

Baba Yaga's Black Geese

A folktale from Russia

Recommended Key Stage: KS2

Synopsis:

Olga and Sergei are warned not to play near the witch Baba Yaga's house, but when their parents are at the market they venture into the woods. Olga performs acts of kindness to the creatures they meet on their journey. Each creature rewards Olga with a small gift. When the black geese alert Baba Yaga to their presence, Olga uses each gift to help the children escape to safety.

Part 1: Share the Story

Listen to the story **Baba Yaga's Black Geese**

Part 2: Discuss the story

Use the questions below to begin a discussion about the story.

Suggested Questions

Who was kind in the story? what did they do/how were they kind?

How do they feel when someone is kind to them?

Could share examples when others have been kind to them.

How could we be kind to others in our school day? Highlight different ways to be kind - could record in visual way e.g. on outline of their hand.

Random Act of Kindness - discuss what they are and link to Olga in the story

Highlight that even though she was busy she still stopped to help the fish, the squirrel and the mouse

How could the students perform a random act of kindness? Challenge them to perform one before the end of the school day.

At the end of the day feedback some of the random acts of kindness carried out by the students of any that a student has benefitted from.

Part 3: Play the Story

Activities	
Drama/oracy Tell Me More Divide class into pairs (threes at the most) with a storyteller and a listener. The storyteller says a sentence from part of the story: e.g. "A fish called out to Olga to push it back into the river." The listener then chooses something that they'd like to know more about: "Tell me more about the fish." or "Tell me more about the river." The storyteller gives another sentence or two about the chosen aspect: "The fish was large and silver. It rewarded Olga a shell." The listener then picks something else from what has just been said to ask about: e.g. "Tell me more about the reward." or "Tell me more about Olga." Responses can be kept basic or the challenge could be to bring out the feelings and thoughts of the characters in the story	Freeze Frames Begin as a whole class and choose a section of the story to focus on. Tell that part to the class again. Ask for volunteers to be the characters and retell the scene while the students act it out. At the chosen point they freeze. Encourage the rest of the class to consider the feelings, thoughts and speech for each of the characters. Feelings can be recorded onto heart shaped paper, thoughts onto cloud shapes and speech onto speech bubble shapes. These could be pinned/stuck to the characters clothing and then the scene is photographed. Groups of students can continue with other sections of the story and feedback ideas to each other.
PSHE Labelling Kindness Collect lots of different objects together. e.g. a few paper towels, dust pan and brush, plant pot, a sock (or pair), ruler, drinks bottle, etc. Put all the objects in the middle of the circle and give pairs or groups some post-it notes and something to write with. The students have 5-10 minutes to label the objects with ways they could use the object to be kind to another person. For example: socks - one sock; could be they look for the lost one; pair of socks could be they lend them to someone with wet socks; ruler - put it away if it's left out or make sure it is given back to the person it belongs to. After the 5 - minutes look at some of the ways in which people could use the object to be kind. Discuss them and see if any ideas surprised the students. These objects and labels may be used in a kindness display, added to and used to reinforce the idea of small simple act of kindness.	

Part 4: Story Stimulus

Activities
Sequencing the Story: use the resources cards in Resource A to explore the story further.
Creative Challenge: The idea of being kind to different characters can be expanded on to create a different version of the story. What other characters might Olga meet? What could she do to help them? What will they give to her to help her later? How might the new object help Olga and Sergei escape from Baba Yaga?

Part 5: Taking it Further

Similar Stories Baba Yaga's Daughter (Russian folktale) Chinye (African folktale) Chun Ping (Asian folktale) The Lion and The Mouse (European fable) Cinderella (European Fairy Tale)
Wider Curriculum Links PSHE: Respecting self and others: learn about what is kind and unkind behaviour and how this affects others;

Learning Resources

Story Cards for Sequencing



Once upon a time there were two children, Olga and Sergei. The children were warned not to play in the garden because Baba Yaga's black geese had recently been seen. Baba Yaga was the witch who lived in the deep, dark woods and loved to eat children! But when Olga and Sergei's parents went to market to buy sugar buns for tea and the children went outside and Sergei was kidnapped by the three black geese and taken to the deep, dark woods. Olga chased after the geese.



She ran and she ran, and she ran like the wind. "Olga, Olga, Olga..." called a fish who was lying on the bank by the river. Olga stopped to help the fish and was given a shell as a reward. "As you have helped me, so I shall help you," said the fish. "If ever you find yourself in trouble, take this shell, throw it over your shoulder and I will come and help you." "Thanks," said Olga. And again she started to run towards the deep, dark woods.



She ran and she ran and she ran like the wind. "Olga, Olga, Olga," called a squirrel in a trap. "I haven't got time to stop..." ... But Olga did help the squirrel and received an acorn as a reward. 'As you have helped me, so I shall help you...'



She ran and she ran and she ran like the wind. "Olga, Olga, Olga," called a mouse who couldn't get into her hole.... Olga helped the mouse and was given a small stone as a reward. 'As you have helped me, so I shall help you...

Learning Resources



In the deep, dark woods Olga found Baba Yaga's house on three chicken legs. She rescued her brother but the three black geese woke up Baba Yaga and she started to chase them.



With her long bony arms and her long bony legs she reached out to grab the children when ... Olga put her hand into her pocket and pulled out the present from the fish - a shell. She threw it over her shoulder and a lake appeared. Baba Yaga drank it.



Baba Yaga came after them again, with her long bony arms... Olga put her hand into her pocket and pulled out the present from the squirrel – an acorn. She threw it over her shoulder and a forest appeared. Baba Yaga chomped her way through it. Baba Yaga came after them again, with her long bony arms... Olga put her hand into her pocket and pulled out the present from the mouse - a stone. She threw it over her shoulder and a mountain appeared.



With her stomach full of lake and trees, even Baba Yaga couldn't eat the mountain and the children got home just in time for tea.