

The Fox and the Goat

by Aesop *from The Aesop for Children*

A Fox fell into a well, and though it was not very deep, he found that he could not get out again. After he had been in the well a long time, a thirsty Goat came by. The Goat thought the Fox had gone down to drink, and so he asked if the water was good.

"The finest in the whole country," said the crafty Fox, "jump in and try it. There is more than enough for both of us."

The thirsty Goat immediately jumped in and began to drink. The Fox just as quickly jumped on the Goat's back and leaped from the tip of the Goat's horns out of the well.

The foolish Goat now saw what a plight he had got into, and begged the Fox to help him out. But the Fox was already on his way to the woods.

"If you had as much sense as you have beard, old fellow," he said as he ran, "you would have been more cautious about finding a way to get out again before you jumped in."

Look before you leap.

Questions

1. How would the story be different if the Goat had thought about getting *out* of the well before he jumped *in*?
2. The Fox is called "crafty" in the text. What do you think "crafty" means?
3. What does "cautious" mean in the phrase "you would have been more cautious about finding a way to get out again"?
4. What does "plight" mean in the phrase "The foolish Goat now saw what a plight he had got into..."?

Vocabulary List

Each of the vocabulary words below are used in the reading passage. As you read the passage, pay attention to context clues that suggest the word's meaning.

1. thirsty
2. crafty
3. leaped
4. plight
5. cautious

Context Clues

Using context clues from the sentences in the passage, underline the correct meaning of the word in boldface.

1. "After he had been in the well a long time, a **thirsty** Goat came by"

a. sneaky; mean b. dirty; muddy c. honest; honorable d. wanting water; dry

2. "The finest in the whole country," said the **crafty** Fox"

a. talented; makes things b. proud or pleased c. smart or clever d. colorful

3. "The Fox just as quickly jumped on the Goat's back and **leaped** from the tip of the Goat's horns"

a. jumped; hopped b. crawled or crept c. grabbed; held d. hung or dangled

4. "The foolish Goat now saw what a **plight** he had got into"

a. dark space or room b. trouble or difficulty c. deep well d. silly game or contest

5. "you would have been more **cautious** about finding a way to get out again before you jumped in"

a. sad or pitiful b. careful; alert c. lucky or fortunate d. calm; quiet