

FEATURES OF FABLES

Here is one of Aesop’s fables – The Ant and the Dove. Check it for the usual features of fables, then complete the table below.



The Ant and the Dove

One day, when the sun was fiercely hot, an ant trudged his way to the stream to quench his thirst. Being small and quite exhausted by the heat, he tumbled into the water. Pushed this way and pulled that way by the strong current, he was on the point of drowning. A dove, nesting on a branch overhanging the stream, witnessed the ant’s predicament.

Quickly, she plucked a nearby leaf and let it float down close to the ant, who, with a final exertion, was able to scramble onto it and float to safety. “I won’t forget your kindness,” said the ant.

Some days later, a bird-catcher, impressed by the song of the dove, arrived to set a trap of lime twigs for the bird. He knew which berries it found irresistible.

The ant, realising his intention, stung him in the foot. Limping in pain, the bird-catcher made such a howling noise, the dove took flight.

[The moral of this story is that one good turn deserves another.]



feature	evidence
opening lacks detail	no description of time or place
animal characters	dove and ant
example of animal speaking	“I won’t forget your kindness,” said the ant.
unrealistic plot	animals thinking / talking / helping each other out / understanding the motives of the bird-catcher
simple setting	stream with trees nearby
limited sketch of a character	no description of the characters apart from their being helpful
a lesson about life	One good turn deserves another.