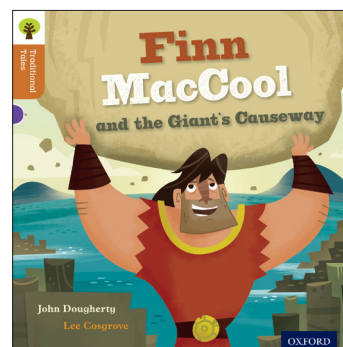


Finn MacCool and the Giant's Causeway



Written by John Dougherty and illustrated by Lee Cosgrove

Teaching notes written by Teresa Heapy and Charlotte Raby

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 one of the Irish legends of Fionn mac Cumhail. He was said to have been a great Irish warrior who had many adventures.

Group/Guided reading

Introducing the story

- look at the cover of the book and read the title together. Ask the children if they have heard of the Giant's Causeway or the story of Finn MacCool. Ask: *What do you think is going to happen in the story?*
- Ask: *Do you know where the Giant's Causeway is? How could it have been made?* After reading the story, you could help the children to find out more from a library book or on the internet.
- Look at pages 2 to 3 together, and ask the children to read out lines which tell them about the characters of Finn MacCool and Angus. Then look at page 8, and read about Oona. Ask: *What sort of characters are they? Who do you think is the most interesting?*
- 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.
- Look at page 7 and talk about how Finn is feeling. Ask: *Have you ever felt worried like this about something?*
- Pause at page 10 (the end of Chapter 1). Ask: *What do you think is going to happen next? What will Oona do?*
- On page 11, check the children understand the meaning of the word *sarled*. Can they think of another verb that could be used here? For example: growled, grumbled, snapped or roared.

Returning to the story

- Look at pages 12 to 13 and ask: *What was Angus thinking? Why did he look worried when he saw Finn dressed as a baby?*
- Ask the children to find words that use the /or/ and /ee/ phonemes, spelled in different ways. For example: **all** (page 2), **roared** (page 3), **sea** (page 3), **baby** (page 8) and **heaved** (page 15).
- Talk about how Oona and Finn tricked Angus. Ask: *What do you think Angus would say about Finn to other people or giants when he got back to Scotland?*



Storytelling

- Show the class the video of the storyteller performing the story on www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales.
- Talk about how the storyteller uses rich and imaginative language to describe characters and events in the story.
- Ask the children to think about how the storyteller uses his voice to add expression by varying his tone and the rhythm of the story. Discuss how the storyteller uses facial expressions to show emotions.
- Ask the class to discuss what they particularly enjoyed about the storyteller version of the story.
- Have a look at the storytellers' notes for more information about the storytelling techniques used in the video.

Drama

- In the story, Finn and Angus boast to each other. Remind the children of some of their boasts *I am the greatest giant of all!*, *There is no one who can beat me!* Hold a class discussion about what the children think a giant could do to show they are the greatest giant of all.
- Ask the children to work in pairs taking the roles of the two giants roaring boasts to each other. Encourage them to be as imaginative as possible and to make their boasts specific, such as, 'I can lift ten cars'. Tell the children to put expression into their boasts and mime them where possible. Ask each pair to agree on their favourite boast and to share it with the class.

Writing

- Ask the children to work in groups and discuss how Oona and Finn tricked Angus. You may want to provide children with copies of the story map available on www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales as a prompt. Ask them to work together to think of another trick Oona could have played to convince Angus that Finn was the greatest giant of all.
- Once each group has thought of a new trick, ask the children to work individually to write a new part of the story describing their trick. Encourage the children to think about the different characters in the story and to remember how the storyteller told the story, using rich and interesting language.
- Ask each child to read their new part of the story to the class. Encourage them to think about the storyteller's performance and to read with expression.

Links to the wider curriculum

Mathematics and ICT

- The columns of basalt that form the Giant's Causeway are mainly hexagonal in shape. Explore tessellation using 2D and natural shapes.

Geography

- Locate the Giant's Causeway using maps, Google Earth or other internet sources.

Art and design

- Use pictures of the Giant's Causeway as inspiration for block printing to create the distinctive stone shapes and ink washes for the sea.

PSHE and Citizenship

- Hold a class discussion on boasting. Talk about the importance of self-esteem, but not showing off.

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

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Finn MacCool (Oxford Level 8) 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

Spoken language	<p>Pupils should be taught to listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers (SpokLang.1)</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates (SpokLang.9)</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to select and use appropriate registers for effective communication (SpokLang.12)</p>
Reading: Word reading	<p>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)</p> <p>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)</p>
Reading: Comprehension	<p>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)</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by discussing and clarifying the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary (Y2 ReadComp.1vi)</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to understand both the books that they can already read accurately and fluently and those that they listen to by predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far (Y2 ReadComp.2v)</p>
Writing: Composition	<p>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)</p> <p>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)</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to read aloud what they have written with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear (Y2 WritComp.4)</p>

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

Listening and talking	<p>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)</p> <p>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)</p>
Reading	<p>I can use my knowledge of sight vocabulary, phonics, context clues, punctuation and grammar to read with understanding and expression (ENG 1-12a)</p> <p>To show my understanding, I can respond to different kinds of questions and other close reading tasks and I am learning to create some questions of my own (ENG 1-17a)</p> <p>I am learning to select and use strategies and resources before I read, and as I read, to help make the meaning of texts clear (LIT 1-13a)</p>
Writing	<p>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)</p> <p>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)</p>

WALES Foundation Phase Framework: Year 2

Oracy	<p>Learners are able to share activities and information to complete a task (Y2_OracColl.2)</p> <p>Learners are able to retell narratives or information that they have heard, sequencing events correctly (Y2_OracList.5)</p> <p>Learners are able to express opinions, giving reasons, and provide appropriate answers to questions (Y2_OracSpea.1)</p> <p>Learners are able to speak clearly to a range of audiences (Y2_OracSpea.6)</p> <p>Learners are able to adopt a specific role, using appropriate language in structured situations (Y2_OracSpea.7)</p>
Reading	<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 draw upon relevant personal experience and prior knowledge to support understanding of texts (Y2_ReadComp.4)</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>
Writing	<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 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

Talking and listening	<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>
Reading	<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>
Writing	<p>Pupils can write using a given form (L2_com_write.3)</p>