

## Lesson 5



# A CLEVER SLAVE

from FIFTY FAMOUS PEOPLE by James Baldwin

A long time ago there lived a poor slave whose name was Aesop. He was a small man with a large head and long arms. His face was white, but very homely. His large eyes were bright and snappy.

When Aesop was about twenty years old his master lost a great deal of money and was obliged to sell his slaves. To do this, he had to take them to a large city where there was a slave market.

The city was far away, and the slaves must walk the whole distance. A number of bundles were made up for them to carry. Some of these bundles contained the things they would need on the road; some contained clothing; and some contained goods which the master would sell in the city.

"Choose your bundles, boys," said the master. "There is one for each of you."

Aesop at once chose the largest one. The other slaves laughed and said he was foolish. But he threw it upon his shoulders and seemed well satisfied. The next day, the laugh was the other way. For the bundle which he had chosen had contained the food for the whole party. After all had eaten three meals from it, it was very much lighter. And before the end of the journey Aesop had nothing to carry, while the other slaves were groaning under their heavy loads.

"Aesop is a wise fellow," said his master. "The man who buys him must pay a high price."

A very rich man, whose name was Xanthus,<sup>1</sup> came to the slave market to buy a servant. As the slaves stood before him he asked each one to tell what kind of work he could do. All were eager to be bought by Xanthus because they knew he would be a kind master. So each one boasted of his skill in doing some sort of labor. One was a fine gardener; another could take care of horses; a third was a good cook; a fourth could manage a household.

"And what can you do, Aesop?" asked Xanthus.

"Nothing," he answered.

"Nothing? How is that?"

"Because, since these other slaves do everything, there is nothing left for me to perform," said Aesop.

This answer pleased the rich man so well that he bought Aesop at once, and took him to his home on the island of Samos.

In Samos the little slave soon became known for his wisdom and courage. He often amused his master and his master's friends by telling droll fables about birds and beasts that could talk. They saw that all these fables taught some great truth, and they wondered how Aesop could have thought of them.

Many other stories are told of this wonderful slave. His master was so much pleased with him that he gave him his freedom. Many great men were glad to call him their friend, and even kings asked his advice and were amused by his fables.



## Lesson 5.1

## Prose &amp; Poetry

## A LOOK AT LITERARY ELEMENTS IN THE NARRATIVE

**1 Read**

- ◆ Listen carefully as your teacher reads the selection aloud. **Delight** in the story.

**2 Inquire**

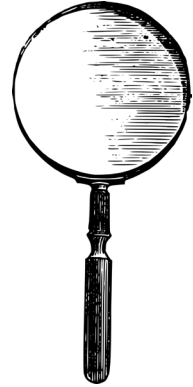
- ◆ Does the **title** give any hint as to the content or message of the story? If this story was published by the author in a larger book or an anthology, does that title give any hint?
- ◆ Discuss the meaning of these words in the context of the story: *homely*, *obliged*, *bundle*, *foolish*, *wise*, *boasted*, *droll*, and any unfamiliar words.

**3 Observe the Content**

- ◆ **Setting** When and where does this story take place?
- ◆ **Characters** Who is (are) the main character(s) in this story?
- ◆ **Conflict** What is the main problem or crisis for the character(s)?
- ◆ **Resolution** Is the problem solved? If so, how? If not, why not?

**4 Investigate the Context**

For biographical information on Aesop, please see Lesson 1. James Baldwin (1841-1925) was a largely self-educated teacher and school superintendent in Indiana. He loved the great stories of the Western tradition, and he wanted his students to love them too. Over the course of his lifetime he either edited or wrote more than fifty volumes, most of which were retellings of the best stories from literature and history for young people. These were standard fare in United States schoolrooms for many years. In fact, for several decades during the twentieth century, more than half of the books used in schools had been either edited or written by him. "A Clever Slave" is Baldwin's retelling of a story from the life of Aesop.



## 5 Connect the Thoughts

- ♦ Does this story remind you of other stories with similar plots, messages, or characters?
- ♦ Does this story remind you of any fables?
- ♦ Does this story remind you of any proverbs or other well-known quotations? If so, enter these in your Commonplace Book.



## 6 Profit and Delight

- ♦ **Delight** What are the sources of delight in this story?
- ♦ **Wisdom** What wisdom does this story furnish?
- ♦ **Read** the narrative aloud to your teacher with expression and with proper pauses.
- ♦ **Record** in your Book of Centuries: James Baldwin.

# Language Logic



## GRAMMAR TERMS & DEFINITIONS

- ◉ Review all flashcards according to tabs.

## GRAMMAR PRACTICE AND REVIEW

- ◉ In your Writer's Journal, copy these sentences. Analyze each sentence by marking the simple subject (who or what the sentence is about) with a single underline, and the verb or verb phrase with a double underline. Write D.O. over the direct object, if there is one in the sentence. Then diagram the sentence. Refer to *Sentence Sense* as needed. When you diagram, you may just ignore any additional words in the sentence which are not the simple subject, the verb, or the direct object.<sup>2</sup>

1. The slave was named Aesop.
2. The slaves must walk.
3. Bundles were made.
4. Aesop chose a bundle.
5. Aesop told fables.



2. Students who have completed *Fable & Song* may diagram all the words in the sentence.

# Eloquent Expression

## COPIA OF WORDS: VOCABULARY STUDY

- 🌿 Conduct a vocabulary study for "A Clever Slave."
- A. Choose at least two unfamiliar words to study. If you need suggestions, see the list under **Inquire** in Literary Elements above. Work in your Writer's Journal.
  - B. Complete Vocabulary Study steps A-G for each word (see Appendix).



# Commonplace

## NARRATIVE

Session one of three commonplace sessions for this lesson. Literary selection: "The Clever Slave."

- 🌿 Set your timer and begin copying. When you finish, check your work carefully, word by word, against the original.



## Lesson 5.2

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# Prose & Poetry

## NARRATIVE PLOT OBSERVATION

- 🌿 Observe the plot of "A Clever Slave."
- ♦ Place short pencil marks on the narrative (copied below) to divide the plot into a series of action.

A long time ago there lived a poor slave whose name was Aesop. He was a small man with a large head and long arms. His face was white, but very homely. His large eyes were bright and snappy.

When Aesop was about twenty years old his master lost a great deal of money and was obliged to sell his slaves. To do this, he had to take them to a large city where there was a slave market.

The city was far away, and the slaves must walk the whole distance. A number of bundles were made up for them to carry. Some of these bundles contained the things they would need on the road; some contained clothing; and some contained goods which the master would sell in the city.

"Choose your bundles, boys," said the master. "There is one for each of you."

Aesop at once chose the largest one. The other slaves laughed and said he was foolish. But he threw it upon his shoulders and seemed well satisfied. The next day, the laugh was the other way. For the bundle which he had chosen had contained the food for the whole party. After all had eaten three meals from it, it was very much lighter. And before the end of the journey Aesop had nothing to carry, while the other slaves were groaning under their heavy loads.

"Aesop is a wise fellow," said his master. "The man who buys him must pay a high price."

A very rich man, whose name was Xanthus, came to the slave market to buy a servant. As the slaves stood before him he asked each one to tell what kind of work he could do. All were eager to be bought by Xanthus because they knew he would be a kind master. So each one boasted of his skill in doing some sort of labor. One was a fine gardener; another could take care of horses; a third was a good cook; a fourth could manage a household.

"And what can you do, Aesop?" asked Xanthus.

"Nothing," he answered.

"Nothing? How is that?"

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In Samos the little slave soon became known for his wisdom and courage. He often amused his master and his master's friends by telling droll fables about birds and beasts that could talk. They saw that all these fables taught some great truth, and they wondered how Aesop could have thought of them.


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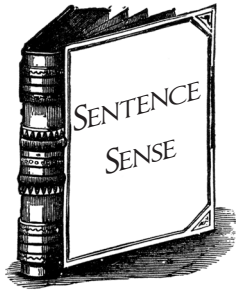
- ♦ In your Writer's Journal, write a short outline to capture the **plot** (sequence of actions) of this narrative. For each action you marked on the selection, write a few words or phrases.



## Language Logic

### THE ADJECTIVE

 Read and discuss these lessons in *Sentence Sense* with your teacher as indicated below.



#### I. Etymology: The Adjective

- ♦ 4.0A Oral Lesson
- ♦ 4.1 Adjective Definition

#### V. Exercises

- ♦ Oral exercise: Identify the adjectives in *Harvey's* 55, sentences 1, 2, 8, and 12. Tell which noun each adjective modifies.

 Add this flashcard to your box behind the Daily Tab, and begin to memorize it. Review all flashcards according to tabs.



- ♦ Adjective

# Classical Composition

## PLOT OBSERVATION: ORAL NARRATION

- Without reading "The Clever Slave" again, retell the **plot** orally to your teacher. Refer to your outline if needed.

## Commonplace

### NARRATIVE

Session two of three commonplace sessions for this lesson. Literary selection: "The Clever Slave."

- Set your timer and begin copying. When you finish, check your work carefully, word by word, against the original. Check spelling, capitalization, and punctuation for accuracy.



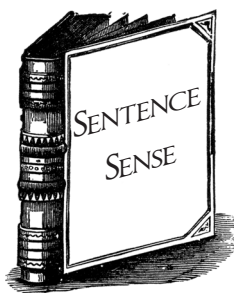
## Lesson 5.3

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# Language Logic

## ADJECTIVE CLASSES

- Read and discuss these lessons in *Sentence Sense* with your teacher as indicated below.



### I. Etymology: The Adjective

- ♦ 4.0B Oral Lesson
- ♦ 4.2A Adjective Classes

### V. Exercises

- ♦ Oral exercise: For each adjective you identified in *Harvey's 55*, sentences 1, 2, 8, and 12, tell whether it is descriptive or definitive. The key to distinguishing between definitive and descriptive adjectives is determining which of the adjective questions is being answered. Learn those questions well!

- Add this flashcard to your box behind the Daily Tab, and begin to memorize it. Review all flashcards according to tabs.







♦ Adjective Classes

## Eloquent Expression

### SENTENCE STYLE REVIEW

-  Copy this sentence into your Writer's Journal, and then paraphrase it as each of the other classifications. Replace at least three words with synonyms and negated antonyms.

A very rich man, whose name was Xanthus, came to the slave market to buy a servant.

-  Copy this sentence into your Writer's Journal, and then rewrite it two times, varying the dialogue tags and placement in each one. Replace at least two words with synonyms and/or negated antonyms.


"And what can you do, Aesop?" asked Xanthus.



## Classical Composition

### NARRATIVE RETELLING – FIRST DRAFT

You will have two sessions to work on this retelling. Begin here, and plan to finish in Lesson 5.4. As you write your retelling, do your best to use proper grammar and spelling, but keep in mind that you will have opportunity to edit before you finalize it.

-  Retell "A Clever Slave" in writing, keeping the same characters, setting, and sequence of action. Refer to your outline if needed, but do not review the original narrative before you write. Include a heading, properly formatted (Refer back to Lesson 5. 5 as needed.)



## Lesson 5.4

## Language Logic

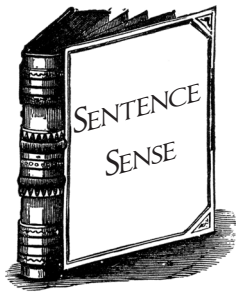


## GRAMMAR TERMS &amp; DEFINITIONS

☉ Review all flashcards according to tabs.

## SENTENCE DIAGRAMMING: ADJECTIVES

☉ Read and discuss the following sections in *Sentence Sense* with your teacher.



## III. Sentence Diagramming: Modifiers

- ♦ 13.1 Adjectives *Skip the second sentence and its explanation. We will come back to that when we study linking verbs in Lesson 6.*

☉ In your Writer's Journal, copy these sentences. Analyze each sentence by marking the simple subject (who or what the sentence is about) with a single underline, and the verb or verb phrase with a double underline. Write D.O. over the direct object. Then diagram the sentence. Refer to *Sentence Sense* as needed. You should be able to diagram each word in the sentence now.

1. The poor slaves carried the heavy bundles.
2. Wise Aesop had a lighter bundle.
3. Aesop gave a clever answer.
4. This answer pleased the rich man.
5. The droll fables express wonderful truths.



# Eloquent Expression

## SENTENCE STYLE – COPIA OF WORDS: ADJECTIVES

You may also wish to add adjectives to bring additional clarity and description to your sentences. Make sure that they fit the context of the story. For example, a fox would not generally be a kind and compassionate animal who wants to be friends with the chickens.

If you wish to describe a character, think about what the character looks like. Consider how he or she is feeling, and what kind of moral character he or she has. Here are a few questions you might ask yourself:

- ◆ How big or small is he? Is she young or old? Is he clean or dirty?
- ◆ Is she angry, overjoyed, nervous, hesitant, quiet, bossy, sweet?
- ◆ Is he prideful, foolish, wise, grateful, careful, heedless, courageous?

Once you have come up with a few adjectives, check the dictionary for possible synonyms for those adjectives. A synonym is a word that has the same, or close to the same, meaning. Most dictionaries have a list of synonyms at the end of each entry.



Find substitutes for nouns from "A Clever Slave" for the nouns listed below. Also find adjectives you could pair with the nouns you have chosen. For each noun:

- ◆ List all the other nouns and pronouns used to refer to the same thing in the fable.
- ◆ List more nouns and pronouns that could be substituted, keeping the context in mind. Check a thesaurus for synonyms. For a person, consider his or her moral character in choosing synonyms.
- ◆ List any adjectives used to describe these nouns in the selection, then list others that fit the context of the fable. Check a thesaurus for synonyms.
- ◆ Write down several of your favorite adjective-noun combinations.

1. Aesop 2. bundle



For each of the following verbs from "A Clever Slave":

- ◆ List several substitutions that fit the context. Make your verbs strong and fitting. Use the dictionary for synonyms if you wish.



♦ Paraphrase each sentence, substituting different verbs for the underlined words.

1. The slaves must walk the whole distance.
2. The other slaves laughed and said he was foolish.
3. A very rich man came to the slave market to buy a servant.
4. Even kings asked his advice and were amused by his fables.

## Classical Composition

### NARRATIVE RETELLING – FINISH FIRST DRAFT



Finish the first draft of your narrative retelling. Review the instructions in Lesson 5.3 as needed.



## Commonplace

### NARRATIVE

Session three of three commonplace sessions for this lesson. Literary selection: "The Clever Slave."



Set your timer. Begin where you stopped in the last session. When you finish, check your work carefully against the original for accuracy.



## Lesson 5.5

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## Prose & Poetry

### POETRY APPRECIATION



Read and enjoy a few poems in your poetry anthology. Identify the rhyme schemes of several. Read one or two poems aloud with expression and proper pauses. Pause at punctuation, but not necessarily at the ends of lines. See if you can find another poem with iambic meter.

# Language Logic

## GRAMMAR TERMS & DEFINITIONS



- Ask your teacher to quiz you with the grammar flashcards. Alternately, use the test feature in the Cottage Press *Bards & Poets I* Quizlet Classroom for an online or printed quiz for Lesson 5.

## DICTIONATION: NARRATIVE PASSAGE

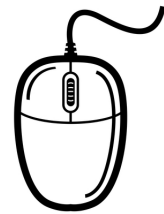
- Work in your Writer's Journal. Write as your teacher dictates a passage to you from your Commonplace Book. When you are done, check your work carefully, word by word, against the original. Check for accurate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.



# Classical Composition

## NARRATIVE RETELLING: TYPE DRAFT

- Type your retelling on the computer with spell-check turned off, or ask your writing mentor to type it exactly as you wrote it. Save, print, and file this draft in your writing binder.



# Commonplace

## FROM YOUR READING

Find selections in a book or poem to add to your Commonplace Book. Include the name of the book or poem, properly formatted. Label the entry with the grammar or poetry feature or as a favorite passage. Aim for a minimum of three entries, with at least one from each category.

- Grammar Features (choose any)


- ♦ A sentence that has an interesting or descriptive noun



- ♦ A sentence that has a strong and fitting verb
- ♦ A sentence that has a well-chosen adjective
- ♦ A sentence with one or more prepositional phrases
- ♦ An interesting dialogue tag (add to your Dialogue Tags list)
- ♦ An interrogative, exclamatory, or imperative sentence

 Poetry Features (choose any)

- ♦ Rhyme (note name of the rhyme scheme)
- ♦ Iambic meter (note name of the meter)

 Favorite Passage: Add at least one passage of one to three sentences or several lines of poetry that captured your attention in your reading this week. It may be something you found beautiful, thought-provoking, funny, or interesting.