

Aesop (Ancient Greek: Αἴσωπος, *Aisōpos*, c. 620–564 BC) was an Ancient Greek story teller.

1. Fable: a short story with a moral.

2. Fable characters: The characters of fables and tales are usually animals who act and talk just like people. However, they keep their animal characteristics. Nevertheless, the characters usually teach about specific human nature and characteristics (greed, evil, stupidity, etc) and NOT animal nature.

3. Moral: a lesson about common sense.

The Tortoise and the Hare

A hare one day laughed over the slow speed of the tortoise. He bragged about his great speed in running to everybody. The tortoise smiled at the hare and said, "Let's have a race from here to the pond. The fox will be the judge." The hare agreed and away they ran together. Quickly, the hare was out of sight in a moment. The tortoise jogged along with a slow, steady pace, straight towards the end of the course. Full of joy, the hare first outran the tortoise, and then intentionally fell behind laughing at the slow tortoise.

Having come close to the goal, the hare began to eat the young plants. After a while, the day being warm, he laid down for a nap, saying "The tortoise is behind me now. If he should go by, I can easily catch up to him." However, when the hare awoke, the tortoise was not in sight. Running as fast as he could to the finish line, the hare found the fox congratulating the tortoise at the end. The Hare overslept in the soft grass and warm sun, and so the slow Tortoise won the race.

The Boy Who Cried Wolf

There once was a shepherd boy who was bored as he sat on the hillside watching the village sheep. To amuse himself he took a great breath and sang out, "Wolf! Wolf! The Wolf is chasing the sheep!" The villagers came running up the hill to help the boy scare the wolf away. But when they arrived at the top of the hill, they found no wolf. The boy laughed at the sight of their angry faces.

"Don't cry 'wolf', shepherd boy," said the villagers, "when there's no wolf!" They went angrily back down the hill. Later, the boy yelled out again, "Wolf! Wolf! The wolf is chasing the sheep!" To his naughty delight, he watched the villagers run up the hill to help him drive the wolf away.

When the villagers saw no wolf they sternly said, "Save your breath for when there is really something wrong! Don't cry 'wolf' when there is NO wolf!" But the boy just grinned and watched them go back down the hill once more.

Later, he saw a REAL wolf prowling about his flock. Alarmed, he jumped to his feet and sang out as loudly as he could, "Wolf! Wolf!" But the villagers thought he was trying to fool them again, and so they didn't come.

At sunset, everyone wondered why the shepherd boy hadn't returned to the village with their sheep. When they went up the hill to find the boy, they found him weeping with tears dripping from his eyes.

"There really was a wolf here!" the boy explained. "Many of the sheep were killed and others ran away into the forest. I yelled for help, but nobody came! Why didn't you come to help?"