



Exploring financial and ethical concepts through folktales



This sequence is intended as a framework to be modified and adapted by teachers to suit the needs of a class group.

Resources needed

- The Miser and his gold
- A couple of misers
- Lord of the Cranes
- The gift of giving – Quotes visualiser
- Miserliness and generosity – Focus questions visualiser
- The Spendthrift and the Swallow – Deconstruction visualiser
- Structure of a short story – Graphic organiser
- Year 10 short story writing task
- Post-it notes

Suggested activity sequence

Part A: Exploring ethical principles

Setting the scene

- 1 Brainstorm with students contemporary examples of people's generosity and the act of giving. Examples include:
 - crowd sourcing (and giving)
 - Australian bushfire donations and appeals
 - volunteers (for example, life savers, fire fighters, meals on wheels)
 - essential service workers during COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2 As a class, discuss why people give and what it tells us about humanity.

Solo and pair thinking

- 1 Display the quotes on the *Quotes visualiser* and invite students to think about what they mean.
- 2 Students share their thinking with a partner and decide on a real-life example, or an example from literature that exemplifies the meaning of each quote. Students write their example on a post-it note to display on the classroom wall.
- 3 Students read the examples of other students.



Exploring folktales

If students have not been introduced to folktales previously, explain the following:

All cultures have stories that are shared. A story from one culture may be similar to the story of another culture. These stories are known as folktales which include fables

In folktales the characters are not well developed, nor the location clearly described. What is more important to the story is that there is usually conflict between good and evil with good usually being rewarded and evil being punished. Often, the purpose of these stories is to teach a lesson or to describe characteristics of one's culture. The stories are also entertaining.

Discussing ethical concepts

- 1 Read the fable *The Miser and his Gold* aloud to students.
- 2 Ask:
 - What is the moral of this story?
 - How can this moral be applied to the modern world?
 - Can you provide an example of a story (such as a fairy tale) with a similar moral?
 - How does this moral relate to saving?
 - How does this moral relate to spending?

Part B: Deconstructing folktales

Modelling deconstruction

- 1 Read the fable *The Spendthrift and the Swallow* using the *Deconstruction visualiser*. As you read the story, give students time to discuss answers to the questions on each page.

- 2 Discuss potential lessons in the story that have relevance to students' financial choices. Possible prompts include:
 - saving for unplanned events or circumstances in the future
 - the pitfalls of trying to look good or trendy to please others
 - living within your means.
- 3 Draw a large Venn diagram (2 intersecting circles) on the board. Write Miser on the left circle and Spendthrift and the Swallow on the right circle. Students help fill the circles to show similarities and differences between the 2 stories.
- 4 Ask: Is there a common lesson that can be learned even though these stories are quite different?

Deconstructing a story in groups: A couple of misers

- 1 Use a *grouping strategy* to organise students into pairs.
- 2 Ask students to search for 'a couple of misers folktale' in their browsers or display the story *A couple of misers* on a screen for students to read.

Go to learningtogive.org and search for 'couple of misers'.

- 3 Students use the *graphic organiser* to identify the structural elements of the story.
- 4 Pairs of students connect with another pair to compare their responses on how the story is structured.
- 5 Display the couple of misers slides on the *Focus questions visualiser*.
- 6 Groups discuss answers to each question.
- 7 Groups share their responses.



- 8 Brainstorm stories from other cultures with a similar message (for example, King Midas).

Deconstructing a story in groups: Lord of the Cranes

- 1 Read the Chinese folktale *Lord of the Cranes* aloud to students. Various versions of this folktale are available online.

Go to [learningtogive.org](https://www.learningtogive.org) and search for 'lord of the cranes'.

- 2 Students use the *Graphic organiser* to identify the structural elements of the story.
- 3 Pairs of students connect with another pair to compare their responses on how the story is structured.
- 4 Display the lord of the cranes slides on the *Focus questions visualiser*.
- 5 Groups discuss answers to each question.
- 6 Groups share their responses.
- 7 Brainstorm stories from other cultures with a similar message.

Comparing the stories

- 1 Draw a large Venn diagram on the board. Write the 2 misers on the left circle and Lord of the Cranes on the right circle. Students help fill the circles to show similarities and differences between the 2 stories and the characters in them.
- 2 Ask: Is there a common lesson that can be learned even though these stories are quite different?

Part C: Independent writing

Brainstorming in groups

- 1 Use a *grouping strategy* to organise students into groups of 4.
- 2 Groups use evidence from the stories they have read to discuss the following statement:

'Managing money is a fine balancing act; money is for spending, saving and giving, not hoarding **or** spending and **not** giving'.

- 3 Groups identify how this message is relevant to teenagers.

Choose a discussion strategy to promote collaboration and participation.

Writing a narrative

Students complete the *Short story writing task*. They should be given at least 2 lessons to write their stories and one lesson to publish their stories using information and communication technology (ICT).