

LANGUAGES

Literacy, Speaking and Listening

The story uses Scots language to tell the tale. With this resource you can also download a glossary of terms used in the story. Encourage older children to look up the words that they are not sure of. The story can be read in a small group by confident readers, taking turns to read a few pages each.



Ask the children to talk about the story once they have heard it and read it.

- Which bits did they enjoy?
- Why did they like these sections?
- Why do you think that James, the author, chose to write the story in Scots?
- What difference would it make if it was in English?



Consider the use of Scots words and language by looking at some of the different Scots words in the story. What is the difference between words like hoose, mair, aipple, heid and girn, crabbit, breengin, fashed?

Teaching note: the first set of words with their English cognates house, more, apple, head, whereas the second set have no direct English equivalents.

Think of more Scots words that have English words very like them (toun/town, doon/down, nicht/night, flair/floor etc) and then try to think of Scots words that don't (e.g. wee, pinkie, scunner, dreich, oxter, lug). Where do different words come from?

James Robertson created the Boy and the Bunnet story. He is a well-known Scottish author and the children may want to do some research about other books James has written. He writes poetry, novels and has written many children's books in Scots. He is co-founder of Itchy Coo who publish books for children in Scots. For lots more information and resources in Scots look at www.itchy-coo.com.



Other Scottish languages

You might like to go further with your class and look at other Scots dialects, perhaps used in your own area. For example Doric - from Aberdeen and certain dialects used in the Highlands and Islands. This could form an interesting piece of research for older primary pupils.

Writing



The story has some beautifully descriptive passages identifying the main characters.

Ask your class to read these – or read them out to the group – what other descriptive words or phrases could be used for the characters?

Ask the class to write descriptions of Granny, Neil and the cat in their own words.



They can find scots words to use in the Glossary if they want to choose some appropriate words.

Here are James Robertson's words for a few of the characters:

THE CRAW: The Crow is a crabbit, girnin kind o bird. He bides in an auld aipple tree in the gairden

THE STAG: He had a muckle handsome heid, and strang shooders and a brow russet coat, and on his heid he had a fine perr o antlers, wi sax sherp points on each yin.

THE URISK: The Urisk wis a fierce, wild beast that steyed in the deepest, daurkest pairt o the widd. Its tap hauf wis like a man and its bottom hauf wis like a goat, and it had horns and lang hair and hairy shanks and lang sherp teeth and it slaivered and snochtered as it roamed through the trees at nicht lookin for wee laddies tae hae for its supper.

THE SELKIE: The Selkie is a shy, sleekit craitur that sometimes paps her heid oot o the watter tae see whit's gaun on.

Storytelling



Have a discussion with the class about Stories in general. What makes a good story? What elements do you need for a good story? Why?

Explain to them that of all the stories that exist it is said that there are really only seven plots, which centre round the following;

Boy meets girl

Hero beats Villain – or overcoming the monster

The Journey and return

The quest

Tragedy

Comedy

Rags to Riches (like the Cinderella story)

The Boy in the Bunnet falls into category three – the journey and return.

Creating a group story in Scots



In a group chose your plot from this list and start planning the tale. This is a story to speak out loud, not to write down so just collect all your elements together, character, action, order of happenings, ending etc. and decide who will tell which part of the tale. Make some notes if this will help. Try to include as many Scots words as you can, using the glossary for Boy in the Bunnet to help you.



Once you have created your story you could;



Chose a piece of music to play behind the group telling of the tale, or create your own music experimenting with sounds and rhythms to fit the words.

Share the story with other's in your class and allow time for comments on each other's work.