



PRINTABLE LESSON

The Silly Grasshopper

A lesson in what tomorrow costs when today was all play



One complete lesson from The Sing Me a Fable Lesson Book

Ages 4 to 8 . Printable . 26 lessons in the full book

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The Silly Grasshopper

Fable F from Sing Me a Fable – a lesson in what tomorrow costs when today was all play

AGE	LENGTH	SUBJECT	GROUP
4–7 (Pre-K to Year 2)	30–40 minutes	PSHE · SEL · Speaking	Whole class, then pairs

Learning objective

Children understand that play is not the fault, and that work put off does not disappear but arrives later, colder, and all at once.

You will need

The fable, read aloud

Two clear jars labelled Ants and Grasshopper

A bag of dried beans

A timer

Poster F to colour

The jars are the two winter stores. Put them side by side where the whole class can see both at once, because the comparison is the lesson.

Before the story

4 minutes

Stand the two empty jars side by side. Put the bag of beans between them and the timer where the class can watch it.

Ask: “If you had one hour and two jobs, which would you do first, the fun one or the hard one?”

Then: “Keep your answer. We will look at both jars when the winter comes.”

Read the fable

5 minutes

Read fable F aloud. Put a bean in the Ants jar every time the ants work, and put nothing anywhere while the grasshopper plays. Say nothing about it.

By the third stanza one jar has beans in it and the other is still empty, and the silence of the empty jar does more than any sentence you could add.

Talk about it

10 minutes

1. Was the grasshopper wrong to play music? Say why or why not.
2. The ants did not share. Were they being mean, or were they being something else?
3. What could the grasshopper have done in the summer that would still have left time to fiddle?

Question 2 is genuinely arguable and children argue it well. Do not resolve it for them. Both sides are defensible and the fable does not settle it either.

Main activity: The two jars

12 minutes

1. Empty both jars and set the timer where everyone can see it.
2. Read a situation from the teacher's sheet. Each has a play-first answer and a work-first one.
3. The class votes, hands up, play or work. The class decides, not you.
4. Work: a bean goes in the Ants jar. Play: nothing goes in either, and the timer keeps running.
5. After the third situation, hold both jars up and ask what happens if the weather turns now.
6. At the end, ask whether the grasshopper could fill his jar in one afternoon.

Do not make play the villain. The fable is about order, not about music, and a class taught that fun is wrong will disagree with you and be right.

Plenary

4 minutes

“Nobody stopped the grasshopper playing all summer. So why was he knocking on doors in the snow?”



Play it together

Put the game on the board. At every choice, stop, let the class vote, then press the card they chose.



Scan to play

OPEN IT

singmeafable.com/arcade/gary-the-grasshopper

UNLOCK WORDS

WAITING FOR

CHOICES

6, about 2 minutes of play

Level 1 · Song Before Winter



The Fiddle and the Acorn

- A Leap and run instead of working.
- B Help push the heavy acorn up the hill. ✓



Carrying the Seeds

- A Carry two seeds at once with your long legs. ✓
- B Sing and roam instead of carrying seeds.

Level 2 · The Cold Wind



The Stores Are Bare

- A Shout that food is your right and stomp off.
- B Admit you played all summer and have nothing now. ✓



Knocking in the Cold

- A Admit you were frivolous and offer to sweep. ✓
- B Demand a meal because you played music.



The last level, and what to ask

The tick marks the choice that earns the stars. Keep this page to yourself while the class votes.

Level 3 · The Sweet Winter Song



Sweeping the Halls

A Complain that sweeping is too hard for a musician.

B Sweep every hallway until it shines. ✓



The Winter Song

A Play a sweet song. Let us dance!

Ask at every choice

Before pressing: “Which card would you press, and why?”

After it plays out: “What changed because of that choice? What would the other card have done?”

How it joins the lesson

The main activity, **The two jars**, takes the same lesson off the screen and into the room. Play the game first, so the class has already watched both kinds of choice play out before they make one themselves.

Every choice plays out and nothing is timed, so a wrong vote is something to talk about, not a failure. Stars at the end of each level show how many right choices the class made.



Six situations to vote on

Read the left column aloud only. The right column is what work first sounds like.

THE SITUATION, AS THE CLASS HEARS IT	WHAT WORK FIRST SOUNDS LIKE
You could tidy up now or go outside while the sun is out.	"Five minutes tidying, then out."
Your reading is not done and your friend has a new game.	"Two pages first. Then I am coming."
You have a job at home and something better is on.	"I will do it in the break."
There is a job nobody has volunteered for.	"I will start it. Who is helping?"
You said you would help and then forgot.	"I forgot. I will do it now."
It is nearly the end of the day and the room is a mess.	"If we all do one thing it takes a minute."

Every work-first answer still ends with the child playing. That is deliberate. Diligence is not the option where the fun is cancelled.

The line, in one sentence

Work put off does not vanish. It waits, and it arrives with the cold.

Give the class that sentence at the end, never at the beginning.

Adapting for your class

Age 4 · Pre-K. Three situations, and let a child drop the bean in so the jar is theirs.

Ages 5–7 · K to Year 2. Run it as written.

Ages 7–8 · Year 3. Add the hard case: should the ants have shared? It is a real argument, there is no right answer, and Year 3 will do it justice.

Mixed ages: pair an older child with a younger one and give the older one the job of asking, not answering.

What children take away

- **Play is not the fault.** The fable is about order, and a class told otherwise will stop listening.
- **The empty jar is silent.** Nothing warns you in the summer, which is why it is hard.
- **Small and early beats big and late.** One bean a day fills a jar. One afternoon does not.
- **The ants are arguable.** Whether they should have shared is a question worth leaving open.

If you have more time

- **Colour the poster.** While they work, ask what one thing the grasshopper should have done in June.
- **Sing it.** The fable's song with on-screen words runs about 90 seconds.
- **Play it.** In the browser game the child chooses whether the grasshopper plays or gets ready for winter.

Where this fits

One of twenty-six lessons, one for each letter and one character trait each. A week at a time, the set covers a school year. All twenty-six songs and the printable posters are free at singmeafable.com.

Curriculum links. PSHE and SEL: self-management, planning, consequences, fairness. Speaking and listening: justifying a choice, arguing a position. Maths: counting, comparing quantity. Literacy: letter recognition, traditional tales, cause and effect.