

The Sleeping King

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.

A Story from Wales, a part of the King Arthur legend

Recommended Key Stage: KS2

Synopsis: A poor man called Tom meets a traveller, who asks about the hazel stick he carries. Tom guides the traveller to the tree where it came from, where they find a deep underground cavern full of treasures, as well as a mysterious sleeping King and his knights. Tom manages to avoid waking the King and takes off with as much treasure as he can carry. But will his good fortune last?

Part 1: Share the Story

Wales has a strong tradition of stories about King Arthur, and this story is part of the King Arthur legend. Before you begin the story, spend some time telling the children about King Arthur – you could share the story of [The Sword in the Stone](#), so that the children understand how he came to be King.

A number of caves in Wales claim to be where Arthur is sleeping, including Craig y Dinas in the Brecon Beacons, a hill of sheer limestone with an Iron Age hillfort. Show the children pictures of the cave as part of the story.

Listen to the story of The Sleeping King told by Hugh Lupton

Part 2: Discuss the story

Use the questions below to begin a discussion about the story

Questions

- How do you think Tom feels at the beginning of the story?
- Who do you think the traveller is?
- Who is the sleeping king? How did he get there?
- What would happen if the King woke up?
- What would you do with all that treasure?
- How does Tom feel at the end of the story, compared to the beginning?
- What can we learn from this story?

Part 3: Play the Story

Activities
Story Walk - Students stand in their own space around the room. They have each become Tom in their own story worlds. - Read out Resource A line by line. As you read, the students use the space to mime the story.
Freeze Frames In groups, the children can act out or freeze frame the story with a focus on emotions. The children choose a moment from the story, and show how the characters are feeling at that time – can they express this through their facial expressions and body language? - Tom is very poor and meets a man who can help him get gold. - Tom and the man dig a hole, inside is a bell that the man says not to touch. - Tom sees a sleeping horse, king and warriors, he takes as much gold as he can. - When he leaves, he rings the bell by accident and wakes the King! But the man puts him back to sleep. - Tom spends all his money until he has nothing left. - He goes back to the hill, but he never finds the tunnel again. They may also add a caption to their freeze frame to summarise what is happening in the scene. Share the freeze frames with the rest of the class, with one person narrating their captions.

Part 4: Story Stimulus

Activities	
Creative Challenge Design a place for King Arthur to rest, so that he won't be disturbed! Become designers and inventors and consider how you can make the cavern more secure to keep people out. Will you create a labyrinth or maze? Will there be traps? How can you make it comfortable for the King and his warriors? Present your plans and have a go at building this cave! (You could use cardboard, or material and furniture around the room!)	Emotional Literacy Task The children draw a map of the man's journey, sequencing the key events of the story (e.g. Tom crossing the bridge, down on his luck... Tom leading the man to the hazel tree... squeezing past the bell, etc.). At each moment of the story, the children should label their map with the emotions they think the characters might have been feeling. The map can then act as an emotions graph, mapping out the different feelings the man felt throughout his journey. Were there moments where he felt conflicting emotions? Use this as a basis for discussion about our emotions and how quickly they can change.

Part 5: Taking it Further

Similar Stories

The Foolish Wishes or **The Three Wishes** (Many sources)

The Pedlar of Swaffham (UK)

The Sword in the Stone (UK)

The Unlucky Man (UK)

The Golden Fish (Asia)

Wider Curriculum Links

History – “Pupils should continue to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study.” This story can be used to discuss the time period when Arthur would have lived, and the contrast between this time and today.

Design and technology – “use research and develop design criteria to inform the design of innovative, functional, appealing products that are fit for purpose, aimed at particular individuals or groups.”

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.



<https://www.oxygenoxfordshire.com/>

Learning Resources

The Sleeping King

Resource A: Story Walk Prompts

You are Tom

You are down on your luck, walking across London with nothing but a hazel walking stick.

A stranger approaches you...

You make your way to the hazel tree with the old man

How strange, he asks you to start digging...

Now you're going through a very dark, scary tunnel...

There's a bell that you MUSN'T touch! You squeeze past so carefully!!

Wow, this chamber is full of gold!

Who is that over there? A sleeping King?

But look at all the gold! Quick, grab as much as you can!

Now your coat is full of gold, time to run back through the tunnel!

Oh, look out! The bell!

Oh no... The King is waking up...

Phew! You're outside, and you've still got all your gold!

You can buy anything you want! Look at all your new friends! You're so popular!

Uh-oh, the money is starting to run out...

You make the long trip back to the tree

You cannot find the tunnel anywhere...