

Thor and Utgard Loki

A Norse myth from Scandinavia

Recommended Key Stage: KS2

Synopsis

Thor and Loki find themselves in a castle in Jotunheimr - The Land of The Giants. After they are ridiculed for being so small by the ruler of the castle, Utgard Loki, the Gods challenge the Giants to a series of challenges. Thor and Loki each lose their challenges one by one and are humiliated – but Utgard Loki insists that they stay the night in the castle. The next morning, Utgard Loki reveals that the challenges were much harder than they seemed, and the Giants were very frightened by how strong and powerful the two Gods were! Thor and Loki were made to leave and never return, and with that, the Giant and the castle disappear.

Part 1: Share the Story

Share the video **Stories from the Whispering Wood: Thor and Utgard Loki** or tell the story yourself.

Top storytelling tips:

- Learn the story beforehand so that you can be expressive and maintain eye contact with the students.
- Use actions and sound effects and encourage the students to join in.

Find one or two moments in the story to stop and ask the students to predict what is going to happen next, or how they would feel if they were the characters.

Part 2: Discuss the story

Use the questions below to begin a discussion about the story

KS2 Questions
• What did you think of the story? What was your favourite part? • What does this story tell you about Thor and Loki's characters? • How would you describe Utgard Loki? What adjectives could you use? • Would you rather be a God or a Giant? Why? • What do you think of the challenges that were set? Can you think of a better challenge? • What would you do if you were challenged by a Giant? • What advice would you give to Thor and Loki when they think they have failed? • How might Thor and Loki be feeling? • Would you end the story differently?

Part 3: Play the Story

Activities	
Freeze frame - Choose a section of the story to focus on. For example, the moment when Thor and Loki first enter the castle and see all the Giants. - Ask for volunteers to be the characters and retell the scene while the students act it out. At the chosen point they freeze. - Encourage everyone else 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 during share time.	Tell me more - Divide into pairs. One person is the storyteller, and the other is the listener. - The storyteller says a sentence from part of the story: e.g. 'Soon Thor and Loki realised, they were in the Land of the Giants, and they were standing in front of a large castle. Inside the castle, there was a room full of Giants having a feast.' - The listener then chooses something that they'd like to know more about: 'Tell me more about the castle.' - The storyteller gives another sentence or two about the chosen aspect: e.g. 'The castle was as tall as a mountain, made of huge, grey stones that loomed over Thor and Loki'. - The listener then picks something else from what has just been said to ask about, for example: 'Tell me more about the grey stones.' - Responses can be kept basic, or the challenge could be to bring out the feelings and thoughts of the characters in the story.
Challenges of the Gods Think you can be as strong or as clever as the Gods? Design a set of challenges to test different skills. You could test: - Strength - Dexterity/ balance - Stamina/ perseverance - Intelligence/ problem-solving Build an obstacle course outside/ in the classroom or draw an inescapable labyrinth to test your brains. You could use your imagination to bring these challenges into a mythical world – for example: maybe your obstacle course involves stealthily walking along Jormungandr's back or walking on stilts to become as tall as the Giants. Test everyone in the class and find a way to record everyone's scores – who would beat the Gods or the Giants?	Character presentations Write a letter from either Thor or Loki to their friends and family in Asgard (Odin, Freyr, Sif) explaining what has happened in Jotunheimr. Think carefully about how the characters would be feeling and how this might affect what they write: - Would they leave out information? - How might they describe the other characters or events? - Would they make their feelings obvious or hide them? You could also write the response and ask questions of Thor/Loki to continue delving deeper into the characters and their thoughts and feelings. Consider what the other characters might say to help Thor/Loki.

Part 4: Story Stimulus

Activities	
Creative Challenge: Draw the story as a comic strip instead. - Students take a piece of paper and make 9 panels. - Students try to tell the story of Thor and Utgard Loki from beginning to end in just those 9 panels. - Plan what will happen in each panel before you start to draw it, so you don't use too many or too few. - Use words and pictures in each. Create sound effects, and speech/ thought bubbles to show what the characters are saying and thinking. - When drawing, make sure you show how characters feel throughout. Show Thor and Loki angry or upset at losing the challenges.	What if...? Innovate the story in pairs or groups, making one change. How does this alter the events of the story? Does it change how we perceive the characters? Use the following as starting points for your innovation: - What if Thor and Loki had ended up somewhere else? Who would they face? - What if Utgard Loki had set different challenges? - What if Thor and Loki had fought the giants instead? - What if Thor and Loki had taken the castle at the end? Present your new story – this could be as a written story, a comic strip, an oral story, or a performance with actors and narrators.
Create Thor's next adventure There are many stories about Thor and Loki – come up with their next adventure. Thor is usually the hero of the stories, who fights everything he comes up against, and Loki is the sly trickster. Will you keep these roles in your story? Or will you mix things up?	

Part 5: Taking it Further

Similar Stories

The Treasure of the Gods

How Thor Lost His Hammer

Hercules (challenges also set in this myth)

Wider Curriculum Links

PSHE

- *about how to manage setbacks/ perceived failures, including how to re-frame unhelpful thinking*
- *to identify personal strengths, skills, achievements and interests and how these contribute to a sense of self-worth*
- *about everyday things that affect feelings and the importance of expressing feelings*