

# The Tale of the Too Talkative Turtle

An age-old fable from India offers a wise lesson

## About the Article

### Levels

Guided Reading Level: T  
DRA Level: 50

### Learning Objectives

Students will analyze how two characters in a fable are similar; they will also identify the moral of the fable.

### Key Skills

Character, compare and contrast, vocabulary, fluency, close reading, inference, problem and solution, theme, text structures, explanatory writing

### Content-Area Connections

Social studies: World cultures

### Standards Correlations

This article and lesson support the following Common Core anchor standards: **R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.10, W.2, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.6**

For more standards information, go to our website.



## The Tale of the Too Talkative Turtle

By Scott Bodd and Karen Trout

### Characters

Circle the character you will play

- \*Narasim (nar-uh-SHEE) a prince
- \*Rishi (REE-shee) a tutor
- \*Prince a 9-year-old boy
- \*Rishika (ree-SHEE-kah) a tutor
- \*Kambo (kam-BOO) a turtle
- Sister Kambo's sister
- Brother Kambo's brother
- Mother Kambo's mother
- Father Kambo's father
- \*Sankat (sah-KAH) a crane
- \*Vikar (vuh-KAH) a crane
- Mongoose
- Arunn (ah-ROON) a boy
- Ayaa (AHN-yah) a girl



Comparing Characters As you read this play, look for ways in which the characters PRINCE and KAMBO are alike.

LOOK FOR WORD REFS & TERMS IN BOLD

### Scene 1

**Narasim 1:** In fancy India, a royal prince strolls along the shore of beautiful Dal Lake. **Narasim 2:** His tutors, Rishi and Rishika, walk alongside him. **Narasim 1:** They try, with difficulty, to hold the prince's attention. **Narasim 2:** It's not easy, since their student likes to do all the talking. **Rishi:** Please, Prince, once again, how many sides does a triangle have? **Prince (not hearing):** Just think, Rishi, someday this kingdom shall be all mine. **Rishika:** Indeed, Your Highness. But what about our triangle? **Prince:** This exquisite lake shall be mine too.

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The collage shows several pages from the story. On the left, there are pages with text and a world map. In the center, there is an illustration of a turtle. On the right, there are pages with text and an illustration of a crane and a mongoose. The text includes dialogue between characters like Narasim, Rishi, Rishika, and Kambo.

## Your Teaching Support Package

Here's your full suite of materials, all of which you'll find at [storyworks.scholastic.com](http://storyworks.scholastic.com):

### Activities to print or project:

- Vocabulary
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions\*
- Core Skills Workout: Character, Setting, Theme
- Comprehension Quiz\*

\*Available on two levels

# Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

## Close Reading, Critical Thinking, and Skill Building



### 1. Preparing to Read

#### Preview Text Features/

##### Set a Purpose for Reading (10 minutes)

- Tell students that the play they are about to read is based on a fable. Invite a volunteer to explain what a fable is. (*a short tale, usually with animal characters, that ends with a moral, or lesson*)
- As a class, view the illustrations that accompany the play, and look at the map and its caption on page 23. Ask: Where do you think this fable is from? (*India*)
- Call on a volunteer to read aloud the Up Close box for the class.

#### Introduce Vocabulary

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

- Point out the boat in the picture on page 20, and have students find the word *shikara* in bold on page 23. Explain that a *shikara* is a traditional kind of Indian boat.
- Distribute our **vocabulary activity sheet** to preview the rest of the highlighted words and their meanings.
- Highlighted words: *tutors, exquisite, snuffle, cove, shikara, squabbling, quiver, plummets*

### 2. Reading the Play

- Assign parts and read the play aloud as a class. After reading, ask students to answer the **close-reading questions** in groups. Then regroup to discuss the **critical-thinking questions**.

#### Close-Reading Questions

(activity sheet online)

- **What character traits does the prince show in Scene 1? Support your answer with examples.** (character) *The prince is talkative and not a good listener. He especially likes to talk about himself. When his tutors try*

*to teach him math, he ignores them and talks about the kingdom he will someday own.*

- **What character traits does Kambu show in Scene 2? How is he similar to the prince?** (comparing characters) *Like the prince, Kambu is very talkative and not a good listener. When his family wants to sleep, he keeps asking them questions and giggling. When they warn him not to lean, he doesn't listen and they all fall over.*

- **What problem comes up for Kambu's family in Scene 3? What plan do they make to solve it?** (problem and solution) *Sankat and Vikat tell the family that fishing boats are approaching. They must get away from the fishermen. The family plans to swim to a passing shikara, which will take them to a cove where they will be safe.*

- **Reread the lines Kambu says to Mongoose in Scene 3. What do they tell you about Kambu? How do they lead to his problem?** (character) *Kambu says that he's very sweet and interesting. This tells you that he likes to boast about himself. Because he can't stop talking, he misses the shikara that the rest of his family is taking to the cove.*

- **In Scene 5, why can't Kambu keep his mouth closed around the stick?** (character) *Kambu thinks highly of himself; in Scene 4 he says, "I'm a genius!" He can't stand to hear the children give credit to the cranes for his idea. He has to tell them how smart he is even though his talking causes him to fall.*

- **In Scene 6, when Rishi and Rishika "give each other a knowing look," what do you think they are thinking?** (inference) *They are probably thinking that the prince is not a better listener than Kambu and that he needs to consider the lesson of the story.*



## Critical-Thinking Questions

(activity sheet online)

- In the last line of the play, the prince states the moral, or the lesson, of the story about Kambu. Restate the moral in your own words, or think of another moral from the story. (theme) *Answers may include that talking too much can keep you from listening; boastfulness can get you into trouble; sometimes you should resist talking about yourself.*

- In Scene 1, Rishi explains that a Panchatantra is “a story within a story, in which animals help teach a



lesson.” How does this play fit that description? (text structures) *The story about Kambu is told inside the story of the prince and his tutors. In the Kambu story, all the characters are animals; Kambu—and the prince—end up learning a lesson.*

## 3. Skill Building

### Featured Skill:

### Comparing Characters

- Distribute the comparing characters activity to help students compare Kambu and the prince. Have students work on it in small groups. They will then be prepared to respond to the writing prompt on page 25.

**Background Information** The Panchatantra, a collection of ancient Indian fables, was written in Sanskrit sometime between 100 B.C. and 500 A.D. Versions of the stories have spread around the globe, making them one of India’s important contributions to world literature.

## Differentiate Your Teaching

### For Struggling Readers

Modify the writing prompt on page 25. Ask students to write three to four sentences describing Kambu’s character, with details from the play.

### For Advanced Readers

Guide students to do research to find other versions of this fable. Ask them to make a chart comparing the characters, plot, and moral in each version.

### For ELL Students

Before reading the play as a class, have your English language learners work with native-speaking partners to practice reading one character’s lines and become comfortable with them. Encourage them to take roles in the class reading.



### For Guided Reading

As you read the play with students in your guided-reading groups, focus on identifying the character traits of Kambu and the prince. Use the “character” close-reading questions to help you.