

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Bear and the Two Travelers

By Aesop
From Aesop's Fables • 620-560 B.C.

Aesop was a slave and story-teller who was believed to have lived in ancient Greece between 620 and 560 B.C.E. This story is part of his collection of tales known as "Aesop's Fables" which have influenced children's literature and modern storytelling culture. As you read, think about how the one traveler's actions affect the other, and what motivates him.

- [1] Two men were traveling together, when a Bear suddenly met them on their path. One of them climbed up quickly into a tree and concealed himself in the branches. The other, seeing that he must be attacked, fell flat on the ground, and when the Bear came up and felt him with his snout, and smelt him all over, he held his breath, and feigned¹ the appearance of death as much as he could. The Bear soon left him, for it is said he will not touch a dead body. When he was quite gone, the other Traveler descended from the tree, and jocularly² inquired of his friend what it was the Bear had whispered in his ear. "He gave me this advice," his companion replied. "Never travel with a friend who deserts you at the approach of danger."



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1. **Feign (verb):** to fake or pretend
2. **Jocularly (adverb):** jokingly

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Describe the circumstances in this story. [RL.2]

2. How do the circumstances in the story influence the betrayal? Cite evidence in [RL.1] [RL.3] your answer from this text and your own experience.

3. How could the first traveler, who hid in the tree, have helped the second one? [RL.3]

4. How does the theme of fear develop in this story? Support your answer with evidence from the text. [RL.2]

5. What is the message or moral of this fable? Support your answer with evidence from the text. [RL.2]
