

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Fox and the Horse

By The Brothers Grimm
1812

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were German academics and authors who collected and published folklore during the 19th century. In this folktale, a fox helps a horse prove his worth to his master after he has been asked to leave the stable. As you read, take notes on the interaction between the fox and the horse.

- [1] A peasant once had a faithful horse, but it had grown old and could no longer do its work. Its master grudgingly gave it food, and said: "I can't use you any more, but I still feel kindly towards you, and if you show yourself strong enough to bring me a lion I will keep you to the end of your days. But away with you now, out of my stable," and he drove it out into the open country.



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The poor horse was very sad, and went into the forest to get a little shelter from the wind and the weather. There he met a fox, who said: "Why do you hang your head, and wander about in this solitary¹ fashion?"

"Alas!" answered the horse, "avarice² and honesty cannot live together. My master has forgotten all the service I have done for him for these many years, and because I can no longer plough he will no longer feed me, and he has driven me away."

"Without any consideration?" asked the fox.

- [5] "Only the poor consolation of telling me that if I was strong enough to bring him a lion he would keep me, but he knows well enough that the task is beyond me."

The fox said: "But I will help you. Just you lie down here, and stretch your legs out as if you were dead." The horse did as he was told, and the fox went to the lion's den, not far off, and said: "There is a dead horse out there. Come along with me, and you will have a rare meal." The lion went with him, and when they got up to the horse, the fox said: "You can't eat it in comfort here. I'll tell you what. I will tie it to you, and you can drag it away to your den, and enjoy it as your leisure."

The plan pleased the lion, and he stood quite still, close to the horse, so that the fox should fasten them together. But the fox tied the lion's legs together with the horse's tail, and twisted and knotted it so that it would be quite impossible for it to come undone.

When he had finished his work he patted the horse on the shoulder, and said: "Pull, old grey! Pull!"

1. **Solitary (adjective):** done or existing alone
2. extreme greed for wealth

Then the horse sprang up, and dragged with lion away behind him. The lion in his rage roared, so that all the birds in the forest were terrified, and flew away. But the horse let him roar, and never stopped till he stood before his master's door.

- [10] When the master saw him he was delighted, and said to him: "You shall stay with me, and have a good time as long as you live."

And he fed him well till he died.

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: In order for his plan to work, what did the fox need most? [RL.3]
 - A. The horse had to be a good actor.
 - B. The lion had to trust the fox.
 - C. The horse had to be patient with the fox.
 - D. The lion had to be hungry.

2. PART B: What does the fox tell the lion that causes the answer to Part A? [RL.3]
 - A. The lion should eat his meal in comfort.
 - B. Horse meat is delicious.
 - C. The horse is dead.
 - D. The lion should lie down and wait for the fox to return.

3. PART A: Which aspect of the horse's character best helps to solve the conflict in the folktale? [RL.3]
 - A. trust
 - B. sorrow
 - C. strength
 - D. persistence

4. PART B: Which sentence from the folktale best illustrates the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
 - A. "The poor horse was very sad, and went into the forest to get a little shelter from the wind and weather. (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "The horse did as he was told, and the fox went to the lion's den, not far off, and said: 'There is a dead horse out there.'" (Paragraph 8)
 - C. "When he had finished his work he patted the horse on the shoulder, and said: 'Pull, old grey! Pull!'" (Paragraph 8)
 - D. "But the horse let him roar, and never stopped till he stood before his master's door." (Paragraph 9)

5. PART A: Which TWO sentences belong in a summary of "The Fox and the Horse?" [RL.2]
 - A. The old horse is sent away by his owner.
 - B. The horse lay down as the fox told him to do.
 - C. The horse receives help from a cunning fox.
 - D. The peasant does not want to feed an old horse.
 - E. The birds in the forest are frightened by the lion.
 - F. The horse ignores the lion's enraged roar.

6. PART B: Which TWO additional sentences belong in the summary in Part A? [RL.2]
- A. The horse was sad when his master turned him out.
 - B. The fox promises the lion a special meal.
 - C. The fox tricks the lion into being tied to the horse.
 - D. The horse is able to bring a lion back to his master.
 - E. The lion is in his den when the fox comes to trick him.
 - F. The master forgot the horse's many years of service.
7. PART A: Which statement best expresses a central idea in the folktale? [RL.2]
- A. Loyal friends can be trusted.
 - B. Honest people are good friends.
 - C. Individuals who show kindness are often treated the same way.
 - D. Individuals can accomplish more with the help of others.
8. PART B: Which sentence from the folktale best demonstrates this idea? [RL.1]
- A. "A peasant once had a faithful horse, but it had grown old and could no longer do its work." (Paragraph 1)
 - B. "'Only the poor consolation of telling me that if I was strong enough to bring him a lion he would keep me, but he knows well enough that the task is beyond me.'" (Paragraph 5)
 - C. "Then the horse sprang up, and dragged the lion away behind him." (Paragraph 9)
 - D. "When the master saw him he was delighted, and said to him: 'You shall stay with me, and have a good time as long as you live.'" (Paragraph 10)
9. PART A: Why does the horse decide to follow the fox's plan without knowing what it is? [RL.3]
- A. because the horse has lost his self-confidence
 - B. because the fox has helped him before
 - C. because the fox knows where the lion's den is
 - D. because the horse is lonely
10. PART B: Which excerpt from the folktale supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
- A. "The poor horse was very sad." (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "'Why do you hang your head, and wander about in this solitary fashion?'" (Paragraph 2)
 - C. "'if I was strong enough to bring him a lion he would keep me, but he knows well enough that the task is beyond me.'" (Paragraph 5)
 - D. "The horse did as he was told, and the fox went to the lion's den." (Paragraph 6)

