Thoughts
“ It is preferable to die to be always fearing for the life.” [Aesop]

“The shame of recognizing the first mistake takes to commit many other.” [Jean de La Fontaine]

What do you know about fables? Can you make up other stories in this genre? Have you ever read fables in English? How about learning more about fables and their importance in our lives?

Task

1.1 Reading of fables

Form groups of four or five students and read the fable supplied by the teacher. Then exchange the texts among yourselves until everyone has read all different fables. The activity has the purpose of familiarizing you with the form and the language of the genre, besides enlarging your repertoire.

1.2 Defining the fable

List, orally, common features in all the texts read. Remember to use as much English as you can during the discussion. (You can present your answers based on aspects as the duration of the story, the presence of which types of characters and as these act, the indication of time and space and what explanation is given at the end of the story).

1.3 State, in your words, a conception of:

Fable __________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Moral __________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
Recognizing the Textual Genre called “Fable”

Definitions
The word "fable" comes from the Latin "fabula" (a "story"), itself derived from "fari" ("to speak").

In a pejorative sense, a "fable" may be a deliberately invented or falsified account of an event or circumstance. In its original sense, however, "fable" denotes a brief, succinct story that is meant to impart a moral lesson.

Fabulists

Aesop, author of Aesop’s Fables, was a great creator of fables, who lived in ancient Greece as slave in the century 5th B.C. Although he had a strange appearance, since he was hunchbacked, he had the talent of the word and the ability of telling stories, which were allusion to the human behavior through animal characters. Some of these Aesop's fables are still known today, as “The fox and the grapes”, “The lion and the mouse”, “The tortoise and the hare”, among others.

Jean de La Fontaine (1621 – 1695). A French poet who is known mainly as an author of fables, written in light and rhymed verses. Besides creating some original fables well known, representative of the context of the French aristocracy of the century 17th, as for instance, “The wolf and the lamb” and “The grasshopper and the ant”, rewrote some fables based in Aesop.

Characteristics
Fables can be described as a didactic mode of literature. That is, whether a fable has been handed down from generation to generation as oral literature, or constructed by a literary tale-teller, its purpose is to impart a lesson or value, or to give sage advice. Fables also provide opportunities to laugh at human folly, when they supply examples of behaviors to be avoided rather than emulated.

Fables frequently have as their central characters animals that are given anthropomorphic characteristics such as the ability to reason and speak.

Personification may also be extended to things inanimate. Divinities may also appear in fables as active agents. Aesop’s Fables feature most of the Greek pantheon, including Zeus and Hermes.

Adapted from: [http://www.entrelinhas.unisinos.br/index.php?e=3&s=9&a=19](http://www.entrelinhas.unisinos.br/index.php?e=3&s=9&a=19)  
Traditional Stories

**Fable**
A fable is a succinct story, in prose or verse, that features animals, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature which are anthropomorphized (given human qualities), and that illustrates a moral lesson (a "moral"), which may at the end be expressed explicitly in a pithy maxim.

**Parable**
A parable is a brief, succinct story, in prose or verse, which illustrates a moral or religious lesson. It differs from a fable in excluding animals, plants, inanimate objects, and forces of nature as actors that assume speech and other powers of mankind.

**Apologue**
An apologue is a brief fable or allegorical story with pointed or exaggerated details, meant to serve as a pleasant vehicle for a moral doctrine or to convey a useful lesson without stating it explicitly. It is exactly like a parable except that it contains supernatural elements, often the personification of animals or plants. Unlike a fable, the moral is more important than the narrative details.

**Anecdote**
An anecdote is a short tale narrating an interesting or amusing biographical incident. It may be as brief as the setting and provocation of a *bon mot* (well-chosen word(s), particularly a witty remark). An anecdote is always based on real life, an incident involving actual persons, whether famous or not, in real places. However, over time, modification in reuse may convert a particular anecdote to a fictional piece, one that is retold but is "too good to be true". Though sometimes humorous, anecdotes are not jokes, because their primary purpose is not simply to evoke laughter, but to reveal a truth more general than the brief tale itself, or to delineate a character trait or the workings of an institution in such a light that it strikes in a flash of insight to their very essence.

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional_stories"
Online on September 25th, 2008

**Think and Discuss**

1. What’s the role of the fables in the society?

2. What Brazilian fabulist do you know?

3. Write briefly the difference between fable, parable, apologue and anecdote:
Once upon a time a hare saw a tortoise walking slowly along and began to laugh and mock him. The tortoise challenged the hare to a race and the hare, thinking himself the fastest animal around, accepted. They agreed on a route and started off the race. The hare shot ahead and ran briskly for some time. Then seeing that he was far ahead of the tortoise, he thought he’d sit under a tree for some time and relax before continuing the race.

He sat under the tree and soon fell asleep. The tortoise, plodding on, overtook him and finished the race. The hare woke up and realized that he had lost the race.

The moral, stated at the end of the fable, is, "Slow and steady wins the race."

Glossary:
Mock: zombar de
Challenged: desafiou
Briskly: rapidamente
Shot: disparou
Plodding: caminhando pesadamente
Overtook: ultrapassou
The Lion and the Mouse (Aesop)

In the fable, a lion wants to eat a mouse who wakes him up. The mouse *begs* forgiveness and promises to return the favor if ever he is given the opportunity. He also makes the point that such *unworthy prey* as he should not *stain* the lion's great *paws*. The lion is moved to uncontrollable laughter and when he recovers, lets the mouse go, *stating* that he has not had such a good laugh in ages.

Later, the lion is captured by hunters and *tied* to a tree; the lion *roars* with all his might so that someone might help him. The mouse hears the lion's *pleas* and frees him by *gnawing* through the ropes.

The moral of this story is stated in the last line of the fable:

“Little friends may prove great friends”

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted"

From: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lion_and_the_Mouse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lion_and_the_Mouse)

Online on October 04th, 2008

Glossary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Begs: implora</th>
<th>Unworthy prey: presa indigna</th>
<th>Stain: manchar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paws: patas</td>
<td>Stating: declarando</td>
<td>Tied: amarrou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roars: ruge</td>
<td>Pleas: apelos</td>
<td>Gnawing: roendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Lion and the Mouse (La Fontaine)

It *is worthwhile* to *spread* reasons of gratitude:

The small ones also have their *usefulness*.

Two fables * will show

that I am not speaking except the truth.

When leaving the *hole*, a mouse,
Among a lion’s terrible paws, was.
The animals’ king, in a very generous action,
Nothing to the little mouse did, and he let him to survive.
The good action was not in vain.
Who would think that a lion
Some time would need
Such a little mouse? That’s right, my friend,
Lion is in danger too,
And that was tied in a net, one day.
So much roared, that the mouse heard and helped,
Gnawing the ropes that arrested him.

It’s better the persistent labor
Than the despair and the rude strength.

* To illustrate the same moral, La Fontaine tells, in the sequence, other fable, entitled “The dove and the ant”. La Fontaine, Fables, 1992.

Adapted from: http://www.entrelinhas.unisinos.br/index.php?e=3&s=9&a=19
Online on October 20th, 2008

Glossary:

is worthwhile: vale a pena  Spread: espalhar  Usefulness: utilidade
Hole: buraco  Arrested: prendiam  Strength: força

Suggestion for video: Fable => The Lion and the Mouse
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAma4fFC0gl – Little Fables – Online on October 28th, 2008

Think and Discuss

1. Which other proverbs would be suitable to the morals of the three fables above?

2. What’s your opinion about the moral “Slow and steady wins the race”? If you agree with that statement, then why do teenagers drive so fast?

3. Nowadays, do you believe people are persistent or do they prefer to use the strength in order to get what they want? Why does it happen?

4. The fables are an allusion to the behavior of men. What human beings are represented by the animals in the fables?

5. What are people mocked very much in our society? Why?
Adjectives

A ordem do adjetivo em Inglês é diferente da ordem em Português. Em Português, geralmente, temos substantivo + adjetivo e, em Inglês, temos adjetivo + substantivo. Os adjetivos em Inglês não sofrem qualquer alteração ortográfica seja para o masculino / feminino ou plural / singular:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex.: patas grandes =&gt; great paws</th>
<th>ação generosa =&gt; generous action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>riso bom =&gt; good laugh</td>
<td>boa ação =&gt; good action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pequenos amigos =&gt; little friends</td>
<td>rato pequeno =&gt; little mouse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Complete with three adjectives that defines the personality from animals of the fables above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The hare is...</th>
<th>The tortoise is...</th>
<th>The lion is...</th>
<th>The mouse is...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. Find out the synonyms for the following adjectives in the fables:

- quickest: ____________________
- worthless: ____________________
- large: _______________________
- dreadful: ___________________
- kind: ______________________
- constant: ___________________

3. Match the columns according to the opposites of the adjectives:

- ( a ) slow ( ) first
- ( b ) steady ( ) big, large
- ( c ) uncontrollable ( ) gentle
- ( d ) good ( ) moving, not firmly
- ( e ) last ( ) fast
- ( f ) little, small* ( ) bad
- ( g ) rude ( ) cannot stop

* O adjetivo little é usado para formar o diminutivo em Inglês e também quando se quer dizer algo de maneira mais gentil ou educada.

- What a sweet little dog! (cachorrinho)
- I have a little problem. (faz o problema parecer menos sério ou urgente)

O adjetivo small simplesmente descreve o tamanho de algo.

- My son’s room is smaller than mine.

4. In pairs, choose an animal of one of the fables that you would like to know more about. On the Internet find out some interesting or unusual information about this animal and make a short presentation to your class about your research.
**Simple Past Tense**
Este tempo verbal é usado para expressar ações / fatos que ocorreram em um tempo definido no passado. Geralmente são usadas as expressões de tempo: yesterday, ago, last week, last month, etc.

5. Read the fables “The Tortoise and the Hare” and “The Lion and the Mouse” (La Fontaine) again and underline all the verbs which are in the Simple Past Tense:

Observe que há verbos com a terminação *d / ed* (verbos regulares) e outros que não seguem esta regra, pois têm uma forma própria para a formação do passado (verbos irregulares). No passado, os verbos têm a mesma forma para todas as pessoas, porém o passado do verbo *to be* tem formas diferentes – *was / were.*

Ex.: The tortoise *challenged* the hare to a race...
    The hare *shot* ahead and *ran* briskly for some time.
    The good action *was* not in vain.

6. Write the Present Tense of the verbs of the exercise above:

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

7. Make four sentences in English based on facts that happened in your life:
1. ______________________________________________________________
2. ______________________________________________________________
3. ______________________________________________________________
4. ______________________________________________________________

**Simple Present Tense**
- Em Inglês, ações que indicam fatos, rotina e freqüência são expressas pelo *Simple Present Tense* e são, normalmente, acompanhadas das expressões como always, usually, often, sometimes, rarely, never, every day, every week, every month, every year, etc.
- Em frases afirmativas na 3ª pessoa do singular (*he*/*she*/it) no *Simple Present* acrescenta-se “s” ao verbo:
  Ex.: A lion *wants* to eat a mouse who *wakes* him up.
- Quando os verbos terminam em o, s, x, z, ch, sh acrescenta-se “es” ao verbo, porém o verbo *have* e *to be* têm as formas “has” e “is”, respectivamente.
  Ex.: …he *has* not had such a good laugh in ages.
  Lion *is* in danger too.

8. Write down all verbs in the Simple Present Tense in “The Lion and the Mouse” (Aesop):
9. Write a paragraph about what you do during the week:

On Sundays I __________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Writing

Comparing versions of a same fable

1. Compare the texts of the fable "The lion and the mouse" by Aesop and by La Fontaine, identifying the similarities and differences about characterization; indications of time and space; presentation of sceneries and about language (style, vocabulary.)

Recreating fables

2. Rewrite Aesop's fable “The tortoise and the hare”. Try to introduce modifications in the story. You can alter the end, include new characters and sceneries, that is, interfere in the text as you like.

Making up fables

3. Invent a fable whose moral is “Think before acting ” in order to compile a book with other students’ fables to be donated to the library of your school. Remember to illustrate your story.

Having Fun

Let’s play this game with a friend.
1. Ask him to think about three animals and to write three adjectives for each one of them;
2. Next, tell him to imagine the things that you’re going to say and to write three adjectives for:
   ✓ A big forest
   ✓ A white and high wall
   ✓ The sea
   ✓ Coffee
   ✓ A book
   ✓ A student (or any other profession)
Interpretation:
1. The first animal and its qualities represents how you see yourself;
   The second one represents how you are seen by the others;
   The last animal represents how you would like to be seen.
2. A big forest => it’s the way you see life;
   A white and high wall => it’s how you see the death;
   Sea => it’s the way you see love;
   Coffee => it’s the way you see sex;
   Book => it’s how you see knowledge;
   Student => it’s how you see your work/profession.
Don’t worry!!! It’s just a joke.

Referências Bibliográficas


Documentos Consultados On-line


http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tortoise_and_the_Hare Online on October 04th, 2008

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lion_and_the_Mouse Online on October 04th, 2008


http://www.entrelinhas.unisinos.br/index.php?e=3&s=9&a=19 Online on October 20th, 2008

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAma4fFC0gl – Little Fables – Online on October 28th, 2008

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