

Commedia
dell'Aesop
Activity
Book

Themes from Aesop

Commedia dell'Aesop tells the story of Pantalone, his daughter Isabella, and their servants Columbina and Pierrot traveling to Fancytown to meet Magnifico. Along the way the witch teaches them lessons about life. Here's some of the lessons that were demonstrated:

1. Be kind

2. Be grateful for what you have

3. Take responsibility for what you do

Discussion pages:

Kindness

1. Why should we be kind to others?

2. What is a way you can be kind to someone today?

Gratitude

3. What does it mean to be grateful?

4. What are some things you are grateful for?

Responsibility

5. What do you think it means to take responsibility for what you do?

6. Do you have any responsibilities? If so, list some of them

Aesop

Aesop was a storyteller from Ancient Greece. He wrote many fables. A **fable** is a story that teaches us a lesson. Do you remember what the fables in the shows were? What do you think the lesson of each one was? (Hint: "Traveler and his Dog" were Pantalone and Columbina and "The Golden Goose" was Isabella)

The sun and the north wind

The Traveler and his Dog

The Golden Goose

The Miser and the Rock

Commedia dell'arte

Commedia dell'arte (which means "comedy of the art" in Italian) is a type of theatre that was popular in 1600s Italy (a really really long time ago!). Actors would travel in groups around the country performing shows outside for everybody to see. Commedia shows were often **improvised**, or made up, by the actors. The actors played stock characters like the ones in Commedia dell'Aesop.

A **stock character** is a made-up person based on stereotypes that is used over and over again no matter which actor plays it. It's like your favorite superhero in a movie: even if someone different plays them, the character doesn't change. Stock characters are still in cartoons, tv shows, and movies today. Ebenezer Scrooge from A Christmas Carol and even Mr. Krabs from Spongebob Squarepants are characters that were influenced by the greedy old man character Pantalone.

Because commedia shows were performed outside and used the same characters over and over again, actors would wear masks so audiences would be able to recognize the characters and so they could see who was on stage, even if they were really far away!

Commedia Masks

Make your own mask inspired by commedia dell'arte characters!



Commedia Game

In commedia dell'arte, actors would each choose one stock character to play and make up a story with them. Choose a character to play and make up a story with them!

Magnifico - powerful man who thinks he's the best (even if he's not)

Pantalone - greedy old man

Innamorata/Isabella - beautiful young singer

Columbina - smart maid

Pierrot - sad clown

Witch - silly trickster

Coloring Pages



The Witch



Pierrot



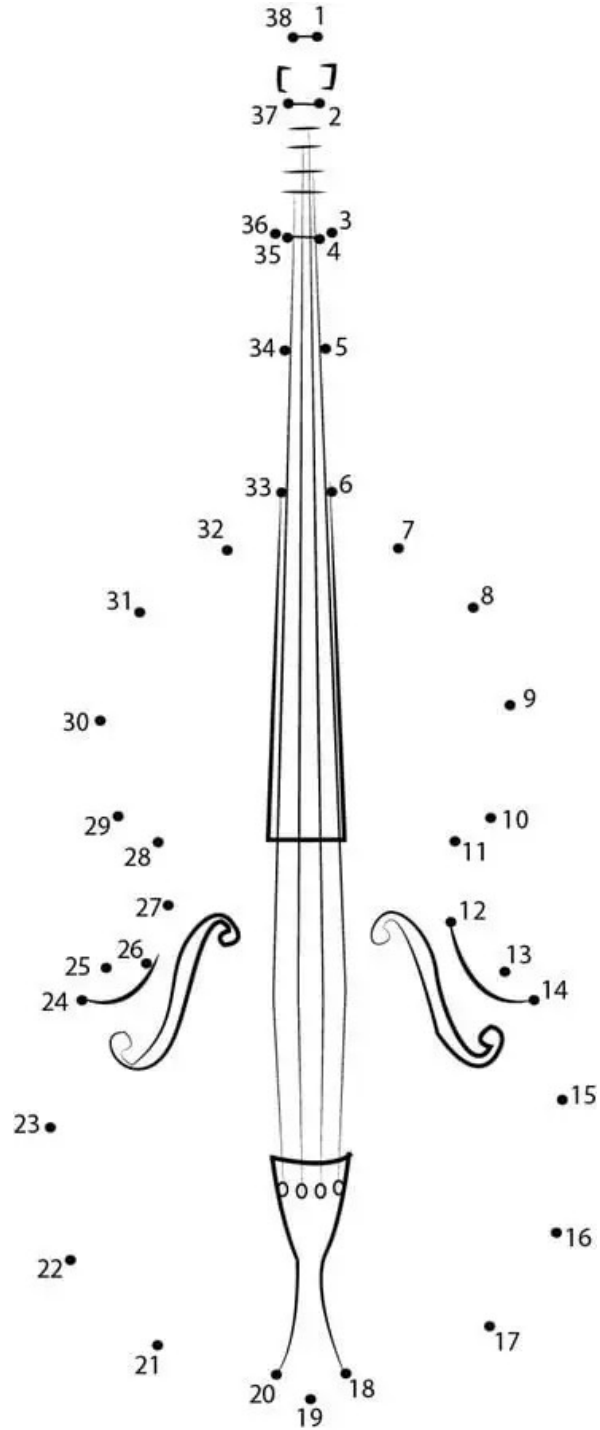
Sun and the North Wind



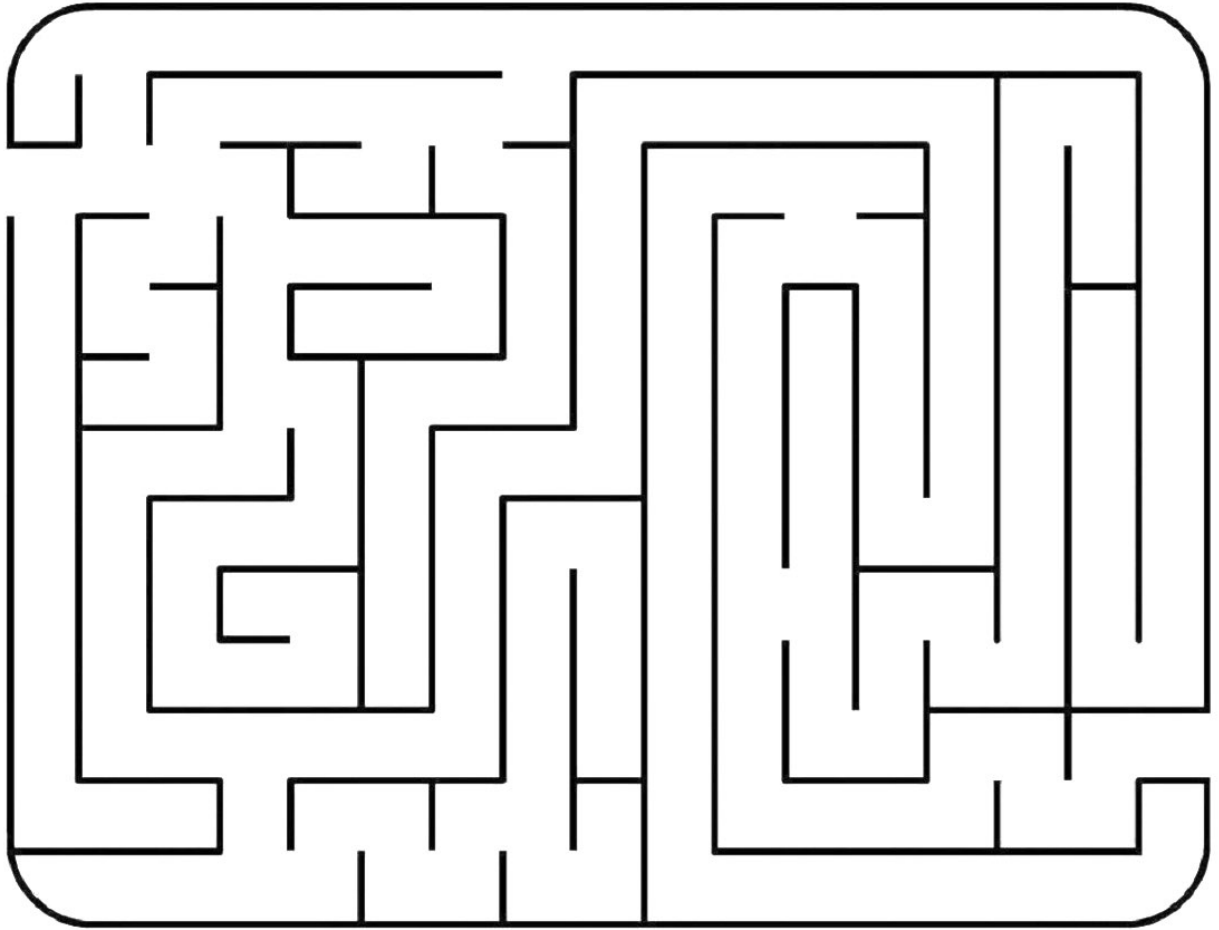
Fancytown

Activities

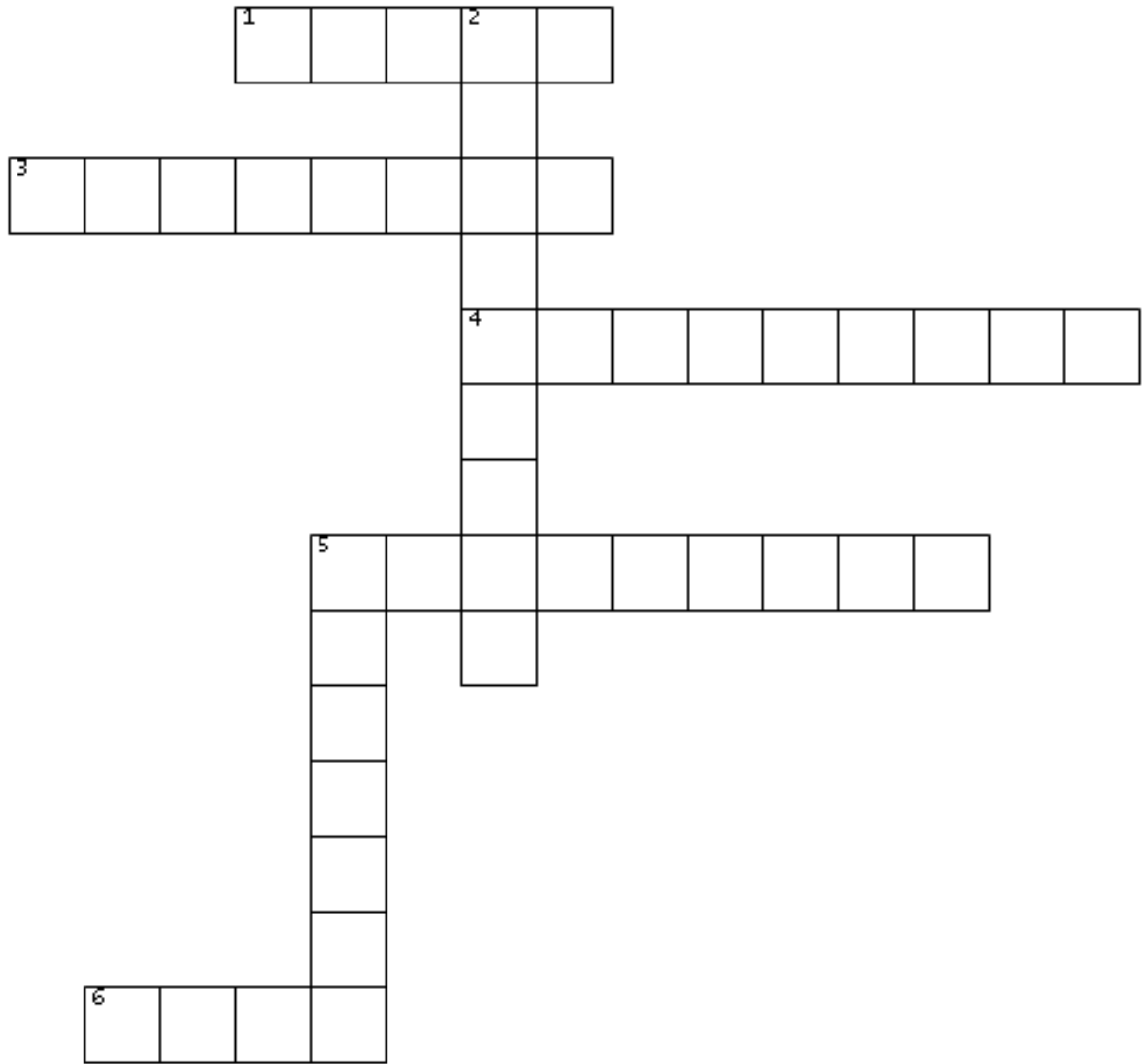
Connect the dots on Pierrot's violin!



Get the cart to Fancytown!



Complete the crossword puzzle!



ACROSS

- 1. Has Magical Powers
- 3. The Girl with the Golden Voice
- 4. Owns a Big Theater in Fancytown
- 5. Isabella's Father
- 6. Breaks down in the road

DOWN

- 2. Isabella's Servant
- 5. Loves Columbina