

Reading Comprehension:

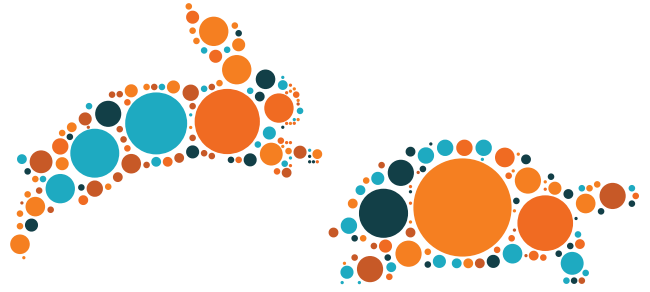
“King Chameleon and the Animals” and “The Hare and the Tortoise”

Keep reading! Then answer the questions that follow.

Passage 2: “The Hare and the Tortoise”

(adapted from *Aesop's Fables*)

- 1 One day, the Hare was needling the Tortoise for the way he plodded along so sluggishly.
- 2 “Do you ever get anywhere?” he asked with a mocking sneer.
- 3 “Yes,” replied the Tortoise, unperturbed. “And I get there sooner than you would expect. I’ll run you a race and prove it.”
- 4 The Hare was much amused at the idea of running a race with the Tortoise, and, eager as always to put his superiority on full display, he agreed. So the Fox, who had consented to act as referee, marked the distance along a course and started the runners off.
- 5 The Hare was soon far out of sight, well on his way to easy victory; however, to make the Tortoise feel how



deeply ridiculous it was for him to challenge Hare to a race, he lay down beside the course to take a nap until the Tortoise should catch up.

- 6 The Tortoise, meanwhile, pressed on at an unhurried and even pace, and after a time, he quietly passed the place where the Hare was fast asleep. The Hare slept on quite peacefully, dreaming of his victory, and when at last he did wake up, he saw that the Tortoise was nearing the goal. The Hare then ran his swiftest, but he could not overtake the Tortoise in time. As Tortoise crossed the finish line, Fox declared slow-and-steady Tortoise the winner of the race.

Answer the questions about “King Chameleon and the Animals” and “The Hare and the Tortoise.”

Sample answers

1. **Part A:** In “King Chameleon and the Animals,” what is the most likely reason that the animals were not satisfied with Chameleon becoming king?
 - a. They wanted a bigger animal who could protect them.
 - b. They did not think he was worthy of their trust.**
 - c. They decided they did not want a king after all.
 - d. They thought the hare was much more intelligent.

Part B: Use evidence from the text to explain your answer.

The text says that the animals “did not like the underhanded way Chameleon had become king” and refers to his “ill-gotten throne.” This suggests that the animals probably thought they couldn’t trust Chameleon.

2. **Part A:** What is the theme or moral of “King Chameleon and the Animals”?
 - a. It is more important to act quickly than to spend time thinking of a plan.
 - b. Our greatest weaknesses may turn out to be our greatest strengths.
 - c. A king without the respect and allegiance of his subjects is not a true king.**
 - d. An honorable ruler gains power through cleverness not brute strength.

Part B: Cite a specific part of the text that supports the theme of the fable.

Chameleon sits alone and calls his “imagined attendants and loyal subjects,” but no one listens to him or obeys because, despite being named king, he has no one to command.

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3. Using context clues from “King Chameleon and the Animals,” match the bolded words with their definitions.

<u> e </u> resolved	a. lack of punishment
<u> c </u> anarchy	b. prevented from happening
<u> a </u> impunity	c. absence of government
<u> d </u> stealthy	d. careful not to be noticed
<u> b </u> thwarted	e. reached a firm decision

4. Read the excerpt from paragraph 4 in passage 1.

The quarreling animals were united in only one respect: As a group, they were behaving like a dog chasing its own tail.

What does the analogy show about the animals’ situation?

Just as a dog might go around in circles trying to catch its tail, not actually accomplishing anything without biting itself, the animals were spending a lot of effort doing something that was unproductive and unlikely to bring resolution.

5. **Part A:** Circle the character trait that the hares in “King Chameleon and the Animals” and “The Hare and the Tortoise” share.

humility kindness courage
 haughtiness cleverness

Part B: Cite text evidence from each passage that illustrates this shared characteristic.

Passage 1: When Mr. Hare realizes that Chameleon has tricked him out of the throne, he is “infuriated and indignant” and goes to “sweep the chameleon from the stool.”

Passage 2: Hare makes fun of Tortoise for being slow and is “eager as always to put his superiority on full display.” He wants to “make the Tortoise feel very deeply how ridiculous it was” to race him.

6. In what way are the structures of the passages similar?

a. They both open by setting up the central conflicts that propel the events in the story.

b. They both rely on dialogue to develop the central conflict between two main characters.

c. They both foreshadow the solution to the conflict before introducing the specific problem.

d. They both open by describing the setting and giving the backstory of the main characters.

7. **Part A:** An archetype is a story element that appears over and over again in stories throughout the world, bringing a sense of familiarity to the stories we read. Circle the character archetype that Chameleon best represents in “King Chameleon and the Animals.”

the hero the creator the rebel
 the trickster the bully

Part B: Cite text evidence that illustrates Chameleon’s character archetype.

Rather than fairly competing in the race, Chameleon uses his camouflage ability to deceive Mr. Hare and the other animals so that he can become king.

8. Situational irony is a literary device in which the outcome of an event is very different or opposite from what the reader expects. Explain how each story uses irony to teach a lesson.

Passage 1: Chameleon uses trickery to become king. However, no one listens to him as their king, so he is not a true king. This teaches that without people to trust in you, you cannot truly be their leader.

Passage 2: The slower animal, the Tortoise, wins the race against the much faster Hare. This unexpected outcome shows that being slow and steady is better than being arrogant in one’s natural abilities.