

The Story of Daedalus and Icarus

This resource was produced in partnership with Oxygen for The Story Exchange project (focusing on *how oral storytelling can support teachers to improve emotional literacy in the classroom*). Funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

An Ancient Greek myth

Recommended Key Stage: KS2

Synopsis: Imprisoned by King Minos to prevent him leaking the secrets of the labyrinth, Daedalus creates wings for himself and his son Icarus. His plan is for them to fly away from Crete and he warns Icarus that as the feathers are stuck to the frame using candle wax, they should not fly too close to the sun. Icarus forgets his father's advice as the delicious feeling of freedom overcomes him and he flies too close to the sun.

Part 1: Share the Story

Look at a map of Europe. Find the UK and then find Greece. Locate Crete which is where this story originated. This is an Ancient Greek myth which continues Daedalus' story after the story of Theseus and the Minotaur.

Listen to the story **Daedalus and Icarus** told by Chris Smith

Part 2: Discuss the story

Use the questions below to begin a discussion about the story

Questions

- What was your favourite part of this story?
- Which character is most like you? How?
- How would you describe King Minos?
- What would you do all day if you were locked away in a tower?
- How else could Daedalus and Icarus have escaped?
- People sometimes use the expression, "he flew too close to the sun". What do you think it means?
- Who was to blame for Icarus' accident?

Part 3: Play the Story

Activities	
Story Walk - Students stand in their own space around the room. They have each become Icarus in their own story worlds. - Read out Resource A line by line. As you read, the students use the space to mime the story.	
Drama/oracy In groups of two, students have to construct a scene where Daedalus and Icarus are first imprisoned. Discuss how they feel. Discuss how Icarus feels about being imprisoned and how he feels about his father. Daedalus is a builder and inventor, so have him come up with different ways to escape this prison. Show how and why Daedalus finally decided on wings to escape over any other solution. How does Icarus feel about this? End with them taking off. Don't let your scene last longer than 5 minutes and perform it to the group.	Freeze Frames - Encourage two students to create a freeze frame showing Daedalus and Icarus first take flight. Their feeling as they escape and fly. - Ask the students to list words or phrases to describe how the different characters might be feeling. Discuss any unusual choices e.g. How Icarus feels towards his father/What he's seeing - Show Daedalus and Icarus as Icarus flies too close to the sun. Show the difference between how Daedalus feels and how Icarus feels at this moment. - Compare and contrast the tableau with the first scene, and again, ask the students to list words or phrases to describe how the different characters might be feeling.

Part 4: Story Stimulus

Activities	
Creative Challenge: Ask the class. How else could Daedalus and Icarus have escaped from the tower? Provide a blob of playdoh/plasticene for each child to represent Icarus. Ask the students to be inventors like Daedalus to create an alternative means of escape. Set time and success criteria. Use tissue paper/plastic bags, string/junk materials, straws/ feathers to create their idea. Test out ideas and reflect on which ideas were most successful? What would they do differently next time. Record by sending Icarus and Daedalus your ideas as a secret labelled diagram delivered by carrier pigeon!	Emotion graphs Look back at the emotion wheel and ask children to find some of the emotions they felt when they were inventing their means of escape. Were there moments of hope/excitement/despair/annoyance? Can they articulate them? Next explore whether they can each create an emotion graph showing how one characters' emotions change during the story. They need an emotion graph template each showing: • The tower where Icarus and Daedalus are locked • Daedalus has the idea to make wings • They take off from the tower with the wings on their arms • They enjoy the freedom of flying • Daedalus warns Icarus not to fly too close to the sun • Icarus falls into the sea. Ask the students to label the y axis with emotions: happiest at top to despair at the bottom. The x axis line represents time. Mark on dots to show how Icarus feels at each moment in the story. Can they join the dots to show his emotional journey through the story? Challenge students to have two colours - one to represent Icarus and one to represent Daedalus. How do their emotions differ? Share graphs and discuss any differences between the students' interpretations.

Part 5: Taking it Further

Similar Stories

Theseus and the Minotaur (it's the prequel)

Dionysus and the Tyrrhenian Pirates (another Greek myth)

Jatayu and Sampati (In the Ramayana, it is a myth about two brothers who fly too close to the sun.)

The myth of Phaeton (a Greek myth about the son of Apollo whose wish to drive his father's sun chariot leads to disaster)

Artwork – The Fall of Icarus by Peter Bruegel

The Turtle Who Wanted to Fly (Versions are found in India, Africa and Europe)

Wider Curriculum Links

PSHE – freedom, dreams, emotional journeys

History – KS2 Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world

Science – Forces - explain that unsupported objects fall towards the Earth because of the force of gravity acting between the Earth and the falling object.

The Story Exchange was a Paul Hamlyn funded project run in partnership between Oxygen and the Story Museum focusing on the inquiry question: *how can oral storytelling support teachers to improve emotional literacy in the classroom?* Storytellers from the Story Museum worked with class teachers in seven Oxfordshire schools to co-teach sessions which have been distilled into these resources to share with the wider community.



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Learning Resources

Icarus and Daedalus

Resource A: Story Walk Prompts

You are Icarus

You are fed up with being locked up in the tower all the time.

Cheer up! Your father has had an idea!

Lean out of the small window- he wants you to collect feathers from the seagulls who roost there.

Take the feathers over to your father.

Dip them in wax.

Lay them carefully on the frame.

Go back to the window and wait.

Another bird has left a feather.

Pick it up and add it to the frame in the same way.

Try on the wings. Hold out your arms and try a careful little flap.

It feels good.

Try another flap a bit bigger.

Listen to your father's advice – nod that you understand.

Sit down on the window ledge with your wings outstretched.

Look at the world of freedom waiting for you.

Launch yourself up into the air – you're flying!

Try a little swoop and a glide!

You are having so much fun!

Soar a bit higher. You feel the warmth of the sun on your face.

Oh no! Some of the feathers are starting to drop off! You are not flying. You're falling.

Call for help!

Splash!