

The Boy Who Cried Wolf (Years 3–4/P4–5)

Synopsis

This is an updated version of one of Aesop's most famous fables. Oliver likes playing tricks. When it is his turn to watch the sheep, he decides it might be fun to sound a false alarm and see what happens. He laughs as the villagers come running up the hill not once, but twice. However, the third time there really *is* a wolf – and this time no-one comes.

Comprehension

- Before listening: Introduce the title of the story. See if the children are familiar with the story or the expression 'to cry wolf'.
- Pause when Oliver blows the horn the third time. Ask: *What do you think will happen next? Why do you think that?*
- Pause before the storyteller gives the moral and see if the children can predict what it might be. Explain that fables are stories that help to illustrate a moral.
- Ask: *How do you feel about Oliver's behaviour? Do you think the villagers will trust Oliver again? What might Oliver have learnt about telling lies?*
- Discuss the end of the story. Ask: *Who do you think was responsible for the sheep being lost? Should the villagers have gone the third time they heard the horn?*



Activities

- Summarize the key points of the plot. Use these to help children retell the story. Borrow ideas from the storyteller but encourage children to add their own ideas and details to make each retelling unique.
- Retell the story using the same pattern but changing the main character and/or the setting, e.g. 'The Girl Who Cried Wolf'; 'The Boy Who Cried Fire'. Ask the children to do the same.
- Ask children to dramatize a scene from the story, e.g. the villagers' second arrival in the meadow or when they hear the horn the third time. Use dialogue, voice and gestures to convey the villagers' feelings about Oliver's tricks.
- Write prepositional phrases to express time or place in the story, e.g. 'on the hilltop'; 'in the village/meadow'; 'after a while'; 'in the evening'.
- Discuss plurals used in the story, e.g. 'pack of wolves', 'flock of sheep'. Ask children to research and collect other examples.
- Ask children to write a report or a letter to Oliver's mother describing his behaviour at school.
- Ask children to write an additional paragraph for the story to say what happened next. Encourage them to consider whether Oliver changed, or if he was punished.
- Challenge children to write an apology from Oliver to the villagers, explaining how he will change or try to make it up to them.
- Drawing on the story, discuss responsibilities and the consequences of actions on other people.
- Research wolves to find out about their diet, natural habitat, place in the food chain.

