

Traveling the **SILK ROAD**

Explore **FABLES**

ACTIVITIES FOR GRADES 3-5

Overview

Students will learn what a fable is, explore fables told along the Silk Road, and then create their own.

Background for Educator

Fables are short stories that teach a moral lesson, like Aesop's "The Tortoise and the Hare." The characters are usually common people or animals that speak and act like humans. Fables often reveal how cultures understand their surroundings and which values they hold dear. As the stories traveled across generations and cultures, the characters and settings would often change, but the lesson of the story stayed the same. For instance, the elements of *Little Red Riding Hood*—whose origin can be traced to the Norse in the 13th century—can be found in *Peter and the Wolf* (Russia), *Borreguita and the Coyote* (Mexico), and *The Story of Grandpa and the Tiger* (China/Taiwan).

Elements from fables have been adopted for use in songs, games, poetry, jokes, and sayings; characters or motifs may appear in jewelry, clothing, and textiles. Additional information and examples can be found at teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/index.htm.

Before Your Visit

Class Discussion: What is a fable?

Engage students by telling a familiar fable or by reading one. Then ask what kind of story they think they just heard. (*Answer: a fable.*) Encourage students to name fables they may have heard in school or at home, and to talk about the moral of the story. (*Some common fables and their morals include: The Boy Who Cried Wolf: Don't lie; even when liars tell the truth, people won't believe them. Three Little Pigs: Hard work can fend off danger. Other fables can be found at pantheon.org/areas/folklore/fables/*) Use the discussion to help students come away with a common understanding/definition of what a fable is.

Additional Activities

www2.scholastic.com/browse/lessonplan.jsp?id=578

Visit the Scholastic site for an extended activity on fables, where students can practice telling stories out loud as well as writing them online.

New York State Social Studies Standards

Standard 2—World History

Performance Indicator 2.1c

Study about different world cultures and civilizations focusing on their accomplishments, contributions, values, beliefs, and traditions.

During Your Visit

Traveling the Silk Road Exhibition

3rd floor (30-45 minutes)

To explore fables in the exhibition, direct students to the Samarkand section. Find the large video screen titled "Stories of the Silk Road." Have students



watch the three animations ("The Stonemason That Was Never Satisfied," "The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs," and "The Lion and The Hare") and complete the first page of the **student worksheet**. Then have each student select an interesting object from elsewhere in the exhibition, and draw it on the back of the worksheet. Tell them that back in the classroom, they will create a story around this object.

Plan how your students will explore *Traveling the Silk Road*. Distribute copies of the **student worksheets** to students before coming to the Museum.

In *Traveling the Silk Road*, students can stamp Passports as they enter each of the four cities. Pick up the Passports at the exhibition entrance.

Stout Hall of Asian Peoples**2nd floor (20-30 minutes)**

After leaving the Silk Road exhibition, descend the staircase one flight and enter the Stout Hall of Asian Peoples through the door to your left. Upon entering, direct your students to “Samarakand: Crossroad of Asia” for a close-up view of items that may have been traded along the Silk Road. Then find the China (yellow walls) and India (red walls) sections towards the center of the hall. You may ask students to select an interesting object from either of these sections, and draw it on the back of their worksheets. Tell them that back in the classroom, they will create a story around this object. If there’s time, you and your students can visit the Tribes of Central Asia section.

Back in the Classroom**Class Discussion: Review “Silk Road Fables”**

amnh.org/ology/silkroadfables

Watch the animations of the three fables from the exhibition online. Ask students which words are unfamiliar. (*Unfamiliar words may include: stonemason—a craftsman who cuts, shapes, or works with stone or brick that are then used in to create buildings; and hare—a long-eared mammal similar to a large rabbit.*) You may also use this time to give students a chance to complete their student worksheets.

Activity: Create a Fable

Part I: Remind students of the definition of “fable” (see pre-visit activity). Draw a table on the board and list the three “Silk Road Stories.” As a class, fill in the table with information (e.g. characters, locations, lessons or morals) that the students gathered on their student worksheets and/or came up with after watching each of the tales online. (*See answer key on the student worksheet.*) Discuss what the three tales have in common, and where they differ. (*Answers may include: The stonemason and the owner of the goose both wanted something more or different from what they possessed. Both learned that they should have been satisfied in the first place. All three stories have a “magical” component, such as wishes being granted, a goose laying golden eggs, and talking animals.*)

Part II: Read and review at least three other fables with your students. (For ideas, see the online resources below.) Add the names and lessons learned to the table your class created on the board. Using the information (e.g. characters, lessons or morals) the class has gathered about various fables and objects at the Museum, have students work in small groups to create their own fables, with original sets of characters and moral lessons. They can write and illustrate the fable, create a play, or produce a shadow puppet story.

Online Resources**An Explanation of Folktales, Fairytales, Myths, Legends, Fables**

eve-tal.com/Folktales.html#What_a_Folktale_Isnt

A website that compares and describes the history and characteristics of fables, folktales, myths, and fairytales.

Folklinks

www.pitt.edu/~dash/folklinks.html

Resources that include links to fables, information about the origin of specific fables and academic resources.

SurLaLune Fairytales

surlalunefairytales.com/fishermanwife/other.html

A resource for folk and fairy tales including annotations, information about similar fables across different cultures, and the history of fables.

1 Go to the Samarkand section of the exhibition. Find a large video screen labeled “Stories of the Silk Road” and listen to the three animated fables.

Write down the name of each story.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

On the map below, circle the place that each story comes from and label it. Draw arrows that show the direction each story traveled.



Choose one story. Write the story’s name and the lesson the story teaches.

Name of Story: _____

What lesson(s) does this story teach? _____

2 Find one or more objects that interest you. Draw and label the object(s) on the back of this worksheet.

- 1** Go to the Samarkand section of the exhibition. Find a large video screen labeled “Stories of the Silk Road” and listen to the three animated fables.

ANSWER KEY

Write down the name of each story.

1. Answer: The Stonemason that was Never Satisfied
2. Answer: The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs
3. Answer: The Fable of the Lion and the Hare

On the map below, circle the place that each story comes from and label it. Draw arrows that show the direction each story traveled.



Choose one story. Write the story’s name and the lesson the story teaches.

Name of Story: _____

What lesson(s) does this story teach? Lessons may include:

The Stonemason that was Never Satisfied

- Don’t be afraid of hard work.
- Happiness comes from inside.

The Goose that Laid the Golden Egg

- Greed destroys the source of good.
- Think before you act.
- People who want too much can lose everything.

The Fable of the Lion and the Hare

- People should use common sense.
- People with wit and intelligence have power.
- Do not be cruel
- Do not be proud.

- 2** Find one or more objects that interest you. Draw and label the object(s) on the back of this worksheet.

New York State STANDARDS

NEW YORK STATE SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS FOR LEARNING

Elementary

Standard 2: World History

Students:

- 2.1c study about different world cultures and civilizations focusing on their accomplishments, contributions, values, beliefs, and traditions.
- 2.2c compare important events and accomplishments from different time periods in world history.
- 2.3a understand the roles and contributions of individuals and groups to social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, technological, and religious practices and activities.
- 2.3b gather and present information about important developments from world history
- 2.4a consider different interpretations of key events and developments in world history and understand the differences in these accounts.
- 2.4b explore the lifestyles, beliefs, traditions, rules and laws, and social/cultural needs .and wants of people during different periods in history and in different parts of the world
- 2.4c view historic events through the eyes of those who were there, as shown in their art, writings, music, and artifacts.

Standard 3: Geography

Students:

- 3.1a study about how people live, work, and utilize natural resources.
- 3.1d identify and compare the physical, human, and cultural characteristics of different regions and people.
- 3.1e investigate how people depend on and modify the physical environment.
- 3.2a ask geographic questions about where places are located; why they are located where they are; what is important about their locations; and how their locations are related to the location of other people and places.

Standard 4: Economics

Students:

- 4.1a know some ways individuals and groups attempt to satisfy their basic needs and wants by utilizing scarce resources.
- 4.1d study about how the availability and distribution of resources is important to a nation's economic growth.
- 4.1e understand how societies organize their economies to answer three fundamental economic questions: What goods and services shall be produced and in what quantities? How shall goods and services be produced? For whom shall goods and services be produced?
- 4.1f investigate how production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of goods and services are economic decisions with which all societies and nations must deal.

New York State STANDARDS (cont'd)

Middle School

Standard 2: World History

Students:

- 2.1b know some important historic events and developments of past civilizations.
- 2.1c interpret and analyze documents and artifacts related to significant developments and events in world history.
- 2.2c study about major turning points in world history by investigating the causes and other factors that brought about change and the results of these changes.
- 2.3a investigate the roles and contributions of individuals and groups in relation to key social, political, cultural, and religious practices throughout world history.
- 2.3b interpret and analyze documents and artifacts related to significant developments and events in world history.
- 2.4c view history through the eyes of those who witnessed key events and developments in world history by analyzing their literature, diary accounts, letters, artifacts, art, music, architectural drawings, and other documents.

Standard 3: Geography

Students:

- 3.1a map information about people, places, and environments.
- 3.1c investigate why people and places are located where they are located and what patterns can be perceived in these locations.
- 3.1d describe the relationships between people and environments and the connections between people and places.

Standard 4: Economics

Students:

- 4.1a explain how societies and nations attempt to satisfy their basic needs and wants by utilizing scarce capital, natural, and human resources.
- 4.1b define basic economic concepts such as scarcity, supply and demand, markets, opportunity costs, resources, productivity, economic growth, and systems.

High School

Standard 2: World History

Students:

- 2.1b understand the development and connectedness of Western civilization and other civilizations and cultures in many areas of the world and over time.
- 2.1d understand the broad patterns, relationships, and interactions of cultures and civilizations during particular eras and across eras.
- 2.2e investigate key events and developments and major turning points in world history to identify the factors that brought about change and the long-term effects of these changes.
- 2.3a analyze the roles and contributions of individuals and groups to social, political, economic, cultural, and religious practices and activities.
- 2.3b explain the dynamics of cultural change and how interactions between and among cultures has affected various cultural groups throughout the world.
- 2.3c examine the social/cultural, political, economic, and religious norms and values of Western and other world cultures.
- 2.4b interpret and analyze documents and artifacts related to significant developments and events in world history.

New York State STANDARDS (cont'd)

Standard 3: Geography

Students:

- 3.1a understand how to develop and use maps and other graphic representations to display geographic issues, problems, and questions.
- 3.1d understand the development and interactions of social/cultural, political, economic, and religious systems in different regions of the world.
- 3.1e analyze how the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of the Earth's surface .
- 3.1f explain how technological change affects people, places, and regions.

Standard 4: Economics

Students:

- 4.1a analyze the effectiveness of varying ways societies, nations, and regions of the world attempt to satisfy their basic needs and wants by utilizing scarce resources.
- 4.1f explain how economic decision making has become global as a result of an interdependent world economy.

NEW YORK STATE SCIENCE CORE CURRICULUM

Elementary

LE7.1a Humans depend on their natural and constructed environments.

LE 7.1b Over time humans have changed their environment by cultivating crops raising animals, creating shelter, using energy, manufacturing goods, developing transportation, changing populations, and carrying out other activities.

High School

Living Environment Standard 1

1.1b Learning about the historical development of scientific concepts or about individuals who have contributed to scientific knowledge provides a better understanding of scientific inquiry and the relationship between science and society.

Living Environment Standard 4

1.1b An ecosystem is shaped by the nonliving environment as well as its interacting species. The world contains a wide diversity of physical conditions, which creates a variety of environments.

7.3a Societies must decide on proposals which involve the introduction of new technologies. Individuals need to make decisions which will assess risks, costs, benefits, and trade-offs.

7.3b The decisions of one generation both provide and limit the range of possibilities open to the next generation.