

Small Helpers, Two Fables

Compare two versions of a story about a small helper.

2.RL.3 "Integration of Concepts Set a purpose for reading by providing guiding questions, activating prior (experience) and background (content) knowledge..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Tell a partner about a time someone helped you. Read to learn how a small animal helps a lion. Underline the mouse's dialogue. Circle one word that names a place in each story.

The Lion and a Small Helper

These English retellings share one fable, a story with a lesson. Version A comes from the ancient Greek Aesop tradition. Version B is by French writer Jean de La Fontaine.

Version A: The Lion and the Mouse. In a forest, a mouse ran over a sleeping lion's nose. He caught her. "Let me go. I may help you someday," she begged. The lion found that idea funny, but let her go. Later, a hunter's net trapped him. The mouse heard his roar and hurried over. She chewed a rope in the net until the lion was free. "Even a mouse can help a lion," she said.

Version B: The Lion and the Rat. A rat came out of a hole between a lion's paws. The lion spared the rat's life. Later, hunters caught the lion in a net in the forest. Roaring and struggling did not free him. The rat ran up and chewed through the net to let him out. Patient work did what the lion's strength could not.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 In Version A, what do the mouse's first spoken words show she thinks she can do?

2 How are the small helpers alike? How are they different? Use both versions.

3 What setting do both versions share? Give a place detail from each.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Compare the beginnings and endings of these two versions.

Compare the plots

Write one sentence about how the small animal meets the lion in A, and one about B. Then write one way the endings are alike. Tell a partner a lesson both endings teach. Point to a detail in each story that supports it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Tell a partner about a time someone helped you. Read to learn how a small animal helps a lion. Underline the mouse's dialogue. Circle one word that names a place in each story. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In Version A, what do the mouse's first spoken words show she thinks she can do?	She thinks she may help the lion someday if he lets her go.
2	How are the small helpers alike? How are they different? Use both versions.	Both small animals repay a lion's kindness by chewing a net to free him. Version A names a mouse; Version B names a rat. Version A also gives the mouse dialogue, while Version B reports the rat's actions without dialogue.
3	What setting do both versions share? Give a place detail from each.	Both take place in a forest. Version A begins with the lion asleep in a forest. Version B says the lion is caught in a net in the forest. Neither retelling names a country as the story setting.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the start of Version A, a mouse runs over a sleeping lion's nose. In Version B, a rat comes out of a hole between a lion's paws. In both endings, the small animal chews a net to free the lion. Both show that a small helper can make a big difference.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

These are adaptations of documented versions, not invented national settings. Greek tradition and the French author describe the stories' literary origins; they do not mean the forests are in Greece or France. Accept comparisons supported by both printed retellings. Version A includes the mouse's promise; Version B has no spoken promise. Both have kindness repaid and a rescue by chewing a net. Sources: Aesop, *The Lion & the Mouse*, *The Aesop for Children* (1919), Library of Congress, read.gov/aesop/007.html; Jean de La Fontaine, *The Lion and the Rat*, translated by Walter Thornbury, *The Fables of La Fontaine* (1886), Project Gutenberg ebook 50316, gutenberg.org/files/50316/50316-h/50316-h.htm. The dialogue in A is simplified for this retelling. Read aloud or support decoding as needed. For the place-word marking, accept forest in either version or hole in B. The rope in A is part of the hunter's net.