

Unit Ten

Fables

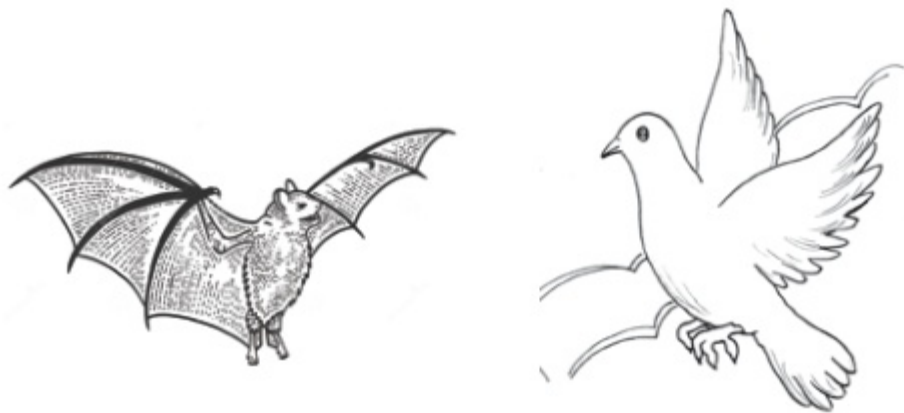


After we have studied this unit, we will be able to

- describe pictures
- read and understand texts through silent reading
- infer meaning from context
- ask and answer questions
- take part in discussions
- identify main points of a text

Lesson 1: The Truthful Dove (1)

Key word : shelter grumpy unwillingly generous flattery



A Talk about the picture and read the story of the dove and the bat.

Once upon a time, a dove and a bat were very good friends. One day the two friends decided to set out on a journey. They flew over the rivers and hills and came to a big jungle. Both the friends were very tired, they needed to sit down and take a rest. Soon night fell and it was dark all around. A storm rose. It started to rain heavily. The dove and the bat started to look for shelter.

They came upon a century-old rain tree. An owl had his nest in that tree. The dove and the bat knocked at the owl's door. The old grumpy owl opened the door. The dove and the bat requested him to give them shelter. The owl unwillingly let them in. The two birds were hungry too. They begged for some food. The selfish owl was not happy. However, he shared his dinner with them. The dove was so tired that she could hardly eat. But the bat was sly. He ate greedily. He began to praise the owl with the thought of getting more food. The bat said, "O wise and brave owl, you are the most generous person I have ever seen. You are powerful and mighty."

The owl was very pleased at the bat's flattery. He puffed and ruffled himself, trying to look as wise and brave as possible. Then he turned to the dove and asked, "Now little dove, what do you think about me?"

B Ask and answer the following questions.

- 1 Who were the two good friends ?
- 2 What did they decide to do ?
- 3 Why were they tired ?
- 4 Why did they look for a shelter ?
- 5 Where did the dove and the bat come ?
- 6 Whose nest was there on the tree?
- 7 Which words tell you that the owl was not good at heart?
- 8 Why couldn't the dove eat?
- 9 Why did the bat praise the owl?
- 10 Which words pleased the owl?
- 11 What action of the owl tells you that he wanted to hear more good things about him?

C Read the story again and make sentences from the table.

The dove and the bat		very tired.
	decided	to fly over rivers and hills.
They	were	to look for a shelter.
		very good friends.

D True or false? If false, give the correct information.

- 1 The dove and the bat decided to go for a flying competition.
- 2 They reached a big jungle.
- 3 They were afraid because a storm was blowing.
- 4 The dove and the bat were looking for a place to spend the night.
- 5 The owl gladly asked the bat and the dove to come in.
- 6 The owl and the birds ate together.
- 7 The bat sincerely praised the owl.

E Which words would you use to describe an eagle or a crow?

Lesson 2: The Truthful Dove (2)

Key words : wondering insincere speech praise host grateful

A Look at the picture and talk about it.



B Read more about the three birds and write answers to the following questions.

All this time the dove was listening to her friend's false praises. She was wondering how insincere his praises were. The dove hung her head down and was quiet. The owl got impatient. He wanted to hear more praises. He looked at the dove and asked, "Don't you have any good thing to say about me?" The bat joined the owl, "Yes, don't you have any words of praise for our kind host?" The dove was ashamed of her friend bat and kept her eyes down. The owl urged the dove, "Come on, say something!"

The dove lifted her head slowly and said, "Master owl, thank you very much for the shelter you have given me, thank you for the food you have offered me. I will remain ever grateful for this".

Questions

- 1 What does the word 'insincere' mean in the story?
- 2 Why did the dove think that the bat is insincere?
- 3 What made the owl impatient?
- 4 Why was the dove ashamed of her friend?

C True or false? If false, give the correct information.

- 1 The bat was very sincere when he praised the owl.
- 2 The owl wanted to hear more good things about himself.
- 3 The dove was very harsh to the owl.

Lesson 3: The Truthful Dove (3)

Key words: gracious noble deserve hospitality ungrateful echo vicious leathery vain

A Look at the picture.

- 1 What do you see?
- 2 How do the three birds look?
- 3 Why do you think they look so?
- 4 Who looks very happy? Can you guess why?

B Read more about the three birds and find out about their fate. Work in pairs and write the answers to the questions that follow.

"What?" cried the bat. "Is that all you have to say to our gracious host? Is he not the wisest, bravest and most generous of all animals and birds? **Don't you have** praise for his noble character as well as for his goodness to us? I am ashamed of you! You do not deserve such hospitality. You do not deserve this shelter."

"You are an ungrateful bird, and the bat is right. You do not deserve this generous hospitality which I have offered. Get out! Be off, I say!" said the owl.

"Yes, get lost!" echoed the bat, flapping his leathery wings. The two heartless creatures fell upon the poor little dove and drove her out into the dark and stormy night.

But the owl and the bat did not go unpunished for their act of heartlessness. The bat can never fly in broad daylight. He has to wait for the sun to go down. And do you know what happened to the vain owl? Well, he is blind as long as the sun is up. He cannot hunt or feed himself unless it is dark. So the two vicious creatures with their dark heart live in the dark.

On the other hand, the dove is rewarded for her truthfulness. Her name shall be used by poets as long as the world lasts to rhyme with "LOVE".

(Adapted from *The Curious Book of Birds* by Abbie Farwell Brown)

Questions

- 1 Why did the bat say that he was ashamed of the dove?
- 2 Why was the owl angry with the dove?
- 3 What did the owl and the bat do to the dove?
- 4 How were the bat and the owl punished at the end?
- 5 What reward did the dove get?

C Make a list of the words used in the story to describe the three birds. add some of your own words.

Owl :
Bat :
Dove :

D Discuss in groups and write the moral of the story.

Lesson 4: A Summer Story

A) Look at the image and discuss in groups the possible answers to the questions.



Illustrated by K.G. Subramanyan

1. What comes first in your mind when you look at the image?
2. How do crows actually drink water?

B. Now read this story written by K.G. Subramanyan and answer to the questions that follow:

July, but there was still no sign of rain. Clouds crossed the sky but they only made the heat hotter. I was thirsty. But what could a crow like me do on a day like this? There was no water anywhere. The wells were dry and there were no waterholes. I would have to fly miles and miles to reach anywhere in this heat unless I get to a town.

Crows know that, in times like this, to go where men live is best. They put things by when things are plenty for days when they are scarce. So I flew towards the nearest town over a dry and barren land. When I reached there, it was noon. The streets were empty. The doors were barred. The cisterns and horse-troughs were dry. There was no water anywhere. Except in a small bottle on a pushcart at the street corner. I thanked heaven for that.

But I had thanked too early. How was I going to get the water in the bottle unless I could get my beak in? My beak was too fat and neck of the bottle, too narrow. So, as usual, I went to Grandpa for advice. A doddering old crow he was, but he had seen the world. And, often, had useful things to say. Sure enough, he had a way. Go and get pebbles from the riverbed, he said, and drop them in. When they fill the bottle, the water will come up to the brim for pebbles and water can't be in the same place. This he'd learnt from his old man. And his old man had learnt it from an old Greek crow called Ar-crow-medes

That was great! I didn't even wait to thank him. Off I went to the riverbed where pebbles there were in all shapes and sizes. Pebbles are tricky things for crows to carry. They slip out or slide in. So I had to carry them carefully, piece by piece. On a day like this, it was not easy to do. I panted and sweated and the colour of my wings started to run. And I grew thirstier each time. So, on my last flight, I thought I would carry two together. But that wasn't easy to do either for one would always slip away. Still, I made an effort and carried two some distance. But, as luck would have it, plop went one on the glass roof of the greenhouse. And clitter-clatter went the glass. Not a great loss to me. But, with a shudder came the thought that I could break my bottle, too, with such a pebble. And Grandpa's trick may not work.

That made me mad. I flew helter-skelter. Until, suddenly, I noticed the poster over the bus stop. To think that it had been there all the time and I, like a fool, had never lifted my head to see it. If men can drink through straws, then so can crows. If they are clever. Straws were plenty in the haystacks. I drew a few out, clipped and cleaned them. And used them the way men do. I don't blame Grandpa, though. He was nice in his own way. But each age has its own bag of tricks.

Note

Barren – Land that is dry and unable to produce crops or plants; empty.

Cisterns – Large containers used to hold water.

Barred – Closed off or blocked, preventing entry.

Pushcart – A small cart with wheels used to carry things, often pushed by hand.

Doddering – Moving in an unsteady way, often because of old age; shaky.

Helter-skelter – In a hurried or confused way; chaotic.

Clipped – Cut or trimmed down to a smaller size.

C. Match the correct element with its appropriate description.

Elements	Descriptions
The Crow	A reference to the famous Greek scientist Archimedes.
Grandpa	The modern solution the crow finds by looking at a poster.
Pebbles	The place where the crow finds pebbles to fill the bottle.
Ar-crow-medes	The container with water but too narrow for the crow's beak.
The Bottle	The old crow who offers traditional advice to solve problems.
Straws	The destination where the crow searches for water.
The Greenhouse Incident	The source of the crow's realization about using straws.
The Poster	Where a pebble breaks glass, making the crow rethink its plan.
The Riverbed	The main character of the story who is searching for water.
The Town	The initial method suggested to raise water in the bottle.

D. Answer to the following questions.

1. What problem is the crow facing at the beginning of the story?
2. What advice does Grandpa give the crow to get the water from the bottle?
3. Why does the crow decide not to use pebbles to raise the water in the bottle?
4. How does the crow eventually solve the problem of drinking water from the bottle?
5. What does the crow learn about solving problems by the end of the story?

E. Have you read the original fable about the thirsty crow? Discuss with in groups what changes that the writer has made here.**F. Choose a fable that you like and retell the story using the current context. Then, share it with the class.**