

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

**“The Cat Who Thought She Was a Dog and the Dog Who Thought He Was a Cat”**

by Isaac Bashevis Singer

## Literary Analysis: The Moral of a Story

Some folk tales, especially fables, end with a **moral**, or lesson in living. Fables with morals may have originated with Aesop, a slave in ancient Greece. According to legend, Aesop told his famous fables to convey messages and advice to his master. Because it was not a slave's place to advise his master directly, Aesop's message or lesson was implied by what happened to the characters in the fable. At the end of his tale, Singer states the moral through the words of the local priest, who is the final authority on morals in the village.

**A. DIRECTIONS:** Below is a list of morals followed by summaries of three stories. On the lines provided, match each of the morals to one of the summaries. Note that there is one extra moral.

### Morals

Don't judge worth solely by appearance.

There is no honor among thieves.

Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today.

Treat others as you would have them treat you.

1. The manager of a business pays his assistant poorly and treats him badly. In time, the assistant inherits a large sum of money and buys the business. He then treats the manager as he was treated.

### Moral

2. Two neighbors visit the same horse breeder to buy horses. One neighbor buys a stunning white stallion. The other buys an unattractive, dirt-colored mare who is very spirited. The two neighbors enter their horses in a race. The dirt-colored mare wins the race and a large cash prize.

### Moral

3. A cocker spaniel and a boxer see a collie bury some bones. That night, the cocker spaniel and the boxer dig up the collie's bones. They carry them into the woods and bury them where no one will find them. The next night, the cocker spaniel sneaks to the hiding place to take all the bones for himself. The bones are all gone.

### Moral

**B. DIRECTIONS:** On the lines below, write a moral for the following story.

Ian was thinking about a job interview scheduled the next day with the manager of a local supermarket. The thought of supermarket work didn't appeal to Ian, but he wanted a part-time job to earn spending money. Suddenly, he heard his neighbor, Mr. Watson, call out: "Ian, would you do me a big favor and finish weeding my flower beds? I think I've sprained my wrist." Ian didn't feel like working just then, but he decided to help his neighbor. A little later, as Ian pulled out the last stubborn weed, he realized that he really had enjoyed working outdoors, which made the prospect of working at the supermarket seem especially grim. Then, Mr. Watson walked up. "Ian," he said, "you did a great job. How would you like to take care of my yard over the summer, doing things like weeding, trimming bushes, and mowing the lawn? I'll pay you by the hour." Ian replied, "Great! I'd love to!" and his job search was over.

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