

# An Analysis of Speech Acts in Aesop's Fables

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**Abstract**— This study aims at analyzing ten fables of Aesop (the Greek fabulist and storyteller) within the framework of speech act theory to investigate and find out what kind of speech acts are available in the fables. Another purpose of this study is to know to what extent the selected fables are mirrored in the speech act theory. Through the analysis of this study, the researchers have arrived at some findings: the fables included *assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative* speech acts. Based on the results and data analysis, it has been concluded that the speech act is applicable to the analysis of the fables as they are everyday conversations..

**Keywords**— Stylistic Pragmatics, Speech Act Theory, Aesop's Fables,

## 1. INTRODUCTION, THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 1.1 STYLISTIC PRAGMATICS AND SPEECH ACT THEORY

This The study of meaning in context is the basic gist of pragmatics. Meaning is not limited to language since there are other things outside language which can have special effects on the meaning. In fact, the context of the language of a literary work, like drama, novel, and short stories and so on, needs to be analyzed in order to convey the intended and implicit meaning. Another issue is that since understanding literary works depends on the context and culture, which are not merely found in the text meaning; therefore, it is possible to employ pragmatic theories to analyze literary works to obtain the real message of the literary works. Hence, pragmatics is the paralinguistic study that relates meaning to context through which we can comprehend at the intended meaning of an utterance or a text.

Literary texts such as novels and dramas have attracted sufficient pragmatic attentions; for example most of the texts analyzed pragmatically are real texts, however, the present study examines some fables of Aesop pragmatically. The researchers apply the analysis on ten fables within the framework of Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1975) speech acts

(SA(s) henceforth) and analyze them. The study hypothesizes that SA types can be found in the fables as in the real texts.

SAT is that theory Austin was the first to use the term SA. This theory is about the fact that language can be used to perform some acts. Accordingly, many utterances are equivalent to actions—here comes the name of the theory-SAT. It is worth mentioning that SA is employed to mean the same as illocutionary act, illocutionary force, pragmatic force (see Al-Sulaiman 2011, p. 281). The SAT deals with communication in a broad sense. For example, it includes doing orders, making questions, requests, apologies and promises.

Trask (2007, p. 267) argues that SAT is an attempt to do something by speaking. There are many things we can do, or attempt to do, simply by speaking (Crystal, 2008, p.446). People can *promise, ask a question, order or request somebody to do something, make a threat, name a ship, or pronounce somebody as husband and wife*. According to the theory, each of the phrasal verbs can perform the act mentioned by the words. Similarly, Yule (2010, p. 133) believes that communication is not only expressing propositions. This means that, when it comes to communication, people tend to express we have to express propositions with a particular illocutionary force. In so doing one can perform particular types of actions such as stating, promising, warning, and so on. It is, however, important to differentiate three kinds of acts: locutionary acts, perlocutionary acts, and illocutionary acts. Below is a brief explanation of each of the three SAs.

1. **Locutionary Act:** Austin (1962, p. 98) says that a *locutionary act* or a *locution* refers to the act of saying something that makes sense in language. Yule also (2000, p. 48) states that a locutionary act is the basic act of uttering or creating a meaningful linguistic expression.
2. **Illocutionary Act:** the notion of illocutionary acts was presented to [linguistics](#) by the philosopher [Austin](#) in his research of the numerous sides of [SAs](#). Further, Finch (, 2000, p. 180) states that IA is an act 'performed through the medium of language: stating, warning, promising, and

so on.’

3. **Perlocutionary Acts:** the perlocutionary act is defined as the authentic effect of a locution on the listener or addressee such as persuading, convincing, surprising misleading and so on (Austin 1962, p. 95-98).

An interesting type of illocutionary speech act is that performed in the utterance as Austin called performatives, for instance, *I nominate Jack to be President*. Another example can be *I sentence you to two years imprisonment*, or *I promise to come to your invitation*. In these typical examples, rather explicit cases of performative sentences, the action that the sentence describes *nominating*, *sentencing*, *promising* is performed by the utterance of the sentence itself (ibid).

### 1.2. The SAT Conditions: Felicity conditions

Felicity conditions are about the effectiveness of SA use of the utterer. Austin (1962) thought that in using SAs one must achieve certain conditions concerning the act uttered. The speech acts necessitate the extensive of several conditions under which the acts in question will occur. However, Searle made a significant contribution to the SAT regarding felicity conditions. Numerous types of **felicity conditions** are suggested. The following are the most common ones.

- 1- **Content conditions:** An act like promising requires that the future event will be a future act of the speaker (see Searle and Vanderveken, 1985 and Al-Sulaimman 2011, p. 289-290).
- 2- **Preparatory conditions:** The felicitous illocutionary act requires the speaker to have a certain beliefs about his act and conditions. That is, the speaker has to have the faculty and power of authority on the hearer. Thus, this type relates to whether the one performing a SA has the authority to do so. Everyone is not entitled to fine, sentence, arrest others. (Yule 2000, p. 50).
- 3- **Sincerity conditions:** In order to perform an act, the performer, the performer should have a certain psychological attitude regarding the propositional content of the utterance. For instance, when a person promises, he must have an intention of keeping their words and act according to what they have promised. This illustrates that whether the SA is performed sincerely, the speaker should not lie (Al-Sulaimman 2011, p. 289-290).
- 4- **Essential conditions:** It is essential for an utterance which has to do with its intention to catch the hearer do the act wanted (Searle 1969, p.66-67). This condition tells about the way the speaker is committed to a certain kind of belief or behavior. Having performed a typical example of this that is that when someone accepts an object that they have requested (cf. Yule 2000, p. 51).

As suggested for the analysis of indirect requests, felicity conditions include the speaker’s attitude that the hearer has the ability to carry out the request, and the existence of proper reasons for making the request in the first place.

It is important to know that if an utterance which does not satisfy these conditions cannot function as a valid instance of the type of SA to which they apply. For example, ‘will you speak English?’ is not appropriate as a request if the speaker knows that the hearer has not learned English, such utterance is said to be infelicitous (see Crystal 2008, p. 188).

SAs have been classified according to Austin’s (1962, p. 150) classification of illocutionary force (act), or Searle’s (1975) taxonomy of illocutionary act types.

However, Searle’s taxonomy, based on further investigations of the SAT, is more detailed than Austin’s classification. Thus, the current study depends on the Searle’s taxonomy. Searle classifies illocutionary acts into the following five categories.

- 1- **Directive:** this type is an attempt by the speaker to get the addressee to do something, for instance, requesting, questioning;
- 2- **Assertive (Representative):** this type, commits the speaker to the truth of the expressed, proposition, asserting, concluding;
- 3- **Commissive:** this commits the speaker to some future course of action: promising, threatening, and offering;
- 4- **Expressive:** this expresses a psychological state thanking, apologizing, welcoming, congratulating;
- 5- **Declarative,** this SA is an effect immediate change in the institutional state of affairs and which tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions: excommunicating, declaring word, firing from employment (see Searle, 1976; cited in Archer et al, 2012).

In addition to the above two classifications of SAs, there is another classification which is based on the directness of the speeches. Thus, these are called direct and indirect SAs.

Based on the structure and function of the sentences, we can make distinction between the three types of SAs. An utterance is considered as a direct speech act when there is a direct relationship between the syntactic structure and the communicative function of the utterance (Allott 2010, p. 63). The following examples indicate that the form correspondences with the function—thus, there is a match and coincide between the two:

- A *declarative* is used to make a *statement*: You read a book.
  - An *interrogative* is used to ask a *question*: Do you read a book?
  - An *imperative* is used to make a *command*: Read a book!
- (Yule 2010, p. 134)

Clearly, Direct SAs, show the intended meaning the speaker has which is behind making an utterance.

In accordance with indirect SA, an indirect speech is one that is performed by means of another (Finch, 2000, p. 150). This means that there is an indirect relationship between the form (syntactic structure) and the function of the utterance. The following instances show that the form (structure) does not match the function (based on Yule: 2000, p. 25):

- An *interrogative* is used to make a *request*: Could you pass the salt?

- A *declarative* is used to make a *request*: You are standing in front of the Car Park.

The speaker did not obviously state the intended meaning. It is the hearer's task to understand the intended meaning.

### 1.3 Fables as a type of short stories

Abrams (2009, p. 331) states that 'a *short story* is a brief work of prose fiction, and most of the terms for analyzing the component elements, the types, and the narrative techniques of the novel are applicable to the short story as well'. Short story depicts one character's inner conflict or conflict with others. Additionally, short story usually has one thematic focus. Short stories produce a single, focused emotional and intellectual response to the reader. While novels, by contrast, usually depict conflicts among many characters developed through a variety of episodes, stimulating a complexity of responses to the reader. The short story form varies, from 'short short stories,' which run in length from a sentence to four pages, to novellas that can easily be about one hundred pages long and exhibit characteristics of both the short story and the novel. Because some works straddle the definitional lines of these three forms of fiction—short story, novella, and novel—the terms should be seen as approximate rather than absolute.

A fable is a type of short story in literary genre—a concise fictional story. Fables can be in prose or verse. They usually feature animals, legendary creatures, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature that are anthropomorphized—given human qualities, i.e., personified, such as the ability to speak human language. Similarly, Abrams (2009, p. 8) explains that fable (also called an apologue) is a short narrative, in prose or verse, that exemplifies an abstract moral thesis or principle of human behavior; usually, at its conclusion, either the narrator or one of the characters states the moral in the form of an *epigram*. Most common is the beast fable, in which animals talk and act like the human types they represent.

A fable differs from a parable in that the latter excludes animals, plants, inanimate objects, and forces of nature as actors that assume speech or other powers of humankind (Abrams 2009, p. 8). Fables contain action, magic, adventure, comedy, romance and fantasy. These are all classic including adventure and fantasy in one story. They are very popular followed by thousands of readers all around the world. Fable stories usually consist of more than one plot.

### 1.4 Aesop

Aesop was a Greek storyteller of fables. In some literary text, he has become famous by his fables and so-called Aesop's Fables. Even though his existence is constantly under questions, his fingers have been felt in imaginary world. Therefore, his name was annexed to a collection of beast fables narrated from the medium of oral tradition. Many of Aesop's fables were re-composed in Greek verse by the poet Babrius, and in Latin verse by the Roman poet Phaedrus. Aesop's life was mentioned in many Greek works, including [Aristotle](#), [Herodotus](#), and [Plutarch](#). Depictions of Aesop in popular culture over the last 2500 years have included many works of art and his appearance as a character in numerous books, films, plays, and television programs (Redmond, 2008).

## 2. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Most papers which have been done on SAs are usually real texts; however, there are some research papers of SAs conducted on short stories, like, *Speech Act Analysis to Short Stories* by Sahar Farouq Altikriti. The paper focused on the analysis of speech act in short stories generally; it did not specify types of short stories. Another paper which was in 2013 by Ahmad Mudzakir, is *A Speech Act Analysis of Direct Utterances on Short Story Mr. Know All* in School of Teacher Training of Education Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. That paper was identifying the form of the direct sentences on short story entitled *Mr. Know All*.

Furthermore, in 2016 a thesis done on such somehow similar topic was An Analysis Speech Act in Online *Choosing A Wife And The Lost Diary* short story by Amina Bint Alhuda in English Language Teaching Department Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty, Syekh Nurjati State Islamic Institute Cirebon. This also identified SA types found in online Islamic short story *Choosing a Wife and The Lost Diary*. That paper also described the different types of SAs used in online Islamic short story.

Concerning the application of speech acts to fable short stories, nothing has been written in this regard. Thus, to the best of the current researchers' knowledge, this study is breakthrough in that it applies the SAT to the factious language of Aesop's fables

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive and analytic corpus based study of some fables in the light of the SAT. The purpose of this study is to show the quantities of SAs used in ten fables of Aesop. To be more specific, the research is based on the Searle's Taxonomy for the SAs in the selected fables. The full texts of fables are placed in the Appendixes which have been taken from the internet (see Aesop's Fable, 2017).

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, ten fables have been analyzed since the fables are very short. Searle used the notion of illocutionary point to classify SAs into five major categories. Thus, the selected fables are analyzed within the framework of the major SAs (*viz.*, *assertive*, *commissive*, *directive*, *expressive*, and *declarative*). The SAs of each of the fables have been taken out and analyzed separately in the order they are put in the Appendixes of the current study.

In 'The Hare and the Tortoise' (see Appendix 1), the Hare uses the assertive SAs three times: first when he was boasting about his speed in front of other animals; second, he *asserted* once he stated that he has never been beaten. The final assertion in the story occurred when the fabulist asserted that assertion while he said that Plodding won the race.

Moreover, commissive is utilized twice: once the hare promised, threatened and offered, saying that he challenged everybody there to contest with him. The second commissive, happened, is that when he makes fun of the Tortoise when he told him; he could dance round him during the race.

Finally, declarative has been employed thrice. First, when the Tortoise was reacted to the boasting hare as he told him, he accepted his competition. Another declarative available in the fable story was that when the tortoise showed his readiness to

start the race. Generally, this story contains 3 assertives, 2 commissives and 3 declaratives.

The fable ‘The Bundle of Sticks’ (see Appendix 2) includes six directive speech acts used when the old man wanted to advise his children and ask several requests. The questions he did towards his sons are: he asked his children to gather around him; then he gave them advice as he asked his servant to bring a bundle of sticks; then he gave it to the eldest; and asked him to break it; and then he asked his other sons the same request; then he asked each of them take a stick from the bundle and break it.

The second illocutionary act type found in the story is assertive. This type is found three times as follows: when the fabulist stated that the child tried repeatedly to break the bundle but the effort was useless. Another assertive in the story is that once it was stated that each stick was broken separately. And the last assertive “Union gives strength”. All the SAs in this story are nine; six of them are directive and the three remaining ones are assertive.

In ‘The Fox and the Crow’ (see Appendix 3) at least there are three assertive SAs. The first one happens when a crow got a piece of cheese and sat on a tree then a Fox saw this and said this is for him (the Fox) since he was a Fox. Another assertive in the fable occurred while the Fox told the Crow that how well he is looking that day. The last one is when the Fox gives the Crow a piece of advice for the future in return to the cheese. Another type of SA in ‘the Fox and the Crow’ is expressive. It says that “Good-day, Mistress Crow”. This expresses a psychological state.

Furthermore, two directive SAs are found in this fable, too. They happen when the fox says that he likes to hear a song from him (the Crow). The last directive is gotten when the fox advises and requests that he must never believe flatters.

In brief, this fable has included six SAs: the assertive is three, the expressive is one and the directive is two.

The fable ‘The Dog and the Wolf’ (see Appendix 4) subsumes 12 SAs: six of them are assertive and the other six are directive. The first assertive is that when the dog passed by the skinny wolf and told the wolf that how it would be—his sporadic life would soon be damaged on him. Another assertive is that when the wolf said he would have no objection to work regularly on the demand of the dog. Another assertive is that case when the dog asserted if the wolf showed his readiness for such a life, he would prepare and provide a place for him. More assertive is added when the dog answered the wolf about the hair on his neck which became worn away. The final two assertives occurred once the dog replied saying that it was nothing and he could be accustomed to such a case. And the wolf confirmed that it is better starve free than be a fat slave – it is better to be a free thin Wolf than a fat slave dog.

Regarding the directive SAs as mentioned, in this fable six directives SAs one found. When the dog asks the wolf to work is one example of directive. Another directive is that when the

dog said to the wolf he had to regularly get his food through working and giving efforts. Moreover, there are other directives in the story such as once the dog told the wolf come with him to his master and he would share his work. In brief two types of SAs (assertive and directive) could be obtained in the fable four.

In the fable ‘The Wolf and the Crane’ (see Appendix 5) there are seven SAs. Three of them are assertive; three others are directive and the final one is Commissive. First, the Commissive is analyzed. In the story it talks about a wolf ate an animal meat he had killed. Unexpectedly a piece of bone in the meat stuck in the Wolf’s throat and he was not able to gulp it. He asked many animals to help him so that he could swallow the bone. But none of them helped. Then he promised a Crane bird, saying, he would give anything if the crane would have taken the small bone out.

Three assertive SAs are found in the fable when the wolf tried to convince the other animals to take out the bone from his throat. Another assertive was seen once the wolf said to the crane that ‘the crane’ had put his head inside a Wolf’s mouth and taken it out again in safety; that can be sufficient reward for him. The last assertive is that when the wolf said that Gratitude and Greed cannot be combined.

The remaining SAs are directive. The first directive is that when the crane asked the Wolf to lie on one of his sides and open his mouth as wide as he could open. The second directive is obtained when the crane requested the wolf to reward him after he had removed the bone in his mouth. The final directive happened after the wolf replied the Crane—the wolf said to the Crane not talk about reward but he has to be happy after he had put his inside the wolf’s mouth and he could get out it safely.

In ‘The Ant and the Grasshopper’ (see Appendix 6) there are six SAs. Three of them are assertive and the other three are directive. First directive is that when the Grasshopper requested the ants to join him to talk together instead of gathering foods for winter. The second directive occurred when the Ant ordered and recommended the Grasshopper to work and make efforts to collect foods for the winter. The last directive is that time once the Grasshopper asked the Ant not to be bothered by the winter.

Regarding the assertive SAs as mentioned above, they are three too. The first assertive is that as the Ant responded the Grasshopper he worked and gathered foods for the winter. The assertive two took place after the Grasshopper stated that they had enough food for that time. The last assertive is when Grasshopper encountered the winter without food and he came to know that collecting food for the winter is the best thing one should do.

‘The Lion and the Mouse’ (see Appendix 7) encompasses six SAs. The Commissive one is that once the Mouse said he would never forget the Lion’s favor if the Lion would have forgiven him. Concerning the assertive occurred two times in the story. The Mouse asserted that he would help him and would bring him back this favor one day. The other assertive happened when the mouse insisted that one day he would help the Lion, therefore the Lion became excited at his statement – a mouse would be able to help a Lion, as if the lion was astonished at the mouse’s trust in himself.

Moreover, the first directive took place as the mouse asked for apology for annoying the Lion. Another directive SA is when the mouse begged the Lion to forgive him that time. The final directive occurred once the Lion was in trap caught by some people, immediately the Mouse cut the ropes by which the Lion was in the trap, and then the Mouse reminded and asked the Lion to confirm that the Mouse could keep his word towards the Lion.

‘The Fox and the Goat’ (see Appendix 8) at least contains seven SAs. Three of them are assertive. Two of them are directive. The sixth is expressive and the last one is commissive. Three directive SAs took place when the Fox fell in a well. The Goat questioned the Fox what he was doing in that well. The Got wanted to know the reason why the Fox was there. The second directive was at that time when the Fox requested the Goat come down the well.

Three times assertive occurred. The first and the second assertive happened when the Fox answered the Goat by saying that he was in the well because it was said that there was going to be a great drought. The third assertive was that once the Fox stated that he jumped down there so as to assure to get water by him.

The expressive SA is when the Fox tricked the Goat as he convinced the goat to jump down the well and the Fox could put his foot on her big horns succeeded to jump up to the well edge and the Fox teasingly said to the Goat “Good-bye, friend”. The last SA type is commissive. After the Fox could save himself by the above mentioned trick he said to the Goat try to “remember next time”.

In the fable ‘The Fox and the Stork’ (see appendix 9) there are five SAs types. Two of them are expressive. The other two are directive. The last one is assertive. The first expressive SA occurred when the Fox invited the Stork to dinner. The Fox put some soup in a very shallow dish before him. The Fox did this for mockery. Then he expressed himself saying that he was sorry for that. The second expressive happened while the Stork took revenge from the Fox as the Stork invited him and put before the Fox long-necked jar with a narrow entrance. The Stork seemingly said to him he would not apologize.

As above mentioned, the directive SAs, they are two. The first one is when the Fox deliberately put some soup in a very shallow dish before him. Therefore, the Stork asked him not to apologize. The second one is when the Stork requested the Fox visit him for the dinner next time. Then the Stork took revenge from him by putting a very long-necked jar with a narrow mouth. The last SA is assertive. It occurs after taking the revenge and the Stork said that “One bad turn deserves another”.

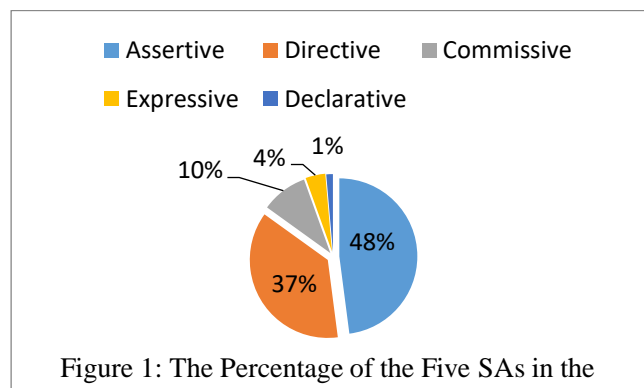
In the last fable ‘The Fox and the Cat’ (see appendix 10) there are seven SAs: six of which are assertive and the other one is directive. The first assertive was obtained as the Fox boasted to a Cat of its smart means to run away from enemies. Then the Fox asserted that he had a lot of tricks. The second assertive was that the Fox confirmed that his bag was full of deceits which help him to escape from the enemies. Another assertive was that the cat answered that he had only one trick. The Cat

added that he could generally make use of this only one trick. Another assertive was that after it was heard the scream of a pack of hounds coming towards them. The Cat at once ran up a tree and concealed himself in the branches. Then the Cat stated that was his plan. Regarding the directive, it was on as mentioned above. This happened when the cat used his only trick and he said to the Fox what he was going to do. The last assertive was that the advice saying which was said that “Better one safe way than a hundred on which you cannot reckon”.

**Table 1: The Summary of Five SAs and their Quantity in the Ten Fables**

The Fables	Assertive	Directive	Commissive	Expressive	Declarative
Fable 1	3	1	3	0	1
Fable 2	3	2	0	1	0
Fable 3	5	4	0	0	0
Fable 4	4	6	0	0	0
Fable 5	3	3	1	0	0
Fable 6	2	3	1	0	0
Fable 7	2	3	1	0	0
Fable 8	3	2	1	0	0
Fable 9	1	2	0	2	0
Fable 10	6	1	0	0	0
<b>The Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>

In the analysis of the fables, the SAs were examined in both the characters’ dialogue as well as the author’s narrations. In narrative texts as Perdawdy (2016, p. 10) maintains, both, the characters’ speeches and the author’s comments or evaluations, are regarded part of the narration process. Table 1 is a summary of all the five types of SAs found in all the ten fables, whereas Figure 1 shows the percentage rate of the five SAs in the fables.



## 5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis that the researchers conducted on the ten fables by Aesop has depended on the frame work of the five major SAs proposed by Searle which are based on Austin's SAT. As results of the analyses of the fables showed, SAT in general and Searle's Taxonomy in particular, is applicable to the analysis of the fables as it is to the other text types. The most dominant speech act in the fables has been *assertive*, as shown; they are 35 (see Table 1 and Figure 1), apart from the author's narrative, which are seen as *assertive* too. Additionally, one can conclude that the whole fable can be considered as an act of assertion. The smallest portions in the fables have been *expressive* and *declarative*—the former has three and the latter has only one. In all the fables, the author wanted to give the reader moral lessons in life. Thus, it can be said that each fable should be considered as one long *assertive* sentence signifying some life advice to the reader.

Furthermore, the messages that the fables carry are not literal. Therefore, the readers may face difficulties to receive the target message. From the point of view, the researchers believe to have a good deal of pragmatics can help the readers to understand more from the messages and lessons of such fables. Therefore, the best manifestation and tool for them to understand the author's intentions is that they have to study pragmatics—paralinguistic aspects and they should concentrate on the SAT more specifically. From the viewpoint of the researchers, which is based on the present fables analysis, pragmatic study is one of the best facilitators to the readers and students of literature to properly understand the hidden and indirect messages in which the literary authors want to convey.

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## Appendix: Aesop's Ten Fables

### Appendix 1: The Hare and the Tortoise

The Hare was once boasting of his speed before the other animals. 'I have never yet been beaten,' said he, 'when I put forth my full speed. I challenge any one here to race with me.' The Tortoise said quietly, 'I accept your challenge.' 'That is a good joke,' said the Hare; 'I could dance round you all the way.' 'Keep your boasting till you've beaten,' answered the Tortoise. 'Shall we race?' So a course was fixed and a start was made. The Hare darted almost out of sight at once, but soon stopped and, to show his contempt for the Tortoise, lay down to have a nap. The Tortoise plodded on and plodded on, and when the Hare awoke from his nap, he saw the Tortoise just near the winning-post and could not run up in time to save the race. Then said the Tortoise: 'Plodding wins the race.'

### Appendix 2: The Bundle of Sticks

An old man on the point of death summoned his sons around him to give them some parting advice. He ordered his servants to bring in a faggot of sticks, and said to his eldest son: 'Break it.' The son strained and strained, but with all his efforts was unable to break the Bundle. The other sons also tried, but none of them was successful. 'Untie the faggots,' said the father, 'and each of you take a stick.' When they had done so, he called out to them: 'Now, break,' and each stick was easily broken. 'You see my meaning,' said their father. Union gives strength.

### Appendix 3: The Fox and the Crow

A Fox once saw a Crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree. 'That's for me, as I am a Fox,' said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree. 'Good-day, Mistress Crow,' he cried. 'How well you are looking to-day: how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds.' The Crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by Master Fox. 'That will do,' said he. 'That was all I wanted. In exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future. 'Do not trust flatterers.'

### Appendix 4: The Dog and the Wolf

A gaunt Wolf was almost dead with hunger when he happened to meet a House-dog who was passing by. 'Ah, Cousin,' said the Dog. 'I knew how it would be; your irregular life will soon be the ruin of you. Why do you not work steadily as I do, and get your food regularly given to you?' 'I would have no objection,' said the Wolf, 'if I could only get a place.' 'I will easily arrange that for you,' said the Dog; 'come with me to my master and you shall share my work.' So the Wolf and the Dog went towards the town together. On the way there the Wolf noticed that the hair on a certain part of the Dog's neck was very much worn away, so he asked him how that had come about.



'Oh, it is nothing,' said the Dog. 'That is only the place where the collar is put on at night to keep me chained up; it chafes a bit, but one soon gets used to it.' 'Is that all?' said the Wolf. 'Then good-bye to you, Master Dog.' Better starve free than be a fat slave.

#### Appendix 5: The Wolf and the Crane

A Wolf had been gorging on an animal he had killed, when suddenly a small bone in the meat stuck in his throat and he could not swallow it. He soon felt terrible pain in his throat, and ran up and down groaning and groaning and seeking for something to relieve the pain. He tried to induce every one he met to remove the bone. 'I would give anything,' said he, 'if you would take it out.' At last the Crane agreed to try, and told the Wolf to lie on his side and open his jaws as wide as he could. Then the Crane put its long neck down the Wolf's throat, and with its beak loosened the bone, till at last it got it out. 'Will you kindly give me the reward you promised?' said the Crane. The Wolf grinned and showed his teeth and said: 'Be content. You have put your head inside a Wolf's mouth and taken it out again in safety; that ought to be reward enough for you.' Gratitude and greed go not together.

#### Appendix 6: The Ant and the Grasshopper

In a field one summer's day a Grasshopper was hopping about, chirping and singing to its heart's content. An Ant passed by, bearing along with great toil an ear of corn he was taking to the nest. 'Why not come and chat with me,' said the Grasshopper, 'instead of toiling and mowing in that way?' 'I am helping to lay up food for the winter,' said the Ant, 'and recommend you to do the same.' 'Why bother about winter?' said the Grasshopper; we have got plenty of food at present.' But the Ant went on its way and continued its toil. When the winter came the Grasshopper had no food and found itself dying of hunger, while it saw the ants distributing every day corn and grain from the stores they had collected in the summer. Then the Grasshopper knew: It is best to prepare for the days of necessity.

#### Appendix 7: The Lion and the Mouse

Once when a Lion was asleep a little Mouse began running up and down upon him; this soon wakened the Lion, who placed his huge paw upon him, and opened his big jaws to swallow him. 'Pardon, O King,' cried the little Mouse: 'forgive me this time, I shall never forget it: who knows but what I may be able to do you a turn some of these days?' The Lion was so tickled at the idea of the Mouse being able to help him, that he lifted up his paw and let him go. Sometime after the Lion was caught in a trap, and the hunters who desired to carry him alive to the King, tied him to a tree while they went in search of a wagon to carry him on. Just then the little Mouse happened to pass by, and seeing the sad plight in which the Lion was, went up to him and soon gnawed away the ropes that bound the King of the Beasts. 'Was I not right?' said the little Mouse. Little friends may prove great friends.

#### Appendix 8: The fox and the Goat

By an unlucky chance a Fox fell into a deep well from which he could not get out. A Goat passed by shortly afterwards, and

asked the Fox what he was doing down there. "Oh, have you not heard?" said the Fox; "there is going to be a great drought, so I jumped down here in order to be sure to have water by me. Why don't you come down too?" The Goat thought well of this advice, and jumped down into the well. But the Fox immediately jumped on her back, and by putting his foot on her long horns managed to jump up to the edge of the well. "Good-bye, friend," said the Fox, "remember next time.

#### Appendix 9: The Fox and the Stork

At one time the Fox and the Stork were on visiting terms and seemed very good friends. So the Fox invited the Stork to dinner, and for a joke put nothing before her but some soup in a very shallow dish. This the Fox could easily lap up, but the Stork could only wet the end of her long bill in it, and left the meal as hungry as when she began. 'I am sorry,' said the Fox, 'the soup is not to your liking.' 'Pray do not apologise,' said the Stork. 'I hope you will return this visit, and come and dine with me soon.' So a day was appointed when the Fox should visit the Stork; but when they were seated at table all that was for their dinner was contained in a very long-necked jar with a narrow mouth, in which the Fox could not insert his snout, so all he could manage to do was to lick the outside of the jar. 'I will not apologise for the dinner,' said the Stork: 'One bad turn deserves another.

#### Appendix 10: The Fox and the Cat

A Fox was boasting to a Cat of its clever devices for escaping its enemies. 'I have a whole bag of tricks,' he said, 'which contains a hundred ways of escaping my enemies.' 'I have only one,' said the Cat; 'but I can generally manage with that.' Just at that moment they heard the cry of a pack of hounds coming towards them, and the Cat immediately scampered up a tree and hid herself in the boughs. 'This is my plan,' said the Cat. 'What are you going to do?' The Fox thought first of one way, then of another, and while he was debating the hounds came nearer and nearer, and at last the Fox in his confusion was caught up by the hounds and soon killed by the huntsmen. Miss Puss, who had been looking on, said: 'Better one safe way than a hundred on which you cannot reckon.

(Source: 'Aesop's Fables'. Retrieved on 29 February, 2021 from <http://www.taleswithmorals.com/>)