

1. "The Lion and the Mouse" by Aesop, 620-560 BCE

A Lion lay asleep in the forest, his great head resting on his paws. A timid little Mouse came upon him unexpectedly, and in her fright and haste to get away, ran across the Lion's nose. Roused from his nap, the Lion laid his huge paw angrily on the tiny creature to kill her.

"Spare me!" begged the poor Mouse. "Please let me go and some day I will surely repay you."

The Lion was much amused to think that a Mouse could ever help him. But he was generous and finally let the Mouse go.

Some days later, while stalking his prey in the forest, the Lion was caught in the toils of a hunter's net. Unable to free himself, he filled the forest with his angry roaring.

The Mouse knew the voice and quickly found the Lion struggling in the net. Running to one of the great ropes that bound him, she gnawed it until it parted, and soon the Lion was free.

"You laughed when I said I would repay you," said the Mouse. "Now you see that even a Mouse can help a Lion."

1. The theme of this story is...

- A. Lions and mice can be friendly animals.
- B. Hunting is a cruel sport.
- C. You don't have to be big and powerful to do good things.
- D. Always be brave.

2. "The Ant and the Grasshopper" by Aesop, 620-560 BCE

One bright day in late autumn a family of Ants were bustling about in the warm sunshine, drying out the grain they had stored up during the summer, when a starving Grasshopper, his tiddle under his arm, came up and humbly begged for a bite to eat.

"What!" cried the Ants in surprise. "Haven't you stored anything away for the winter? What in the world were you doing all last summer?"

"I didn't have time to store up any food," whined the Grasshopper; "I was so busy making music that before I knew it the summer was gone."

The Ants shrugged their shoulders in disgust. "Making music, were you?" they cried. "Very well, now dance!" And they turned their backs on the Grasshopper and went on with their work.

2. The theme of this story is...

- A. Help others when they're struggling.
- B. Work comes before play.
- C. It's important to store food so that you're prepared for the winter.
- D. Ants are rude insects.

3. "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" by Aesop, 620-560 BCE

There once was a shepherd boy who was bored as he sat on the hillside watching the village sheep.