

READ

Some fables like this one, use idioms as their moral. Read the story once to familiarize yourself. Read it again, paying attention to the three parts of the story.

The milk maid and her pail



Beginning: this is where the characters are introduced

A milkmaid balanced a full bucket of milk on her head. As she walked home, she dreamed of all the money she would make from the milk

The middle: the action starts to build and things start to go wrong. All stories must have some conflict. This conflict leads to the big event of the story, the climax is when the milkmaid drops the bucket of milk.

"I will make butter," she thought. "And with the money I get from the butter, I will buy some hens. Soon I will have a lot of chickens. I will sell eggs and with the money I make from them, I will buy a new dress." She imagined herself being admired by all the young men at the fair. She imagined herself tossing her head proudly. She was caught up in her dream that she tossed her head – and the bucket of milk wobbled and crashed to the ground. All the milk was spilled, soaked into the ground and disappeared.

The ending: the mess of the climax gets sorted out and the story gets resolved. In fables, this is where the character learns the moral lesson of the story.

And so did all her dreams of chickens and eggs and a new dress.

Moral: don't count your chickens before they hatch.

WRITE

How to write your own fable

Step 1: Decide what moral or lesson you want your fable to teach. Take an idiom from the first box or pick a life-lesson from the second box.

- Don't judge a book by its cover.
- A leopard cannot change its spots.
- You can take a horse to water but you can't make it drink.

- ❖ Honesty is the best policy.
- ❖ Work first, play later.
- ❖ No act of kindness is ever wasted.

Step 2: Write a rough draft using the following frame:

Beginning:

- ✓ Choose a setting.
- ✓ Decide which animal character to use.

Middle:

- ✓ Choose a weakness for your main character.
- ✓ Link the weakness to their stereotypical character **example:** a lion is proud.
- ✓ The conflict should lead to a big event or climax.

Ending:

- ✓ The character learns the lesson of the fable.

Step 3: Use the following checklist to help you edit your story.

- Is the fable short?
- Does it use animal characters?
- Does one of the characters have a weakness?
- Does the weakness create conflict in the story?
- Is there a big event or climax in your story?
- Does the climax lead to the character learning the lesson?
- Is the lesson or message clearly expressed at the end?

Step 4: Write your edited story out neatly.