

Language Arts

Fables are stories that are meant to teach a lesson, often through the actions of animals that act like people.

Literary Elements

The **Moral** of a fable is the lesson it illustrates, which the reader can apply to his or her life.

Metaphor is a type of figurative language that compares two different things or actions to show a likeness between them without using “like” or “as.”

The FOX and the CROW

retold by Mei Kirimoto

A ravenous crow kept a watchful eye on a family eating a picnic lunch.

“I can’t believe that they will eat the entire quantity of food,” thought the hungry crow.

While waiting for the family to finish, the crow took a dip in the pond to pass the time. The crow loved to admire herself. She was attractive and spent a long time looking at her reflection in the water. In her enthusiasm over her own loveliness, she did not notice that the family had eaten and gone.

However, when her stomach grumbled, she remembered how hungry she was and quickly flew back to the picnic spot. There she found that the family had left behind a big piece of cheese. She clamped the cheese in her beak and flew to a branch in a birch tree to enjoy her snack.

Just then a fox appeared. The fox lifted his long nose and smelled the piece of cheese. “Where could the cheese be?” said the tricky fox to himself. “I must investigate. I’m very hungry today.”

He soon spotted the crow with the cheese.



The fox knew the crow quite well. He looked up at her and graciously said, “Why, Miss Crow, don’t you look lovely! The sun shines gloriously on your feathers. Your beauty is a ray of sunlight on a gloomy day.”

The fox saw that the crow was puffing up with each line of praise, so he continued. “Your feathers are of the finest polished ebony. Ah, if only I could hear your sweet voice. Certainly it’s as magnificent as your feathers.”

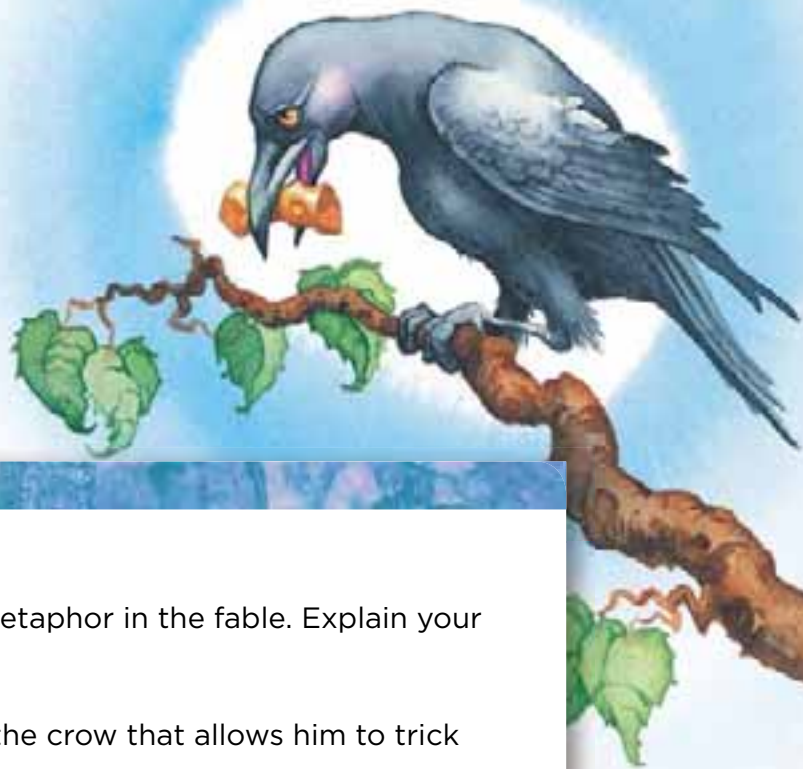
The crow immediately wanted to prove that she did indeed have an impressive voice. She opened her beak and began to sing *Caw, Caw, Caw* with tremendous volume. As she sang, the cheese fell to the

ground.
Faster than a blinking eye, the triumphant fox scooped up the cheese and ate it.
“Dear Miss Crow,” said the fox as he licked his lips, “your voice may be lovely, but you should think before you act.”

MORAL: *Do not trust someone who gives too much praise.*

The moral teaches a lesson.

This metaphor compares beauty to a ray of sunlight.



Connect and Compare

1. Give an example of the use of metaphor in the fable. Explain your choice. **Metaphor**
2. What does the fox know about the crow that allows him to trick her? **Analyze**
3. Think about “The Fox and the Crow” and *The Catch of the Day*. How are the fable and the play similar? How are they different?



Find out more about fables at www.macmillanmh.com

Write an Interview

Writer's Craft

Precise Words

Good writers use **precise words** to convey meaning. In an interview, writing questions that contain precise words will help the interview subject give clear responses.

I interviewed my best friend, Maria.

I used precise words to ask about a particular story.

by Elsa T.

Q: What stories do you find most inspiring?

A: The stories that inspire me the most come from Brazil. I like the trickster tales.

Q. Can you summarize the tale that explains why bats sleep during the day?

A: Yes, that's the tale about a little bat who steals sleep from a lizard. The selfish lizard wants sleep all for himself. The bat tricks him and shares sleep with the whole world. As a reward, the moon shines its brilliance so the bat can sleep during the day and play at night.

Q: I love that story. Why do you like to tell stories?

A: They help me to remember Brazil, and I like to share my family's culture with others.

Your Turn

Does anyone in your family like to tell stories? Interview this person about why stories are important. If no one in your family is a storyteller, interview a librarian at your local library. Prepare your questions beforehand. Use the writer's checklist to check your writing.



Writer's Checklist

- Ideas and Content:** Did I choose the best person to interview?
- Organization:** Did I present what I learned from the interview in a way that makes sense?
- Voice:** Will the readers feel as though I am talking respectfully to the person I interviewed?
- Word Choice:** Did I choose **precise words** that will be easy for my readers to understand?
- Sentence Fluency:** Did I use a variety of sentence types? Will readers want to keep reading?
- Conventions:** Have I used apostrophes and possessives correctly? Did I check my spelling?