

Now you will read two fables that are based on stories from the same author. As you read the fables, pay close attention to the characters, settings, and plots. You will answer questions about both stories.

Read "The Cat and the Mice" and "The Mice Have a Meeting" and answer the questions that follow.

The Cat and the Mice

adapted from Aesop's fable

1 There was once a house in the country that was filled with field mice. The mice lived happily there, stealing scraps of food whenever the master and mistress of the house were not around. They lived a happy, carefree life full of comforts.

2 Well, as luck would have it, a sly cat heard about this house of mice. She was very interested, indeed, for cats quite enjoy snacking on mice.

3 "That's the place for me," said the cat as she licked her lips in anticipation.

4 The cat slipped into the house and set about catching the mice, one by one. She was very happy, but the remaining mice did not like this turn of events one bit.

5 "This is unacceptable!" they cried, and they formed an emergency plan. All of the mice ran to their little holes. They vowed to stay inside until the cat grew tired of waiting and would finally leave.

6 The cat was very clever though, and she understood their plan at once.

7 "How awkward!" she thought to herself. "There is nothing left to do now but coax them out of their holes."

8 And so, after thinking for a moment, the cat decided to approach one of them.

9 "Hello in there," she purred gently into the hole. "Won't you please come out and play?"

10 But the mouse did not budge.

11 The cat tried for hours, and soon she grew very tired of purring and became very hungry. Finally, she realized she needed to try something else if she were ever to get another meal in that house!

12 So the cat climbed up the wall and let herself hang down by her hind legs from a peg. She closed her eyes and remained very still so that the mice would think she was asleep.

13 Soon enough, a timid mouse stuck his head out of a nearby hole. The cat watched it carefully through a tiny slit of an eye.

14 Inch by inch, the mouse came out until it was just out of reach. The cat could barely stand it any longer. Finally, just when she thought she had it, the mouse ran back to its hole.

15 Jumping down from the peg, the cat growled in frustration.

16 “Why won’t you come out so that I might eat you?” she asked, too angry to care how ridiculous she sounded.

17 The cat did not expect a reply, but she received one.

18 “You’re very clever, Cat, but you may turn yourself into a chunk of cheese if you’d like. You won’t catch any of us coming anywhere near you. Your past actions speak much louder than anything you could say or do now.”