Fourth & Fifth Grade

- ◆ Ask your students to invent animal characters to represent the people they know. This is a private process and they need not tell which animal represents their mother, teacher, brother, or themselves, etc.. Have them create a story using these characters. Be sure there is a moral to the story!
- ◆ Put on a puppet show! Have your students write scripts for one of the stories they have seen, or maybe another of Aesop's fables. The show can be as simple or as complicated as you want. You might make finger puppets which can be as basic as pictures glued onto a popsicle stick rod, or as intricate as fanciful felt creations. A shoebox theater is a good way to present a show using finger puppets.
- ◆ **Fable Fixing Fun!!** - Proof Reading Exercise ([page 9](#))



# LIVE PERFORMANCE ETIQUETTE

Going to see a live performance is not like watching television or seeing a movie. The artists on stage can see and hear everything that the audience is doing. These performers have worked very hard to provide an enjoyable, entertaining show. Let them know through your actions that you appreciate this. Also, your behavior affects the experience of everyone around you. So respect the other audience members by following the few simple guidelines listed below.

## Did you Know?

Stage performers tell each other to "break a leg" before a performance because superstition says that it is bad luck to wish a performer "good luck" before a show!

## Thumbs Up !



- Arrive early
- Turn off phones, watch alarms & anything else that would disrupt the show
- Use the restroom before the show
- Applaud where appropriate, after a well-performed song or dance, and at the end of an Act or scene, Also at a curtain call when the performers are taking a bow
- Laugh or giggle politely where appropriate
- Watch closely and listen carefully

## Thumbs Down!

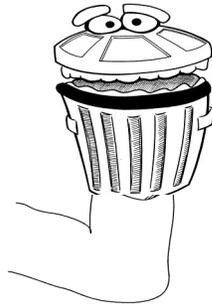
- No photos or video
- Do not whisper, talk, sing or hum during the performance
- Do not eat or drink during the performance
- Do not put your feet on the seat in front of you
- Do not boo, heckle or shout during the performance
- Do not leave the theater until the actors have left the stage



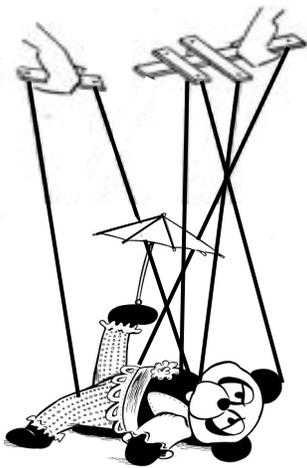
# STYLES OF PUPPETRY

**Body Puppets** Body puppets are exactly what they sound like. They are larger-than-life and the puppeteer, or sometimes two, are actually inside the puppet. Body puppets can be very simple, like a large costume, or very sophisticated, employing video cameras and robotics. Sesame Street's Big Bird is probably the most recognized body puppet!

**Hand Puppets** Hand Puppets are puppets that cover the puppeteer's hand. They can either have a moving mouth or not. Hand puppets, or glove puppets as they are sometimes called, cover the puppeteer's hand so that the head is moved by the index finger and the arms moved by the thumb and middle finger. Hand puppets are part of a Chinese puppet tradition.



**Rod Puppets** are puppets that are controlled entirely by control rods, or sticks. These rods are often attached to both hands with a third rod that is attached inside the head to allow the puppeteer to turn the head or move it up and down. While the puppeteer provides the voice, without a moving mouth much of the puppet's character is expressed through exaggerated movements and actions.



## **Marionettes (string puppets)**

Marionettes are considered the most difficult of all puppets to master. They consist of a full bodied character whose head, arms and legs are jointed to allow full movement. These are each connected by heavy thread to a cross shaped controller (called an airplane) that is held in one hand by the puppeteer. By moving the airplane controller and using the free hand to manipulate individual threads, the puppet can be made to walk, jump, dance, or run. The puppet is always controlled from above. Some stages even have bridges built across them to allow the puppeteer to move back and forth across the scene without ever being seen. A very famous marionette scene was in the movie *The Sound of Music*, in which Julie Andrews sang a song while marionette

**Shadow Puppets** When most people think of shadow puppets they picture making a simple bird or dog shadow on a wall with their hands. Actually, shadow puppets can be quite complex. Originating in Indonesia, shadow puppets are often made from dried animal skins which are cut out in very ornate patterns and shapes. Because shadow puppet shows are usually performed at night, they are often considered to be "adult" themed and not suitable for children to attend. Audience members may sit in front of the shadow screen to watch the show, or they may sit behind the screen and see the puppets in the bright light and not as shadows at all!



That Puppet Guy brings Aesop's animals to life through the use of glove puppets, rod puppets and moving mouth puppets.

**Puppets Featured in Aesop's Fabulous Fables**

# About The Puppeteer



Celebrating 20 years, Lee Bryan "That Puppet Guy", specializes in exceptional school assemblies and extraordinary library programs. He strives to entertain the imaginations of the young *and* the young-at-heart with innovative puppets, original scripts and zany adaptations of classic tales. Lee's solo performances are often featured at the internationally acclaimed The Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta.

He is a two-time grant recipient from the prestigious Jim Henson Foundation, Inc. In 2003 he received a Project Grant which helped produce his original, found-object production of PINOCCHIO.

<http://www.hensonfoundation.org/index.php/grantawards/2000s/2003>

Then, in 2006 Lee received a Seed Grant to further his production of THE SUITCASE CIRCUS a/k/a "Le Cirque du Suitcase."

<http://www.hensonfoundation.org/index.php/grant-awards/2000s/2006>

Professional film credits include work with the Muppets® on the feature film, "[The Adventures of Elmo in Grouchland](#)." Recently, The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences honored Lee with a Southeastern Regional Daytime Emmy® nomination for his work with Public Broadcasting on the award winning Spanish language series, ¡SALSA! Current video projects include the role of Hardy Heart for [The OrganWise Guys](#) and most recently the role of Captain Cruller to help celebrate Krispy Kreme's [TALK LIKE A PIRATE](#) promotion.

Professional puppetry affiliations include memberships with [UNIMA-USA](#), [The Puppeteers of America, Inc.](#), and [The Atlanta Puppetry Guild](#).



# Curriculum Standards for Aesop's Fantastic Fables

## Language Arts – Common Core Standards

Literacy.RL.K.2 - With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.

Literacy.RL.1.2 – Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message.

Literacy.RL.2.2 – Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

Literacy.RL.3.2 – Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

Literacy.RL.4.3 – Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).

Literacy.RL.5.3 – Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific detail in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

## Theatre - Georgia Performance Learning Standards

TAES.1 - Analyzing and constructing meaning from theatrical experiences, dramatic literature, and electronic media

TAES.11 - Engaging actively and appropriately as an audience member in theatre or other media experiences

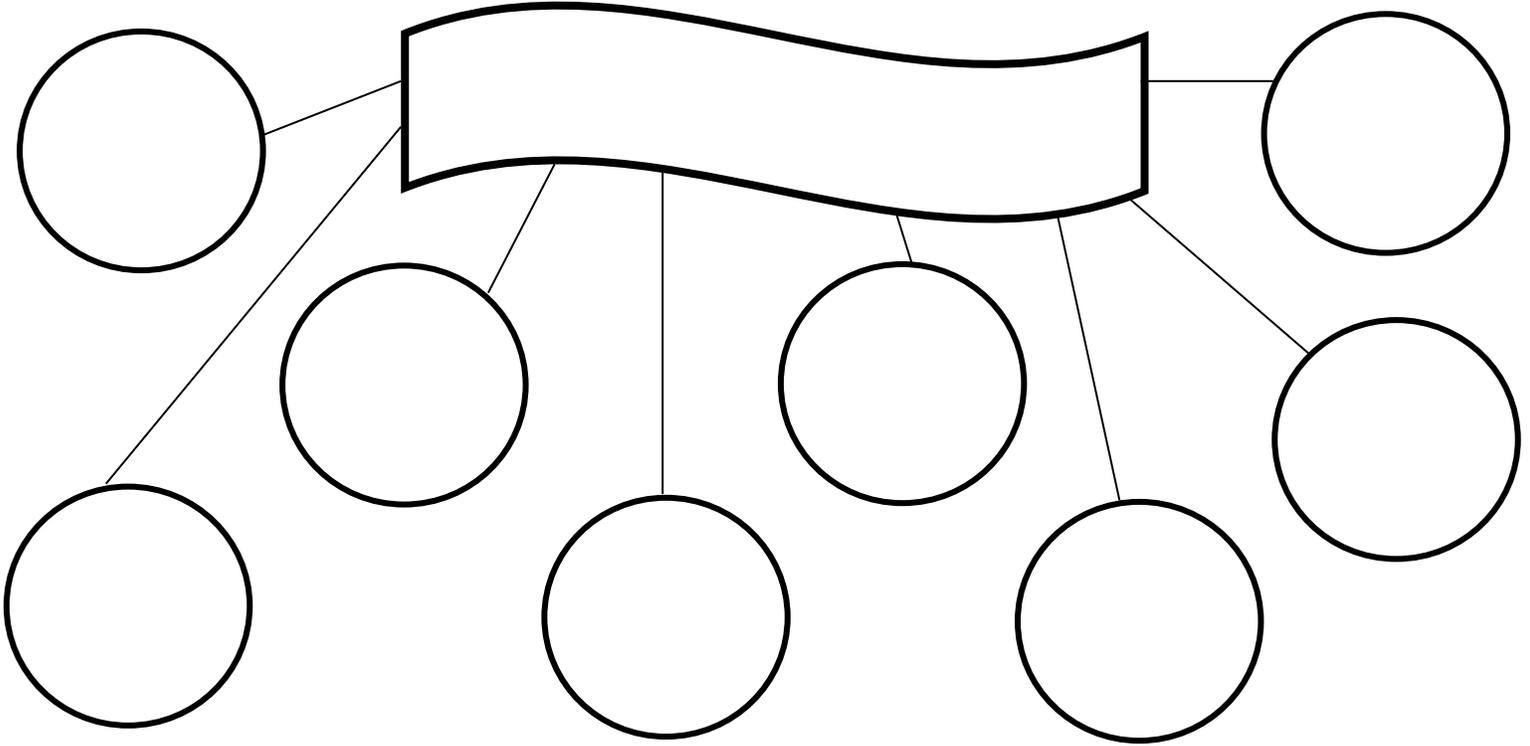


# AESOP'S EIGHT

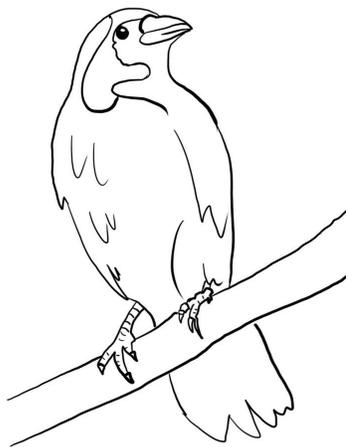
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Select one of the following Aesop's Fables, *The Lion and the Mouse*, *The Tortoise and the Hare*, or *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, and write it in the banner. Think of eight words related to the fable you chose and write each one in a circle. Then use each word in a sentence about the fable.



- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_



# Fable Fixing

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Fun!!

**Directions:** Proofread each of the following fables and correct missing punctuation, misspelled words and incorrect tenses.

### The Crow and the Pitcher

A CROW perishing with thirst saw a pitcher, and hoping to find water flew to it with delight? When he reaches it, he discovered to his grief that it contained so little water that he could not possibly get at it he tried everything he could think of to reach the water, but all his efforts was in vain. At last he collected as many stones as he could carry and dropped them one by one with his beak into the picture, until he brought the water within his reach and thus saved his life.

**Moral:** Necessity is the mother of invention.

### The Dove and the Ant

An Ant going to a river to drink, fell in, and was carried along in the stream. A Dove pitied her condition, and threw into the river a small bough, by means of which the Ant gained the shore! The Ant after-ward, seeing a man with a gun aiming at the Dove, stung him, in the foot sharply, and made him miss his aim, and so saved the Dove's life.

**Moral:** Little friends may prove great friends.

