

Sour Grapes and Other Fables

*Written by Margaret Mooney
Illustrated by Chantal Stewart*

Level 21

Getting ready for reading

You might like to tell the students some fables, such as ‘The Tortoise and the Hare’, prior to the guided reading session. While telling the students some fables, focus on the features: short text; animals that talk; includes a moral.

During the guided reading session you might say: *Can you think about the fables that I have been telling you lately? What were they like? How did they start? How did they finish?*

Talking through the book

Give each student a copy of the book. You might say: *This is a book of fables. What would you expect the characters to be? How would you expect each fable to finish?*

Reading the book

Students read the book individually while the teacher observes each student’s reading behaviours and prompts students to use cues to read unfamiliar words. The teacher may select an additional teaching focus based on these observations.

Returning to the text

Select the most appropriate teaching focus for the learning needs of the group. Choose one or more of the following.

Being a meaning maker

Encourage the students to support their answers with evidence from the book as they discuss these questions.

‘Sour Grapes’:

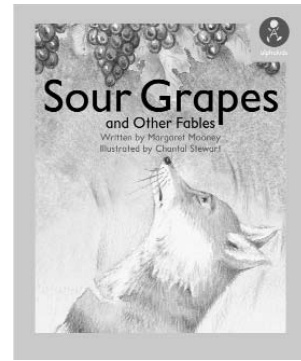
What did the fox want to eat?

Why couldn’t he reach the grapes?

Were the grapes really sour?

‘Danger Ahead’:

Was the lion really sick?



TEXT FEATURES

- **This book is a collection of four short fables.**
- **Each fable features animals that can talk and concludes with a moral.**
- **A preface explains what a fable is.**
- **Colour illustrations extend and enhance the text.**

*Why were there tracks going into the cave, but none coming out?
Which animal was the smartest?*

‘A Tiny Bite’:

How did the dove save the ant?

What does ‘One good turn deserves another’ mean?

‘Dog and Bone’:

Why did the dog think that the bone in the river was bigger than the one in his mouth?

What is this fable trying to teach you?

Being a code breaker

Students could investigate the letters used to represent the short /o/ sound in the book: *fox, was, what, dog, wandered, off, not, want, along, problem, dropped, onto, on, from, shop.*

Being a text user

Discuss:

What is a preface?

How do we read it?

What is a moral?

Why is it included at the end of each fable?

Being a text critic

Discuss:

What is the same about each story in the book?

Why do all the stories have animal characters?

Literacy learning centres – follow-up activities

WRITING CENTRE

Students could use the model of a fable presented in the book to write their own fables. These could be collected and published as a class book.

TEXT CENTRE

Students could work in cooperative pairs to write a list of features all fables have.

INTERACTIVE LITERACY CENTRE

Students could work in cooperative groups to make audiotapes of one or more of the fables in the book. They might be encouraged to use dramatic voices and sound effects.

WORD CENTRE

Students could cut out a large orange ‘o’ and write words with the short /o/ sound on it.

Keeping track

Students can reflect on and evaluate their own learning. This can be done by asking them to complete these two sentences:

Today I have learned

_____.

Tomorrow I need to work on learning to

_____.