

Hartley Road Primary School

Grade 4 English

Fables

Lesson 2: Reading a Fable

Dates: 10/08-14/08

Click on the link to watch a video: <https://youtu.be/ruX6oQeLC3M>

What is a fable?

A **fable** is a short tale which teaches a moral or lesson. **Fables** often use animals as the main characters. Read the elements of a fable before you read the story below.

## **Elements of a Fable**

- Happen somewhere outside
- Short story
- Characters are animals
- Animals talk and act like humans
- Ends with a lesson or moral

Most fables were written long ago.

**During reading activities:**

- Do the animals in the story have unique personalities?
- What are the main/important events which take place in the fable?
- Who is the main character or characters?
- What qualities do the main characters have? (Are they good, evil, sly, kind?)
- Imagine and identify the setting ( where the story takes place)
- Identify the conflict (The main problem faced by the main character)
- Identify the moral/lesson in the story

## The Elephant and the Ants – a fable from India

In the days of old when there was a great deal more jungle than there is now, two ants were burrowing in the ground. An elephant appeared and declared impatiently, "Burrow elsewhere or I will trample your work to pieces!"

The ants answered, "Don't hate us because we are small. Perhaps we are better than you in some ways." "Don't talk nonsense," the elephant responded angrily. "I am in all ways the largest and most powerful animal on the face of the earth."

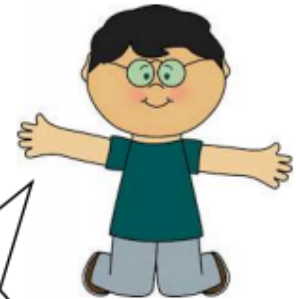
"Well, let us run a race now. If you win we will admit today that you are supreme," the ants said.

"We will start at once," the elephant declared, and he set off immediately. When he tired, he looked down at the ground. There were two ants! So, he set off again and when he stopped and looked down, there were two ants! He ran on again, but wherever he stopped he saw the ants. Eventually he collapsed from exhaustion.



Ants have a reputation for being very clever, despite their size. They look very similar, especially to a much bigger elephant!

Do you think every time he looked down, he saw the same two ants, or just two ants?



**After you have read the passage, answer the following questions carefully in full sentences.**

1. Where is the fable set?

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2. What were the ants doing when the elephant arrived?

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3. Should the ants have been afraid when the elephant threatened them? Provide a reason for your answer.

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4. Which elements of a fable can be found in the story about the ants and the elephant? Name two.

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5. Explain the ants' plan to defeat the elephant.

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6. Describe elephant's mood when he came across the ants.

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7. Why did the elephant think he was superior to the ants?

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8. What, do you think, is the moral of this story?

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9. Provide an adjective to describe the attitude of the elephant towards the ants.

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## Memo

1. In the jungle
2. Burrowing in the ground
3. Yes, elephants are far larger than ants. If he wanted, he could have trampled them without any difficulty.
4. There are animal characters who talk, there is a moral/lesson.
5. They worked together because they knew that the elephant would not be able to tell them apart since all ants look alike so the elephant was fooled by different ants as he ran the race.
6. Angry, irritated, impatient.
7. He a large and powerful animal and he thinks this makes him more superior to the ants who are extremely tiny and powerless against him.
8. Learner dependent answer. A possible answer can be that having strength does not always make you superior to others. The size of an individual does not determine the intelligence of that individual.
9. Arrogant/Proud/Conceited/Overbearing