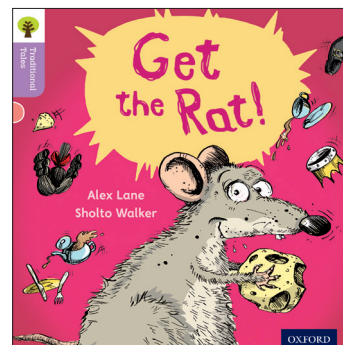


## Get the Rat!

Written by Alex Lane and illustrated by Sholto Walker

Teaching notes written by Teresa Heapy

Information about assessment and curriculum links can be found at the end of these Teaching Notes.



### Background to the story

- Traditional tales have been told for many years. They help to keep alive the richness of storytelling language and traditions from different cultures. These tales, many of which will be familiar to the children, are rich in patterned language and provide a springboard for their own storytelling and writing.
- This story is based on a circular theme, which is a structure used in many traditional tales. The humour in the story comes from the repetition of events, the increasing levels of chaos as the story progresses and the conclusion ... where it seems as if the whole cycle is about to start all over again!

### Group/Guided reading

#### Introducing the story

- Look at the cover of the book and read the title together. Ask: *What do you think the rat is thinking? What do you think might happen to the rat in the story?*
- All the words in this story are decodable for this stage. You can look together at the inside front cover for a list of the high frequency tricky words for this stage used in the book, to help build familiarity with these before children read the story independently.

#### Reading the extended story

- Read the extended story (on page 35 of the *Traditional Tales Handbook*) to the children. Use the pupil book to show the images to the children as you read, and pause during the story to ask questions.
- Stop reading at the end of page 3. Ask: *How are the different characters reacting to the sighting of the rat? Do you think they like rats?*
- Pause at page 9 where the King's wig is mistaken for the rat. Ask: *What do you think the Princess is thinking?*
- At the end of the extended story, ask: *What do you think happened next? What has the Princess spotted this time?*

#### Reading the story

- Tell the children it's now their turn to read the story themselves. Remember to give them lots of encouragement and praise as they read.
- As they read, encourage the children to sound out the phonemes, for example *g-e-t*, *r-a-t*. Draw attention to the **u** grapheme in *rug*, *cup* and *bug*.
- Support the children with the word *the*, explaining that it is a tricky word, but also very common and useful. If a word is too difficult, simply read the word for them.
- As they read, ask them to spot the rat on each page of the book. Ask: *Do you think he is a clever rat?* Check that the children understand that various items are being mistaken for the rat – the sock on page 3, the teabag on page 5 and the King's wig on page 7.



## Returning to the story

- Talk about what happened in the story. Ask: *Who first spotted the rat? What do you think the Princess thought when she saw it?*
- Ask: *What happened when the Princess thought the rat was on the King's hat? What do you think the King, the Queen and the footmen might be saying at this moment in the story?*
- Look at pages 10 and 11 again and ask: *What has happened to the room since the beginning of the story?*
- Ask: *What do you think the rat thinks about what happened in the story? Was he surprised that they didn't catch him? Did you think he would get caught?*

## Storytelling and Drama

- Using the story map available on [www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales](http://www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales) for reference, talk as a class about what happened in the story.
- Ask three children to take the roles of the Princess, the King and the Queen. Ask them to act out the story, but this time with the King and Queen refusing to chase the rat!
- Ask another three children to come up and act out the story. This time, you could change the animal – it could be a spider, a dog or even a tiger! What will happen in the story now?
- Keep asking other groups of children to come and act out the story, changing events or characters. Ask the children in the class who are not acting in role to think of suggestions for alternatives that the groups can act out.

## Writing

- Ask the children to draw their favourite character in the story. It could be the King, the Princess or even the rat! Ask them to think about the events in the story and to draw their character at a key moment. Make picture frames for the children's illustrations like the pictures on the wall in the story.
- Encourage the children to write labels for the character they have drawn. These could be for their clothes or key words about what they are doing or thinking. Ask them to write their name on their work.
- If appropriate, ask the children to show their picture to the rest of the class and describe the moment in the story and the character that it shows.

## Links to the wider curriculum

### Science

- Find out about rats. Ask children to investigate their habitats and what they like to eat.

### Geography

- The King, Queen and Princess live in a palace. Find out about real palaces, or castles, in books or on the internet.

### Art and design/Design and technology

- Ask the children to design a royal crown. They can choose to make a crown for the King, the Queen or the Princess.

### PE

- Ask the children to tell the story in a dance. They should think about the chaotic

moments of running around and chasing the rat, and contrast them with quiet moments when the rat is happily hidden away nibbling cheese.

For more ideas on how to use this book in the classroom use the *Traditional Tales Handbook*.

**Oxford**  
**OWL**

#### For teachers

Helping you with free eBooks, inspirational resources, advice and support

#### For parents

Helping your child's learning with free eBooks, essential tips and fun activities



[www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk)

# Get the Rat! (Oxford Level 1+) curriculum coverage chart

## Links to Oxford Reading Criterion Scale:

- Can use developing GPC knowledge to sound and blend simple VC and CVC words. (READ) [ORCS Standard 1, 5]
- Is able to read some words from the YR high frequency word list. (READ) [ORCS Standard 1, 6]
- Can recognize language patterns in stories, poems and other texts, e.g. repeated phrases, rhyme, alliteration. (A) [ORCS Standard 1, 14]
- Can talk about main points or key events in a simple text. (R) [ORCS Standard 1, 20]

## ENGLAND The National Curriculum in England: Reception

<b>EYFS</b>	The activities in this book develop all areas listed within the following Early Learning Goals: 01, 02, 03, 09, 10.
<b>Letters and Sounds Phase 2</b>	Sounds practised: a (as in rat), t (as in get), i (as in it)

## SCOTLAND Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy and English experiences and outcomes – Early Level

<b>Listening and talking</b>	I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts, sharing my thoughts in different ways (LIT 0-01c) Within real and imaginary situations, I share experiences and feelings, ideas and information in a way that communicates my message (LIT 0-09a)
<b>Reading</b>	I explore sounds, letters and words, discovering how they work together, and I can use what I learn to help me as I read and write (ENG 0-12a / LIT 0-13a / LIT 0-21a) I enjoy exploring and playing with the patterns and sounds of language, and can use what I learn (LIT 0-01a / LIT 0-11a / LIT 0-20a) I use signs, books or other texts to find useful or interesting information and I use this to plan, make choices or learn new things (LIT 0-14a) I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts, sharing my thoughts in different ways (LIT 0-19a)
<b>Writing</b>	Within real and imaginary situations, I share experiences and feelings, ideas and information in a way that communicates my message (LIT 0-26a)

## WALES Foundation Phase Framework: Reception

<b>Oracy</b>	Learners are able to contribute to role-play activities using relevant language (YR_OracSpea.7)
<b>Reading</b>	Learners are able to identify information from a text using visual features and words (YR_ReadComp.2) Learners are able to follow texts read to them and respond appropriately (YR_ReadResp.2) Learners are able to recognise that words are constructed from phonemes (sounds) and that phonemes are represented by graphemes (written letters) – orally blend combinations of known letters (YR_ReadStrat.5i) Learners are able to read simple captions and texts recognising high-frequency words (YR_ReadStrat.9)
<b>Writing</b>	Learners are able to convey meaning through pictures and mark making (YR_WritMean.3)

## NORTHERN IRELAND Levels of Progression in Communication across the curriculum: Primary Level 1

<b>Talking and listening</b>	Pupils can take on the role of someone else (L1_com_talk.1ii) Pupils can use vocabulary from within their experience to describe thoughts and feelings (L1_com_talk.3)
<b>Reading</b>	Pupils can show understanding of the meaning carried by print, pictures and images (L1_com_read.1) Pupils can understand that words are made up of sounds and syllables and that sounds are represented by letters (L1_com_read.2i) Pupils can read and understand familiar words, signs and symbols in the environment (L1_com_read.3i) Pupils can use visual clues to locate information (L1_com_read.3ii) Pupils can talk about what they read and answer questions (L1_com_read.5)
<b>Writing</b>	Pupils can express thoughts, feelings and ideas, from within their experience, using symbols, pictures, words, phrases and simple sentences (L1_com_writ.2)