

Sage's Adventures

Educator & Discussion Guide

*A read-aloud and social-emotional learning companion
for PreK-Grade 3 (ages 3-8)*

About this guide

The Sage's Adventures series follows one curious child through the everyday challenges of growing up, learning a life lesson in each story with the help of a wise animal friend. The series carries the timeless wisdom of Aesop's Fables into a warm, modern setting - pairing age-old morals with situations today's children recognize.

This guide gives teachers, librarians, and families a simple, low-prep way to turn each story into a conversation and an activity. Every book includes before- and after-reading questions, a hands-on activity, and a take-home idea.

How to use it

- *Read the story aloud.*
- *Use the before-reading questions to spark curiosity, and the after-reading questions to reflect.*
- *Pick one activity - all are designed to need little or no preparation.*
- *Adapt the language up or down for your children's ages.*

Social-emotional learning alignment

Each book maps to one or more of the five CASEL social-emotional learning competencies - Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making - making the series a natural fit for character-education and SEL time.

Book	Life lesson	SEL competency (CASEL)	Aesop echo
1. Sage and the Big Race	Patience & pacing	Self-Management	The Tortoise and the Hare
2. Sage's Weekend Plans	Work-play balance	Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making	The Ant and the Grasshopper
3. Sage Helps a Friend	Everyone can make a difference	Social Awareness, Relationship Skills	The Lion and the Mouse
4. Sage Tells the Truth	Honesty & trust	Responsible Decision-Making, Self-Awareness	The Boy Who Cried Wolf
5. Sage Visits the City	Appreciation & gratitude	Self-Awareness, Social Awareness	The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse
6. Sage's Special Discovery	Sharing & community	Relationship Skills, Social Awareness	The Bundle of Sticks (spirit of generosity & unity)

Book 1 - Sage and the Big Race

Lesson: Patience & pacing | SEL: Self-Management | Aesop echo: The Tortoise and the Hare - with a fun

twist, here it's the rabbit who teaches "slow and steady"!

Before reading

- **Have you ever wanted to be first at something? How did it feel?**
- **What do you think it means to "pace yourself"?**

After reading

- **Why did Sage get so tired at the start of the race?**
- **What did Flash mean by "steady wins" - can you say it in your own words?**
- **Have you ever rushed something and then wished you'd taken your time?**
- **How do you think Sage felt crossing the finish line, even in third place? Why?**

Activity: "Steady & Speedy"

Have children hop across the room as fast as they can, then again at a slow, steady pace. Which way let them go further without getting tired? Talk about why.

Take home

Pick one thing to practice a little each day this week and notice how steady effort adds up.

Words to know: pace, steady, patience, effort.

Book 2 - Sage's Weekend Plans

Lesson: Work-play balance | SEL: Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making | Aesop echo: The Ant and the Grasshopper - reimagined toward balance between work and play.

Before reading

- **What jobs or chores do you have? What do you like to do for fun?**
- **Is it easier to do a big job all at once, or a little at a time?**

After reading

- **Why did Sage feel overwhelmed at the start?**
- **What did Busy and her squirrel friends teach Sage about work and play?**
- **What does "work a little, play a little" mean to you?**
- **How did taking breaks help Sage get more done?**

Activity: "Chunk It Up"

Write a pretend to-do list on the board. As a class, break one big task into small chunks and add a short "play break" between each.

Take home

Next time you have homework or chores, try work-a-little, play-a-little. Did it feel easier?

Words to know: balance, chunk, break, rhythm.

Book 3 - Sage Helps a Friend

Lesson: Everyone can make a difference | SEL: Social Awareness, Relationship Skills | Aesop echo: The Lion and the Mouse - the smallest helper matters most.

Before reading

- *Have you ever felt too small or too young to help with something?*
- *What does it mean to work as a team?*

After reading

- *Pip the mouse was very small - how did he still help?*
- *How did Sage, Emma, and Marcus each use a different strength to save the baby bird?*
- *What does "brave enough together" mean?*
- *Can you think of a time you helped someone, even in a small way?*

Activity: "Everyone's Gift"

Go around the circle; each child names one thing they're good at that could help others. Celebrate that every gift matters.

Take home

Do one small helpful thing for someone this week - small acts count!

Words to know: teamwork, brave, strength, difference.

Book 4 - Sage Tells the Truth

Lesson: Honesty & trust | SEL: Responsible Decision-Making, Self-Awareness | Aesop echo: in the spirit of The Boy Who Cried Wolf - honesty protects trust.

Before reading

- *What does it mean to tell the truth?*
- *Is it ever hard to tell the truth? Why?*

After reading

- *Why was Sage tempted not to tell the truth about the broken frame?*
- *What did Oliver mean when he said "trust is like a spider web"?*
- *How did Sage's mom react to the truth - and why did she still trust Sage?*
- *How do you think Sage felt after telling the truth?*

Activity: "Truth Builds Bridges"

Build a paper-chain "bridge," adding a link each time someone shares an example of honesty. Watch trust grow, link by link.

Take home

Notice a moment this week when telling the truth is the brave choice.

Words to know: honest, truth, trust, brave.

Book 5 - Sage Visits the City

Lesson: Appreciation & gratitude | SEL: Self-Awareness, Social Awareness | Aesop echo: The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse - reimagined with a city cat and a country cat.

Before reading

- *What do you love about where you live?*
- *Have you ever wished you had what someone else has?*

After reading

- *Why did Sage start to feel that home was "boring"?*
- *What did Alley (the city cat) and Barn (the country cat) each love about their homes?*
- *What does "comparison steals joy" mean?*
- *Name one thing about your own home or town that is special.*

Activity: "Home Treasures"

Each child draws or names one thing they're grateful for at home. Build a class "gratitude wall."

Take home

At dinner, share one thing you appreciate about your day or your home.

Words to know: appreciate, gratitude, compare, special.

Book 6 - Sage's Special Discovery

Lesson: Sharing & community | SEL: Relationship Skills, Social Awareness | Aesop echo: Aesop's spirit of generosity and unity (The Bundle of Sticks) - we're stronger, and happier, together.

Before reading

- *Have you ever found something special you wanted to keep all to yourself?*
- *What does it feel like to share something you love?*

After reading

- *Why did Sage want to keep the feather at first?*
- *What happened at the pond when Sage decided to give it back?*
- *What did Grace mean by "joy grows when it's shared"?*
- *Sage felt invisible at school - what made Sage feel truly special in the end?*

Activity: "Sharing Circle"

Pass one special object around the circle; each child offers a kind word or a small share (a turn, a compliment). Talk about how sharing multiplied the good feelings.

Take home

Share something this week - a toy, a turn, a kind word - and notice how it feels.

Words to know: share, generous, community, kindness.

Series-wide ideas

- *Sage's Lesson Chart: keep a classroom chart; after each book, add the lesson and a class example of living it.*
- *Character of the Week: feature one animal friend a week (Flash, Busy, Pip, Oliver, Alley & Barn, Grace) and its lesson.*
- *Fable connection: pair each Sage book with its classic Aesop's fable and compare - same lesson, different worlds. A ready-made bridge between old and new.*
- *Kindness / steady-effort jar: drop in a token each time a child demonstrates one of Sage's lessons; celebrate when it fills.*

For librarians

The series suits story-time programs, SEL / character-education units, and early-reader collections. The consistent cast and one-lesson-per-book structure make it easy to build a display or a read-aloud series ("A Lesson a Week with Sage"). A hardcover collected edition of all six stories is planned for autumn - ideal for durable circulation and gift collections.

Review copies and this guide are available to educators and librarians on request.

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Sage's Adventures by C.J. Crompton - inspired by the timeless wisdom of Aesop's Fables.