

Test: Comprehension

Name: _____

The Lion Who Wanted to Zoom^o

by James Thurber

There was once a lion who would have given everything for an eagle's wings. So he sent a message to the eagle, asking the great bird to come and see the king of beasts. When the eagle landed in front of the lion's den^o, the latter said, "Let's make a bargain. I give
5 you my mane for your wings." "Keep talking, brother," said the eagle. "Without my wings I could no longer fly." "So what?" said the lion. "I can't fly now, but that does not prevent me from being king of beasts. I became king of beasts on account of my magnificent mane." "All right," said the eagle, "but give me your mane first."

10 The eagle came closer and the lion threw a huge paw^o at him, pinning^o him to the ground. "Now give me those wings immediately!" he growled angrily.

So the lion took the eagle's wings but kept his own mane. For a while the eagle was very hopeless and discouraged, but then he had
15 an idea. "I bet you can't fly off the top of that great rock over there," said the eagle. "Who, me?" asked the lion, and he walked to the top of the rock and took off. His weight was too great for the eagle's wings to support him, and besides he did not know how to fly, never having tried it before. So he crashed at the foot of the rock. The
20 eagle hastily climbed down to him and regained his wings and took off the lion's mane, which he put about his own neck and shoulders. Flying back to the rocky nest where he lived with his mate, he decided to have some fun with her. So, covered with the lion's mane, he poked^o his head into the nest and in a deep, awful voice he cried,
25 "Harrrooooo!" His mate, who was very nervous anyway, grabbed a pistol from a bureau drawer and shot him dead, thinking he was a lion.

Moral: Never allow a nervous female to have access to a pistol, no matter what you're wearing.

to fly into the air



the place where the lion lives

the lion's foot

to hold sth down

to push

Vocabulary

1. Say in your own words what the following words and phrases mean (in the context of the fable above):

an eagle (2)

a message (2)

a beast (3)

to make a bargain (4)

a mane (5)

besides (18)

to regain (20)

2. Give the opposite word(s) for:

everything (1)

the latter (4)

to discourage (14)

deep (24)

3. Give the synonymous word(s) for:

to come and see (3)

on account of (8)

immediately (12)

to allow (28)

Comprehension

In the following, make sure that you use **your own words** as far as possible. Use **formal language** (no contracted forms!) and formulate answers in **complete sentences!** (50% language, 50% substance)

4. *Formulate the lion's trick in your own words.*
5. *Describe why the eagle is mean.*
6. *Write any good commentary on lines 19-29 of this fable.*
7. *What does this fable teach us—in your opinion?*

Vocabulary

1. *Say in your own words what the following words and phrases mean:*

an eagle (2)	An eagle is a large, meat-eating bird with good eye-sight. <i>or</i> An eagle is a bird of prey (= a bird that kills other creatures for food) with a sharp curved beak and very good eye-sight.
a message (2)	A message is a written or spoken piece of information that you send to somebody or leave for somebody when you cannot speak to them yourself.
a beast (3)	A beast is an animal (a four-footed one), especially one that is large or dangerous.
to make a bargain (4)	“To make a bargain” means to make a (very) good deal.
a mane (5)	A mane is the long hair on the neck of a lion or a horse.
besides (18)	“Besides” means “in addition to” or “apart from”.
to regain (20)	“To regain” is to get back something you no longer have.

2. *Give the opposite word(s) for:*

everything (1)	nothing, not anything
the latter (4)	the former
to discourage (14)	to encourage
deep (24)	high, shallow (sleep: light; knowledge: superficial; colours: pale)

3. *Give the synonymous word(s) for:*

to come and see (3)	to visit
on account of (8)	because of something
immediately (12)	at once, without delay
to allow (28)	to let (somebody do something), to permit, to give permission

Comprehension

In the following, make sure that you use **your own words** as far as possible. Use **formal language** (no contracted forms!) and formulate answers in **complete sentences!** (50% language, 50% substance)

4. *Formulate the lion's trick in your own words.*

The lion invites the eagle to make a deal. He offers to give his mane for the wings of the former. The eagle does not accept this offer and tells the lion that without his wings he could no longer fly. The lion then says that is not important: even though he is not able to fly he still is the king of beasts. The lion adds that he has become king because of his beautiful mane. The eagle then gives in, but he asks the lion to give him the mane before he will get the wings. The lion then asks the eagle to come a little bit closer so that he can hand him the mane. However, the lion does not intend to give his mane in the first place. He takes hold of him and steals the eagle's wings.

5. *Describe why the eagle is mean.*

In saying to the lion that he cannot fly off the rock the eagle ingeniously (*raffiniert*) appeals to (*reizen, anfechten*) the lion's enormous pride and self-consciousness. The eagle can be sure that the king of beasts will become careless in such a challenging situation and jump off the rock.

6. *Write any good commentary on lines 19-29 of this fable.*

The eagle clearly exaggerates with his revenge on the lion. He takes back his wings but also takes the lion's mane. In doing this the eagle makes clear that he is just as greedy as the lion and deserves the same sort of punishment. In fact, he only takes the mane to play a joke on his wife and leaves the lion who is seriously injured behind. In the end it serves him right to be shot by his wife.

7. *What does this fable teach us—in your opinion?*

We should not try to be somebody else. (...)

We should not be carried away by a triumph but be modest. (...)

Justice will always win in the end. (...)

etc.