Linguistic activity

5th Grade

“Wise talk”, a text about proverbs

Objectives

* To know the students what a proverb is.
* To find out how and why the proverbs are used in speech.
* To learn what makes them easy to remember and why they can be easily understood.
* To understand that they are metaphorical sayings.
* To say why they are useful.
* To work out their interpretation.
* To distinguish the differences and similarities between the Greek and English proverbs.

Procedure

The students were given the text “Wise talk”, which is about proverbs. After reading and explaining it they were divided into groups to do two matching exercises on proverbs. Then they tried to give their meaning and wrote it down.

 Wise talk

Wherever you go you will find that different peoples have their own proverbs. Most of these clever old sayings became part of the country’s language when experience showed how true they often were.

Years ago, when few people could read or write, parents used to pass their wisdom on to their children through these proverbs. Because they made good sense, they could be understood with little or no difficulty.

We find proverbs in every part of our lives: some advise us what to say or do while others warn us against certain things. Many tell us about our behaviour and others make us notice the behaviour of our friends or neighbours. But it is not only human behaviour which we can learn from; the behaviour of animals, birds and insects can teach us many things as well.

**Many languages, for example, have a proverb which says: *When the cat’s away, the mice will play.* It is not, however, the behaviour of these animals that the proverb is talking about. What it really describes is how people often behave when there is no one to keep an eye on them. Experience has often shown that workers stop working when their boss is away, and, in the same way, pupils may misbehave when the teacher is not present.

Have you ever noticed how old people find it difficult to learn new things which the young can learn immediately? This shows how true another proverb is: *You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.* But, the young have a lot which they can learn. When they are about to leave home, they are given advice on so many different things. Love and marriage are two subjects which they soon start thinking about, and as you can expect, there is a lot of advice on them*. Love is blind*, they are told, and *The way to a man’s heart is through his stomach!* When looking for a job, parents warn them: *Look before you leap* and *Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.*

Fortunately for younger children, two old proverbs are not so popular today as they used to be. One says*: Children should be seen and not heard* and the other: *Spare the rod and spoil the child.* They will be happy to learn that most parents today still agree with the one which says that*: All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy!* 

**Match the beginnings of the proverbs with the endings. Then say what they mean.**

1. Where there is smoke A. in the mouth.
2. Better late B. crying over a spilt milk.
3. Actions C. that ends well.
4. All’s well D. there’s fire.
5. It’s no use E. than never.
6. Strike F. speak louder than words
7. Never look a gift horse G. has a silver lining.
8. Every cloud H. while the iron is hot.

**Choose the correct option.**

1. The early bird catches the …………..
2. sun B. worm C. cat
3. Boys will be …………………………..

A. men B. children C. boys

3. It’s love that makes the ……………. go round.

A. head B. world C. eyes

4. He who would the daughter win, must with the ……………

first begin.

1. mother B. father C. parents

5. Absence makes the ……………….. grow fonder.

A. love B. mind C. heart

6. A deaf husband and a …………… wife make a happy home!

A. deaf B. dumb C. blind

7. He who’s ………………….. dreams of bread-loaves.

A. thirsty B. hungry C. full

8. Someone who gets in chicken feed is eaten by the ………………..

A. ducks B. chicken C. birds

9. You can’t make ………………….. without breaking eggs.

A. a soufflé B. an omelette C. mayonnaise

10. Don’t cross ……………. until you come to it.

A. a road B. a river C. a bridge

**Interpretation of the proverbs of the 1st exercise**

1. If it looks that something is wrong, it is wrong.
2. To do something later than expected it is not good, but it is better that not at all.
3. Our actions matter more than our words.
4. An event is good only if it has a good ending.
5. Don’t be upset about something that has happened and you cannot change.
6. Do something before you lose your chance.
7. Never behave badly to someone who gives you a present.
8. You can take something good from every bad thing that happens to you.

**Interpretation of the 2nd exercise**

1. If you wake up early to work you’ll succeed.
2. Boys are expected to behave like boys.
3. When someone is in love he is eager to do anything.
4. You have to be likeable to your wife’s mother to win your wife.
5. Absence makes love grow more.
6. A peaceful marriage is a happy one.
7. A man must manage his own household.
8. Do not reach results of something before it happens
9. .You can’t do something if you do not have the qualifications.
10. Wait until a problem comes and then solve it.

Watch a sample of this activity below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JlN9lbuDus>