

# Reading for Meaning

**Welcome, story supporter!**

**We hope that you and your child  
have fun with this story.**

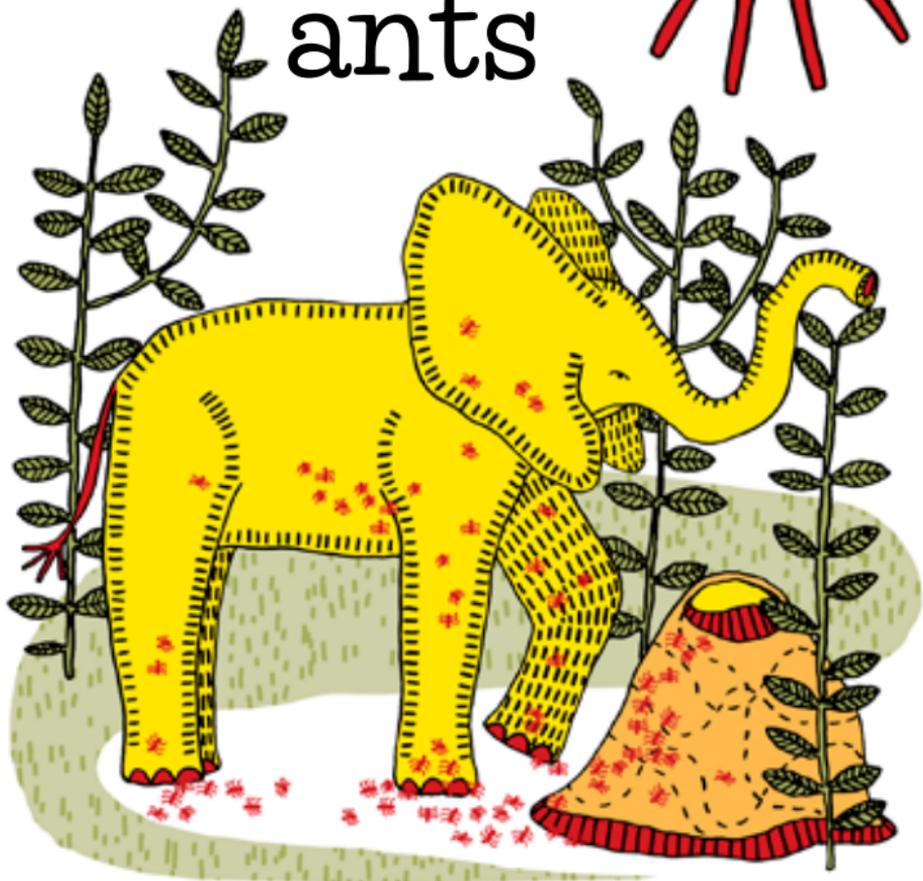
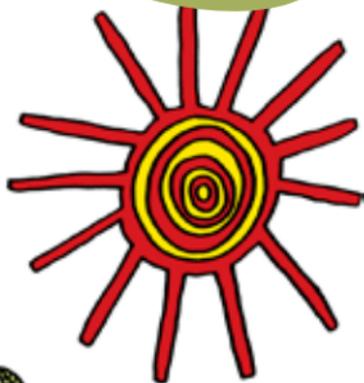
**Nurturing and supporting  
your child is important for  
their physical, emotional and  
academic development.**

**ZERO  
DROP/OUT**

**Part of the Zero Dropout campaign working towards  
halving the rate of school dropout by 2030.**

# The elephant and the ants

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for Meaning



There was once a young elephant who liked to look for mischief. One day, he went wandering away from his family and went walking in the bush.

He saw an ant-hill and thought it would be fun to trample all over it and break it. He tramped and stamped all over the anthill and almost destroyed it. Then he laughed and laughed; as if this was all just a joke: “Ha ha, ha ha, ha!”

The ants came running out of their tunnels in a panic. Altogether, in their tiny ant voices, they shouted: “STOP IT! STOP IT – NOW!”

Do you know what the young elephant did? He ran away!

Straight away, as quickly as they could, the ants started fixing their home. At last it was a tall ant-hill again, with all the passages re-built.

A few days later, that young elephant went walking again. He saw, with surprise, that the

ant-hill had been fixed. “Hah!” he thought. “More fun for me!”

Do you know what he did? Again he stomped all over the anthill, breaking the ant home with his massive legs. Again he laughed and laughed. “Ha ha, ha ha, ha!”

The ants were furious.

Let’s see what the smart ants did. Suddenly, hundreds of ants came running out of the ant-hill. They ran up the elephant’s huge legs, they ran behind his ears and ran up his trunk.

They tickled him, bit him and tickled him again.

“Hee hee hee! That tickles! Ow! that’s sore! Ow! Please stop it! Ow!” yelled the young elephant.

The ants answered: “Just look what you’ve done! You’ve destroyed our beautiful home - not once but twice! We will only stop biting you if you stop bothering us and if you stop breaking

down our home.”

The elephant stood with his mouth hanging open in surprise.

The ants said: “You think that because you are bigger and stronger than us, you can bully us. Well, think again! We are powerful too. We may be tiny, but there are lots of us. Together we are strong!”

The elephant was very itchy and very sore and very tired of being bitten, so he said: “Okay, I won’t destroy your home again. Just please don’t bite me or tickle me any more!”

When the ants heard this, they ran down the elephant’s ears, down his trunk and down his legs.

Then they looked up at the elephant and in their tiny voices, all together, they said:

“And just think about this. We build things up. We don’t break things down. We are constructive,

we're not destructive.”

The elephant replied: “Actually, I am quite impressed with the way you fixed your home!”

So the ants went back into their home, and the young elephant went back to the herd.

The next day, when he went walking in the bush, that young elephant walked very, very carefully around the ant-heap. And if you looked at his face, you could see he was smiling.

And all those little ants? Well - I think they were smiling too.

And that is the end of the story.

## EXTEND THE STORY...

# Label the elephant



ARTS &  
CRAFTS

### WHAT TO USE

*Paper, pencil, crayons, glue stick or prestik.*

### WHAT TO DO

- Now that you have read the story, ask your child to draw an elephant. You can assist them if they are struggling.
- Then together, use small pieces of paper to write down the different parts of the elephant. For example, an elephant's nose is called a trunk. Elephants have a tail, big

ears and four legs.

- When you are finished writing these words on the pieces of paper, help your child to use them to label the elephant. For example, put the word 'tail' on the elephant's tail.

**Elephants are interesting animals, we hope you enjoy doing this activity with your child.**

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