

## The Boys and the Frogs

Some boys were playing one day at the edge of a pond in which lived a family of frogs. The boys amused themselves by throwing stones into the pond to make them skip on top of the water. The stones were flying thick and fast and the boys were enjoying themselves very much; but the poor frogs in the pond were trembling with fear. At last one of the frogs, the oldest and bravest, put his head out of the water and said, "Oh, please, dear children, stop your cruel play! Though it may be fun for you, it means death to us!"

**Moral:** One person's fun should not cause another person's unhappiness.

## The Fox and the Grapes

A fox one day spied a beautiful bunch of ripe grapes hanging from a vine trained along the branches of a tree. The grapes seemed ready to burst with juice, and the fox's mouth watered as he gazed longingly at them. The bunch hung from a high branch, and the fox had to jump for it. The first time he jumped, he missed it by a long way. So he walked off a short distance and took a running leap at it, only to fall short once more. Again and again he tried, but in vain. He sat down and looked at the grapes in disgust. "What a fool I am," he said. "Here I am wearing myself out to get a bunch of sour grapes that are not worth gaping for." And off he walked very, very scornfully.

**Moral:** There are many who pretend to despise and belittle that which is beyond their reach.

## The Raven and the Swan

A raven, which you know is black as coal, was envious of the swan because her feathers were as white as the purest snow. The foolish bird got the idea that if he lived like the swan, swimming and diving all day long and eating the weeds and plants that grow in the water, his feathers would turn white like the swan's. So he left his home in the woods and fields and flew down to live on the lakes and in the marshes. But though he washed and washed all day long, almost drowning himself at it, his feathers remained as black as ever. And as the water weeds he ate did not agree with him, he got thinner and thinner and at last, he died.

**Moral:** A change of habits will not alter nature.

## The Geese and the Cranes

The geese and the cranes were feeding in the same meadow when a bird hunter came to ensnare them in his nets. The cranes, being light of wing, fled away at his approach while the geese, being slower of flight and heavier in their bodies, were captured.

**Moral:** Life isn't always fair.

## The Hares and the Frogs

Hares, as you know, are very timid. The least shadow sends them scurrying in fright to a hiding place. One day, they passed a pond where a family of frogs was sitting among the reeds on the bank. In an instant, the startled frogs were seeking safety in the mud. “Look,” cried a hare. “Things are not so bad after all, for here are creatures who are even afraid of us!”

**Moral:** However unfortunate we may think we are, there is always someone worse off than ourselves.