Name: _____ Date: _____

The Dove and the Ant

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 253 words

A small black ant was thirsty. She went to the river's edge to get a drink.

She leaned out too far. Splash! She tumbled in, and the water swept her away.

She kicked her six legs and waved her feelers. But the river was powerful, and she was so small.

A dove sat in the tree above. She saw the tiny ant bobbing and spinning below.

"Oh, dear!" cooed the dove. "That little one will drown." She looked around for something to help.

She snapped off a green leaf with her beak. She dropped it into the water, right beside the ant.

The ant climbed onto the leaf. It rocked and floated like a little green boat.

The stream carried it to the bank. The ant hopped off, wet and happy, onto dry ground.

"Thank you!" she called up to the dove. The dove nodded and went back to her branch.

Some days later, the ant walked by the river again. She heard a soft step in the grass.

A birdcatcher was tiptoeing toward the tree. He held a net, and he was looking up. The dove was busy preening and did not see him.

The ant saw what he meant to do. She thought of the leaf, and she ran.

She scurried up his boot. She gave his ankle a sharp nip. "Ow!" cried the man, and he dropped his net.

The dove heard the shout and flew off. High above the trees, she looked down. Far below, the ant was waving.

Questions

1. What did the dove drop into the river?

A. A twig
B. A stone
C. A leaf

2. How did the ant save the dove?

A. She gave the man's ankle a nip
B. She hid the dove's nest
C. She sang a loud song

3. Why did the ant help the dove?

A. The dove had helped her first
B. The man was her enemy
C. She wanted a ride on the leaf

4. What does "preening" mean in this story?

A. Singing
B. Tidying her feathers
C. Sleeping

5. What does this fable show?

A. Ants can swim
B. A small kindness can come back
C. Doves like rivers

Words to know

feelers: antennae
drown: sink in water
cooed: made a soft call
preening: tidying feathers
scurried: ran quickly
birdcatcher: man with a net

Answer key: The Dove and the Ant

1. C. A leaf
2. A. She gave the man's ankle a nip
3. A. The dove had helped her first
4. B. Tidying her feathers
5. B. A small kindness can come back