



CLASSICAL VIRTUES HOMESCHOOL WORKBOOK | VOLUME 1

Wisdom & Prudence

**5 Self-Paced Lessons with Classical Readings and
Critical Thinking**

Read deeply. Think clearly. Answer with evidence.

A Pando & Page Press Workbook

How to Use This Workbook

Read deeply. Think clearly. Answer with evidence. This focused mini-unit gives families a repeatable way to bring classical readings into discussion and written answers.

1. Read

Start with the active reading prompt, then read the excerpt slowly.

2. Locate

Use the map, timeline, and glossary to make the old reading feel less far away.

3. Notice

Discuss the rhetoric page. Students should notice how the writer teaches, persuades, or arranges ideas.

4. Connect

Use history and art to see the world around the reading.

5. Write

Answer the big question with the top-down method. Review parent notes only after the student tries.

Best Fit

Best for ages 9-12; parent-supported for younger advanced readers. Grades 4-6. Older students who need guided writing can also use the method pages independently.

Suggested Pace

Each lesson can be completed in 2-3 short sessions, or stretched across a week with narration, copywork, discussion, and revision.

Top-Down Answer Method

A strong answer starts with the main idea, then supports it with reasons and evidence.

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | Big Answer First | Say the answer in one clear sentence. |
| 2 | 2-3 Reasons | Give the main supports in a sensible order. |
| 3 | Evidence | Use facts, moments, or words from the reading. |
| 4 | So What? | End with why the answer matters. |

Use This Sentence Path

Answer: This reading shows wisdom & prudence because...

Reasons: First..., Second..., Third...

Evidence: I know this because the reading says or shows...

So what: This matters because...

The Crow and the Pitcher

Reading Path

Gentle start. The plot is concrete, the sentences are short, and the moral is direct. The glossary supports a few older words.

Active Reading Prompt

As you read, watch for the exact moment the crow stops forcing the problem and starts testing an idea. What changes?

Before You Read

This fable comes from the ancient Greek story tradition and is retold in a 1919 children's Aesop. It uses one simple animal problem to teach practical wisdom.

Excerpt

In a spell of dry weather, when the Birds could find very little to drink, a thirsty Crow found a pitcher with a little water in it. But the pitcher was high and had a narrow neck, and no matter how he tried, the Crow could not reach the water. The poor thing felt as if he must die of thirst.

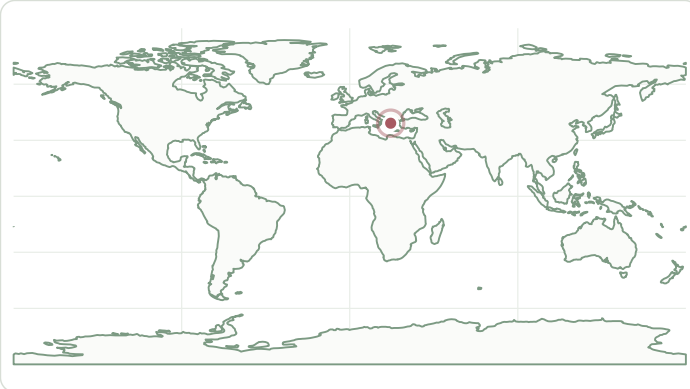
Then an idea came to him. Picking up some small pebbles, he dropped them into the pitcher one by one. With each pebble the water rose a little higher until at last it was near enough so he could drink.

In a pinch a good use of our wits may help us out.

Word count: 114; excerpt kept under 500 words.

Where and When

World Locator



Modern Greece



Origin focus: Greece

Country borders then: Ancient Greek stories moved among city-states; there was no modern Greek national border.

Country today: Today this origin is in Greece; the modern Greek state was internationally recognized in 1830.

Timeline

● **c. 6th century BCE** Aesop fable tradition

● **1919** Aesop, retold for children

Time gap: about 2,469 years separate the earliest source world and the later sourced version.

Dates are simplified for student orientation.

Glossary

pitcher

A tall container for holding and pouring liquid.

spell

A period of time, such as several dry days.

narrow

Thin or not very wide.

pebbles

Small, smooth stones.

wits

Your ability to think clearly and solve problems.

Classical Rhetoric Lens

Notice how the reading teaches, arranges ideas, and moves the reader toward judgment.

1. Example teaches the lesson

The fable does not begin with a lecture. It shows one small scene, then lets the moral grow out of the crow's action.

2. Order builds understanding

The events move problem, attempt, new idea, result. That clear arrangement helps the reader see why the solution works.

3. The moral is short on purpose

The final sentence turns the story into a portable rule: in a tight place, use your mind before you give up.

Try It

Try it today: before asking for help, name the problem and test one small, safe idea.

Historical World



The Crow and the Pitcher. State 1.

Wenceslaus Hollar, Unknown date; artist lived 1607-1677

Hollar's engraving presents the fable in an older, spare style. The pitcher, bird, and simple setting keep attention on the action: wisdom appears through one focused solution.

Where do you see the crow, pitcher, and water? How does the simple engraving make you focus on the action?

Three Historical Dimensions

People/Society

Greek fables grew in an oral world where short animal stories could travel from speaker to speaker. A listener might hear this tale at home, in a market, or from a teacher and remember it because the crow's problem is ordinary and vivid.

Institutions/Work

Fables helped families and teachers pass on practical judgment before formal textbooks were common. Farmers, sailors, merchants, and children all understood water, tools, and scarcity, so the lesson could cross class lines.

Innovations

Simple containers, wells, and stored water mattered in daily life. The story turns a basic observation about rising water into a lesson in problem solving, making everyday technology part of moral education.

Art credit: Wenceslaus Hollar, The crow and the pitcher. State 1. Source: Wikimedia Commons / Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. Full source notes are in the back matter.

Worksheet: Build a Top-Down Answer

Big Question

How does the crow show practical wisdom?

Build Your Answer With

Use the reading and at least two other kinds of evidence.

Reading

A detail or moment from the excerpt

Rhetoric

One lens from the rhetoric page

Where & When

A map, place, or timeline clue

History & Art

A historical detail or image clue

Big answer first:

Reason 1 from the reading:

Reason 2 from context or rhetoric:

Best evidence to quote or describe:

So what? Why this matters:

Self-check

☐ I answered first

☐ I used evidence

☐ I explained why it matters

Parent Notes: The Crow and the Pitcher

Use this page after the student completes the worksheet. Reading path: Gentle start. The plot is concrete, the sentences are short, and the moral is direct. The glossary supports a few older words.. Question: How does the crow show practical wisdom?

Parent Cue

Invite the student to explain the answer aloud before revising. Praise clear structure first, then coach evidence and meaning.

Model Top-Down Answer

Big Answer

The fable shows that wisdom can be stronger than force because the crow solves an ordinary problem by observing, testing, and using a small tool well.

Reason 1

First, the crow notices the real problem: the water is there, but his beak cannot reach it.

Reason 2

Second, the fable's clear order shows problem, failed force, new idea, and result.

Reason 3 (bonus)

Third, the historical world of water, containers, and scarcity makes the practical lesson easy to understand.

So What?

Wisdom means pausing long enough to find the action that fits the problem.

What To Look For

Answer first

The first sentence should answer the question directly.

Evidence

The answer should point to the reading and at least one lesson page: rhetoric, the source-world page, timeline, history, or art.

Meaning

The final thought should connect wisdom and prudence to choice, habit, or character.

Lesson build-up

A strong answer uses the excerpt first, then adds context to explain why the lesson matters.

Evidence the model uses

- Reading: the pitcher has a narrow neck, and the water rises 'a little higher' with each pebble.
- Rhetoric: the short moral turns the action into a rule about using one's wits.
- History/art: the simple water jar and Hollar engraving keep attention on ordinary problem solving.