

Ant and Grasshopper

Classical Fable by Aesop

Retold by James Reeves

The Richer, the Poorer

Modern Fable by Dorothy West

Should you **LIVE** for the present or the future?

COMMON CORE

RL 1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL 2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details.

Throughout the world and over the centuries, people have had different ideas about saving and spending. Some people prefer to save as much as possible, so the money will be there when they really need it. Others prefer to spend what they have right away, so that they can enjoy it. In the fables you are about to read, four characters—two from a story told more than 2,500 years ago and two from a story published in 1995—struggle with their decisions to save or spend.

DISCUSS Is it better to save for the future or enjoy yourself in the present? Discuss your opinion with a partner. Provide reasons to support your response.



Meet the Authors

● TEXT ANALYSIS: FABLE

Fables teach us lessons about life. A **classical fable** like “Ant and Grasshopper” often features animals who act like human beings and ends with a clear **moral**, or message about life. Aesop’s fable is an example of classical literature and comes from the classical civilization of ancient Greece.

A **modern fable** like “The Richer, the Poorer” is more likely to use human characters. It has a lesson that readers have to interpret on their own.

● READING STRATEGY: SET A PURPOSE FOR READING

When you read a fable, you gain insight into the **cultural and historical setting** it comes from. Fables often reflect the concerns of the people who lived at the time the fables were written. Your purpose for reading is to compare and contrast the historical and cultural settings of two fables. As you read, think about the choices characters make and the consequences of those choices. Then think about how the fables speak to the **cultural values**—the ideas and beliefs—of the people at that time.

	“Ant and Grasshopper”		“The Richer, the Poorer”	
	Ant	Grasshopper	Lottie	Bess
Actions	worked hard			
Consequences				

▲ VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

West uses the words below to tell her fable. To see how many you know, match each word with the term closest in meaning.

WORD LIST	clarity	frugal	intolerable
	enhance	inefficient	lean

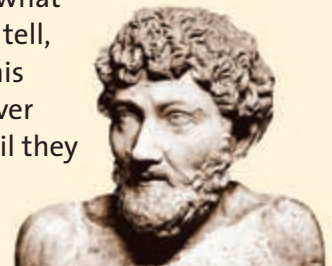
- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. thin | 3. clearness | 5. unbearable |
| 2. wasteful | 4. improve | 6. thrifty |

Aesop

620?–560 B.C.

Ancient Storyteller

Aesop, who became known as one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece, was famous for his clever fables. Little is known about who Aesop was. Early writers of history agree that he came from Africa and was held in slavery in Greece, but was eventually given his freedom. Aesop told his fables aloud. Others repeated what they’d heard him tell, and in that way his fables survived over the centuries until they were published around 300 B.C.



Dorothy West

1907–1998

Writer from the Start

The daughter of a freed slave, Dorothy West was just 16 years old when she first received recognition as a writer. She won second prize in a contest put on by a literary magazine. As an adult, West moved to New York City, where she became a key literary figure. West wrote two novels and numerous short stories.



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

Authors Online



Go to thinkcentral.com. KEYWORD: HML6-383

Ant and Grasshopper

Aesop
Retold by James Reeves

All summer the ant had been working hard, gathering a store of corn for the winter. Grain by grain she had taken it from the fields and stowed it away in a hole in the bank, under a hawthorn bush.

One bright, frosty day in winter Grasshopper saw her. She was dragging out a grain of corn to dry it in the sun. The wind was keen, and poor Grasshopper was cold. **A**

“Good morning, Ant,” said he. “What a terrible winter it is! I’m half dead with hunger. Please give me just one of your corn grains to eat. I can find nothing, although I’ve hopped all over the farmyard. There isn’t a
10 seed to be found. Spare me a grain, I beg.”

“Why haven’t you saved anything up?” asked Ant. “I worked hard all through the summer, storing food for the winter. Very glad I am too, for as you say, it’s bitterly cold.”

“I wasn’t idle last summer, either,” said Grasshopper.

“And what did you do, pray?”

“Why, I spent the time singing,” answered Grasshopper. “Every day from dawn till sunset I jumped about or sat in the sun, chirruping to my heart’s content.”

“Oh you did, did you?” replied Ant. “Well, since you’ve sung all
20 summer to keep yourself cheerful, you may dance all winter to keep yourself warm. Not a grain will I give you!”

And she scuttled off into her hole in the bank, while Grasshopper was left cold and hungry.

IN GOOD TIMES PREPARE FOR WHEN THE BAD TIMES COME.  **B**

Analyze Visuals ►

What can you **infer** about these two illustrations by viewing them next to each other?

A FABLE

Reread lines 1–6. What clues tell you that this is a fable?

B FABLE

The **moral**, or lesson, is a stylistic element of a classical fable. Restate the moral in your own words. Which character’s behavior does the moral support?



The Richer, the Poorer

Dorothy West

Over the years Lottie had urged Bess to prepare for her old age. Over the years Bess had lived each day as if there were no other. Now they were both past sixty, the time for summing up. Lottie had a bank account that had never grown **lean**. Bess had the clothes on her back, and the rest of her worldly possessions in a battered suitcase. **C**

Lottie had hated being a child, hearing her parents' skimping and scraping. Bess had never seemed to notice. All she ever wanted was to go outside and play. She learned to skate on borrowed skates. She rode a borrowed bicycle. Lottie couldn't wait to grow up and buy herself the best
10 of everything.

As soon as anyone would hire her, Lottie put herself to work. She minded babies; she ran errands for the old.

She never touched a penny of her money, though her child's mouth watered for ice cream and candy. But she could not bear to share with Bess, who never had anything to share with her. When the dimes began to add up to dollars, she lost her taste for sweets.

By the time she was twelve, she was clerking after school in a small variety store. Saturdays she worked as long as she was wanted. She decided to keep her money for clothes. When she entered high school, she would
20 wear a wardrobe that neither she nor anyone else would be able to match.

But her freshman year found her unable to indulge so frivolous a whim, particularly when her admiring instructors advised her to think seriously of college. No one in her family had ever gone to college, and certainly Bess would never get there. She would show them all what she could do, if she put her mind to it.

She began to bank her money, and her bankbook became her most private and precious possession.

lean (lēn) *adj.* having little to spare; thin

C COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Reread lines 1–5.

Consider the ways this passage is similar to the first two paragraphs of “Ant and Grasshopper.” What do you think will happen in the rest of the story?

Language Coach

Word Forms To create an adverb from an adjective form, you can add the ending *-ly* to the adjective. In line 22, adding *-ly* to the adjective *serious* creates the adverb *seriously*. What other adverb in this paragraph is created by adding *-ly* to an adjective form?

In her third year in high school she found a job in a small but expanding restaurant, where she cashiered from the busy hour until closing. In her
 30 last year in high school the business increased so rapidly that Lottie was faced with the choice of staying in school or working full time.

She made her choice easily. A job in hand was worth two in the future. **D**

Bess had a beau¹ in the school band, who had no other ambition except to play a horn. Lottie expected to be settled with a home and family while Bess was still waiting for Harry to earn enough to buy a marriage license.

That Bess married Harry straight out of high school was not surprising. That Lottie never married at all was not really surprising either. Two or three times she was halfway persuaded, but to give up a job that paid well for a homemaking job that paid nothing was a risk she was incapable of taking.

40 Bess's married life was nothing for Lottie to envy. She and Harry lived like gypsies,² Harry playing in second-rate bands all over the country, even getting himself and Bess stranded in Europe. They were often in rags and never in riches.

D COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Reread lines 26–32. In what ways is Lottie similar to Ant in “Ant and Grasshopper”?

▼ Analyze Visuals

Describe the **mood**, or feeling, that each of these paintings conveys.

1. **beau**: boyfriend.

2. **gypsies**: people who move from place to place.



Woman in Calico (1944), William H. Johnson. © Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C./Art Resource, New York.



Mom and Dad (1944), William H. Johnson. Oil on paperboard, 31" × 25³/₈". Gift of the Harmon Foundation. © Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C./Art Resource, New York.



Street Life, Harlem (1940), William H. Johnson. © Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C./Art Resource, New York.

◀ Analyze Visuals

Which of the sisters would you be more likely to **connect** to the woman in this painting?

Bess grieved because she had no child, not having sense enough to know she was better off without one. Lottie was certainly better off without nieces and nephews to feel sorry for. Very likely Bess would have dumped them on her doorstep.

That Lottie had a doorstep they might have been left on was only because her boss, having bought a second house, offered Lottie his first
50 house at a price so low and terms so reasonable that it would have been like losing money to refuse.

She shut off the rooms she didn't use, letting them go to rack and ruin.³ Since she ate her meals out, she had no food at home, and did not encourage callers, who always expected a cup of tea. **E**

Her way of life was mean and miserly, but she did not know it. She thought she lived **frugally** in her middle years so that she could live in comfort and ease when she most needed peace of mind.

E FABLE

Reread lines 48–54. What do you think of Lottie's behavior?

frugal (frōō'gəl) *adj.*
avoiding waste; thrifty

3. **go to rack and ruin**: become shabby or wrecked.

The years, after forty, began to race. Suddenly Lottie was sixty, and retired from her job by her boss's son, who had no sentimental feeling
60 about keeping her on until she was ready to quit.

She made several attempts to find other employment, but her dowdy appearance made her look old and **inefficient**. For the first time in her life Lottie would gladly have worked for nothing, to have some place to go, something to do with her day.

Harry died abroad, in a third-rate hotel,⁴ with Bess weeping as hard as if he had left her a fortune. He had left her nothing but his horn. There wasn't even money for her passage home.

Lottie, trapped by the blood tie, knew she would not only have to send for her sister, but take her in when she returned. It didn't seem fair that
70 Bess should reap the harvest of Lottie's lifetime of self-denial. **F**

It took Lottie a week to get a bedroom ready, a week of hard work and hard cash. There was everything to do, everything to replace or paint. When she was through the room looked so fresh and new that Lottie felt she deserved it more than Bess.

She would let Bess have her room, but the mattress was so lumpy, the carpet so worn, the curtains so threadbare that Lottie's conscience pricked her. She supposed she would have to redo that room, too, and went about doing it with an eagerness that she mistook for haste.

When she was through upstairs, she was shocked to see how dismal
80 downstairs looked by comparison. She tried to ignore it, but with nowhere to go to escape it, the contrast grew more **intolerable**.

She worked her way from kitchen to parlor, persuading herself she was only putting the rooms to rights to give herself something to do. At night she slept like a child after a long and happy day of playing house. She was having more fun than she had ever had in her life. She was living each hour for itself.

There was only a day now before Bess would arrive. Passing her gleaming mirrors, at first with vague awareness, then with painful **clarity**, Lottie saw herself as others saw her, and could not stand the
90 sight.

She went on a spending spree from specialty shops to beauty salon, emerging transformed into a woman who believed in miracles. **G**

inefficient (ɪn'ɪ-fɪsh'ənt)
adj. not able to produce without wasting time or energy

F COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Note Lottie's reaction to sharing her home with Bess. How is this similar to or different from what happens in "Ant and Grasshopper"?

intolerable
(ɪn-təl'ər-ə-bəl) *adj.*
unbearable; too much to be endured

clarity (klär'ɪ-tē) *n.* the quality of being clear

G FABLE

Reread lines 75–92. What has Lottie learned about herself? How is this lesson affecting her behavior?

4. **third-rate hotel**: a hotel of poor quality.

She was in the kitchen basting a turkey when Bess rang the bell. Her heart raced, and she wondered if the heat from the oven was responsible.

She went to the door, and Bess stood before her. Stiffly she suffered Bess's embrace, her heart racing harder, her eyes suddenly smarting from the onrush of cold air.

“Oh, Lottie, it's good to see you,” Bess said, but saying nothing about
100 Lottie's splendid appearance. Upstairs Bess, putting down her shabby suitcase, said, “I'll sleep like a rock tonight,” without a word of praise for her lovely room. At the lavish table, top-heavy with turkey, Bess said, “I'll take light and dark, both,” with no marveling at the size of the bird, or that there was turkey for two elderly women, one of them too poor to buy her own bread.

With the glow of good food in her stomach, Bess began to spin stories. They were rich with places and people, most of them lowly, all of them magnificent. Her face reflected her telling, the joys and sorrows of her remembering, and above all, the love she lived by that **enhanced** the
110 poorest place, the humblest person.

Then it was that Lottie knew why Bess had made no mention of her finery, or the shining room, or the twelve-pound turkey. She had not even seen them. Tomorrow she would see the room as it really looked, and Lottie as she really looked, and the warmed-over turkey in its second-day glory. Tonight she saw only what she had come seeking, a place in her sister's home and heart. **H**

She said, “That's enough about me. How have the years used you?”

“It was me who didn't use them,” said Lottie wistfully. “I saved for them. I saved for them. I forgot the best of them would go without my
120 ever spending a day or a dollar enjoying them. That's my life story in those few words, a life never lived.

“Now it's too near the end to try.”

Bess said, “To know how much there is to know is the beginning of learning to live. Don't count the years that are left us. At our time of life it's the days that count. You've too much catching up to do to waste a minute of a waking hour feeling sorry for yourself.”

Lottie grinned, a real wide-open grin, “Well, to tell the truth I felt sorry for you. Maybe, if I had any sense, I'd feel sorry for myself, after all. I know I'm too old to kick up my heels, but I'm going to let you show me how. If I land
130 on my head, I guess it won't matter. I feel giddy already, and I like it.” **☞ 1**

enhance (ĕn-hăns') v.
to increase in value or
quality

H FABLE

What do you learn about Bess from these lines? Based on the description, what type of behavior is the author recommending?

1 FABLE

Reread lines 127–130. Consider Lottie's attitude in this passage with her attitude at the beginning of the fable. What lesson does this change in attitude hint at?

Comprehension

1. **Recall** Why does Grasshopper need to ask Ant for food?
2. **Recall** Why does Bess come to live with her sister Lottie?
3. **Summarize** What does Lottie do to prepare for Bess's arrival?

Text Analysis

4. **Analyze Fables** In "Ant and Grasshopper," the characters are animals who talk and act like people. What do these animal characters tell you about human nature?
5. **Analyze Fables** Think about which of the characters in the two fables changed and which ones did not. Identify who changed and explain in what ways he or she changed.
6. **Compare and Contrast** In what way is Grasshopper's situation similar to Bess's? In what way is it different?
7. **Examine Cultural and Historical Settings** Fables often reflect the concerns of a particular culture. What details from "Ant and Grasshopper" tell you that self-reliance was an important value to ancient Greeks?



RL 1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL 2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details.

Compare and Contrast Fables

Now that you've read both fables, add a new row to the chart you filled out as you read. Use the answers to the questions in the selection to help you identify the moral of "The Richer, the Poorer." How does this moral reflect a different attitude toward saving and spending than the attitude in "Ant and Grasshopper"?

	<i>"Ant and Grasshopper"</i>		<i>"The Richer, the Poorer"</i>	
	<i>Ant</i>	<i>Grasshopper</i>	<i>Lottie</i>	<i>Bess</i>
<i>Actions</i>	<i>worked hard during the summer</i>			
<i>Consequences</i>				

<i>Moral: In good times prepare for when the bad times come.</i>	<i>Moral:</i>
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Should you **LIVE** for the present or the future?

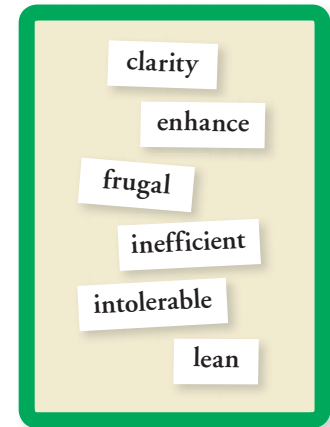
Has either fable changed the way you think about living for the present or the future? Support your response with details from the text.

Vocabulary in Context

▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

In each item below, choose the letter of the word that has a different meaning from the other words.

1. (a) enable, (b) enhance, (c) improve, (d) increase
2. (a) wasteful, (b) disorganized, (c) unfair, (d) inefficient
3. (a) quick, (b) sparing, (c) frugal, (d) thrifty
4. (a) lean, (b) sparse, (c) little, (d) lengthy
5. (a) generosity, (b) kindness, (c) charity, (d) clarity
6. (a) impractical, (b) unenjoyable, (c) intolerable, (d) terrible



ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN SPEAKING

• attitude • communicate • context • illustrate • implicit

With a partner, discuss the moral of each fable. Do you find a direct statement of a moral to be effective? Or is it more convincing if a moral is **implicit**? Use at least two Academic Vocabulary words in your discussion.

VOCABULARY STRATEGY: MULTIPLE MEANING WORDS

Many English words have more than one meaning. You may have known, for example, that *lean* can mean “rest the body against something for support.” But you may not have been familiar with its use in “The Richer, the Poorer,” where the word means “having little to spare; thin.”

If a word does not seem to make sense in context, look at the rest of the sentence to figure out what other meaning the word might have. If you are still not sure of the meaning, check a dictionary.

PRACTICE Use context clues or a dictionary to define the boldfaced words.

1. She **cast** her hat and scarf aside when she got home.
2. The golfer used an **iron** to make the shot.
3. Instead of making a decision, she chose to **hedge** for a while longer.
4. To swing the bat better, **plant** your feet solidly yet comfortably.

COMMON CORE

L 4a Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Interactive Vocabulary **THINK** central

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Writing for Assessment

1. READ THE PROMPT

The two fables you've just read present a similar idea in very different ways. In writing assessments, you will often be asked to compare and contrast similar characters or themes in two stories, poems, or fables.

In three paragraphs, compare and contrast the traditional fable "Ant and Grasshopper" with the modern fable "The Richer, the Poorer." Consider the moral of each fable and the actions of each character. Support your ideas using details from the fables.

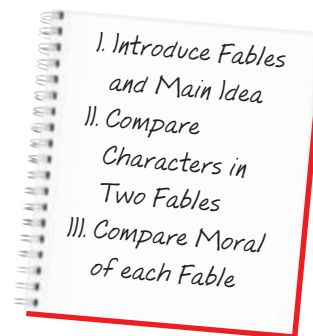
STRATEGIES IN ACTION

1. I have to identify the *similarities and differences* between the fables.
2. I need to describe how the *characters* behave, and any *lessons* they learn.
3. I need to include *details and examples* from the fables to support my ideas.

2. PLAN YOUR WRITING

Using the chart you filled in as you read, identify the ways in which the fables are alike and different. Then think about how to present these similarities and differences.

- Decide on a main idea, or position statement, for your response.
- Review the fables to find examples and details that support your position.
- Create an outline to organize your response. This sample outline shows one way to organize your paragraphs.



3. DRAFT YOUR RESPONSE

Paragraph 1 Provide the titles and authors of both fables, as well as a sentence telling what each fable is about. Also include your main idea.

Paragraph 2 Explain how the four characters are similar or different. Support your position with examples of what they say, do, or think.

Paragraph 3 Provide the moral of each fable. Explain how the messages are similar or different. Use supporting details from the fables.

Revision Make sure you've used transition words such as *similarly*, *also*, *however*, *instead*, or *unlike* to show similarities and differences.