

Lesson 44: Aesop's Fable — The Dog in the Manger

PLL PART TWO



Classical Fable

A dog was lying in a manger. A hungry ox saw the hay in the manger and wanted to eat it. The dog barked and snapped at the ox, and would not let him touch it. The ox said, "You are a selfish dog, for you can not eat the hay, and you will not allow others to eat it."

Fable Focus: A fable is a short tale teaching a moral truth • Identifying character motivations • Quoted dialogue.

1 COMPREHENSION & LITERARY DISCOVERY

Read the story of the dog and the ox carefully. Write your answers on the guidelines.

1. **Story Setting:** Where was the dog lying? In a _____
2. **Conflict:** Why could the hungry ox not eat the hay? _____
3. **Genre:** What do we call a short story with animals that teaches a life lesson? A _____
4. **Vocabulary:** What word did the ox use to describe the dog's behavior? _____

2 MORAL MEANING & DIALOGUE MECHANICS

Examine why the dog was called selfish and how direct speech is punctuated.

A. Understanding "Selfish": A selfish person or animal:

[] Shares generously with friends [] Keeps what they cannot use from others

B. The Ox's Direct Speech: Write the quotation marks and introductory comma in the correct places:

The ox said _____ You are a selfish dog... _____

3 RETELLING THE FABLE IN YOUR OWN WORDS

In two complete sentences, retell the story of *The Dog in the Manger* and state its moral lesson.

Story Retelling: _____

Moral Lesson: _____

4 SHARING & KINDNESS AT SCHOOL

Think of a time at recess or during art class when children should share toys or crayons instead of acting like the dog. Write one encouraging rule for the classroom.

Classroom Rule: _____

1 LITERARY HERITAGE: THE CLASSICAL FABLE

Pedagogical Value of Fables (Serl/Aesop): Fables provide concise, powerful narrative structures that teach ethics through metaphorical animal behavior. The idiom "dog in the manger" has entered common English parlance, denoting one who spitefully prevents others from enjoying what is useless to oneself.

Standards Addressed: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2 (Fables & Moral Lessons), RL.2.3 (Character Response to Challenge), L.2.2 (Quotation marks & commas in dialogue), W.2.3 (Narrative retelling).

✓ COMPLETE ANSWER KEY

Section 1: Comprehension & Literary Discovery

1. Setting: *manger* (a wooden feeding box or trough for farm animals).
2. Conflict: *The dog barked and snapped at the ox and would not let him touch the hay.*
3. Genre: *fable* (accept: *parable* or *moral story*).
4. Vocabulary: *selfish*.

Section 2: Moral Meaning & Dialogue Mechanics

A. Definition of Selfish: [✓] **Keeps what they cannot use from others.**

B. Dialogue Mechanics: *The ox said, "You are a selfish dog..."*

- Comma after *said*.
- Opening quotation mark before *You*; closing quotation mark after terminal period.

Section 3: Retelling the Fable in Your Own Words (Sample Response)

A dog lay in a hay manger and growled at a hungry ox. Even though the dog could not eat hay, he refused to let the ox eat.

Moral: *Do not begrudge others what you cannot enjoy yourself. (We should share and not be selfish.)*

Section 4: Sharing & Kindness at School (Sample Answers)

- *We should pass the crayons to our classmates when we are done coloring.*
- *If I am not using the swing, I will happily let another child swing.*

! DIAGNOSTIC GUIDE & MORAL INQUIRY

- **Clarifying "Manger":** Urban children may not know what a manger is. Explain that it is an open trough that holds hay or oats for livestock in a barn.
- **The Essence of Selfishness:** Ensure students grasp that the dog does not even like hay! The dog's malice is keeping food away from someone who is truly hungry.
- **Quotation Mark Placement:** Check that the comma follows *said* before the quotation mark opens, and that the ending period stays inside the closing quote.

★ SCORING RUBRIC (20 POINTS TOTAL)

Evaluation Metric	Exemplary (5 Pts)	Proficient (3-4 Pts)	Developing (1-2 Pts)
Fable Comprehension	Accurately defines a fable; clearly explains the conflict between dog and ox.	Answers comprehension questions correctly; recognizes story teaches a moral.	Misinterprets the setting or motives; leaves key questions incomplete.
Vocabulary & Moral	Explains 'selfish' deeply; articulates the core moral of sharing and fairness.	Identifies 'selfish' definition correctly; understands moral lesson.	Struggles to define 'selfish'; moral reflection is vague or missing.
Dialogue Mechanics	Inserts introductory comma and quotation marks with flawless precision.	Quotation marks included; minor error with comma or period placement.	Omits quotation marks or places them inside words incorrectly.
Retelling & Application	Writes an expressive, coherent summary in own words; actionable school rule.	Retells the fable clearly; writes a thoughtful classroom rule.	Retelling is fragmented or copies text verbatim; rule is incomplete.