

The Unlucky Man

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 folktale from England

Recommended Key Stage: KS2

Synopsis: A man goes on a journey to try and find his luck, but fails to notice it is all around him, with disastrous consequences...

Part 1: Share the Story

Listen to the story of **The Unlucky Man** told by Chris Smith

Tell the story as a 'whoosh' – Children sit in a circle with a performance space in the middle. Tell the story and call a child up to come and act out that part of the story as it's being told. When you say 'whoosh', the children sit down, and new children will come up to act out the next part of the story. You can use costumes for this to help children get into character.

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?
- Has anything unlucky ever happened to you?
- What would you do if you were the unlucky man?
- How would you describe the unlucky man?
- Was the man really unlucky? How do you know?
- Did the man have a fixed or growth mindset? What advice would you give him?
- Who was to blame for the man's bad luck?
- What lessons can we learn from this story?

Part 3: Play the Story

Activities	
Creative Challenge: Sculpting – The children work collaboratively to ‘sculpt’ each other into characters from the story. The children sit in a circle and at least one person comes into the middle. Tell the children that we are going to create the unluckiest man in the world – what would he look like? The children give ideas about body language and facial expressions. They can be invited to come up and gently move body parts to literally ‘sculpt’ these characters. This can also be used to analyse particular scenes or ways in which characters might interact. E.g. several children could be sculpted to show the man interacting with his friends, or the man interacting with the starving wolf at the beginning vs at the end. The children in the circle can take turns walking past the sculpture and whispering what the characters are thinking.	Drama/Oracy Activity: Conscience Alley – Tell the children that they are going to help the unlucky man by telling him what is right and what is wrong. The children should form two lines with a path running in between. Choose one child to be the unlucky man to walk the path (they can dress up for this too!). One side of the path should tell the unlucky man that what he has done is wrong, while the other side will tell him that it is right. E.g. You could choose the moment when he is heading up the mountain – should he go up the mountain or not? Why? The children give their reasons and then the unlucky man should decide by the end of the path.

Part 4: Story Stimulus

Activities	
Emotional Literacy Focus: Emotions Graph – Ask the children to draw the mountain that the unlucky man climbs in the story. This can then be used both as a story map and emotions graph. The children can draw the man’s journey up and down the mountain and include emotional language to describe how the man feels at different points of the story. Emotion wheels can be used to support this, so that children have the chance to expand their vocabulary.	Freeze Frame Feelings: Work in groups to freeze frame key moments in the story. The children devise four freeze frames for moments in the story that they think are significant and present them one after the other. Ask the groups to come up with a caption for each freeze frame, which the children can announce as they present. This will allow children to show their knowledge of the sequence of events in the story in their captions – e.g. ‘The unlucky man about to make a big mistake’, shows him speaking to the wolf at the end of the story. This story is also perfect for children to practice their use of humour in their performance.

Part 5: Taking it Further

Similar Stories

Misery and Honey (Haiti)

The Foolish Wishes (Europe)

The Golden Fish (China)

The Pedlar of Swaffham (Lincolnshire, UK)

The Sleeping King (Wales)

The Brave Weaver (India)

Wider Curriculum Links

PSHE - discussions about growth vs fixed mindset, resilience and perseverance

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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