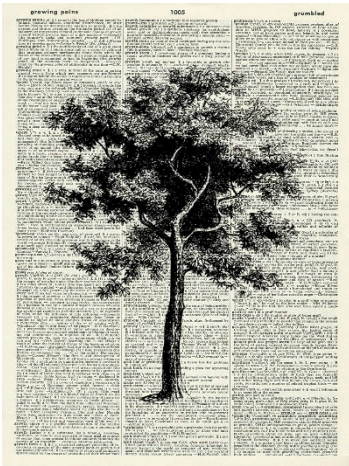


Y7 Autumn Term 2 – English home learning
Topic: Roots of Western Literature



LESSON 1: Reynard the Fox

LO: Explore allegory

TASK 1:

Complete this quiz based on what you have learned so far:

1. Complete this quotation from Cain: 'Am I my ...?'

2. Explain what is meant by a 'parable'.

3. How does the story of the prodigal son demonstrate forgiveness?

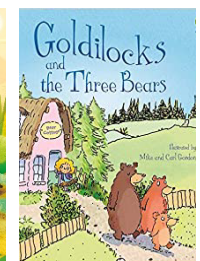
4. List the three ways in which the Devil tries to tempt Jesus.

5. How are the crowd responsible for Jesus' death?

NOW CHECK YOUR ANSWERS! PLEASE SEE PAGE 9

TASK 2:

- *Who was your favourite animal character when you were younger?*



- *What features did this character have?*

TASK 3:

- *What characteristics do you associate with FOXES?*



- WATCH THIS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSHcu4zkCHU>
- *Why is a fox an appropriate choice for the character of Robin Hood?*

REYNARD THE FOX

- This story is from from Medieval Dutch, English, French and German fables and folk tales (around the late 12th century)
- The first known written versions of Reynard include writing by the French writer Pierre de St Cloud (1174) and the German Heinrich der Glichezare (1180); he appears in earlier works by the Belgian Nivardus (1148); William Caxton printed the first English version in 1481.
- The story is ***ALLEGORICAL** – while Reynard is cunning and deceitful, he also exposes the hypocrisy of the ruling classes, corrupt church officials etc.
- At Whitsuntide (end of May) all of the animals gather in the court of King Lion; the only one who is not present is Reynard the Fox.
- Most of the other animals have a complaint against Reynard: he has kicked dust in the eyes of the wolf's children, stolen a sausage from the dog (who stole it from the cat), attacked the hare, and killed the chickens' children.
- The only animal who defends him is his nephew, the badger, who says the wolf has treated Reynard badly.
- King Lion demands that Reynard appear at court, to try him for his crimes, and sends Bruin the Bear to fetch him.

***ALLEGORY:** a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning.

TASK 4:

Now read the story for yourself:

From Reynard the Fox (anon, c.1180 CE; tr. CS Evans 1920)

Reynard the Fox, Bruin the Bear, and Tybert the Cat

Now Reynard was rich enough to own several houses. The strongest of them all was the Castle of Malpertuis, built high among the rocks. Here the fox was able to hide himself, even if his enemies got over the strong walls. Underneath the house ran thousands of passages, all twisted and dark, and nobody knew his way along these passages except Reynard and his wife. So Bruin set out to find Reynard, and after visiting all his houses in turn came at last to the Castle of Malpertuis.

The gates were locked, and everything was quiet when the bear arrived. Bang! Bang! knocked Bruin on the door.

Not a sound was heard.

“Reynard! Reynard!” he cried loudly. “Open the door. I am Bruin the Bear, and I come from King Lion to bid you appear before him at once.”

Still not a sound was heard; for although the fox heard every word, he was not going to open the gate till he knew that the bear was alone.

When he was certain that only the bear was outside he ran inside and put on his hermit's gown. Then, holding a book in his hand, he opened the gate.

“I am very sorry I have kept you waiting. I was just in the middle of my prayers. You cannot know how pleased I am to see you. Come inside and rest yourself. I am not feeling well enough to start for the court today. You know I've given up eating flesh, and honey is the only food that is plentiful about here. I am afraid I feel ill through the eating of too much of the nasty stuff.”

“Nasty stuff!” said Bruin. To him, honey was the nicest thing on earth. “If you can show me where to get my fill I will do my best for you at the court.”

“Do you say so?” answered Reynard. “Why, I know a place where there is so much honey that you could not drink it dry in seven years. If you will be a friend to me at court I will show you the place.”

“Let us go at once,” said Bruin, whose mouth was watering. “I will do all I can for you.”

So the two set off for the farmyard of a woodcutter who lived in the valley. In the yard lay a huge oak tree which the woodcutter had felled the day before. To split this he had driven in two big wedges which made a great crack right along the trunk. No one was in the yard, for the woodcutter had gone into the house for a nap.

“Here is the well,” said Reynard, pointing to the crack in the tree. “Put your mouth down as far as you can and eat as much honey as you like.”

It was not long before Bruin had his head and forefeet in the crack, and as soon as Reynard saw that the bear was busy he gave a hard tug at the wedges. Out they came, the trunk closed up, and Bruin was caught in a trap.

Such a roaring and struggling as the bear set up! You never heard such a noise. The fox grinned, and told himself it was time to be off.

"How do you like the taste of the honey?" said Reynard. "Do not eat too much, for the woodcutter will bring you something else to eat in a moment. Good day!" and off he went.

Meanwhile, the woodcutter, hearing the noise, came out to see what was the matter. When he saw what had happened he shouted: "Neighbours! Here's a bear caught in my yard. Come and have some sport!"

Everybody in the village left his work to come. Some carried sticks, some spades, some axes, and others hammers. All had some weapon to beat poor Bruin. So great a hail of blows rained on his back that with a furious tug he pulled himself free from the tree, leaving behind him his ears and claws. Away he went down the road, and away after him went the crowd. Sticks were thrown at him, and at every corner someone would spring out and give him a blow. Blinded with pain he neither saw nor cared where he went, and suddenly he ran into a crowd of women who were standing by the river watching the fun.

Over went the priest's cook into the water. "Two silver crowns to the man who gets her out," shouted the Priest. Every one left the bear to save the cook. Bruin took the chance of escape, and jumped into the river and swam away.

A mile or two down the river he climbed on the bank, and for a long time lay as if dead. Then he arose and turned towards home.

For four days he crawled along, covered with bruises and blood. Hardly able to put one foot before the other he reached the court. No one would have seen in the miserable creature that returned the lordly bear who had gone out a few days before.

"Surely this is not Bruin," said the king. "Whatever has happened?"

When the bear had told his story the king's anger was terrible to see, and he uttered threats of vengeance.

Where strength has failed cunning may succeed," said he. "I will send the cat to fetch Reynard to court. He is not very big, but he has all his wits about him."

The cat did not care very much for the work he had to do; but he started off, making up his mind not to be tricked as Bruin had been. It was evening when he reached Malpertuis and found Reynard sitting in his front garden.

"Good evening!" said the cat. "The king orders you to return with me without delay." "I hope you are in good health," answered the fox. "I will certainly come with you in the morning. In the meantime, will you not step inside and have something to eat? I would have returned with Bruin, only he was such an ill-mannered fellow."

"I think we had better go at once," said the cat. "It is a fine night; the moon is shining and the roads are dry." "But, my dear Cat," said Reynard, "it is so much more pleasant in the daytime, and all sorts of rascals are about at night."

"Well, if I stay, what can you give me to eat?" asked the cat.

"I am very poor and live plainly," said Reynard, "but I think I can find you a good meal of honey."

"No!" said the cat, remembering in what a sad state poor Bruin had come back. "I am not fond of honey. Now, if you had a mouse, I could manage with that."

"Mouse!" said the fox, "why, I know a barn not far from here where there are wagon-loads of mice. The priest who lives there is always grumbling about the mischief they do."

"I should very much like to go and see the place that you speak of," said the cat.

"Come on, then," said Reynard, and away down the road the two went together.

A day or two before this the fox had found out that the priest kept his chickens in the barn. So he made a big hole under the wall and stole the finest bird he could find. The priest's little son, Martin, had made up his mind to catch the fox if he came that way again, so getting a piece of string he had tied one end to a nail, and at the other end he had made a slip-knot, which he placed over the hole. But Reynard was too clever to be caught easily. It did not take him long to find out about the trap that had been set for him, and he had taken good care not to venture inside that barn again.

Here's the place," said Reynard, when they reached the barn. "Can't you hear the mice squeaking? The hole at the bottom of the wall leads right inside. I'll keep watch outside while you go in; but don't be long, for we must be up early in the morning to make ready for our journey."

In went the cat, and before he knew what had happened the slip-knot was round his neck. He tugged and tugged, but the more he pulled the tighter the string became, and the poor thing felt that he would very soon choke.

"Are the mice tasty and fat?" shouted Reynard through the hole. "Don't make so much noise or you'll frighten them all away. It's a pity you have to eat them cold, but Martin will bring you something warm in a minute," and, calling on his way at another farmyard to get a chicken for supper, the fox trotted home.

The noise made by the cat awoke Martin, whose bedroom was close by. "Father, get up!" he shouted. "The fox is caught in my trap!"

Up jumped the priest, and putting on a cloak, he ran downstairs with Martin to the barn. The servants all rushed out of their bedrooms when they heard the clatter, thinking that the house must be on fire. Away went all of them pell-mell to the barn to repay the fox for his theft. It was too dark to see that it was no Fox that was caught in the trap, so the poor cat got a terrible beating, besides being blinded in one eye. Mad with pain, he sprang at the nearest person to him, who happened to be the priest. The priest's legs were so covered with bites and scratches that he had to be carried into the house and the cat was left alone.

Though he nearly felt dead he knew that now was his only chance of getting free, for if his enemies returned there would be little left of him. So he gnawed as hard as he could at the string, and was just able to get loose as some of the servants returned.

Next morning, into the court of King Lion there walked the most miserable cat that anyone ever saw. Blind in one eye, covered with bruises, and with patches of fur missing, he looked the most unhappy of cats. When the king heard his tale he was angrier than ever.

"I will punish Reynard without a trial," he said. "He has had too many chances. Call all of my soldiers together; we will burn him out of Malpertuis and give him no mercy."

"Great King!" said the badger. "Reynard may have done much wrong, but he has the right to be called to court three times. If he does not come the next time, then let him be found guilty. Please allow him to be sent for once more."

Well! as you are so anxious for Reynard," said the lion, you shall fetch him yourself. Mind you do not return without him, or you will be sorry for it."

LESSON 2:

- Write the next part of the Reynard story – another animal will be sent from the King to try and fetch him, but Reynard should outsmart them as well...
- Plan your writing first. You should be looking to include:
 - ✓ Descriptions of Reynard and another character which will give the reader a clue as to their personality.
 - ✓ A short plot (story) with a beginning/middle/end – how does Reynard trick the other animal?
 - ✓ Description of setting/scene, including effective vocabulary choice, imagery, multisensory description etc.
 - ✓ Dialogue using the rules of dialogue. E.g. All dialogue should be surrounded by speech marks. There should be some punctuation before the speech mark closes. Every 'new' speaker needs a new line.
 - ✓ Paragraphs, correct SPaG, etc.

Use this planning grid to organise your ideas:

| |
|-------------------------------|
| REYNARD |
| YOUR CHARACTER – NAME? |
| STORY BEGINNING |
| STORY MIDDLE |
| STORY END |
| SETTING(S) |

Now write your story below:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing a story. It occupies most of the page below the instruction.

QUIZ ANSWERS FROM PAGE 2:

- 1. Complete this quotation from Cain: 'Am I my ...?'**
 - a. 'brother's keeper'**
- 2. Explain what is meant by a 'parable'.**
 - a. A story with a moral or message beyond its surface meaning**
- 3. How does the story of the prodigal son demonstrate forgiveness?**
 - a. It shows that even the worst sinner will be welcomed back by Christians**
- 4. List the three ways in which the Devil tries to tempt Jesus.**
 - a. Tempts him to turn stones into bread; challenges him to test God by jumping from a high place; offers him authority in return for worshipping the Devil**
- 5. How are the crowd responsible for Jesus' death?**
 - a. They choose Barabbas to be saved rather than Jesus**