

Lesson Plan: The Lion and the Mouse - A Fable in Nature

Subject Integration: Language Arts (Fable), Art & Craft, Nature Studies

Curriculum Focus: Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework, Class 2 (Age 7-8)

Core Themes: Contrasting characters (mighty and meek), virtue of kindness, imaginative storytelling, and connection to the natural world.

Materials Needed

- **For the Story Scene:**
 - A tray, shallow box lid, or a piece of wood as a base
 - Natural items gathered from a walk: small twigs, moss, leaves, pebbles, gumnuts, bark
 - A small bowl of water (optional, for a "pond")
 - **For the Peg Doll Characters:**
 - 2 wooden dolly pegs (one larger for the lion, one smaller for the mouse if possible)
 - Scraps of felt or fabric (yellow/gold for the lion, grey/brown for the mouse)
 - Wool or yarn (yellow/brown for a lion's mane, grey for a mouse's tail)
 - Non-toxic craft glue
 - Child-safe scissors
 - A black or brown felt-tip pen for drawing faces
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Lesson Structure & Activities

1. Opening Rhythm (5 minutes)

This helps create a calm and focused start to our learning time.

Begin by standing together and reciting a simple morning verse. You can put gentle hand motions to it. This verse connects us to our work for the day.

*The sun with loving light
Makes bright for me each day,
The soul with spirit power
Gives strength unto my limbs.
In sunlight shining clear
I revere, Oh God,
The strength of humankind,
Which Thou so graciously
Has planted in my soul,
That I with all my might,
May love to work and learn.
From Thee come light and strength,
To Thee rise love and thanks.*

After the verse, take a few deep breaths together before sitting down for the story.

2. Storytelling: The Fable (10 minutes)

This part engages the heart and imagination. Tell the story orally, without a book, to encourage H to create their own pictures in their mind. Use an expressive voice and simple gestures.

Teacher's Narration (Example):

"Once, deep in a warm, sunny forest, a mighty Lion was sleeping. His great head rested on his enormous paws, and his golden mane spread around him like a sun. As he slept, a timid little Mouse came upon him unexpectedly, and in her fright and haste to get away, ran across the Lion's nose!

Roused from his nap, the Lion laid his huge paw angrily on the tiny creature to kill her. 'Spare me!' begged the poor Mouse. 'Please let me go and I will surely repay you one day.' The Lion was so amused at the idea of the little Mouse being able to help him, the King of the Beasts, that he lifted up his paw and let her go.

Some weeks later, the Lion was caught in a hunter's net. Unable to free himself, he filled the forest with his angry roaring. The Mouse knew the voice and quickly found the Lion struggling in the net. Running to one of the great ropes that bound him, she began to gnaw it with her sharp little teeth. Soon, the rope was chewed through, and then another, and another, until the Lion was finally free!

'You laughed when I said I would repay you,' said the Mouse. 'Now you see that even a little mouse can help a mighty lion.' And from that day on, they were the best of friends."

3. Reflection & Recall (5 minutes)

This step helps H process the story's meaning and connect it to their own feelings.

Ask gentle, open-ended questions. Avoid asking "what was the moral?" directly. Let H discover the meaning.

- "I wonder, how do you think the little mouse felt when the lion caught her?"
- "Why do you think the big, strong lion let her go?"
- "What was the cleverest thing the mouse did in the story?"
- "What do you think the lion learned at the end?"

4. Main Activity: Creating the Fable Scene (30-40 minutes)

This is the "hands-on" part of the lesson where H brings the story to life, applying their understanding creatively.

1. Create the Characters:

- **The Lion:** Take the larger wooden peg. Wrap and glue yellow yarn around the top 'head' part to create a big, bushy mane. Use the pen to draw a simple, noble face (two dots for eyes, a triangle for a nose). You can wrap a small scrap of yellow felt around the 'body' for his coat.
- **The Mouse:** Take the smaller peg. Glue on two tiny circles of grey felt for ears. Braid or twist a piece of grey yarn and glue it to the back for a tail. Draw a simple face with whiskers.

2. Build the Forest World:

- Give H the tray or box lid. Say, "Let's build the forest where our story happened."
- Arrange the natural materials. Twigs can become trees, moss can be soft grass for the lion to sleep on, and leaves can make a canopy. Perhaps you can build a little mouse-hole from pebbles.

3. Act It Out:

- Once the scene and characters are ready, encourage H to use them to retell the story in

their own words. They can act out the mouse running over the lion's nose, the lion getting trapped in a "net" (you can use a piece of loose-weave fabric or just imagine it), and the mouse nibbling the ropes to free him.

Differentiation Note: If H finds the fine motor work challenging, you can pre-cut the felt pieces. For an extension, H could create other forest creatures (a bird, a squirrel) to live in the scene or design a 'net' for the lion from yarn.

5. Closing (5 minutes)

A calm closing signals the end of the lesson and helps with transition.

Admire the beautiful fable scene H has created. Let the characters "go to sleep" in their forest world. Tidy up the craft supplies together. You can end with a simple closing thought or verse:

*Our work is done,
Our play is through,
Goodbye for now,
From me to you.*

Assessment

This is done through observation, not a test. Look for:

- **Engagement:** Was H captivated by the story and involved in the activity?
- **Comprehension:** Can H recall the main events of the story through conversation and play?
- **Creativity:** Did H put their own unique touches on the characters and the scene?
- **Connection:** Does H show an understanding of the story's core message—that kindness is a strength and that small friends can be great friends?