

Fables

What is a fable?

A fable is a short story which is designed to teach the reader a moral or a lesson. Even though the characters are generally animals, the morals and lessons contained in fables are about human nature. This is because the characters, setting and actions symbolise human qualities.

Voice

Fables are generally written in the third person, which means that the narrator is not a character in the story. The narrator recounts the events, referring to the characters using pronouns such as 'he', 'she' and 'they'.

Language & Grammar

The language used in fables is similar in style to fairy tales. Fables are targeted to a wide range of audiences, and the language you use needs to be accessible for younger readers as well as older readers.

Descriptive language is an important feature, and you need to describe the setting of the story so that the reader can form clear mental images while reading. The characters are the most important element. You will need to describe their appearance, personalities and human traits, as this will develop the lessons of the fable.

Fables are a recount of fictional events that have happened in the past, and are mostly written in the past tense.

Structure and Organisation

Fables have a very clear structure, and are often quite a short narrative.

Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fables usually start with phrases such as 'once upon a time', 'one day' or 'a long time ago'.• They don't normally specify a time and place, so that the story and the lesson can apply to anyone, anywhere.
Characters and setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is important to describe the setting, so that the reader can clearly understand where the events in the fable are taking place.• The characters in fables are usually animals.• The animals are normally given human traits, so that we can relate to them.• The characters normally have distinct personalities, which can often teach us lessons about human values.

Complication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The main character usually faces problems that they need to overcome.• Their personalities or traits are important in trying to overcome the obstacles.
Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is where the story gets wrapped up.• Unlike fairy tales, fables don't always have a happy ending. This is because a sad ending can teach us a lesson or a moral about life, so we know to do things differently.• The end of the fable is used to present the main message or moral of the story.• The moral is not written explicitly, so the reader has to make inferences about what the lesson is.

Exemplar Years 7 – 9

Exemplar Years 10 – 12