

# The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf

by Aesop *from The Aesop for Children*

A Shepherd Boy tended his master's Sheep near a dark forest not far from the village. Soon he found life in the pasture very dull. All he could do to amuse himself was to talk to his dog or play on his shepherd's pipe.

One day as he sat watching the Sheep and the quiet forest, and thinking what he would do should he see a Wolf, he thought of a plan to amuse himself.

His Master had told him to call for help should a Wolf attack the flock, and the Villagers would drive it away. So now, though he had not seen anything that even looked like a Wolf, he ran toward the village shouting at the top of his voice, "Wolf! Wolf!"

As he expected, the Villagers who heard the cry dropped their work and ran in great excitement to the pasture. But when they got there they found the Boy doubled up with laughter at the trick he had played on them.

A few days later the Shepherd Boy again shouted, "Wolf! Wolf!" Again the Villagers ran to help him, only to be laughed at again.

Then one evening as the sun was setting behind the forest and the shadows were creeping out over the pasture, a Wolf really did spring from the underbrush and fall upon the Sheep.

In terror the Boy ran toward the village shouting "Wolf! Wolf!" But though the Villagers heard the cry, they did not run to help him as they had before. "He cannot fool us again," they said.

The Wolf killed a great many of the Boy's sheep and then slipped away into the forest.

*Liars are not believed even when they speak the truth.*

**Questions**

1. What do you think a shepherd's pipe is?
2. Why didn't the Villagers run to help the Shepherd Boy the third time he called?
3. Would you have believed the Shepherd Boy the third time he shouted, "Wolf!"? Why or why not?
4. What do you think "tended" means in this sentence: "A Shepherd Boy tended his master's Sheep."?

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**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. tended
2. amuse
3. flock
4. underbrush
5. terror

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**Context Clues**

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

1. "A Shepherd Boy **tended** his master's Sheep near a dark forest"  
a. watched; cared for    b. fed or watered    c. lost; misplaced    d. locked up
2. "All he could do to **amuse** himself was to talk to his dog or play on his shepherd's pipe"  
a. excuse; defend    b. hurt or injury    c. educate or teach    d. entertain; interest
3. "His Master had told him to call for help should a Wolf attack the **flock**"  
a. farm    b. village; town    c. cow or calf    d. group of animals
4. " a Wolf really did spring from the **underbrush** and fall upon the Sheep"  
a. treetops    b. bushes and plants    c. tunnel or hole    d. rocks or stones
5. "In **terror** the Boy ran toward the village shouting 'Wolf! Wolf!'"  
a. fun or play    b. minutes; quickly    c. great fear or fright    d. error or mistake