



An Aesop's Fable

Here is a shortened version of the **fable**, “The City Mouse and the Country Mouse.” Read it and then answer the questions.

The City Mouse and the Country Mouse were friends. The City Mouse came to visit the Country Mouse at his home on a farm. The Country Mouse served the City Mouse beans, bacon, cheese, and bread.

“Is that all you have to offer me?” asked the City Mouse.

“Come to my house in the city and I will feed you food you only **fantasize** about.”

The mice went to the city. The City Mouse fed the Country Mouse jellies, cakes, cookies, and ale. As they were eating, they heard growling and barking.

“That sound is atrocious,” **exaggerated** the Country Mouse. “I think I want to go home.”

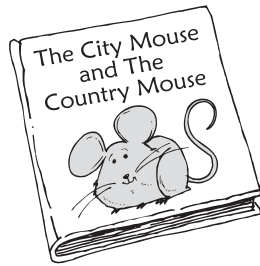
“So soon? It’s just the innkeeper’s dogs” said the City Mouse.

“Yes, I’m going! Better beans and bacon in peace than cakes and ale in fear!”

Now answer these questions.

1. Writers use **personification** to give animals human characteristics. What animals did the author personify in this **fable**?
2. How are a **tale** and a **fable** alike? How are they different?
3. What did the Country Mouse **exaggerate** about? Why do you think he exaggerated?
4. A **myth** is like a legend. What do you think a myth is?
5. Is this **fable** truth or a **myth**? How do you know?

Did You Know?



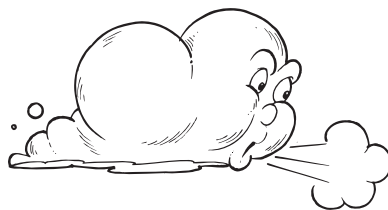
Aesop, the writer of *Aesop's Fables*, was an Ethiopian slave to the Greeks. He used stories from his underprivileged upbringing to teach lessons. These lessons are called "morals of the story."

A **myth** is a sacred, cultural story. The main characters of a myth are usually gods and supernatural heroes.



Fantasy is fiction that uses magic or the supernatural in its plot. Such things as enchanted gardens and sorcery are parts of fantasy.

A **tale** is a fiction or nonfiction story of events that lead to a conclusion. There are tall tales (stories to explain reasons for supernatural events), folktales (stories passed down from generation to generation), and fairytales (stories about fairies, goblins, elves, and trolls).



Writers use **personification** in fairytales, fantasies, and fables to give human traits to animals or objects.

Writers use **exaggeration** to write about something in an excessive or magnified way.



Definitions

exaggeration (noun, also exaggerate, exaggerates, exaggerated)

- *definition:* hyperbole, magnification, overstatement
- *usage tip:* when wanting to blow something out of proportion
- *correct:* Jaycee’s **exaggeration** of his pitching ability caught up with him when he pitched a 7-homer game.
- *incorrect:* Jaycee’s **exaggeration** of his pitching ability caught up with him when he pitched a no run, no hit game.

fable (noun)

- *definition:* legend; short, moral story
- *usage tip:* when referring to a story that teaches a lesson
- *correct:* The **fable** “The Tortoise and the Hare” teaches the moral of “slow and steady wins the race.”
- *incorrect:* The **fable** “The Tortoise and the Hare” teaches the moral of more is better.

fantasy (noun, also fantasize)

- *definition:* unlike, dissimilar
- *usage tip:* when referring to a story that could not possibly happen
- *correct:* *Alice in Wonderland* is a best-loved **fantasy**.
- *incorrect:* *The Biography of George Washington* is a best-loved **fantasy**.

myth (noun)

- *definition:* traditional, fictional story accepted by a culture
- *usage tip:* when referring to stories of ancient Greek culture
- *correct:* The **myth** of Echo and Narcissus is about a Greek boy and a goddess.
- *incorrect:* The **myth** of Echo and Narcissus is about a cat and a dog.

personification (noun, also personify, personifies)

- *definition:* giving human attributes to animals and objects
- *usage tip:* when wanting to “give life” to something inhuman
- *correct:* Writers use **personification** in fables and fairy tales.
- *incorrect:* Mathematicians use **personification** when calculating answers.

tale (noun)

- *definition:* story of events
- *usage tip:* in place of the word **story**
- *correct:* A **Tale** of *Two Cities* is a classic story of French peasants and English aristocracy.
- *incorrect:* Darren told a **tale** on his math test.

Making Associations

myth
exaggerate

tale
fantasy

fable
personification

Which word goes with:

1. applying human traits to objects or animals? _____
2. when you magnify something? _____
3. a story? _____
4. a story with a moral? _____
5. a Greek story? _____
6. a fairytale? _____
7. when something is blown out of proportion? _____
8. an urban legend? _____
9. the story of Alice in Wonderland? _____
10. a story written by Aesop? _____
11. a fictional story? _____
12. when animals take on human characteristics? _____

Finish the Thought

1. "It's a **myth** that Harry Potter is a real person," Gail said. "He's really _____

2. Sheila **exaggerates** about her flexibility during gymnastics because _____

3. The **tale** of my broken leg started with _____

4. The **fantasy** story of Peter Pan is about a boy who _____

5. "I wrote a **fable** about being greedy," Daphne said. "The main characters are _____

6. I named my new bike "Speedy" because it **personifies** _____

Match-Up

Draw a line from each word on the left to its example on the right.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. myth | a monster bad test |
| 2. exaggerate | Aesop |
| 3. tale | The Wizard of Oz |
| 4. fantasy | Hercules |
| 5. fable | A Car Named Mr. Smooth |
| 6. personification | My Friend Flicka |

Your Opinion, Please

1. Would you rather read a **tale** or a **fable**? Why? _____

2. Would you rather read nonfiction or a **myth**? Why? _____

3. Would you rather write a **fantasy** or a **tale**? Why? _____

4. Which example of **personification** is more appealing, a bus named Willie or a train named Chugs? _____

5. Which is a better example of **exaggeration**, "I was so angry I lost my head" or "I was so angry I started crying"? _____

6. Why do writers use **personification**? _____

7. Why are **fables** good stories to learn from? _____

8. Why did Greek writers use gods and goddesses in their **myths**? _____

9. What's the difference between a legend and a **fantasy**? _____

10. When do you tend to **exaggerate**? Why do you exaggerate? _____
