

Mock Turtle: Once, I was a real Turtle. (*He sobs, and there is a long pause.*) When we were little, we went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle – we used to call him Tortoise –

Alice: Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one?

Mock Turtle: (*angrily*) We called him Tortoise because he taught us! ...Really, you are very dull. Ahem! We went to school in the sea, though you mayn't believe it –

Alice: I never said I didn't!

Mock Turtle: You did.

Alice: I've been to a day-school, too. We learned French and music.

Mock Turtle: And washing?

Alice: Certainly not!

Mock Turtle: Now at ours, they had French, music, and washing.

Alice: You couldn't have wanted it much, living at the bottom of the sea.

Mock Turtle: I couldn't afford to learn it. (*Sigh.*) I only took the regular course.

Alice: What was that?

Mock Turtle: Reeling and Writhing, to begin with – and then the different branches of Arithmetic – Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision.

Alice: What else had you to learn?

Mock Turtle: Well, there was Mystery. Mystery, ancient and modern, with Seaography: then Drawling –

Gryphon: I went to a Classical Master. He was an old crab, he was. He taught Laughing and Grief, they used to say.

Alice: And how many hours a day did you do lessons?

Gryphon: Ten hours the first day, nine the next, and so on.

Alice: What a curious plan!

Gryphon: That's the reason they're called lessons: because they lessen from day to day. But that's enough about lessons. Tell her about the games now.

The MOCK TURTLE has been weeping during the GRYPHON and ALICE'S conversation.

Mock Turtle: You may not have lived much under the sea, or been introduced to a lobster, or known what a delightful thing a Lobster-Quadrille is!

Alice: Is that some sort of dance?

Mock Turtle: Why, you first form into a line along the seashore—

The MOCK TURTLE and the GRYPHON begin to solemnly dance as the MOCK TURTLE sings slowly and sadly (to the tune of "Turkey in the Straw").

Mock Turtle: "Will you walk a little faster?" said a whiting to a snail,
"There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's treading on my tail.
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance.
They're all waiting on the shingle—will you come and join the
dance?
Will you, won't you? Will you won't you?
Will you, will you, will you, will you?
Won't you, won't you, won't you, won't you?
We're all waiting on the shingle—will you come and join the
dance?"

They bow. ALICE applauds, confused.