

Name _____

Date _____

The King's Fable

There once was a wonderful kingdom with a much loved king. All the people had more than enough to eat and drink. While the people worked hard, they also realized that the king's policies and rules had much to do with their good fortune. As the king's 100th birthday approached, the people asked what they might do to commemorate this auspicious occasion. The king, thinking that he would like some small token from all of his subjects, but not wanting to place strain on their lives, requested that a lake be dug outside the palace and filled with pitchers of milk. He wanted to wake up on the morning of his 100th birthday and look out over the lake of milk and view a glorious sunrise. His ministers agreed and initiated preparations. A proclamation was issued requesting that all citizens bring one pitcher of milk to the lake the night before the king's birthday as a small token of affection and respect.

The night arrived and all of the people lined up to pour their pitcher of milk into the lake. The next day, the king arose and went to his window to see the sunrise over the lake of milk. He was surprised and disappointed, for rather than a lake of milk, there was a lake of water. Each person, acting individually, thought that it would not really matter if they substituted water for the milk.

Fables are all about morals ...

What do you think is the moral of this story and how it might relate to environmental science?
