

Please read this information carefully before starting on your own fable!

The Features of Fables

Although fables use themes, characters and settings of traditional stories, they have a very strong moral statement. A fable teaches the reader or listener about life. Fables can often pass into our culture as myths and legends and are used to teach about morals to children.

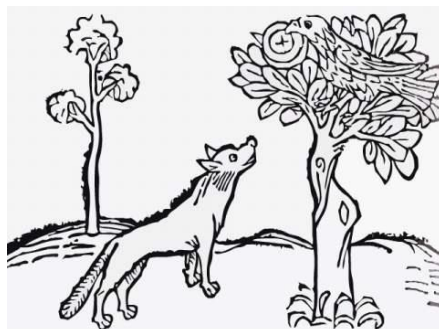
Well known morals are: "appearances are often deceiving", "the early bird gets the worm", "slow and steady wins the race", "little friends may become big friends", "where there's a will there's a way", etc.

In a fable, the message of the story is important. For this reason the plot is kept simple, the setting is totally fictitious and the characters are usually portrayed as simple stereotypes rather than complicated, multidimensional heroes or villains. Moreover, the narrative structure is kept short and often only has a few sentences; dialogue is used to move the story on and to convey its message to the reader or listener without making it too complicated.

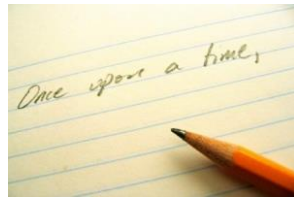
The characters are often named in the title and are usually animals who act and talk like people, but who retain their animal traits. By having these animal characters speak and behave like human beings, the storyteller can make us aware of human behaviour without pointing the finger at real people.

The storyteller tends to:

- Establish the setting and characters quickly. (e.g. "One day a hungry fox was sitting by the roadside")
- Use simple chronological structure in the text. (e.g. "One morning... as he was walking... first he saw... then he saw...", etc)
- Use simple dialogue between the characters. (e.g. "why do you howl so loudly" or "my feathers may not be beautiful, but they keep me warm", etc)



Tips for Writing your own Fables



1. Create characters that are simple stereotypes rather than multidimensional heroes or villains. Make the characters animals and have them behave like human stereotypes: a lazy donkey, a wise old owl, a cunning fox, a brave little mouse, etc.
2. Use the names of the main characters in the title.
3. Establish the setting in the very first line and introduce the main characters at the beginning.
4. Give clues to the reader or listener about what might happen (e.g. "a greedy but impatient fox was watching the chickens from behind a tree")
5. Keep description to a minimum. Instead use dialogue to explain cause and effect (e.g. "If you give me your hand, I will help you across the river," said the wolf)
6. Show the reader or listener when things happen and how times passes through dialogue (e.g. "One morning... as he was... he saw...then he saw..")
7. Clearly state the moral of the fable at the end. (e.g. he who does good deeds for another will get many good deeds in return).

Writing your own fable

As a group you will decide on the characters and main moral of the story (you must use the theme you have been given). **Each of you** will now write their own fable. Use the characters, theme and main message that you have chosen as a group. Try and imitate the style of the fables that you have read and/or have listened to. Pay attention to **grammar** (tenses) and use **adjectives** to describe animals, places and things.

Tip: Use the form at the bottom on Stage Three Instructions. This will help you to create your own fable.

When you meet up again, you will share and compare the stories you have written and will decide on the best story, or elements from several stories to write ONE fable together as a group. This is the story which will be shared with your partner school.

BE CREATIVE WITH YOUR STORY!!!

