**Allegorical Animals**

*Directions: See if you can determine the commonly accepted allegorical meanings of the following animals. Fill in the table as comprehensively as possible.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Animal** | **Characteristics/Qualities** |
| Donkey |  |
| Pig |  |
| Fox |  |
| Owl |  |
| Bull |  |
| Crow |  |
| Cat |  |
| Lion |  |
| Wolf |  |
| Chicken |  |
| Dog |  |
| Eagle |  |

**Allegory in Fables**

*Directions: Read the following Aesop’s Fables and answer the corresponding questions using complete sentences.*

“The Tortoise and the Hare”

Once upon a time there was a hare who, boasting how he could run faster than anyone else, was forever teasing tortoise for its slowness. Then one day, the irate tortoise answered back: “Who do you think you are? There’s no denying you’re swift, but even you can be beaten!” The hare squealed with laughter.

“Beaten in a race? By whom? Not you, surely! I bet there’s nobody in the world that can win against me, I’m so speedy. Now, why don’t you try?”

Annoyed by such bragging, the tortoise accepted the challenge. A course was planned, and the next day at dawn they stood at the starting line. The hare yawned sleepily as the meek tortoise trudged slowly off. When the hare saw how painfully slow his rival was, he decided, half asleep on his feet, to have a quick nap. “Take your time!” he said. “I’ll have forty winks and catch up with you in a minute.”

The hare woke with a start from a fitful sleep and gazed round, looking for the tortoise. But the creature was only a short distance away, having barely covered a third of the course. Breathing a sigh of relief, the hare decided he might as well have breakfast too, and off he went to munch some cabbages he had noticed in a nearby field. But the heavy meal and the hot sun made his eyelids droop. With a careless glance at the tortoise, now halfway along the course, he decided to have another snooze before flashing past the winning post. And smiling at the thought of the look on the tortoise’s face when it saw the hare speed by, he fell fast asleep and was soon snoring happily. The sun started to sink, below the horizon, and the tortoise, who had been plodding towards the winning post since morning, was scarcely a yard from the finish. At that very point, the hare woke with a jolt. He could see the tortoise a speck in the distance and away he dashed. He leapt and bounded at a great rate, his tongue lolling, and gasping for breath. Just a little more and he’d be first at the finish. But the hare’s last leap was just too late, for the tortoise had beaten him to the winning post. Poor hare! Tired and in disgrace, he slumped down beside the tortoise who was silently smiling at him.

“Slowly does it every time!” he said.

1. Who/what does the hare represent? And the tortoise?
2. Is this just a story for children?
3. What is the ‘moral’ of the story?
4. Why tell a story like this? Why not just explain the ‘moral’ to people?
5. Why use animals?

“The Fox and the Crow”

A Fox once saw a Crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree.

“That's for me, as I am a Fox,” said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree.

“Good day, Mistress Crow,” he cried. “How well you are looking today: how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds.”

The Crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by Master Fox.

“That will do,” said he. “That was all I wanted. In exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future: “Do not trust flatterers.”

1. What is the literal meaning of the story?
2. What is the figurative meaning?

“The Wolf and Lamb”

Once upon a time a Wolf was lapping at a spring on a hillside, when, looking up, what should he see but a Lamb just beginning to drink a little lower down.

"There's my supper," thought he, "if only I can find some excuse to seize it."

Then he called out to the Lamb, "How dare you muddle the water from which I am drinking?"

"Nay, master, nay," said Lambikin; "if the water be muddy up there, I cannot be the cause of it, for it runs down from you to me."

"Well, then," said the Wolf, "why did you call me bad names this time last year?"

"That cannot be," said the Lamb; "I am only six months old."

"I don't care," snarled the Wolf; "if it was not you it was your father;" and with that he rushed upon the poor little Lamb and ate her all up.

But before she died she gasped out: "Any excuse will serve a tyrant."

1. What/who does the lamb represent?
2. Rewrite the moral in your own words.
3. How can this moral be helpful to society today?

“The Dog and His Reflection”

It happened that a Dog had got a piece of meat and was carrying it home in his mouth to eat it in peace.

Now on his way home he had to cross a plank lying across a running brook.

As he crossed, he looked down and saw his own shadow reflected in the water beneath.

Thinking it was another dog with another piece of meat, he made up his mind to have that also.

So he made a snap at the shadow in the water, but as he opened his mouth the piece of meat fell out, dropped into the water and was never seen more.

1. What is the moral of the story?
2. Do you agree with the symbolic meaning of the story? Explain.

“The Fox and Grapes”

One hot summer's day a Fox was strolling through an orchard till he came to a bunch of Grapes just ripening on a vine which had been trained over a lofty branch.

"Just the thing to quench my thirst," quoth he.

Drawing back a few paces, he took a run and a jump, and just missed the bunch.

Turning round again with a One, Two, Three, he jumped up, but with no greater success.

Again and again he tried after the tempting morsel, but at last had to give it up, and walked away with his nose in the air, saying:

"I am sure they are sour."

1. What is the moral of this story?
2. Describe a situation in society today in which you might see the same sort of reaction as the fox.