

Working together / Stronger together

1.The Bundle of Sticks

Synopsis:

Mrs McKenzie has six sons, but they are always fighting amongst themselves, which makes it hard to get any work done. She shows them the error of their ways by asking each one in turn to snap a bundle of sticks in two. It is too difficult for any of them to snap the whole bundle, but when she unties the bundle and gives them one stick each to snap, it is easy. The sons realise the value of working together, and by doing so, win the top prize in a building competition.

Characters:

- Mrs McKenzie; Peter McKenzie; Paul McKenzie; Patrick McKenzie; Philip McKenzie;
- Frankie McKenzie; Fred McKenzie

Theme(s):

- You can achieve more by working together than by fighting
- You are stronger as a team than as individuals

Moral:

- Unity is strength

2.The Dog, the Cockerel and the Fox

Synopsis:

A cockerel and a dog live on a farm, where they are very good at their respective jobs waking everyone up in the morning, and letting everyone know when there was some on eat the gate. One day they decide to go on an adventure, although the cockerel needs some reassurance from the dog that it will be protected against foxes. At sunset they come to a wood, and find a hollow tree. The dog can sleep inside the tree, and the cockerel can roost in the branches. The dog reassures the cockerel that no fox will find him in the tree unless he crows. However, in the morning the cockerel forgets himself and crows, attracting a fox, who tries to trick the cockerel into letting him up on to the branch. The cockerel tricks the fox in his turn, by saying that his porter will let him in at the bottom of the tree. The porter is, of course, the dog, who scares the fox away.

Characters:

- Dog; Cockerel; Fox

Theme(s):

- Friendship and mutual assistance
- Working together
- The importance of good preparation

Moral:

- Be prepared

Mutual kindness and favours / Helping each other

1. The Ant and the Dove

Synopsis:

An ant is dying of thirst, due to all the water in the forest having been dried up in hot weather. The only source of water is the river, so the ant decides to drink from that, despite knowing how dangerous it is. Sure enough, the river sweeps him away, and he cries desperately for help. A dove helps the ant to safety by helping him climb on to a leaf, and disappears before the ant can thank her. However, the ant is able to return the favour when two hunters come with the aim of catching the dove. He bites the feet of the hunters, preventing them from catching the doves and causing them to runaway.

Characters:

- Dove; Ant; Hunters

Theme(s):

- Mutual kindness and favours
- Size not necessarily equating to effectiveness

Moral:

- Do someone a good turn and they may do the same for you in return
- One good turn deserves another

2. The Lion and the Mouse

Synopsis:

A mouse happens upon a sleeping lion in the forest. Unwisely, he climbs up onto the lion and boasts about how mice need not be scared of lazy lions. The lion, by now not asleep, grabs the mouse and prepares to eat it. The mouse pleads for its life by claiming that one day it will be able to help the lion. The lion, finding this ridiculous thought very funny, lets the mouse go. The next day, the mouse is indeed able to help the lion, who is trapped in a hunter's net. The mouse gnaws through the rope to save the lion, who thanks him and praises his courage.

Characters:

- Mouse; Lion

Theme(s):

- Bravery
- Mutual kindness and favours
- Size not necessarily equating to effectiveness

Moral:

- Friends are very useful, even if they are very small

Friendship

1. The Fox and the Stork

Synopsis:

A stork arrives in the forest, and is looking to make new friends. The small birds advise him not to make friends with the fox, but the fox is charming, showing him round the woods and then inviting him round for supper. At supper, the fox plays a cruel trick. He serves soup on a shallow dish, which the stork cannot eat from using his long beak. The stork gets its revenge by inviting the fox for supper in return, and serving it inside a tall, thin jar into which the fox cannot get its snout. Eventually the fox gets the jar stuck on its snout. The stork pulls it off...and the fox apologises for having played the original trick.

Characters:

- Fox; Stork; Small birds

Theme(s):

- Getting a taste of one's own medicine
- Mutual forgiveness
- Friendship

Moral:

- If you are going to play tricks on people, expect them to be played on you in return

2. Androcles and the Lion

Synopsis:

Androcles, a slave, is mistreated by his master, so attempts to escape by running away into a forest. After a while, he stops to rest, but encounters a fiercely roaring lion. Androcles fears that he will be eaten, but in fact the lion is roaring from the pain of a thorn in its paw. Androcles helps the lion by pulling out the thorn and washing the wound. Soon afterwards, Androcles is recaptured by his master, and imprisoned. His punishment will be to be fed to a lion in the big arena, watched by the Emperor and a large crowd. However, the lion turns out to be the same one that Androcles had helped, and therefore greets the slave in a friendly way. The Emperor, impressed by the power of their friendship, frees both Androcles and the lion.

Characters:

- Androcles; Master; Lion; Emperor

Theme(s):

- The power of friendship
- Slavery and the desire to escape from cruelty

Moral:

- Do someone a good turn and they may do the same for you in return

Over confidence / pride & pretence

1: The Hare and the Tortoise

Synopsis:

A hare boasts to the other animals about how fast he can run. When none of them responds initially to his challenge for a race, he taunts them that they are too scared even to try. When the tortoise then speaks up, the hare scoffs that he won't even waste his time racing the slowest creature in the world. The tortoise returns the taunt, claiming that the hare must be scared of being beaten. When some of the animals laugh at this, the hare agrees to a race, to take place a week later. The tortoise spends the week in training, but continues to move very slowly, and the other animals wonder if the race is a good idea. Nevertheless, there is a large crowd of animals on the day of the race. As the race starts, the hare roars off. When he stops to look back, the tortoise has barely crossed the starting line. The hare taunts the tortoise that he will be able to stop for a rest and still beat him. However, when the hare goes to sleep in the sun, he sleeps for so long that the tortoise is able to overtake him. As the tortoise nears the finishing line, the animals cheer. This wakes up the hare, who runs as fast as he can to catch up again, but the tortoise just makes it to the finish in time.

Characters:

- Hare; Tortoise; Fox; Badger; Crow; Rabbit

Theme(s):

- Defeat of arrogance and over-confidence
- Courageous underdog

Moral:

- Don't be over-confident
- Even if you do not think you can succeed, it is still good to put in the best effort that you can

2. The Donkey in the Lion's Skin

Synopsis:

Tired of being laughed at by the other animals, a donkey wishes it was something else. Its wish seems to be granted when it finds a lion costume. When it puts it on, it starts to inspire respect in the other animals. When it comes across a fox it becomes over-confident, thinking it will sound like a lion if it tries to roar. The resulting bray gives it away, and the fox pulls off its costume, making the other animals laugh at the donkey again.

Characters:

- Donkey; Giraffe; Hippo; Crocodile; Fox

Theme(s):

- Beware of over-confidence

Moral:

- Be confident in yourself

We all have our strengths and weaknesses

1.The Lion and the Mouse

Synopsis:

A mouse happens upon a sleeping lion in the forest. Unwisely, he climbs up onto the lion and boasts about how mice need not be scared of lazy lions. The lion, by now not asleep, grabs the mouse and prepares to eat it. The mouse pleads for its life by claiming that one day it will be able to help the lion. The lion, finding this ridiculous thought very funny, lets the mouse go. The next day, the mouse is indeed able to help the lion, who is trapped in a hunter's net. The mouse gnaws through the rope to save the lion, who thanks him and praises his courage.

Characters:

- Mouse; Lion

Theme(s):

- Size not necessarily equating to effectiveness
- Mutual kindness and favours

Moral:

- Friends can be very useful, even if they are very small

2.The Lion and the Elephant

Synopsis:

A lion is awoken each morning by the crowing of a cockerel. The lion comes to be afraid of the noise of the cock's crow, and is ashamed of himself for this, given that he is so big. The lion canvasses opinion amongst other animals, but none confess to being afraid of the cock's crow. However, the elephant does admit to being afraid of a small insect – it fears that it will be done for if the insect flies inside its ears. For this reason, the elephant is constantly shaking its head around. The lion finds it hard to believe that such a large animal should be afraid of such a small one, and thereby realises its own fear is irrational.

Characters:

- Lion; Monkeys; Hippo; Crocodile; Elephant

Theme(s):

- Small things can be very powerful
- Irrational fears

Moral:

- Don't let yourself be afraid of something for no good reason