

Mulan

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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.
- There have been many versions of this ancient Chinese story, originally told as a poem. It is a journey story of personal discovery. Onomatopoeia, repetition and alliteration are used throughout to emphasise Mulan's courage, cleverness, and self-belief.

Group/Guided reading

Introducing the story

- Ask: *Do you already know the story of Mulan? Do you know in which country it is set?*
- After reading the story, the children could find out about the famous Chinese archaeological discovery of the Emperor's Terracotta Army.
- Talk about any other stories the children may know where a character must assume a disguise in order to prove himself/herself.
- Look at the cover of the book and read the title together. Ask: *What do you think is going to happen in 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.
- Ask the children to read page 8 and find words that have been deliberately repeated. Help them to identify *much*, *much too young* and *much, much too old*. Talk about using repetition for emphasis.
- Pause at pages 22 and 23. Talk about the descriptions of Mulan's time as a soldier and how far she travelled. Talk about the cumulative effect of listing the number of years and the number of miles to emphasise the length of time and the distance.

Returning to the story

- Look at pages 10 and 11 and ask: *What was each character thinking at this point in the story? Why do you think Mulan's parents were so worried about her decision?*
- Notice the different spellings for the /igh/ phoneme. Encourage the children to look for examples, such as: **why** (page 4), **fight** (page 5), **ride** (page 9) and **tied** (page 14).
- Turn to page 29. Ask: *How did the soldiers react to Mulan's revelation? What do you think the soldiers think about Mulan now?*
- Ask: *How do you think being a soldier might have changed Mulan?*

Storytelling and Drama

- Re-read the final two pages of the story (pages 30 to 31). Using the story map available on www.oxfordprimary.co.uk/tradtales as a prompt, talk about the type of things the soldiers would tell others about Mulan. What key events do the children think the soldiers would focus on? Record the children's ideas on the board.
- Ask the children to work in pairs and, taking turns, to retell the story in role as soldiers who served under Mulan and then spread her story far and wide. They should imagine they are telling the story to someone who did not know about Mulan and had never heard of her story.
- Encourage the children to be as imaginative as possible in their retellings; they should focus on the character of Mulan, her courage and cleverness. They may want to elaborate on details of Mulan in battle and how she became a warrior and a leader.

Writing

- Re-read pages 17 and 18 when Mulan enters the army camp for the first time. Ask the children to think about how Mulan would have felt at this point in the story and write down key words on the board.
- Tell the children that they are going to imagine that they are Mulan writing a letter home to her family to tell them that she has arrived at the army camp. They should describe the events in detail, including when Mulan was challenged at the entrance and her first impressions of army life, the army camp and her fellow soldiers. They should talk about how Mulan felt – remind the children that this was the first test of Mulan's disguise as a boy. Encourage the children to use exciting descriptive words in their writing.
- Model writing in the first person, e.g. "When I first tied up my hair and put on my armour I felt very strange, but also excited at what lay ahead."
- When the children have completed their letters, if appropriate, ask some children to read them to the rest of the class. Encourage children reading their letters to read with expression. Invite other members of the class to comment on any descriptions or parts of the letter that they found particularly effective.

Links to the wider curriculum

Mathematics/History

- Create a timeline of key events in Chinese history and calculate the number of years between each event and the present day.

Geography

- Locate China on a map. Look at the terrain and find the mountainous regions. Compare its size with the UK.

Art and design

- Make Chinese fans, decorated with dragons.
- Try using brushes and black paint to copy traditional Chinese calligraphy.

Music

- Listen to traditional Chinese music; find images of Chinese musical instruments.

PE

- Create a dance sequence to represent the movements of soldiers training and fighting.

PSHE and Citizenship

- Mulan had to pretend to be a boy to join the army. Ask: *Should we have to pretend to be something different from ourselves in order to succeed?*

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

Oxford
OWL

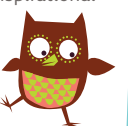
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Mulan (Oxford Level 9) curriculum coverage chart

Links to Oxford Reading Criterion Scale:

- Can make predictions about a text using a range of clues. (D) [ORCS Standard 3, 7]
- Can provide simple explanations about events or information. (D) [ORCS Standard 3, 9]
- Can read aloud with intonation, taking into account a wider range of punctuation (. ? ! ,). (READ) [ORCS Standard 3, 15]
- Can read all of the high frequency words, up to and including the Y1/2 high frequency word list (demonstrates fluent and automatic reading of frequently encountered words). (READ) [ORCS Standard 3, 16]
- Can explain the meaning of interesting 'WOW' words in context including words with common prefixes and suffixes). (D) [ORCS Standard 3, 17]
- Can summarise a story, giving the main points clearly in sequence. (R) [ORCS Standard 3, 18]

ENGLAND The National Curriculum in England: Year 2

Spoken language	<p>Pupils should be taught to use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas (SpokLang.7)</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 recognising simple recurring literary language in stories and poetry (Y2 ReadComp.1v)</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 making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done (Y2 ReadComp.2iii)</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 consider what they are going to write before beginning by writing down ideas and/or key words, including new vocabulary (Y2 WritComp.2ii)</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> <p>When listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can exchange information, experiences, explanations, ideas and opinions, and clarify points by asking questions or by asking others to say more (LIT 1-09a)</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>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)</p> <p>Having explored the elements which writers use in different genres, I can use what I learn to create my own stories, poems and plays with interesting structures, characters and/or settings (LIT 1-31a)</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> <p>I can describe and share my experiences and how they made me feel (LIT 1-30a)</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 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 express views about information and details in a text (Y2_ReadResp.1)</p> <p>Learners are able to show understanding and express opinions about language, information and events in texts (Y2_ReadResp.2)</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 write for different purposes (Y2_WritMean.2)</p> <p>Learners are able to follow a structure in their writing with support (Y2_WritStru.1)</p> <p>Learners are able to follow and build upon a form modelled by the teacher (Y2_WritStru.2)</p> <p>Learners are able to organise writing with a beginning, middle and end (Y2_WritStru.4)</p>

NORTHERN IRELAND Levels of Progression in Communication across the curriculum: Primary Level 2

Talking and listening	<p>Pupils can follow discussions, make contributions and observe conventions of conversation (L2_com_talk.2i)</p> <p>Pupils can ask and answer questions to develop understanding (L2_com_talk.2ii)</p>
Reading	<p>Pupils can use a range of reading strategies (L2_com_read.2)</p> <p>Pupils can recognise some forms and features of texts (L2_com_read.4)</p> <p>Pupils can express opinions and make predictions (L2_com_read.5ii)</p>
Writing	<p>Pupils can express thoughts, feelings and ideas from within their experience using a general vocabulary (L2_com_write.2i)</p> <p>Pupils can show a sense of structure and organisation (L2_com_write.2ii)</p> <p>Pupils can write using a given form (L2_com_write.3)</p>