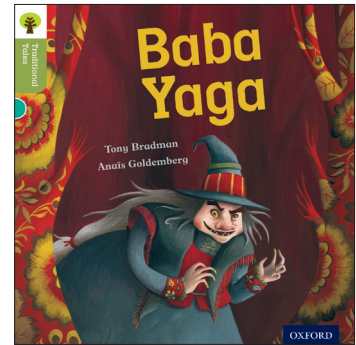


# Baba Yaga

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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.
- Baba Yaga is a witch who appears in many Russian and Eastern European fairy tales. She lives in a house standing on chicken legs. This version tells how Natasha outsmarts the witch. It is a tale of good versus evil.

## Group/Guided reading

### Introducing the story

- Ask the children if they have heard of Baba Yaga. Explain that Russian children would probably know stories about her. Ask: *What stories do you know that have witches in them?*
- Look at the cover of the book and read the title together. Read the back cover blurb and ask: *What do you think might happen in the story?*
- Look at pages 2 to 3 together and ask the children to read out phrases which tell you about the characters of Natasha and her stepmother.
- Look at page 4. Ask: *Which words tell us the setting of the story?*
- All the words in this story are decodable. However, we've listed some of the more challenging words on the inside front cover of the book, to help build familiarity with these before children read the story for themselves.

### Reading the story

- Ask the children to read the story. Remember to give them lots of encouragement and praise as they read.
- Find the word *napkin* on page 6. Do the children know this word? Ask what word they might use instead, e.g. *serviette*, *cloth*, *handkerchief*.
- Ask the children to read the first sentence on page 10. Ask: *What does this tell you about the witch? How does it make you feel about her?* Looking at the illustration, can they think of other ways to describe her?

### Returning to the story

- Look at page 7 of the story and talk about Baba Yaga's house. Ask: *How do you think Natasha felt when she saw where Baba Yaga lived? What does the unusual house make you think about Baba Yaga's character?*
- Look at page 7. Ask: *Can you find a word that tells us how Natasha spoke?* Help them to identify *muttered*. Ask the children to find other words that show how characters say things, such as *hissed* (page 14), *yelled* (page 20), *shouted* (page 25) and *screamed* (page 27).
- Draw attention to examples of the /s/ phoneme spelled in different ways, for example: *sound* (page 5), *whistled* (page 12), *hissed* (page 14), *close* (page 18), *nice* (page 20).
- Ask the children to explain how the three objects the cat gave to Natasha helped her to escape.

## Storytelling and Drama

- Put the children into groups of three; ask the children to take on the roles of the storyteller, Natasha and Baba Yaga.
- Provide each storyteller with a copy of the story map available on [www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales](http://www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales) as a prompt and ask them to retell the story.
- Whilst the story is being told, the children in the roles of Natasha and Baba Yaga should mime their characters. Before starting, you may want to select sections of the story for the children to read so they can practise their character's reactions, e.g. Natasha on pages 5, 9 and 14; Baba Yaga pages 10, 13 and 20. Encourage the children to use facial expressions to show what their character is feeling and use running on the spot for the chase through the forest!

## Writing

- Re-read pages 28 to 31 and talk about how the story ends. Ask the children to talk about how Natasha defeated Baba Yaga and what happened when she returned home.
- Ask the children what they think happened to Baba Yaga. Talk with the children about what might happen next, listing some of the possibilities on the board, e.g. Baba Yaga escapes from the mountain and tries to find Natasha; Natasha's father tells the police about what happened and they arrest Baba Yaga; the witch captures another child and the animals help that child escape, etc.
- The children should choose one of the suggestions and write the opening of the follow-up story or as much of the story as is appropriate. Encourage them to think about the characters from the story and how they think they would react to the new situation. What would they say? How would they feel? Ask the children to think about the language used in the original story and to use exciting and interesting descriptive words in their own writing.
- Encourage the children to read their new episodes to the rest of the class.

## Links to the wider curriculum

### Mathematics/Art and design

- Look at traditional Russian folk-art designs, based on repeated patterns. Create your own using a limited palette of colours.

### Science

- Which forest creatures (page 22) might Natasha have encountered? Research in books or on the internet.

### Geography

- Find Russia on a map; look for main features, e.g. rivers, mountain ranges, bordering countries, sea.

### Design and technology

- Make card models of Baba Yaga's house on chicken legs.

### Music

- Create some music to accompany the final chase scene.

### PSHE and Citizenship

- Talk about how being good and kind to others means they will treat you in the same way.

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

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# Baba Yaga (Oxford Level 7) curriculum coverage chart

## Links to Oxford Reading Criterion Scale:

- Can read aloud, taking into account . ? ! (READ) [ORCS Standard 3, 2]
- Can apply phonic skills and knowledge to recognize an increasing number of complex words. (READ) [ORCS Standard 3, 3]
- Can locate some specific information e.g. key events, characters' names or key information in a non-fiction text. (R) [ORCS Standard 3, 6]
- Can make predictions about a text using a range of clues. (D) [ORCS Standard 3, 7]

## ENGLAND The National Curriculum in England: Year 2

<b>Spoken language</b>	Pupils should be taught to listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers (SpokLang.1) Pupils should be taught to select and use appropriate registers for effective communication (SpokLang.12)
<b>Reading:</b> Word reading	Pupils should be taught to read accurately by blending the sounds in words that contain the graphemes taught so far, especially recognising alternative sounds for graphemes (Y2 ReadWord.2) Pupils should be taught to read aloud books closely matched to their improving phonic knowledge, sounding out unfamiliar words accurately, automatically and without undue hesitation (Y2 ReadWord.7)
<b>Reading:</b> Comprehension	Pupils should be taught to develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by becoming increasingly familiar with and retelling a wider range of stories, fairy stories and traditional tales (Y2 ReadComp.1iii) Pupils should be taught to understand both the books that they can already read accurately and fluently and those that they listen to by making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done (Y2 ReadComp.2iii)
<b>Writing:</b> Composition	Pupils should be taught to develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing by writing narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real and fictional) (Y2 WritComp.1i) Pupils should be taught to consider what they are going to write before beginning by planning or saying out loud what they are going to write about (Y2 WritComp.2i) Pupils should be taught to read aloud what they have written with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear (Y2 WritComp.4)

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

<b>Listening and talking</b>	I am exploring how pace, gesture, expression, emphasis and choice of words are used to engage others, and I can use what I learn (ENG 1-03a) When I engage with others, I know when and how to listen, when to talk, how much to say, when to ask questions and how to respond with respect (LIT 1-02a)
<b>Reading</b>	I can use my knowledge of sight vocabulary, phonics, context clues, punctuation and grammar to read with understanding and expression (ENG 1-12a) I can share my thoughts about structure, characters and/or setting, recognise the writer's message and relate it to my own experiences, and comment on the effective choice of words and other features (ENG 1-19a)
<b>Writing</b>	I am learning to use my notes and other types of writing to help me understand information and ideas, explore problems, generate ideas or create new text (LIT 1-25a) By considering the type of text I am creating, I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in a logical sequence and use words which will be interesting and/or useful to others (LIT 1-26a)

## WALES Foundation Phase Framework: Year 2

<b>Oracy</b>	Learners are able to retell narratives or information that they have heard, sequencing events correctly (Y2_OracList.5) Learners are able to express opinions, giving reasons, and provide appropriate answers to questions (Y2_OracSpea.1) Learners are able to speak clearly to a range of audiences (Y2_OracSpea.6) Learners are able to adopt a specific role, using appropriate language in structured situations (Y2_OracSpea.7)
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<b>Reading</b>	<p>Learners are able to recall and retell narratives and information from texts with some details (Y2_ReadComp.2)</p> <p>Learners are able to express views about information and details in a text (Y2_ReadResp.1)</p> <p>Learners are able to apply the following reading strategies with increasing independence to a range of familiar and unfamiliar texts: phonic strategies; recognition of HFW; context clues; graphic and syntactic clues; self-correction, including re-reading and reading ahead (Y2_ReadStrat.4i–4v)</p>
<b>Writing</b>	<p>Learners are able to understand and use language appropriate to writing (Y2_WritLang.1)</p> <p>Learners are able to use simple subject-related words appropriately (Y2_WritLang.2)</p> <p>Learners are able to write for different purposes (Y2_WritMean.2)</p> <p>Learners are able to follow and build upon a form modelled by the teacher (Y2_WritStru.2)</p>

**NORTHERN IRELAND Levels of Progression in Communication across the curriculum: Primary Levels 1 and 2**

<b>Talking and listening</b>	<p>Pupils can listen for information (L1_com_talk.1i)</p> <p>Pupils can follow discussions, make contributions and observe conventions of conversation (L2_com_talk.2i)</p>
<b>Reading</b>	<p>Pupils can use a range of reading strategies (L2_com_read.2)</p> <p>Pupils can express opinions and make predictions (L2_com_read.5ii)</p>
<b>Writing</b>	<p>Pupils can express thoughts, feelings and ideas from within their experience using a general vocabulary (L2_com_write.2i)</p> <p>Pupils can write using a given form (L2_com_write.3)</p>