



PRINTABLE LESSON

Kip the Bossy Raccoon

A lesson in what asking gets you that telling doesn't



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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KNOW-IT-ALL · AND THE CURIOSITY THAT ANSWERS IT

Kip the Bossy Raccoon

Fable K from Sing Me a Fable — a lesson in what asking gets you that telling doesn't

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 always having the answer stops you learning anything new, and can tell the difference between sharing what you know and refusing to hear what you don't.

You will need

The fable, read aloud

A question jar or box

Slips of paper

Poster K to colour

The song (optional)

Before the story

4 minutes

Hold up the empty jar.

Ask: “Is it more useful to be the person who knows everything, or the person who's good at finding out?”

Take a couple of answers without settling it, then start reading.

Read the fable

5 minutes

Read fable K aloud. Kip corrects everyone, even Monty the mole, who actually knows the tunnels. Read Kip's certainty without mockery — he isn't lying, he genuinely believes he's right every time, which is exactly what makes it hard to reach him.

The turn is Monty. He is the one character who really does know something Kip doesn't, and Kip's habit of never asking is what nearly costs them.

Talk about it

10 minutes

1. Kip corrected Monty about the tunnels. Monty lives in the tunnels. Who should have been asking whom?
2. Was Kip trying to be unkind, or did he really think he was helping?
3. What did Kip miss out on by never asking a question?

Question 3 is the real cost, and it's easy to skip past. Kip isn't punished for being wrong — he's simply the only one who never learns anything new, because learning starts with a question he never asks.

Main activity: The question jar

12 minutes

This game guards against teaching that children should stop having opinions or stop being confident. The point is narrower: asking is strong, not weak.

1. Give every child a slip of paper.
2. Ask them to write, or draw, one thing they genuinely don't know — about anything.
3. Fold the slips into the jar.
4. Pull three or four out and read them aloud. Ask the class if anyone knows the answer.
5. Notice, out loud, how many different people had the answer to different questions.

Ask: “If Kip filled this jar, would there be anything in it?”

The honest answer is probably not, and that's the point without needing to say so directly.

Plenary

4 minutes

“What's something you know a lot about? And what's something you'd like to ask somebody else about, next time you get the chance?”



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/ricky-the-bossy-raccoon

UNLOCK WORDS

WAITING FOR

CHOICES

6, about 2 minutes of play

Level 1 · The Grand Lecture

**Made-Up Facts**

- A Wave the pointer stick in his face and shake your head.
- B Drop the pointer stick and look closely at his shovel. ✓

**Teaching the Fish**

- A Climb out and help Monty gather stones for a barrier. ✓
- B Shake your fist at the sky and boast you can stop rain.

Level 2 · The Great Flood

**The Rising Water**

- A Shout at the rising river to stop while you sink.
- B Call up humbly to Monty's dry tunnel for help. ✓

**The Door to Safety**

- A Take the towel and step inside with a respectful bow. ✓
- B Barge past Monty into the tunnel.



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 Wisdom of Listening



Learning in the Tunnel

- A Grab the charcoal and scribble over Monty's map.
- B Point gently at a detail on the map and ask. ✓



The Sunrise Gathering

- A Sit on the log with your notebook and listen. ✓
- B Leap on the rock and boss everyone around again.

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 question jar**, 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.



Telling, or asking?

Six moments. Sort what Kip does from what would have worked better.

WHAT HAPPENS	KIP'S WAY	THE OTHER WAY
Monty says the tunnel forks left.	"No, it's right. Trust me."	"You know these tunnels better than me — which way?"
Somebody explains a game's rules.	"I already know how to play."	"Wait, what happens if I land there?"
A friend suggests a shortcut.	"That won't work, obviously."	"Why do you think that's faster?"
Someone gets an answer wrong.	"Everyone knows that's wrong."	"Close — what made you think that?"

Notice that the right-hand column isn't Kip staying silent. It's Kip asking a question instead of delivering a verdict. That distinction matters more than "be quiet and let others talk."

The guard on this lesson

This is not about making confident children smaller. A child who knows an answer should say so. The flaw is refusing to hear that you might not know something — not knowing things in the first place.

Kip is corrected by nobody in the fable. He simply misses out, quietly, on everything he could have learned by asking.

Watch for this

Some children will treat the question jar as a competition to prove they know the most answers. Redirect gently: the jar is about noticing that nobody knows everything, including the child who usually answers first.

Adapting for your class

Age 4 · Pre-K. Skip the jar and do it verbally: ask the class one thing you genuinely don't know, and let them see an adult not knowing something. That alone does most of the work at this age.

Ages 5–7 · K to Year 2. Run it as written. Expect a few children to struggle to think of anything they don't know — that struggle is itself worth naming.

Ages 7–8 · Year 3. Ask them to think of a time they were sure of something and turned out wrong. What would have helped them find out sooner?

Mixed ages: let an older child read out the jar's questions. Reading someone else's "I don't know" aloud, respectfully, is its own small lesson.

What children take away

- **Asking is not weakness.** Kip's certainty costs him more than it protects him.
- **Everyone knows something different.** The jar proves it in a few minutes, better than being told.
- **Nobody punishes Kip.** He simply learns less than everyone else, which is consequence enough.

If you have more time

- **Colour the poster.** Ask what Monty knows that Kip doesn't, in the picture.
- **Sing it.** The fable's song with on-screen words runs about 90 seconds.
- **Play it.** The browser game lets the child choose, twice a level, whether the raccoon keeps lecturing or stops to listen, and the rising river shows which choice helps.