

## Procedure for using these stacks as educational tools:

The "[Aesop's Fables +](#)" stack is a collection of Aesop's fables as distributed by the Gutenberg Project™ (Project). They have been reformatted into a database form, and can be accessed randomly in the stack. There is even a "Find" function whereby the user can search for titles, or keywords, only.

This search function is constrained to whole words. Thus a search for "Cat" will only find instances of the whole word CAT, but will not locate words like "Catch". We have found that children have trouble with partial word searches, and lose their way easily, as much of the "find" strikes are irrelevant to their actual search. In many instances even adults are frustrated at finding that they must read through fifty pages when only 2 pages contained the actual reference they seek. Full-blown conditional Boolean searches are complex enough for adults to master. Thus we have limited the searching to whole words, or phrases.

The stack contains a "life of Aesop" and a "Preface" section. Both contain the original text from the Project, as well as simple re-write of some of the information to make it more age-appropriate to our audience. Either is available at the click of a button. The default is the simpler re-write. We think most children will find the original a little difficult, but it is available for reference.

Attention should be paid to getting the children to read the simple preface. It explains some of the characteristics of what makes a fable a Fable. This is an important first step before getting them to make up their own fables. One can envision an activity whereby you allow the students to read through a series of fables where the Wolf is present, (also using the "find" function to introduce them to database searches), and then ask them to describe all the characteristics of the "fable character" Wolf. Ask them to describe these in human terms, as behaviour between people. Then you could ask them to write a fable which deals with the "Wolfish" character that is different from Aesop's. If you are lucky other kids will have already written such fables to your database, and thus your kids can pick up tips from them as well. Perhaps even group children together. The Log-in is not necessarily restricted to individuals, you could just as easily create a "Wolf" group, for example, and allow all members of the Wolf group access to the database and allow them to brainstorm, even if they aren't in the same class!

Rather than simply asking the children to read the original fables, we have created the multi-user Our Fables stack. Here any child can add a new page, and **WRITE THEIR OWN FABLES**. The difference between this and a regular word-processor are immense. First, the child never needs to save their work, it is saved automatically. The children never deal with "files", only "fables". All the fables are saved into a single file. Each Fable is tied to it's author. Modification and deletion priveleges are only allowed the author or admin.

Thus your result is a database of fables, created by many children, over any period of time you wish. Here it is possible to "Find" by Title, Author, or Keywords. This is a public document, and can be carried over from year to year. Build an entire database of fables by all the classes in your school, by anyone frequenting your library. There is no built-in limit to the number of users, although the database slows down with an excessive number of fables and users. (This is more hardware-specific than software. The faster your computers, the faster it works.)