Slow and Steady: Retell a Fable and Find the Moral

Teacher		**Class**	Grade 2
Subject	ELA	**Topic**	Fables and morals
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United States

Students retell The Tortoise and the Hare in order. They find the moral and match two more fables to lessons.

Curriculum links

- Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral [1]
- Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text [1]
- Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action [1]

Learning objectives

- Students will recount The Tortoise and the Hare in order with key details.
- Students will answer who, what, and where to show story understanding.
- Students will determine the central moral in one short sentence.

Success criteria

- I can retell first, next, and last in order.
- I can answer who, what, and where about the fable.
- I can say the lesson in one short sentence.

What students already know

Ask: Have you heard a short tale where animals talk? What happened and what did it teach? Listen for fable and lesson ideas.

Key words

fable	a short tale that teaches a lesson [6]
moral	the lesson about good behavior at the end of a tale [7]
recount	to tell again what happened in order [1]
steady	keeping going without stopping
detail	a small but important piece of information [1]

Materials

- 4 picture cards per pair for the race: start, hare naps, tortoise walks on, tortoise wins
- sentence strips for first, next, last and moral
- Slides 2-5, 7-11

Before the lesson

- Print 4 picture cards per pair and sentence strips with first, next, last
- Print Worksheet Task A page 1 for each student
- Test Slide 8 Video clip 2 (0:00-4:22) for sound and picture

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- Slide 8 Video clip 2 The Tortoise and the Hare 0:00-4:22, tested
- Worksheet Task A page 1 copies: table for paragraphs 1 to 3
- Set pairs, clear floor space for acting slow walk and fast nap

Lesson outline

0–8 min **Starter** 8 min · Whole class

Hook interest in the race and surface ideas about winning.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 4 photo of a tortoise racing a speedy hare and say the hook.
2. Show Slide 5 vote: Would you rather be slow and steady or fast and speedy?
3. Take a quick count for each choice and ask two students to give a reason.
4. Link votes to today's goal: retell the race in order and find its lesson.

STUDENTS DO

1. Look at the photo and vote slow and steady or fast and speedy.
2. Turn and tell a neighbor why in one sentence.
3. Share ideas with the class.

Say: One racer is fast and brags. One racer is slow and keeps going. Who do you think wins? Vote with your heart, then tell your neighbor why you picked it.

Ask: Who are the racers and where are they? (A hare and a tortoise in a race, on a path with trees.) · Why might the slow one still win? (If the fast one stops or naps and the slow one keeps going.)

Check understanding: Thumbs up if you can name both racers. If not, point to each animal on Slide 4 and name together.

Support: Let a student point to the hare and tortoise and repeat: hare is fast, tortoise is slow. **Stretch:** Ask a student to predict the problem: What could go wrong for the speedy hare?

Use: Slides 4–5

8–20 min **Teaching** 12 min · Whole class

Teach what a fable is and how to retell it.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 2 and explain fables were told out loud for hundreds of years and for 2,500+ years people have told these fables [7].
2. Show Slide 3 cards: a fable is a short story that teaches a lesson called a moral [6], animals talk and act just like people [6], and fables almost always end with a moral [7].
3. Show Slide 7 mindmap: Who was there? Where was it? What happened first? What was the problem? What was the lesson?
4. Model a retell of paragraph 1 using who, what, where, and first, next, last to show key details [1].

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen and track first, next, last on fingers.
2. Answer who, what, and where with the teacher.
3. Say the moral together: Slow and steady wins the race.

Say: A fable is quick to retell. First we name who was there and where it was. Then we tell what happened first, next, and last. At the end we say the lesson in one short sentence.

Worked example: Paragraph 1 retell: Who: hare and tortoise. Where: on the race path under a tree. First: A hare laughed at a slow tortoise. The tortoise said, 'Let's race!' Next: The hare ran fast and then took a nap under a tree. The tortoise kept walking slow and steady. Last: At the end, the tortoise won. Lesson: Slow and steady wins the race [7].

Ask: What makes this story a fable? (It is short, animals talk and act like people, and it teaches a lesson [6][7].) · How does the beginning introduce the story? (It tells who is racing and why they start to race [1].) · What is the moral in a few words? (Slow and steady wins the race.)

Check understanding: Hold up 1, 2, 3 fingers for first, next, last as teacher mixes order. Reteach order if mixed up.

Support: Post who, where, first, next, last picture prompts while modeling. **Stretch:** Ask a student to say how the hare changed from bragging to surprised.

Use: Slides 2–3, 7

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20–45 min **Main activity** 25 min · Pairs

Retell The Tortoise and the Hare in order and agree on the moral.

YOU DO

1. Play Slide 8 Video clip 2 The Tortoise and the Hare 0:00–4:22. Tell students to watch how both racers act and notice the big surprise ending.
2. Read aloud paragraph 1 and hand out 4 picture cards and sentence strips per pair.
3. Model putting pictures in order to show the beginning, middle, and end, and how the ending concludes the action [1].
4. Set Slide 9 task: take turns telling who and what happened, act the slow walk and fast nap, agree on the lesson in one sentence.

STUDENTS DO

1. Watch and listen, then order 4 pictures first, next, last with sentence strips.
2. Take turns retelling using who, what, where and what happened first, next, last [1].
3. Act the walks, agree on the moral sentence, and share with another pair.

Say: With your partner, put your four pictures in order. Take turns telling who was there, what happened first, next, last. Act the slow walk and the fast nap. Agree on the lesson in one sentence.

Worked example: Ordered retell: First - hare brags and race starts. Next - hare zooms then naps under tree while tortoise keeps walking. Last - tortoise passes hare and wins. Moral: Slow and steady wins the race [7]. Partners point to each picture and use who, what, and where [1].

Ask: What happened first, next, last? (First they start racing, next hare naps and tortoise keeps going, last tortoise wins.) · How do the racers act, and what is the surprise? (Hare is speedy then sleepy, tortoise is steady; the slow one wins.)

Check understanding: Visit pairs and ask each to tell first, next, last in 30 seconds. If order is wrong, model with cards again.

Support: Give 3 cards instead of 4, with the first one already placed to show how the beginning introduces the story [1]. **Stretch:** Students add one sentence telling what the hare was thinking and what the tortoise was thinking at the finish.

Use: Slides 8–9 (Video clip 2, 0:00–4:22)

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45–55 min **Practice** 10 min · On their own

Apply the 3 steps to find morals in two more short fables.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 10: Retell what happened first, next, last. Ask how the characters changed. Say the lesson in one short sentence.
2. Hand out Worksheet Task A and point to Passage Three Short Fables paragraphs 1 to 3.
3. Read paragraphs 1 to 3 aloud while students follow, then let them complete the table rows for the moral in a few words.
4. Collect two quick examples to show how characters' actions teach the lesson.

STUDENTS DO

1. Follow paragraphs 1 to 3 and retell first, next, last quietly.
2. Complete Task A table: write each moral in a few words.
3. Share moral sentences with a partner.

Say: Use the same three steps. Retell first, next, last in your head. Ask what the animal or boy did. Write the lesson in just a few words.

Worked example: Paragraph 2: A hungry fox saw sweet grapes high on a vine. He jumped and jumped but could not reach them. At last he walked away and said, 'Those grapes are sour anyway!' [6] Moral: saying you do not want what you cannot have. Paragraph 3: boy shouted Wolf! Wolf! twice with no wolf, then no one believed him when a real wolf came [6]. Moral: If you do not tell the truth, no one will believe you.

Ask: Why does the fox say the grapes are sour? (He wanted them, could not reach them, so he said he did not want them [6].) · What lesson does the boy who cried wolf teach? (If you often say something bad happened when it has not, people may stop believing you [6].)

Check understanding: Look at tables for short correct morals. If blank, give sentence starter: The fox wanted ___. The boy learned ___.

Support: Allow copying the last sentence of each paragraph as the moral, then saying it in own words.
Stretch: Ask students to explain why one wrong moral does not fit the story.

Use: Slide 10, Worksheet Task A

55–60 min **Plenary** 5 min · Whole class

Check fable features and morals against the success criteria.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 11 True or false? Read each line together.
2. Ask students to show thumbs up for true, thumbs down for false and fix false lines.
3. Restate: fable is short with talking animals [6], teaches a moral [7], and we retell first, next, last [1].

STUDENTS DO

1. Vote true or false on each line.
2. Correct false ideas in a full sentence.
3. Say I can retell and I can name the moral.

Say: True or false? A fable is a short story that teaches a lesson. Animals in fables talk like people. Tell me true or false and fix it if it is false.

Ask: True or false: Animals in fables never talk like people? (False. They talk and act like people [6].) · What is the moral of our race today? (Slow and steady wins the race [7].)

Check understanding: Count thumbs for each line. If many miss, reread Slide 3 cards quickly.

Support: Let a student echo a neighbor's correct sentence. **Stretch:** Ask a student to give the moral of the fox or boy in one sentence without looking.

Use: Slide 11

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Retelling details but missing the lesson	Retell lists what happened but no moral sentence	Ask: What did the actions teach? Point to ending line and say it in 6-8 words [7].
Thinking animals in fables act only like animals	Says a fox or hare cannot talk or plan	Remind: in fables animals think and talk like humans while still acting like themselves [6].
Mixing beginning, middle, and end order	Nap placed first or win placed in middle	Reorder cards and label how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action [1].

Support

- Use fewer cards, starters, and picture prompts for ordering and retelling.
- Pre-teach fable, moral, first, next, last with gestures.

Stretch

- Add character thinking, compare two morals, or tell the lesson in own words.
- Explain why a different moral does not fit.

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay with target pairs in main activity to model card order and prompt who, what, where. Scribe moral sentence if needed.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Retell The Tortoise and the Hare: what happened first, next, last?	First race starts, next hare naps and tortoise keeps walking, last tortoise wins.

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What is a moral?	A lesson about how to behave, often at the end of a fable.
What is the lesson of The Boy Who Cried Wolf?	If you do not tell the truth, no one will believe you.

Homework

Tell someone at home the race in order and say its moral in one sentence.

Sources

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