The Cat and the Mice

Once there was a house that was full of mice. There were mice in the walls, mice in the closets and cupboards, and mice under the floor boards. A hungry cat heard about this and set off for the house at once. The people in the house decided to keep the cat for a pet, and let him in the house. Every day the cat caught mice and ate them. Realizing the risk of running about the house had become too great, the mice stopped coming out and stayed hidden, instead, in their mouse holes.

No more mice were caught. But the cat began to get bored and hungry. I need to figure out a way to get them out of their holes, the cat said to himself. He thought about it for a while. Then he climbed up the wall and hung by his hind legs from a hook, and pretended to be dead. Soon, a mouse peeked out of his mouse hole and saw the cat hanging on the wall. “You think you’re pretty smart,” the mouse said to the cat. “But you could turn yourself into an umbrella hanging there and still not one of us will come near you!”

The Cat and the Birds

A hungry cat heard that her owner’s birds were sick. One day, while her owner was out, the cat dressed up like a doctor, got herself a bag containing medical instruments, and went into the room where the birdcages were kept. She asked the birds how they were feeling. “Open the door to your cage,” the cat said, “so that I can examine you and make you feel better.” But the birds refused to open their cages. “We’ll be just fine as soon as you’re gone,” the birds said.
Name ________________________________________________

Directions: Answer the questions below. Use specific passages in the stories to support your answers.

1. What do the cats in these stories have in common?

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2. What do the mice and the birds have in common?

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3. What lesson do you think that both of these stories teach?

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Who Invented These Stories?

These fables are believed to have been first told by Aesop, a slave and a storyteller who lived in ancient Greece thousands of years ago.

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