

Name:

Date:.....

Read the following poem based on the Aesop fable *The Tortoise and the Hare* carefully.

The Hare and the Tortoise

By Marmaduke Park

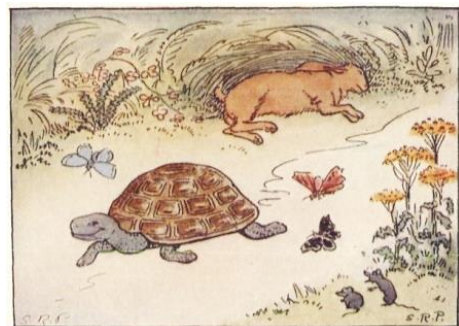
1. Said a hare to a tortoise, "Good sir, what a while
You have been only crossing the way;
Why I really believe that to go half a mile,
You must travel two nights and a day."
2. "I am very contented," the creature replied,
"Though I walk but a tortoise's pace,
But if you think proper the point to decide,
We will run half a mile in a race."
3. "Very good," said the hare; said the tortoise, "Proceed,
And the fox shall decide who has won,"
Then the hare started off with incredible speed;
But the tortoise walk'd leisurely on.
4. "Come tortoise, friend tortoise, walk on," said the hare,
"Well, I shall stay here for my dinner;
Why, 'twill take you a month, at that rate, to get there,
Then how can you hope to be winner?"
5. But the tortoise could hear not a word that she said
For he was far distant behind;
So the hare felt secured while at leisure she fed,
And took a sound nap when she'd dined.
6. So at last this slow walker came up with the hare,
And there fast asleep did he spy her;
And he cunningly crept with such caution and care,
That she woke not, although he pass'd by her.
7. "Well now," thought the hare, when she open'd her eyes,
"For the race, and I soon shall have done it;"
But who can describe her chagrin* and surprise,
When she found that the tortoise had won it!

*chagrin - anger at being humiliated

Answer the following questions carefully.

1. How long does the hare think it will take the tortoise to travel half a mile?
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2. How does the tortoise feel in the second stanza?
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3. Why do you think that the tortoise doesn't mind that he's slow?
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4. Find a word which means speed in the second stanza.
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5. Who will judge the race?
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6. How fast do you think the hare is going at the beginning of the race? How do you know?
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7. What does 'leisurely' tell you about the tortoise's pace in the third stanza? What does this tell us about his attitude to the race?
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8. The hare is exaggerating in the fourth stanza. How do we know?
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9. How far behind is the tortoise when the hare stops for lunch? How has the poet emphasised how far behind he is?
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10. Find and copy the word which means 'see' in the sixth stanza.

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11. Find and copy the alliteration in the sixth stanza.

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12. What does the word 'chagrin' tell us about how the hare is feeling?

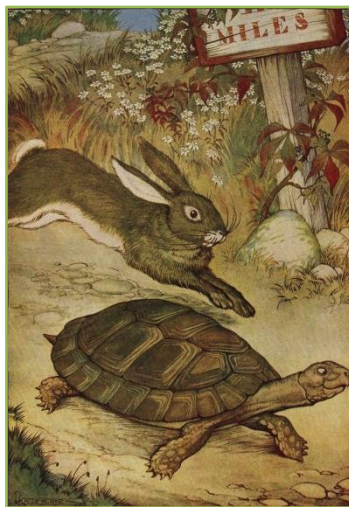
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13. What is the moral of this tale?

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14. Write a summary of the poem in five sentences or less.

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Challenge:

Write a poem version of a story you know well.