The Little Red Hen

Written by Nikki Gamble and illustrated by Scott Nash
Teaching notes written by Teresa Heapy

Background to the story

• Traditional tales have been told for many years. They help to keep alive the richness of storytelling language and traditions from different cultures. These wordless stories, many of which will be familiar to the children, are the perfect introduction to reading and storytelling.

• ‘The Little Red Hen’ is a Russian folk tale. It has a similar moral to Aesop’s fable ‘The Ant and the Grasshopper’: if you work hard, you will be rewarded. In most versions the hen eats the bread alone at the end, but in this one, there is a final surprise!

Group/Guided reading

Introducing the story

• Look at the cover of the book and read the title to the children. Ask if any of the children have heard this story before. Ask: What do you think might happen in this story?

• Wordless stories are a perfect introduction to reading. Children can enjoy reading them with you/in groups or by themselves. They allow children to access traditional tales before they are able to decode any text. They teach key skills including how to hold a book, which way to turn the pages and what key elements make a story, such as character and plot.

Reading the extended story

• Read the extended story (on page 28 of the Traditional Tales Handbook) to the children. Use the eBook or the pupil book to show the images to the children as you read, and pause during the story to ask questions.

• Stop reading at the end of page 5 and talk about how the Little Red Hen is feeling. Ask: What has the Little Red Hen done so far? Has anyone helped her? How are the dog, the cat and the duck feeling?

• Pause at page 9 where the Little Red Hen is eating her bread. Ask: How is the Little Red Hen feeling now? Have you ever worked hard for something and felt satisfied, like she does? How are the other characters feeling now?

• At the end of the extended story, ask: Why do you think the dog, the cat and the duck are helping the Little Red Hen? Do you think everyone is happy now they are working together?

Reading the story

• Ask the children to point to the title as you read it to them.

• Ask the children to turn the pages of the book and describe what they see in the pictures, telling the story together.

• Look at page 4 and talk about the picture. Ask: Why does the Little Red Hen want the other characters to help her?

• Look at page 8 and talk about what the Little Red is doing. Ask: What do you think the Little Red Hen is baking? Do you think the other animals are interested now?
Returning to the story
- Look at page 6 and talk about what is happening. Ask: What is Little Red Hen doing here? Talk about how she is grinding the wheat to make flour. Ask: Why do you think the other animals refused to help?
- Look at page 10. Ask: What do you think the Little Red Hen is saying to the other characters? What do you think they are saying to her?
- Ask: What did the Little Red Hen have to do to make the bread? Can you remember all the stages?

Storytelling
- Show the class the video of the storyteller performing the story on www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales.
- Talk about how the storyteller uses rich and imaginative language to describe characters and events.
- Ask the children to think about how the storyteller uses her voice to add expression by varying her tone and the rhythm of the story. Discuss how the storyteller uses facial expressions to show emotions.
- Ask the class to discuss what they particularly enjoyed about the storyteller version of the story.
- Have a look at the storytellers’ notes for information about the storytelling techniques used in the video.

Drama
- Talk about the events in the story, using the story map as a prompt.
- Tell the children that in some versions of the story, each time the Little Red Hen asks the other animals for help they reply “Not I!”, for example: “Who will help me plant the seeds?” asked the Little Red Hen. “Not I!” said the cat. “Not I!” said the dog. “Not I!” said the duck.
- Ask the children to think of repeated phrases that the cat, the dog and the duck could use when they refuse to help the Little Red Hen. Encourage them to think of a different phrase for each animal. Then think of a phrase that the Little Red Hen could use, for example “Then I will do it!”

Writing
- Using the story map as a prompt, ask the children to draw their own picture of the Little Red Hen performing one of the tasks from the story. Encourage them to use bright colours.
- Encourage and help the children to write key words to caption their pictures. Ask them to write their name on their work.

Links to the wider curriculum

Science
- Make some bread, cakes or scones, using flour. Explore the texture of flour when it is dry, and when it is wet.

Mathematics
- Use scales to weigh out the same weight of flour, sugar and butter, and talk about the different volumes of the ingredients. Discuss how some ingredients are heavier than others.

Geography
- Find out how the bread that we buy from the shops is made – start the process with farmers growing wheat and follow it to the finished product in the shops.

PSHE and Citizenship
- Discuss the importance of helping others and the rewards of working hard.

For more ideas on how to use this book in the classroom use the Traditional Tales Handbook.
**Stage 1**

**The Mouse and the Elephant**

Written by Narinder Dhami and illustrated by Amy Schimler
Teaching notes written by Teresa Heapy

**Background to the story**
- Traditional tales have been told for many years. They help to keep alive the richness of storytelling language and traditions from different cultures. These wordless stories, many of which will be familiar to the children, are the perfect introduction to reading and storytelling.
- This story is based on a tale from the Panchatantra, a collection of Indian fables which were first told, and then written down many hundreds of years ago. No one knows exactly how old the stories are. The legend goes that a wise man called Vishnu was asked to teach a king's sons all about life, and he told them these animal stories. The moral of this story is that big is not always best!

**Group/Guided reading**

**Introducing the story**
- Look at the cover of the book and read the title to the children. Ask: *What do you think might happen in this story?*
- Wordless stories are a perfect introduction to reading. Children can enjoy reading them with you/in groups or by themselves. They allow children to access traditional tales before they are able to decode any text. They teach key skills including how to hold a book, which way to turn the pages and what key elements make a story, such as character and plot.

**Reading the extended story**
- Read the extended story (on page 30 of the *Traditional Tales Handbook*) to the children. Use the pupil book to show the images to the children as you read, and pause during the story to ask questions.
- Stop reading at the end of page 3 and talk about how the mouse is feeling. Ask: *Do you think the elephant will help the mouse?*
- Pause at page 8 where the elephant is trapped in the net. Ask: *Who do you think might be able to help the elephant?*
- At the end of the extended story, ask: *Why do you think the mouse helped the elephant to escape? Do you think they like each other? How do you feel when you've made a friend?*

**Reading the story**
- Ask the children to point to the title as you read it to them.
- Ask the children to turn the pages of the book and describe what they see in the pictures, telling the story together.
- Look at pages 6 and 7 and talk about what is happening in the picture. Ask: *What do you think might happen to the elephant?*
- Look at pages 8 and 9 and talk about what has happened to the elephant. Ask: *What can the mouse do to help the elephant?*
**Returning to the story**
- Talk about what happened in the story. Ask: *How do you think the elephant felt when he was trapped in the net?*
- Draw attention to the other animals visible on pages 8 and 9. Ask: *Do you think the other animals could have helped the elephant if they had wanted to?* Talk about how the mouse was able to help the elephant because of his size and his sharp teeth.
- Talk about the end of the story and ask: *What do you think happened next? Do you think the mouse and the elephant would stay friends and help each other in the future?*

**Storytelling and Drama**
- Talk about the characters of the mouse and the elephant. Show the children page 5 again and talk about the contrast between the elephant and the mouse.
- Ask the children to work in pairs. Ask one child in each pair to be the elephant and one to be the mouse. Working in role, ask them to describe themselves to each other. Encourage them to think of interesting and exciting words to describe themselves (enormous, tiny, powerful, weak etc.).
- Ask the children to come back together and share their adjectives. Write the list of words on the board for the children.

**Writing**
- Using the story map available on www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales as a prompt, ask the children to draw their favourite scene from the story. Tell them they can use colours from the book to colour in their illustration or they can decide to use their own.
- Ask: *What is happening in your scene?* Encourage the children to write a word to go with their picture, and help them to do this. Ask them to look at the word list created earlier and to choose a word and copy it next to their picture, or to try to think of an exciting word to include that describes a character or the action in their scene. Ask them to write their name on their work.

**Links to the wider curriculum**

**Science**
- Discuss other animals of contrasting size. What is the biggest animal they can think of? What is the smallest?

**Mathematics**
- Weigh lots of different things of contrasting shapes, sizes and weights. Ask: *Are big things always heavier than little things?*

**Geography**
- This story comes from India. Find where India is, on a globe or in an atlas. Find out about the landscape and climate in India and talk about the jungle setting for the story. Explain that there are jungles in India, but also towns and cities, too.

**PSHE and Citizenship**
- Discuss the importance of helping others and of returning favours.

For more ideas on how to use this book in the classroom use the *Traditional Tales Handbook.*
The Ugly Duckling

Written by Teresa Heapy and illustrated by Adam Record
Teaching notes written by Teresa Heapy

Background to the story

• Traditional tales have been told for many years. They help to keep alive the richness of storytelling language and traditions from different cultures. These wordless stories, many of which will be familiar to the children, are the perfect introduction to reading and storytelling.

• ‘The Ugly Duckling’ was written by Hans Christian Andersen in 1842. It follows the emotional and physical journey of the ugly duckling as he eventually becomes a swan. Its moral is that we should not judge others by their appearance.

Group/Guided reading

Introducing the story

• Look at the cover of the book and read the title to the children. Ask if any of the children have heard this story before. Ask: What do you think might happen in this story?

• Wordless stories are a perfect introduction to reading. Children can enjoy reading them with you/in groups or by themselves. They allow children to access traditional tales before they are able to decode any text. They teach key skills including how to hold a book, which way to turn the pages and what key elements make a story, such as character and plot.

Reading the extended story

• Read the extended story (on page 24 of the Traditional Tales Handbook) to the children. Use the pupil book to show the images to the children as you read, and pause during the story to ask questions.

• Stop reading at the end of page 3 and talk about the big blue-coloured egg. Ask: What do you think the mother duck is thinking? Do you think she will look after the big egg?

• Pause at page 4 where the ugly duckling hatches. Ask: What do you think the mother duck is thinking now? How do you think the other ducklings feel about the ugly duckling?

• At the end of the extended story, ask: Did you feel sorry for the ugly duckling at the start of the story? How did you feel at the end of the story when he became a swan?

Reading the story

• Ask the children to point to the title as you read it to them.

• Ask the children to turn the pages of the book and describe what they see in the pictures, telling the story together.

• Look at page 5 and talk about what is happening in the picture. Ask: What do you think the other ducklings are saying to the ugly duckling?

• Look at page 7 and talk about how the ugly duckling has changed.
Returning to the story
- Talk about what happened in the story. Look again at pages 6–8 and ask: What is happening to the ugly duckling? Talk about how he has changed and grown up as the seasons have changed.
- Look at page 10 and ask: How do you think the ugly duckling is feeling at this point in the story? What do you think the other swans are saying to him?
- Talk about the end of the story and ask: Do you think everyone was happy at the end of the story? What do you think the other ducks thought when they saw the ugly duckling with his swan family?

Storytelling and Drama
- As a class, talk about the events in the story using the story map as a prompt.
- Tell the children that you are a member of the ugly duckling’s new swan family and that you want to hear his life story before you found him. Tell the children that they are the ugly duckling and they are going to retell the story.
- Ask them to work in pairs or small groups and to discuss what happened in the story and how the ugly duckling felt about the events. Help the children to complete the activity in their groups, and encourage them to use copies of the story map available on www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales as a prompt.
- Gather the class back together and ask them to tell you what happened from the ugly duckling’s point of view, taking it in turns around the class. If necessary, prompt the children with questions about the events and how the ugly duckling might have been feeling.

Writing
- Ask the children to draw a picture of the ugly duckling. Tell them they can choose whether the picture is from the beginning or end of the story – but remind them that he is a swan at the end!
- Ask the children to tell you about their picture. Encourage them to write key words about their ugly duckling, if they can. Ask: Is he big or small in your picture? What colour is he? How is he feeling? Ask them to write their name on their work.

Links to the wider curriculum

Science
- Help the children to research the life cycles of birds – how cygnets become swans and ducklings become ducks.

Geography
- Go on a class trip to see swans and ducks at your local park or wildlife centre.

Art and design/Design and technology
- Draw and cut out large feather outlines. Ask each child to decorate a feather, using crayons, paints or by sticking on glitter/feathers, etc. Then stick all the feathers together, to make a large picture of a (fantastical!) bird.

PSHE and Citizenship
- Discuss the importance of not judging others on their appearance and being kind to everyone, whatever they look like.

For more ideas on how to use this book in the classroom use the Traditional Tales Handbook.
The Elves and the Shoemaker

Written and illustrated by Mike Brownlow
Teaching notes written by Teresa Heapy

Background to the story

• Traditional tales have been told for many years. They help to keep alive the richness of storytelling language and traditions from different cultures. These wordless stories, many of which will be familiar to the children, are the perfect introduction to reading and storytelling.

• This story is based on the folk tale by the Brothers Grimm which was written in 1812. Its moral is that kindness to others should be rewarded.

Group/Guided reading

Introducing the story

• Look at the cover of the book and read the title to the children. Ask: What do you think might happen in this story?

• Wordless stories are a perfect introduction to reading. Children can enjoy reading them with you/in groups or by themselves. They allow children to access traditional tales before they are able to decode any text. They teach key skills including how to hold a book, which way to turn the pages and what key elements make a story, such as character and plot.

Reading the extended story

• Read the extended story (on page 26 of the Traditional Tales Handbook) to the children. Use the pupil book to show the images to the children as you read, and pause during the story to ask questions.

• Stop reading at the end of page 3 and talk about all the things the shoemaker needs to make shoes – including lots of leather, which he doesn’t have! Ask: Do you think the shoemaker and his wife have a hard job?

• Pause at page 9 where the elves appear. Ask: Who do you think is making the shoes? Why do you think they are helping the shoemaker?

• At the end of the extended story, ask: How are the shoemaker and his wife feeling now?

Reading the story

• Ask the children to point to the title as you read it to them.

• Ask the children to turn the pages of the book and describe what they see in the pictures, telling the story together.

• Look at page 4 and talk about what is happening in the picture. Ask: How do you think the shoemaker and his wife are feeling?

• Look at page 6 and talk about what is happening in the picture. Ask: What is the shoemaker doing here?
Returning to the story
- Talk about what happened in the story. Ask: *How do you think the shoemaker and his wife felt at the beginning of the story? Have you ever felt sad like that?*
- Ask: *What happened to the shoes that the elves made? How would this help the shoemaker and his wife?*
- Look at pages 10 and 11 again and ask: *Why did the shoemaker and his wife want to make the elves some clothes? Do you think they deserved them?*

Storytelling and Drama
- Talk about what happens in the story and how the shoemaker and his wife decide to help the elves in return for them making the shoes.
- As a hotseating activity, ask two children to act in role as the shoemaker and his wife and two children to be the elves.
- Encourage the rest of the class to ask the shoemaker, the shoemaker’s wife and the two elves questions. They might want to ask about how they felt at certain points in the story, or why the elves wanted to help the shoemaker for instance. The children in the hotseats should answer in their roles. Encourage the children to take turns in the hotseats to give each child an opportunity to answer in role.

Writing
- Using the story map available on www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales as a prompt, ask the children to draw one event from the story. Remind them to think about what clothes the elves may be wearing, depending on whether their picture comes from the beginning or end of the story. Encourage them to focus on the characters’ expressions to show how they might be feeling.
- Encourage the children to write key words to caption their pictures and to explain what is happening, and help them to do this. Ask them to write their name on their work.

Links to the wider curriculum

**Mathematics**
- Ask the children to role-play being in a shop. Encourage them to count out coins or counters to pay for different items.

**Art and design/Design and technology**
- Find different pictures of shoes in magazines and ask the children to cut them out. Ask the children to design and draw a pair of shoes for someone special.

**Music**
- Make up a song together that the elves might sing as they make the shoes.

**PSHE and Citizenship**
- Discuss the importance of helping others.

For more ideas on how to use this book in the classroom use the *Traditional Tales Handbook.*