

Little Red Riding Hood

The plot

Little Red Riding Hood lives at the edge of a wood. One day, Mum sends her to Grandma's with a cake, as Grandma isn't feeling well. Mum tells Little Red Riding Hood to be very careful in the wood-she mustn't leave the path or talk to strangers. Little Red Riding Hood puts on her red cloak, puts the cake in her basket, and promises to go straight to Grandma's.

In the wood, Little Red Riding Hood meets a wolf. The wolf stops her and asks her where she's going. She tells the wolf she's going to Grandma's. Following the wolf's suggestion, Little Red Riding Hood wanders off the path to pick some flowers for Grandma and the wolf runs straight to Grandma's cottage.

When the wolf arrives at the cottage he pretends he's Little Red Riding Hood and swallows Grandma. He quickly puts on her nightdress and nightcap and jumps into bed to wait for an even tastier meal-Little Red Riding Hood.

Little Red Riding Hood arrives at Grandma's and notices what a big nose, big eyes, ears and teeth Grandma has got. She shouts for help and a woodcutter saves her from the wolf. Grandma jumps out of the wolf's stomach and that's the last they hear of the big, bad wolf!

Alternative ingredients

☆In the original version, Little Red Riding Hood is actually eaten by the big bad wolf.

Subsequent stories, in contrast, have spared Little Red Riding Hood and come to her rescue in various guises-as her father, a hunter or a woodcutter. Who rescues Little Red Riding Hood in your version?

☆In some cases, the big bad wolf is killed and its stomach is cut open to reveal Little Red Riding Hood and/or Grandma. In others, the Big Bad Wolf is hit over the head and the barely digested Grandma pops out of its mouth. Other more alternative versions include the wolf fainting at the sight of the axe or simply running off to find its mother! Which ending do you and your children prefer?

☆What's in Little Red Riding Hood's basket? A cake? Bread and honey? Butter and cheese? An apple pie? What would you and your children take Grandma?

The rights and wrongs of the story

The story of Little Red Riding Hood addresses several significant moral issues which you may like to explore further with your children in their first or second language. Taking care of your family, respecting your parent's wishes and health and safety are all worthy discussion points. Did Little Red Riding Hood ever get told off for disobeying her Mum? Why didn't her Mum go with her? Did the wolf get his just desserts? Aren't wolves an endangered species nowadays?!

Pre-storytelling activities

Resources: Little Red Riding Hood story book, **A4 Character cards**, **Colour the characters** activity, **Story filmstrip**, **Storyboard-learner's pictures and sentence strips**, **Action charades** activity. (Chants, finger puppets, hand puppets, masks, any realia relevant to the story.)

- ☆ Before reading **Little Red Riding Hood**, you could introduce the fairytale by eliciting your children's prior knowledge of the story. Show your children the book cover to arouse their interest and trigger their memories. Who can they see on the cover? (Little Red Riding Hood) What's she wearing? Where is she? Where's she going? Is she a good girl? Why/not?
- ☆ Introduce each character with the flashcards in turn. First of all, ask your children to respond non-verbally to the character flashcards through actions and/or noises. Invent an action and/or noise to correspond to each character, for example, Little Red Riding Hood might skip, the Big Bad Wolf might growl, Mum might be making a cake, Grandma might be walking with a stick, the woodcutter might be cutting wood. Can they mime those actions?
- ☆ Choral drill the characters, as a whole class, teams or small groups in turn. As you show your children the cards say the words like a Big Bad Wolf, a good little girl, an old Grandmother!
- ☆ The children could now colour the characters and produce a character collage for reference throughout the story.

Storytelling

- ☆ In order for your children to get the most out of the storytelling, change the classroom dynamics by organising them in a circle around you wherever possible, either on chairs, cushions, mats or the floor.
- ☆ Make sure that they can all see the book and that you can make eye-contact with them all. This will help to engage their interest and to confirm they are following the gist of the story.
- ☆ When all your children are sitting comfortably, tell your chosen version of Little Red Riding Hood for pleasure. Allow your children time to anticipate actions and to really digest and enjoy the story. Acknowledge and recast in English any contributions they make about the pictures, characters or events as you go along.
- ☆ Adjust the text of your version of the story to meet your children's level, and focus on the illustrations to contextualise events. Support your storytelling with actions, too, using gestures and mime.

- ☆ As you introduce the characters, try to use a different voice for each one, and ensure that you convey the appropriate feelings of pleasure or politeness, fear or happiness, through your tone of voice, pitch, volume and facial expressions.
- ☆ Add further drama to the story through pauses and silence.

Storytelling activities

- ☆ Involve your children in further retellings of the story by encouraging them to act out the main events as you tell the story. In this way, the children connect the language with the actions. Remind them of the actions and/or noises associated with each character-whenver they hear 'Little Red Riding Hood', for example, they skip; the wolf, they growl.
- ☆ Alternatively, give each of your children a **character card** and ask them to hold up the flashcard whenever they hear the correct name.
- ☆ Divide your class into groups and give them a set of **Story A4 flashcards**. Again, ask them to hold up the correct flashcard for each part of the story they hear. Alternatively, place the flashcards around the room. Ask your children to point to (or move to) the correct flashcard for each part of the story they hear.
- ☆ Retell the story pointing to the words in the book as you say them. This will encourage your children to make the connection between the spoken and the written words and develop their sight recognition skills.
- ☆ Retell the story and ask your children about the characters and pictures on the pages. For example, where's Mum? What's Little Red Riding Hood wearing? Have you got (a cloak)? What's in her basket? Do you like (honey)? What's the wood like? Where's Grandma's cottage? Is it near or far?
- ☆ Ask your children to finish some of your sentences as you retell the story, for example, "In the wood Little Red Riding Hood met a big, bad _____ (wolf)"
- ☆ Retell the story and make deliberate mistakes. Ask your children to clap their hands together when they hear a mistake. For example, "Once upon a time there was a little boy..." CLAP! Continue telling the story with the correct word. Alternatively, ask your children to say 'Stop!' and to correct any mistakes they hear. For example,
Teacher: "Once upon a time there was a little boy..."
Children: "Stop! 'Gir!'"
- ☆ Invite your children to join in with the retelling. Begin by asking them to repeat the simpler elements of the story, such as the greetings or the "What big (eyes) you've got!" and "All the better to (see) you" refrain.

Post-storytelling activities

There are many different ways to extend the story of Little Red Riding Hood depending on your children's skills, interests and needs in the BritLit Primary Kit: **Activities, Chants and Plays**. Here are just a few ideas:

- ☆ Play 'I-spy' with the different pages of the book. For example, 'I spy with my little eye, something beginning with 'w'!' This activity may be used as a warmer to any of the vocabulary-related activities in the BritLit Kit, such as the **Picture crossword**.
- ☆ After the story you may like to use the **Action charade** activity for your children to mime the main events from the story. You could then ask them to reorder the **Story filmstrip**, or add the correct sentence strips to the **Storyboard pictures**.
- ☆ Alternatively, introduce one or more of the **Chants** and then re-read the story together and invite your children to repeat the chant(s) at the appropriate moment(s).
- ☆ As a class you could recreate the story using finger puppets, hand puppets and masks distributed amongst the children, or act out one of the **Plays**.