



**TURTLE
AND
RABBIT
STORIES**



FABLES

Turtle and Rabbit Stories is public domain.

Note to teachers: These stories could really use pictures. A great project for your classes could be for you to read these stories to your students or have the students read them to one another and challenge them to make their own picture books or comics. (♥ would appreciate it).

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HEY KIDS!

You can use these stories to make your own picture books. ♥ wrote these stories for you, but ♥ is not a very good illustrator. You can help ♥ by making these stories into picture books or comic books.

Making an illustrated book is a process.

1. Storyboards – Make small drawings that show a plan of how the book is going to look. Do not forget to plan for front and back covers for your books.
2. Layouts – Use your storyboards to make a plan for each page of your book. For comics, you will want to draw the outlines of the frames you plan to use on each page.
3. Pencils – Use a light pencil to show the basic ideas for each page of your story.
4. Inks – Use black markers, pens, or brushes and ink to finish your penciled artwork.
5. Colors – Use crayons, colored pencils, colored markers, paints, or an airbrush to color your inked drawings.
6. Lettering – Write out the words onto the colored pages. For a comics style, you can make word balloons and captions on other sheets of paper, cut them out, and glue them to the colored artwork. Learn to print neatly.

THE RACE AROUND TIME

Once, there was a rabbit who bragged about how fast it was. "I am the fastest land animal. No one can beat me in a land race."

One day, the rabbit was running circles around a turtle. The rabbit teased the turtle about being slow. "How do you like my dust, grandpa? Do you need my help? Maybe I can carry you."

The turtle was very patient with the rabbit. "No, thank you. I can manage."

One day, the turtle got tired of the rabbit's attitude and decided to teach the rabbit a lesson. The turtle found the rabbit and said, "I bet that I can beat you in a race around time."

The rabbit laughed at the turtle. "Okay slowpoke, but if I win, I'm going to make soup out of you."

The turtle yawned and nodded. "If I win, you have to slow down and be nice to everyone for the rest of your life."

The rabbit agreed. "It's a bet."

All of the animals came out to watch the race. When it started, the rabbit ran off into the future, racing far ahead of the turtle. "I'll see you at the end of time, grandpa. I'm looking forward to a nice bowl of soup."

The turtle did not move. The other animals were confused. They could not understand why the turtle did nothing.

"Get moving!" shouted the eagle.

"Go, go, GO!" shouted the bear.

"The rabbit is going to make soup out of you!" shouted the kangaroo.

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The turtle stood up and looked at all of the other animals. "While the rabbit is gone, I want to teach you all something. Time is a circle, and we are at the beginning of it. Now, I don't know about you, but I am sick and tired of that rabbit's attitude. I want to teach that silly rabbit a lesson it will never forget. If you're with me, you'll help me to win. If you're not with me, someone else will have to teach the rabbit a lesson."

The turtle took a few steps backward, hid in its shell, and went to sleep.

The eagle was watching the race from the sky. It flew to the bear. "Go wake up the turtle. The rabbit is halfway around time."

The bear knocked on the turtle's shell. "Wake up, little turtle. The rabbit is at six o'clock. It's time to get up."

The turtle did not move.

When the rabbit was three quarters of the way around time, the eagle got really worried. It flew to the kangaroo. "Go wake up the turtle. The rabbit is three-quarters of the way around time."

The kangaroo thumped its tail on the ground next to the turtle. "Wake up, little turtle. The rabbit is at nine o'clock. It's time to get up."

The turtle did not move.

When the rabbit got eleven twelfths of the way around time, the eagle was in a panic. "Everyone! That awful rabbit is eleven-twelfths of the way around time. Wake that turtle up!"

All of the land animals started beating their paws, hooves, and tails on the ground next to the turtle. The birds flew around the turtle and chirped. The fish splashed water on the turtle.

Everyone shouted. "Get up, little turtle! It's eleven o'clock, time to win the race."

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The turtle poked its head out of its shell. It stretched and yawned. "What time is it?"

"It's five after eleven!" shouted the animals.

"Thank you," said the turtle.

The turtle made a pot of tea.

The bear was very angry. "What are you doing? It's eleven fifteen. The rabbit is getting close!"

The turtle was calm. "I always start my day with a cup of tea. Would you like some?"

"No, thank you," said the bear.

The turtle sat down, poured a cup of tea, and sipped it.

The kangaroo bounced over to the turtle. "How can you sit there sipping tea? It's eleven thirty. The rabbit is nearly here!"

The turtle yawned. "I'm sorry, but could I trouble you for some cake to have with my tea?"

The kangaroo was shocked. "Cake? How can you think about cake at a time like this? The rabbit is going to make soup out of you!"

The turtle smiled. "I like to have cake with my tea."

The kangaroo bounced away and came back with some cake. "Here's some cake. Now please hurry up and win the race. It's already eleven thirty-five."

"Thank you very much," said the turtle. The turtle munched on the cake slowly, chewing many times before swallowing.

The bear came back and growled at the turtle. "It's eleven forty-five. Why don't you cross the finish line? Did we do this for nothing?"

The turtle looked hard at the bear. "What's the problem? All you did was wake me up. Thank you for waking me up. I

will finish what I started, but I'll do it in my own time and in my own style."

The bear could not believe its ears. "It's your **life!**"

The turtle swallowed a bit of cake. "Yes, it's *my* life. Don't worry about me. I'm okay, and I'll be okay."

The turtle finished eating the cake and washed it down with the last of the tea. "What time is it?"

"It's eleven fifty-five!" the animals shouted.

The turtle plodded over to the finish line and stopped in front of it.

"Do it!" shouted the eagle.

"Finish it!" shouted the kangaroo.

"Get it done!" shouted the bear.

The turtle looked back to see the rabbit in the distance. And waited...

"One minute!" shouted the fish.

The turtle yawned.

"Thirty seconds!" shouted the birds.

The turtle looked at the finish line.

"Fifteen seconds!" shouted the land animals.

The turtle raised a foot and left it hanging in the air above the finish line.

Everyone started counting down.

"10...9...8...7...6...5...4...3...2...1..."

The turtle dropped its foot across the finish line a half second before the rabbit crossed it.

Everyone cheered. "The turtle has won! Hooray!"

The rabbit was angry. "How? How did you win? You're the slowest land animal, and I am the fastest. There is *no way* you could beat me. You cheated!"

FABLES

The turtle looked hard at the rabbit. "The bet was to race *around* time. I beat you by sidestepping it. I went around time in one step."

The rabbit cried. "That's not fair!"

The turtle watched the rabbit's tears fall to the ground. "How about we call it a tie?"

The rabbit cheered up. "Do you mean it?"

The turtle was kind and serious. "Yes. I mean it."

All of the other animals cheered and started to sing praises to the turtle.

The turtle frowned. "I didn't win the race alone. I couldn't have done it without all of you. Without you, I'd be in the soup. If you're going to sing praises, sing for everyone."

So they did, and they had a big party with tea and cake for everyone.

From that day on, the rabbit chose to slow down a little and was a lot nicer to everyone (most of the time), and no one tried to wake up the turtle early ever again.

Lesson: Knowledge is power!



FABLES

Now that you have read “The Race Around Time”, sketch a picture of it for the front cover of your book.

THE ROOMMATES

Once upon a time, there was a lazy rabbit who hated to do housework. One day, the rabbit was rushing home when it saw a turtle. The rabbit had an idea.

“Hey turtle,” said the rabbit.

“Hello,” said the turtle.

“How would you like a place to live?” asked the rabbit.

“Um,” said the turtle, “I already have my shell. I don’t really need anything else.”

“This old thing?” said the rabbit, knocking hard on the turtle’s shell. “I’ll bet it leaks when it rains.”

“Nope,” said the turtle. “It never leaks. Besides, I don’t mind the rain. I’m a turtle. I like the water.”

“Well, you need a place to hang your hat,” said the rabbit.

“I never wear a hat,” replied the turtle.

“Just try it! You’ll like it!” snapped the rabbit.

“Well,” said the turtle, “I’ll try almost anything once.”

“Great!” exclaimed the rabbit. “Follow me!”

The rabbit hopped off toward home. The turtle slowly plodded behind the rabbit. After a while, the rabbit poked its head out from behind some weeds. “Are you coming?”

“Yup,” said the turtle.

“Well, hurry up. I haven’t got all day.”

“You go ahead,” said the turtle. “I’ll catch up.”

“It’s not very far from here,” said the rabbit. “It’s the warren with the nicest flowers in front.”

“Okay,” said the turtle.

The rabbit raced home and looked around. “I have to make sure that the turtle does the cleaning, but first, I have to make it look like I cleaned.” The rabbit put all of the dirty

dishes into the closet and swept the crumbs on the floor under the rug. “There! Later I’ll just pull the dirty dishes out of the closet when the turtle isn’t looking.”

Around nightfall, the turtle plodded to the rabbit’s door. “Knock, knock. Is anyone home?”

“There you are!” exclaimed the rabbit. “I was wondering when you’d get here.”

“Slow and steady gets things done,” answered the turtle.

“Well don’t just stand there. Come on in.”

The turtle clambered through the rabbit’s front door.

“Welcome to my home,” said the rabbit.

The turtle looked around the room. “It sure is a nice place you have here. It’s cozy.”

“It’s the coziest warren around,” said the rabbit. “Make yourself at home.”

“I don’t mind if I do,” said the turtle. The turtle plodded into the kitchen and began to make some tea. “Would you like some tea?” asked the turtle.

“No thanks,” said the rabbit. “I don’t care for tea.”

“Suit yourself,” said the turtle. The tea kettle started to whistle.

The rabbit was a little anxious. “Now that we’re roommates, we need rules. The first rule is that we take turns cleaning. I cleaned last, so it’s your turn next.”

The turtle poured hot water over the tea and let it steep. “What did you say?” asked the turtle. “I couldn’t hear you because the tea kettle was whistling.”

“I said,” huffed the rabbit, “that we’ll take turns cleaning. I cleaned last, so it’s your turn next.”

The turtle stirred the cup of tea. “Cleaning, huh? Okay. I can do that. I have a system for cleaning.”

“That’s great!” exclaimed the rabbit, clapping the turtle on its shell hard enough to make the turtle spill a little tea. “We’re going to be best pals, you and me.”

The turtle drank a sip of the tea. “Mm. That really hits the spot. Do you have a TV? I like to watch TV while I drink my tea.”

“I’ve got something better than TV,” replied the rabbit. “My warren, er, *our* warren is right in the busiest part of the woods, and I’ve got a window. We can watch the world go by.” The rabbit grabbed a carrot out of the cupboard. “C’mon. Let’s watch the world.”

The turtle and the rabbit sat on the couch and watched the world go by through the rabbit’s window. The rabbit noisily munched some of the carrot and threw the rest onto the floor. The turtle sipped its tea. When they were finished, they were both satisfied.

“How do you like my visual-reality system?” asked the rabbit.

“It’s wonderful,” answered the turtle. “The picture is perfectly real, and it sounds just like we’re in the story. I can even smell the world outside. You have a lovely window to the world.”

“I’m glad you like it,” said the rabbit.

“Um, I’ve got a question about cleaning,” said the turtle.

“Sure,” said the rabbit. “The cleaning supplies are in the closet.”

“Okay,” said the turtle, “but I’m a little confused.”

“What’s to be confused about?” asked the rabbit.

“Well,” said the turtle, “you have a dirt floor.”

“That’s grade-A dirt,” said the rabbit, “the best dirt there is.”

FABLES

“It’s lovely dirt,” said the turtle, “but what I want to know is, when you sweep the floor, how do you know when you’re done?”

“That’s easy,” said the rabbit. “When the dirt pretty much looks the same everywhere on the floor, you’re done.”

“Ah,” said the turtle, “I get it. I suppose that mopping is out of the question.”

The rabbit laughed. “You’re a funny turtle. You can clean up whenever you want.”

“That’s fine,” said the turtle. The turtle plodded over to the sink and washed, dried, and put away the cup, saucer, and teapot.

“Are you going to sweep the floor?” asked the rabbit.

“Not right now,” said the turtle. “Don’t worry. I have a system.”

“Right,” said the rabbit. “Well, good night.”

“Good night,” said the turtle.

The rabbit hopped into bed and went to sleep. The turtle tucked itself into its shell and went to sleep.

In the morning, the rabbit looked around the warren. The carrot leftovers were still on the floor where the rabbit had thrown them the night before. The turtle was nowhere to be seen.

“Now’s my chance,” said the rabbit. “It’s still the turtle’s turn to clean.” The rabbit raced to the closet and put all of the dirty dishes in the sink. Then the rabbit made breakfast and made a big mess all over the kitchen.

When the rabbit was finished eating, the turtle still had not returned. “I wonder where that turtle went,” said the rabbit. “Hey turtle! Where are you?”

“I’m outside,” answered the turtle.

“What are you doing out there?”

“I’m sunning myself. It’s a beautiful day for a picnic.”

“That’s a great idea,” said the rabbit. “I’ll pack a picnic basket.”

“That sounds nice,” said the turtle. “Maybe we can hike up to the top of Overlook Hill for our picnic.”

“I love Overlook Hill,” replied the rabbit. “You can see the whole woods from up there. Give me a minute.” The rabbit raced around the kitchen, packing things for the picnic.

“Take your time,” said the turtle, but just as the turtle finished speaking, the rabbit zipped out the door.

“Let’s go!” exclaimed the rabbit.

The turtle stretched and yawned. “It’s a good thing I already had my morning tea. I’m ready when you are.”

The rabbit raced ahead. “The last one to the top is a rotten egg!”

“I know who the rotten egg is,” said the turtle, but the rabbit did not hear what the turtle said.

The rabbit raced up to the top of Overlook Hill and set up the picnic. When the preparations were finished, the rabbit looked down the hill and saw the turtle just then arriving at the bottom. The rabbit raced back down to the turtle.

“Hey slowpoke, do you need some help getting up the hill?”

“No, that’s okay,” said the turtle. “I like to take my time.”

“Suit yourself,” said the rabbit and raced back up to the top of the hill.

The turtle kept plodding slowly up the hill. After enjoying the view for a few minutes, the rabbit looked back down the hill and saw the turtle pausing to smell some flowers. “Hey!” shouted the rabbit. “I can’t very well have a nice picnic by myself, can I?”

The turtle spoke thoughtfully. “Getting there is half the fun. Did you smell the flowers? They sure do smell nice.”

“Nope,” said the rabbit. “I missed that.” The rabbit raced back down the hill and smelled the flowers. “Those flowers do smell nice,” said the rabbit. “Now, c’mon. Let’s have that picnic.”

“I’ll be there,” said the turtle.

The rabbit raced back up to the top and waited impatiently for the turtle. After a few minutes, the rabbit looked down the hill again and saw the turtle talking with a bee.

“Thank you, bee,” said the turtle. “You do very nice work pollinating the flowers.”

The bee blushed. “Aw, shucks. Thank you for noticing.”

“You’re welcome,” said the turtle.

“Hey!” shouted the rabbit. “Are you ever going to make it up here?”

“I’m almost there,” said the turtle.

“My grandma was slow, but she was old,” said the rabbit.

The turtle plodded the last few steps to the picnic setup and started to make tea.

The rabbit hastily gnawed some vegetables and made a big mess all over the picnic blanket.

The turtle sipped tea while looking out over the woods and saw the river. “It sure would be nice to go for a swim when we’re finished here.”

“That’s a great idea,” said the rabbit, gulping down the last of the vegetables. “I’m thirsty anyway. Let’s go.”

“Hold on,” said the turtle. “I haven’t finished my tea yet.”

The rabbit was starting to get flustered. “How can you go through life being so slow? I’m always waiting for you.”

The turtle drank a sip of tea and thought for a moment. “I always get everything done, don’t I?”

The rabbit was getting huffy. "You're wasting my time."

The turtle looked into the teacup. "I'm sorry that you think your time is wasted. I use my time. I use all of it."

"Now, that's just silly," said the rabbit. "It took you all morning to get up this hill."

"I got here at noon," said the turtle. "I was just in time for lunch."

"At this rate," said the rabbit, "it will take the rest of the day to get to the river, go swimming, and get back home. The whole day will be wasted!"

"I feel like I'm using the whole day," said the turtle.

"You're impossible!" shouted the rabbit.

The turtle took another sip of tea. "I'll tell you what. After I'm finished here, I'll race you to the river. The last one there has to do all of the cleaning for a whole week."

The rabbit's eyes lit up. "It's a deal!" exclaimed the rabbit. They shook hands on it. "We both know who's going to win the race," said the rabbit.

"You're very sure of yourself, aren't you?" said the turtle.

"Of course I am," said the rabbit. "You couldn't beat me in a race on the best day of your life."

"We'll see," said the turtle.

The rabbit was getting anxious to go to the river. "Can we go now?"

The turtle stretched and yawned. "It isn't even one o'clock yet. Lunchtime isn't finished, and I want to take a little nap and enjoy this wonderful sunny day up here."

"You're going to take a nap?" snapped the rabbit.

"Sure," said the turtle. "I want to let my lunch digest."

"You didn't even eat anything!" shouted the rabbit. "All you had was a cup of tea."

"Well, I want to let that digest," answered the turtle.

FABLES

Now the rabbit was furious. “I can’t take this! Everything with you is wait, *wait*, WAIT! I’m sick of waiting!” The rabbit pulled its foot back and kicked the turtle with all its might. The turtle went flying into the air, rolled down the hill, and splashed into the river.

The turtle poked its head out of the water and looked at the rabbit. “Well, I guess I’m done up there. It looks like I won the race and the bet. Come and join me for a swim.”

The rabbit’s ears drooped pathetically. “But, but, but...you’re a turtle. You can’t beat me in a race!”

“I just did beat you,” said the turtle. “Actually, you beat yourself. Now you have to do all of the cleaning for a week. I told you that I have a system.”

One week later, the turtle moved out of the rabbit’s warren.

Lesson: Losing your temper usually makes things worse.



FABLES

Now that you have read “The Roommates”, sketch a picture of it for the back cover of your book.



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