THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE
Aesop’s fable written with a 100 word vocabulary for all levels

Teacher Guide,
Student Readings
& Activities

Written & Illustrated by Bryce Hedstrom

Includes:

- Lesson plans
- High frequency verbs
- Word frequency list
- Full color illustrations
- English version
- Differentiated student activities

Embedded readings in English and Spanish

Activities are adaptable to any language
WHY THIS STORY?
This story was not chosen just for its familiarity and entertainment value. There are deeper reasons, crucial reasons for students to be familiar with it. I chose to develop this story specifically to encourage students and teachers in the area off Mindset, as described by Carol Dweck. This vital Mindset work, like so many important lessons, needs to be taught implicitly; students need to pick it up as they go along. Too often we get discouraged when we are not instantly good at something. The hares, those with great natural ability, get a lot of attention, but talent is overrated. What counts is steady forward movement. The hare has natural ability, speed. She should win the race, but she doesn’t. The tortoise wins. Hard work beats talent, particularly with focus and hard work over time.

Talent is overrated.
Hard work beats talent.
This is a message our students must get.

CONTENTS

• Why This Story? ................................................................. 2

• Who is it For? Word Usage A Tool and A Model ...................... 3

• English Version of the Fable (for WL teachers of other languages) ........ 5

• Word Analysis by Frequency ................................................. 6

• Teacher Guide ................................................................. 7

• Spanish Version of the Fable with full illustrations and glossary at the end ........ 10
  (For upper level students)

• Spanish Version of the Fable with full illustrations and glossing in each paragraph... 21
  (For lower level students)

• Five Embedded Reading Versions of the Fable: Each version is the complete story
  Version A: 32 total words 10 potentially new words / expressions ....... 31
  Version B: 61 total words 6 additional words / expressions .............. 32
  Version C: 115 total words 5 additional words / expressions ............ 33
  Version D: 220 total words 11 additional words / expressions .......... 34
  Version E: 530 total words 22 additional words / expressions .......... 35

• Spanish Version with minimal illustrations (2 pages) ...................... 37

• Differentiated Student Activities ........................................... 39-44

• English Embedded Reading Versions .................................... 45
Success flows from self-knowledge and dedication. The tortoise embodies these qualities. She knows her weaknesses and her strengths. She does what she can with what she has. The added dialogue at the end of the story helps readers to focus on self-knowledge and to examine their own strengths and weaknesses. The intent is to help readers to use and develop their strengths and stick with them. It is a way to use Carol Dweck’s teaching on Mindset in a Comprehensible Input-based language class.

Not only is this story necessary, it is compelling. We know that the tortoise should not win, but every time we read the story, she does. Against all odds, she wins. The tortoise has learned the secret of winning a race without being the fastest. If she has learned the secret, maybe we can too; perhaps we can win even though we are not the most gifted.

It is written in accessible, useful, high frequency language and it is an important story for our age. Both of these add up to comprehensible and compelling, the ideal components of a language class.

WHO IS IT FOR?
Message: All levels. The message in this fable applies to everyone; particularly to our students in this age of instant everything.

Level 1 Challenge level. High functioning level 1 students will understand it.

Level 2 Appropriate for level 2. Assumes students know basic words in the past tense such as: podía, dijo, estaba, había, era, hablaba, vio, iba, sabía

Level 3-AP Good review. The grammar and vocabulary will not be challenge to most students in these levels so they can more easily focus on the important message and reflect on how it may apply in their lives. Class discussions will be lively and spontaneous at these levels.

WORD USAGE
This story was written in simple Spanish with novice language learners in mind. The number of distinct words in the story is 126, but if the verbs are counted as infinitives the total word count is 100 words. It contains the most useful and high frequency words in the language, excluding those that are necessary for telling this particular fable such as tortoise, hare, race, fast, slow and win. The goal was natural-sounding language that is also useful and easy to read. Some trade-offs were made along the way in favor of frequency. For example:

- The word lentamente was used for “slowly” rather than despacio because lentamente is more frequently used (#1975 vs. #3398 in A Frequency Dictionary of Spanish by Mark Davies). Various forms of • The verb seguir (to keep on) is used often, both because it is appropriate for this story and because it is a surprisingly high frequency verb in Spanish: it is the #97 most used word in the entire language. Many level 1 & 2 teachers tend not to use this verb enough in the classroom.

Although the vocabulary in the story is sheltered, the grammar is not, in keeping with a favorite adage of Susan Gross: Shelter vocabulary, not grammar. If a verb tense or mood was appropriate, it was used in the story. This approach allows for maximum comprehensible input along

“The take-away from this fable is that success flows from self-knowledge and dedication, not merely from natural ability.” —Susan Gross
with natural language usage. Students can understand the story and acquire elements of "advanced" grammar as they read and discuss the story. For example, the past subjunctive is used in illustration #3: Seguía diciendo que aunque la liebre fuera muy rápida, ella iba a ganar en una carrera. (She kept on saying that although the hare may be very fast, she was going to win in a race.)

Grammar and Vocabulary:  
- Preterit vs. imperfect verb forms  
- Prepositions and high frequency function words  
- Useful expressions  
- Verb phrases with infinitives:  
  - no puedes ganar, puedo ganar, podía ganar, iba a ganar, para resolver, decidieron correr, comenzó a correr, podía ver, voy a dormir, etc.  
- Verbs with se:  
  - se reía de, se dijo, se durmió, se acostó, se va, se despertó

A TOOL AND A MODEL
This lesson was written to mix form and function. The message of the story is hope and the lesson is presented to give teachers hope. The lessons and story versions are presented so that Spanish teachers can use them right away in any level with very little preparation time. Teachers are always short on time and a comprehensible and compelling story that is also useful for student life development is always welcome. But this is also presented to give teachers of ALL LANGUAGES hope in another way—that they can write or adapt their own stories and add to a growing pool of quality comprehensible input-based materials in all world languages.

Hare: How could you win when I am so much faster?  
Tortoise: Because I ran my own race.
THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

1) Once upon a time there were two friends, a hare and a tortoise. The hare and the tortoise always talked about who was the fastest. The hare, who was one of the fastest of all the animals, always said to her friend:

2) “I am faster than the dog. I am faster than the cat. And I am much faster than you, friend. You cannot beat me in a race.”

And she would always laugh at her.

3) But the tortoise would always smile, and would say to the hare:

“I know that you are very fast, friend, but I can win races too.”

Each time that they talked, the hare would laugh at her, saying to the tortoise that she was not very fast, and that she never could win. But the tortoise insisted that, yes, she could win a race. She kept on saying that although the hare may be very fast, she could win a race.

4) In order to resolve the situation, they decided to run a race. They decided on the route and the day for the race.

The day arrived, and they started the race.

5) The hare started to run. She ran very quickly, and in very little time she left the tortoise behind. The tortoise walked slowly.

The tortoise couldn’t see the hare, but she kept on with the race.

6) After running for a little while, the hare saw that she was much faster than the tortoise, and she said to herself:

“Why am I running? I do not need to run the whole race. I am so fast that I can win the race without running a lot. I am going to sleep a little. Yes! I am going to take a nap!”

So the hare lay down beside the road, and in a short time she fell asleep.

7) The tortoise still couldn’t see the hare, but she kept on walking.

8) The tortoise walked slowly, but she kept on walking forward. Eventually, she arrived at the place where the tortoise was sleeping.

The tortoise saw her, but she didn’t say anything to her, and she continued on with her race. The tortoise kept on walking for many hours. She didn’t run, because she really wasn’t able to run, and she didn’t walk quickly, but she kept of walking.

9) Finally, the tortoise could see the end of the race. She kept walking slowly.

All of a sudden, the hare woke up from her nap. She saw the tortoise ahead. The hare ran very fast, but she was not able to win. The tortoise arrived at the end first, and she won the race!

10) The hare couldn’t believe it. So she said to the tortoise: “I don’t understand!”

She asked her: “How did you win when I am faster than you?”

The tortoise smiled at her and said to her: “I won because I know that I am not fast. I cannot run quickly, but I can walk. I knew that I couldn’t run the race like a hare, but I could run my own race. I ran my own race, and for this reason, I won.”

The end. Moral: Slow and steady wins the race.
WORD ANALYSIS BY FREQUENCY IN THIS STORY

Key
- Blue highlighting = important words for this story (Check for understanding and/or pre-teach)
- Green highlighting = high frequency verbs in various forms

There are 530 total words in the complete version of the story, which use only 126 distinct words, excluding cognates. If the verbs are counted as infinitives rather than individual words, the total word count is 100 words.

Notice that the frequency of use in this simple story approximates word usage in natural speech and reading—the higher frequency words in the story mirror those in real life. This story was intentionally written to replicate this pattern to help students acquire the most useful, high frequency words.

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>la</td>
<td>(44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>que</td>
<td>(18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>tortuga</td>
<td>(18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>carrera(s)</td>
<td>(17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>(17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>liebre</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>rápida (-o, -os)</td>
<td>(15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>pero</td>
<td>(11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>una</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Words that occur 9 times</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>podía</td>
<td>was able to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>correr</td>
<td>to run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Words that occur 7 times</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>de</td>
<td>of, from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>ganar</td>
<td>to win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>le</td>
<td>to her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>siguió</td>
<td>kept on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>más</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Words that occur 6 times</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>poco</td>
<td>few</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>soy</td>
<td>I am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Words that occur 5 times</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>caminando</td>
<td>walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>el</td>
<td>the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>ella</td>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>muy</td>
<td>very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>para</td>
<td>for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>siempre</td>
<td>always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Words that occur 4 times**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>amiga(s)</td>
<td>friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>dijo</td>
<td>said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>en</td>
<td>in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>era</td>
<td>was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>por</td>
<td>for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>puedo</td>
<td>I can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>herself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Words that occur 3 times**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>adelante</td>
<td>forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>al</td>
<td>to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>caminó</td>
<td>walked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>corrió</td>
<td>she ran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>decía</td>
<td>said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>lentamente</td>
<td>slowly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>llegó</td>
<td>arrived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>mucho (-as)</td>
<td>many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>su</td>
<td>her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>toda (-os)</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>tú</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>ver</td>
<td>to see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>vio</td>
<td>saw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Words that occur 2 times**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>ahora</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>así</td>
<td>so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>decidieron</td>
<td>they decided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>día</td>
<td>day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>dormir</td>
<td>to sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>durmiendo</td>
<td>sleeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>estaba</td>
<td>was</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Copyright © 2015 by Bryce Hedstrom

55. final ending 96. fin end
56. gané I won 97. fuera may be
57. hablaron they talked 98. ganaste you won
58. los the 99. ganó she won
59. mi my 100. gato cat
60. porque because 101. había there was
61. propia own 102. horas hours
62. reía laughed 103. iba was going
63. de repente all of a sudden 104. al lado de beside
64. sé I know 105. lejos far
65. sí yes 106. lugar place
66. siesta nap 107. moraleja moral
67. tiempo time (in general) 108. nada nothing
68. un a 109. necesita I need
69. vez time (an occurrence) 110. nunca never
70. voy I am going 111. perro dog

Words that occur 1 time
71. se acostó lay down 112. preguntó asked
72. atrás behind 113. primero first
73. aunque although 114. pude could
74. cada each 115. puedes you can
75. caminar to walk 116. qué what
76. camino path, road 117. quién who
77. comenzaron they started 118. sabía knew
78. comenzó started 119. seguía kept on
79. cómo how 120. sin without
80. corrió I ran 121. sobre about
81. corriendo running 122. sonreía smiled
82. creer lo to believe it 123. sonrió smiled
83. cuando when 124. tan so
84. dejó quit 125. también also
85. del of the 126. va goes
86. se despertó woke up
87. después after
88. diciendo saying
89. diciéndole saying to her
90. dónde where
91. dos two
92. entiendo I understand
93. eres you are
94. eso this
95. estoy I am

COGNATES

animales animals
eventualmente eventually
no no, not
rápidamente rapidly
realmente really
resolver to resolve
ruta route
situación situation
LA TORTUGA Y LA LIEBRE
THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

TEACHER GUIDE
by Bryce Hedstrom

1. Before Reading
Some students will not be familiar with this fable, so you must give them context. In a comprehensible discussion in the target language, introduce the story and tell the students something about it. Tell them:

A) This is a fable that is attributed to the ancient Greek storyteller Aesop.
B) It has remained a well-known and treasured story across the ages because of the message it brings.
C) People everywhere appreciate it and can relate to it because they can identify with the characters and it gives them hope.

Follow the introduction with a question that is related to the story like, which animal would you rather be, a tortoise or a hare? Encourage discussion so the students can comment, ask questions, and express their thoughts and begin to get accustomed to some key vocabulary in the story. Discuss the concept of a fable with your students. Ask them what are some other examples of fables?

2. First Reading
Teacher reads the story expressively as students follow in their own written version of the text. It is best for the teacher to read aloud in the target language. A teacher can read with the proper expression, make dramatic pauses and stop to check for understanding. As you read, remember to use good read-aloud technique:

- Change your reading speed Fast / Slow
- Modulate your tone of voice High / Low
- Vary your volume Loud / Soft
- Grant wait time Pause

Students will understand more when a teacher reads aloud than when a student (even a literate native speaker) reads. When a student reads aloud in the target language there are very few advantages: The other students will hear slow, poorly pronounced language that they may not understand or relate to. There will be no dramatization, expression or feeling. There will be no checks for understanding in the difficult parts. The trifling “practice” in speaking the language by the student reader is not worth the comprehensible input that is lost to the rest of the class. The teacher should read aloud.
3. **First Class Discussion**
After the first reading, discuss the story comprehensibly in the target language and ask questions like these:

- Why do you think the author decided not to use other animals in the story like a fast horse and a slow horse? Or a fast cow and a slow dog?
- Why do you think the author chose to use a tortoise and a hare for the story?
- Is this story similar to other stories that you know? Which ones?

4. **Students re-read the story again on their own.**
Students read and answer questions on their own to prepare them for the next class discussion.

5. **Second Class Discussion**
Review student answers and discuss aloud again in the TL in class.

6. **Student Activities (Optional)**
See the activities at the end of this document. Students can re-tell the story to a partner or alternate and re-tell it “volleyball style.” This puts the emphasis on telling the story comprehensibly, rather than merely memorizing vocabulary.
Había una vez dos amigas, una liebre y una tortuga. La liebre y la tortuga siempre hablaban sobre quién era la más rápida. La liebre, que era una de los más rápidos de todos los animales, siempre le decía a su amiga:

¿Qué es la diferencia entre una liebre (hare, jack rabbit) y un conejo (rabbit)? Es una pregunta buena. Los dos animales son similares, pero las liebres son más grandes y más rápidas que los conejos. Las liebres tienen pies más grandes y piernas más largas, y las liebres también tienen orejas más largas.
—Soy más rápida que el perro. Soy más rápida que el gato. Y soy mucho más rápida que tú, amiga. No puedes ganar una carrera.

Y siempre se reía de ella.
Pero la tortuga siempre sonreía, y le decía a la liebre:

—Yo sé que tú eres muy rápida, amiga, pero yo puedo ganar carreras también.

Cada vez que hablaban, la liebre se reía de ella, diciéndole a la tortuga que ella no era muy rápida y que nunca podía ganar. Pero la tortuga siempre decía que sí, podía ganar una carrera. Seguía diciendo que aunque la liebre fuera muy rápida, ella iba a ganar en una carrera.
Para resolver la situación, decidieron correr una carrera. Decidieron en la ruta y el día para la carrera.

Llegó el día, y comenzaron la carrera.
La liebre comenzó a correr. Corrió muy rápido, y en poco tiempo dejó la tortuga para atrás.

La tortuga caminó lentamente. La tortuga no podía ver la liebre, pero siguió con la carrera.