



Language through Literature

# Aesop's Fables

Language activities for 8-10 year olds



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# The Bullfrog and the Ox



a well-built, well-dressed ox went for a walk along a country road. He felt very proud of himself because he knew he looked good. Many animals he met on the way stopped to look at him. Some greeted him by waving their caps while a few even bowed.

Passing a huge pond, he noticed a group of frogs. Among them was a bullfrog. He hopped on the bank and stared at Ox. He felt he could make himself just as fine as this proud Ox.

"I can make myself just as fine as Ox," he called to his friends. "Just watch me." He began to puff himself till he became twice his size.

Bullfrog now hopped beside Ox thinking he looked just as grand. By the looks on the faces of the other frogs, he knew he was not. He began to puff himself out some more and then some more. His friends became worried.

"Stop that, Bullfrog," they shouted. "You'll only hurt yourself. Please don't waste us!"

Bullfrog was so sure he could make himself like Ox that he refused to listen. He continued to puff himself till he burst. His remains were scattered all over the path but Ox just walked on.

— *Moral: Try to be yourself and not somebody else.* —





# The Bullfrog and the Ox



## ★ Activity 1 ★

You can use phrases telling 'when' or 'where' to make your writing more interesting.



Part 1

Tick whether the following *phrases* tells 'when' or 'where':  
Use the *phrases* to create sentences of your own on the lines below.

- a. near the shopping centre  when  where
- b. before dinner  when  where
- c. at midday  when  where
- d. across the busy road  when  where

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Part 2

The sentences below have been taken from the story.  
Write whether each underlined *phrase* tells 'when' or 'where':

- a. Ox went for a walk along a country road. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Passing a huge pond, he noticed a group of frogs. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. His remains were scattered all over the path. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. He continued to puff himself till he burst. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. He hopped on the bank and stared at Ox. \_\_\_\_\_



Part 3

**Underline the two *phrases* in each of the sentences below:**

- a. In the early morning well-dressed Ox walked beside a huge pond.
- b. After midday he stopped to rest under a shady tree.
- c. Before long Bullfrog found Ox and walked by his side.
- d. During the walk Bullfrog's puffed body burst near the frog pond.
- e. By late evening the proud Ox returned to the green meadow.

Outcome: Children explore features of language that make sentences interesting.

# Belling the Cat



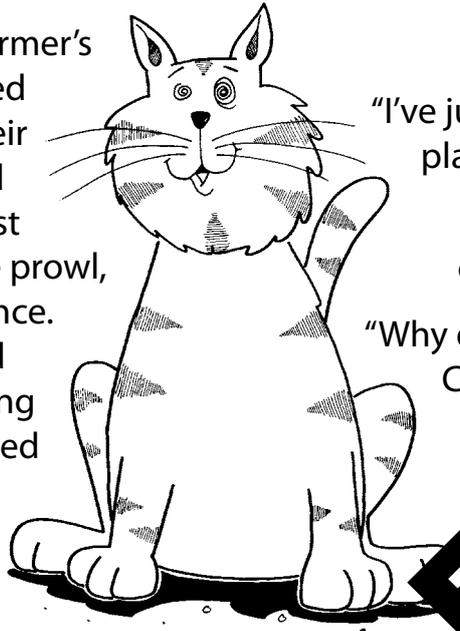
the mice in a farmer's barn huddled together in their holes, too afraid to venture out. Cat, their worst enemy, was constantly on the prowl, waiting her chance to pounce. Being big, she usually killed with a single blow of her strong paw. Not a single mouse wished to become her next meal.

"Whatever are we going to do?" asked one mouse who hadn't eaten for two whole days. "We're bound to starve and die anyway."

"I suggest we get together and have a meeting," said another. "Maybe we can plan how best to get rid of our enemy."

"Agreed! We meet late tonight when the cat is asleep," said a third mouse.

The meeting was attended by a large number of mice, young and old, big and small, fat and thin. Many plans were discussed and many ideas exchanged but not one was thought to be good enough. They were about ready to give up when one young mouse spoke up.



"I've just thought of a very good plan, at least I think it's good!"

"Come on, out with it," came a chorus of voices.

"Why don't we place a bell around Cat's neck," the young mouse spoke proudly. "Every time she moves, the bell will tinkle and we'll know she's out and about. It will be a warning for us to get out of her way."

Everyone thought this was an excellent idea and cheered the bright young mouse. It was the best they had heard so far. Suddenly, an old mouse crouching in the corner of the hole, who had listened quietly so far, raised his voice and said,

"Wait a moment, my friends. I agree, it is a wonderful plan but can someone tell me who is going to place the bell around Cat's neck?"

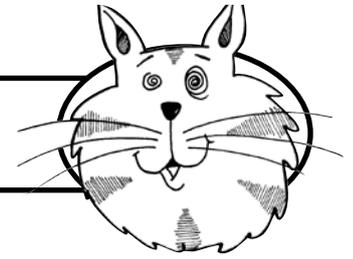
There was a pin-drop silence in the hole.

**Moral: Some plans are very difficult to carry out.**





# Belling the Cat



## ★ Activity 1 ★

You can use "picture words" to make nouns and verbs more interesting. Picture words that describe nouns are called adjectives; picture words that describe verbs are called adverbs.



Write a picture word (*adjective*) for each of the following:

.....garden .....ocean .....park  
..... friend ..... flower



Write a picture word (*adverb*) for each of the following:

listens..... talks..... catches.....  
walks ..... sings .....



Read the story "Belling the Cat" and find picture words that describe the following *nouns* and *verbs*:

*Adjective*

*Noun*

*Verb*

*Adverb*

.....	to	huddled	.....
.....	aw	venture	.....
.....	enemy	listened	.....
.....	mouse	spoke	.....
.....	plan	meet	.....



Draw pictures to describe a *noun* and a *verb* from the list above:

*Noun*

*Verb*

Outcome: Children explore the use of adjectives and adverbs.