

Lesson 9: Parables

☐ Getting Started

The Pearl is a **parable**, a story that illustrates a moral or religious lesson. Through it the reader can learn many valuable life lessons. A **fable** also teaches a lesson, but a fable usually uses animals or forces of nature as characters, while parables feature human characters. Throughout generations, stories have been used to teach moral lessons. People often learn best when hearing or reading a story. Read the parables found on the "Parables" pages and explain the moral or lesson of each story to a parent.

Stuff You Need

- colored pencils
- colored pencils* (Activity 2 - Option 1)
- journal
- note cards
- ruler* (Activity 2 - Option 1)

Ideas to Think About

- How can the power of a story be used to change people's lives?

Things to Know

- A **fable** teaches a moral lesson and has animals or forces of nature as characters.
- A **parable** illustrates a moral or religious teaching and features human characters.

Activities

☐ Activity 1: Labeling Sentences

Copy any three of the following sentences in your journal, leaving extra spaces between each line. Use an orange pencil to underline prepositional phrases, a dark blue pencil to underline appositive phrases, and a red pencil to underline verbal phrases. For each verbal phrase, label how it functions in the sentence using the laminated parts of speech symbols or by drawing the symbols above the phrases using colored pencils (noun = large dark blue triangle, adjective = smaller green triangle, adverb = orange circle). Finally, if a sentence contains any verbal phrases, note the type after the sentence (gerund, infinitive, or participial).

Note: you may find phrases within other phrases.

1. Then you will learn to detach yourself from your useless burden of cravings.

2. James, a fourteen-year-old newsboy, has saved his earnings for three years to finally buy the new bike of his dreams.
3. He crouched beside the road and watched a heavy two-wheeled cart, drawn by slouching oxen.
4. He could see it, just how each man was, two sleeping curled up and the third squatting in the sand.

☐ **Activity 2: A Parable**

For this activity, select one of the **parables** you read today. You can either draw a picture to accompany the parable or practice telling the parable orally.

Option 1: Illustration

Pick one of the parables described in this lesson and draw a picture that effectively illustrates the parable and could accompany the parable in a book.

Option 2: Oral Retelling

Select one of the parables you read today and practice an oral retelling of the parable. You don't have to know it word for word, but you should be able to retell the story without reading it. When you think you can tell the story in a way that engages your audience, gather your family and tell the story. Remember that good storytellers cause the listener to hang on to every word and almost cast a spell on their audience. You can bring in props, hand gestures, and body movements to make the retelling more dramatic. After you tell the story, ask your audience if anyone can explain the lesson the story teaches.

☐ **Activity 3: Grammar Review**

The following chart compiles much of the grammar information covered in this unit. Review the chart each day to help you prepare for the test you will take at the end of the unit. Note that some information is not included on the chart, such as how to test which part of speech a prepositional or infinitive phrase functions as. Be sure to read back through the lessons to review that information.

Another way to help you study is to copy information from the chart onto note cards and then use those for review. (For example, one side of the note card would say, "prepositional phrase," and the other side would provide the definition. Another prepositional phrase note card could explain how the phrases can function in a sentence.)

Grammar Review			
Phrase Type	Description	Part of Speech	Example
noun	Contains the noun and all the words (such as articles, adjectives, and prepositional phrases) that modify it.	noun	<u>A thin, timid dog</u> came close.
verb	Contains a verb and all of its helping verbs. Does not include adverbs or other modifiers.	verb	Kino <u>could</u> never <u>remember</u> it.
prepositional	Begins with a preposition, ends with a noun or pronoun, and includes any modifiers found in between.	adjective or adverb	I put the picture <u>beside the dark blue lamp</u> .
appositive	Renames or further identifies the noun that comes right before or after it.	noun	Mr. Cho, <u>my neighbor</u> , owns two dogs.
verbal	Begins with a verbal (a verb form) followed by one or more words. The three types are gerund, infinitive, and participial.	noun, adjective, or adverb	The boy <u>standing on the steps</u> is my brother.
gerund	Starts with a gerund (a verb form ending in <i>-ing</i>).	noun	<u>Singing in the shower</u> is fun.
infinitive	Starts with an infinitive (the word <i>to</i> + the basic form of a verb).	nouns, adjectives, or adverbs	The parents want <u>to see the new playground</u> .
participial	Starts with the present participle form of a verb (<i>skipping</i>) or the past participle form (<i>worried, thrown</i>).	adjectives	<u>Balancing on its hind legs</u> , the dog walked across the room.

Wrapping Up

The Pearl is a **parable** that teaches many lessons about life. Today you read some other short **parables** with clear lessons for the reader. Think about some of the lessons *The Pearl* teaches. Decide on one of the important lessons and think about a different story you could use to teach the lesson. In the next lesson you will write your own parable.

Life Application

Think about other stories that you feel have taught life lessons with spiritual or moral truths.

Parables

The Parable of the Pearl (Biblical Parable)

Matthew 13:45-46 The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Biblical Parable)

Luke 10:30-37 Jesus answered, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. By chance a certain priest was going down that way. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite also, when he came to the place, and



saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he traveled, came where he was. When he saw him, he was moved with compassion, came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. He set him on his own animal, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said to him, 'Take care of him. Whatever you spend beyond that, I will repay you when I return.' Now which of these three do you think seemed to be a neighbor to him who fell among the robbers?" He said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Wo and Jah (Buddhist Parable)

A troubled man named Wo could not figure out how to live, so he began meditating to find some answers. After many months he felt no progress, so he asked the temple priest for help.

The priest said, "Go see old Jah."

So the man hiked to old Jah's village and came upon the happy-looking old man coming from the forest under a heavy load of firewood.

"Excuse me, honored Jah," he said, "but can you teach me the secret of life?"

Jah raised his eyebrows and gazed at Wo. Then with some effort, he twisted out from beneath his great bundle of firewood and let it crash to the ground.

"There, that is enlightenment," he said, straightening up with relief and smiling.

The troubled man looked on in shock at the prickly firewood scattered over the ground. "Is that all there is to it?" he said.

"Oh, no," said Jah. Then he bent down, collected all the scattered sticks, hoisted them carefully up on his back and made ready to walk on. "This is enlightenment, too. Come. Let's go together for tea."

So Wo walked along with Jah. "What is old Jah showing me?" he asked.

Jah replied, "First, yes, you are suffering a heavy burden. Many do. But, as the Buddha taught and many have realized, much of your burden and much of your joylessness is your craving for what you can't have and your clinging to what you can't keep. See that the nature of your burden and of the chafing you experience as you try to cling to it are useless, unnecessary, damaging, and then you can let it go. In doing so, you find relief, and you are freer to see the blessings of life and to choose wisely to receive them."

"Thank you, old Jah," said Wo. "And why did you call picking up the burden of firewood again enlightenment as well?"

"One understanding is that some burden in life is unavoidable, and even beneficial, like firewood. With occasional rest it can be managed, and with freedom from undue anxiety about it, it will not cause chafe. Once the undue burden is dropped, we straighten up and feel the wonder and power of being. Seeing others suffering without that freedom and blissful experience, we willingly and knowingly pick up their burdens out of compassion, joining and aiding others in their struggles for liberation, enlightenment, and fulfillment."

"Thank you, Old Jah," said the exhilarated Wo. "You have enlightened me."

"Ah-so," said Jah. "Your understanding is enlightened. Now to make it part of your living and your spirit, you must go follow the eight practices and meditate. Then you will learn to detach yourself from your useless burden of cravings and to attach yourself to the profound source of being out of which life, creativity, joy, and compassion form and flow."

And so Wo went and did. And understanding the truths gave him comfort. And practicing the good behaviors kept him from harming himself or others anymore. And concentrating on the deep blissful potential of life gave him a continuing sense of companionship and joyful awe and of well-being in his spirit, no matter what else of pain he had to deal with.



What About the Bike? (South African Parable)

Adapted from a story reported by a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

James, a fourteen-year-old newsboy, has saved his earnings for three years to finally buy the new bike of his dreams. Two days later he is accosted in an alley by Eric, the white neighborhood bully whose father is a capo of the local mob and whose uncle is the corrupt chief of police. Eric pushes James from the bike with a "Give it up, kid!" and rides off. Powerless to do anything about the theft, James often sees Eric riding his beautiful bike while he returns to his old rusty junker.

Three years later, Eric, having gone through his own series of tough experiences, approaches James and says; "Uh...kid, could we talk?"

"I don't think so."

"Hey, come on. Chill out. Just listen to me for a minute."

"I don't want to talk with you. You don't have anything to say that I want to hear."

"Yes I do. There's something I gotta say to you, OK?"

"I can't imagine what."

"Hear me out. Look, uh...(Eric is stammering.) I, uh...I know I was mean to you. I, uh...I think about it when I see you. I uh...I don't know quite how to put it. It's just that...well, I uh...I wanted to say that I'm sorry. I apologize."

(James is incredulous.) "You...you are apologizing to me? (Then he's suspicious.) What's this all about?"

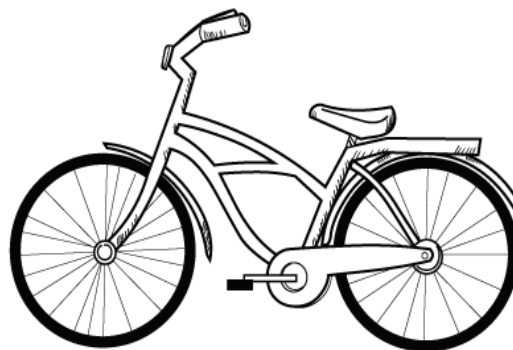
"This may sound weird, but since my dad got killed, my whole life has been turned upside down, and I've been trying to sort things out. Well, actually, I've been going to church again and, well, I'm trying to make things right with people I hurt.... So, if I hurt you in any way, I want to ask your forgiveness."

"If you hurt me in any way, you say?"

"Yeah. Will you forgive me?"

"Forgive you?" (There's a long pause.) "You're asking me to forgive you?"

"Yes."



"That sounds nice and all that. I mean, it may be good for you, but I have a question to ask before we talk about forgiveness."

"Yes?"

"What about the bike?"

"The bike? This isn't about the bike; it's about you and me. I don't have the bike anymore. It's long gone. Bikes? Hey, they come and they go. This is about you and me, about us, you know? About relationship..."

(James breaks in.) "About relationship? What relationship?"

(Eric continues.) "...And that's why I've come to ask. Will you forgive me?"

"You think that's all there is to it? You just say 'I'm sorry' and you say some nice stuff to make everything OK again, and then we forget about the past and act like nothing's happened?"

"Well...yes."

"I have just one thing to say."

"Yes?"

"What about the bike?"

Lesson 9: Parables

Getting Started

✿ Ideas to Think About

- How can the power of a story be used to change people's lives?

📖 Things to Know

- A **fable** teaches a moral lesson and has animals or forces of nature as characters.
- A **parable** illustrates a moral or religious teaching and features human characters.

🕒 Skills

- Reflect on learning experiences by analyzing personal learning growth and changes in perspective. (LA)
- Analyze the purpose of the author or creator by understanding the effects of the author's craft on the reader. (LA)
- Study the characteristics of different types of literature. (LA)
- Model an understanding of conventional written and spoken expression by applying the parts of speech to clarify language usage. (LA)
- Identify and understand the function of appositive phrases, prepositional phrases, and adverbial and adjectival phrases. (LA)

Introducing the Lesson

Today your child will read four different parables. Ask him to explain the lesson that each parable teaches.

The Parable of the Pearl (Biblical Parable)

Many people interpret the parable of the pearl as showing how precious and valuable the kingdom of heaven is. In the story, the merchant looks for and finds a pearl so amazing that he gives up everything he owns to obtain it. Through the story Jesus is saying that those searching for the kingdom of heaven will find that it is more valuable than anything they have; they should seek it, recognize its value, and do whatever they can to attain it.

Some think that the title of Steinbeck's book was inspired by Jesus' parable of the pearl. Ask your child how this parable is like the story in *The Pearl* and how it may be an ironic reference. Your child may mention that Kino ends up "paying" for the pearl with everything he has — his happiness and his family's future. Your child may also note that unlike the pearl in the Biblical parable, which represents heaven, the pearl in the novel comes to represent evil.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Biblical Parable)

Ask your child how he would describe the lesson of the Parable of the Good Samaritan. He should say something about helping people in their time of need, regardless of who the person is. He may also talk about hypocrisy and how important it is that people "practice what they preach."

Wo and Jah (Buddhist Parable)

Ask your child what the lesson of the story is. Answers will vary but a good answer might be that we can

have peace and joy only when we drop our undue burdens and help others who are suffering.

What About the Bike? (South African Parable)

Ask your child what the lesson of this story might be. Answers will vary but a good answer might be that when you want to reconcile with someone, it may take more than an apology to make things right. It will take time and, depending on the circumstances, restitution may be part of the equation.

Activities

Activity 1: Labeling Sentences

Your child should have copied three of the four sentences in his journal, underlining prepositional (PP), appositive (AP), and verbal phrases (VP). He should have also identified each verbal phrase and labeled how it functioned in the sentence.

Answer Key:

1. Then you will learn to detach yourself from your useless burden of cravings [VP, infinitive phrase, noun; also "from your useless burden" and "of cravings" are PPs].
2. James, a fourteen-year-old newsboy [AP], has saved his earnings for three years [PP] to finally buy the new bike of his dreams [VP, infinitive phrase, adverb; also "of his dreams" is a PP].
3. He crouched beside the road [PP] and watched a heavy two-wheeled cart, drawn by slouching oxen [VP, participial phrase, adjective; also "by slouching oxen" is a PP].
4. He could see it, just how each man was [AP], two sleeping curled up [VP, participial phrase, adjective] and the third squatting in the sand [VP, participial phrase, adjective; also "in the sand" is a PP].

Activity 2: A Parable

Your child can decide whether he wants to create an illustration for one of the parables he read today or practice a retelling of the parable.

Option 1: Illustration

Explain to your child that the picture should be detailed and should express an important aspect of the story, helping to bring the story to life.

Option 2: Oral Retelling

When your child is ready, he can retell the parable. Discuss his storytelling skills with him.

Activity 3: Grammar Review

The chart provided summarizes much of the grammar covered in this unit to help your child review for grammar part of the unit test. If he needs additional review, he can create note cards with the phrase type on one side and information about the phrase on the other side; he can then use these cards over the next few days to test his knowledge. Note that your child will still need to read over the individual lessons to review other grammar information.

Wrapping Up

Questions to Discuss

- Did the parables you read today change your thinking in any way?

- Ask your child if he can explain the definition of each of the vocabulary words or use each one correctly in a sentence.

Things to Review

Discuss each of the "Things to Know" sections of the lessons. Explain that these sections are important for preparing for the test. Discuss some strategies for studying — writing information on note cards, rewriting notes from the lessons in a journal and looking over them, or folding a sheet of notebook paper in half and writing a key word on one half and an explanation on the other. (Look only at the key word and see if you can remember the rest of the information.)