

The milkmaid and her pail


Contained in: Book 1 (page 38)

Genre: Traditional tale / fable

Author: Celia Warren

Introduction A retelling of one of Aesop’s fables, exemplifying the widely quoted moral, ‘Don’t count your chickens before they’re hatched’. The wise, hard-working farmer and his feckless, daydreaming daughter are far removed from present-day role models, but are typical of the genre of traditional tales. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers 1. *she is daydreaming or in a world of her own* 2. tell off 3. ‘poultry’ 4. ‘a fine silk gown’ 5. tossed her head 6. *outmoded occupation and dress; archaic words, such as pail, a-courting* 7. bucket, think, dress 8. *don’t count on/assume success/riches till you have achieved them/have them in your hand* – look for understanding and interpretation as well as the ability to answer in a clear sentence.

- Further activities**
- Explain that this is a fable – that is, a story with a warning or piece of moral advice. Help the children to identify the typical features of a fable, particularly the moral at the end of the story.
 - Reiterate, as in the pointer, that the fable was written over 2500 years ago. Make it clear that Aesop’s stories spread quickly by word of mouth. Tell the children that the stories are now available across the world and in many languages.
 - Invite the children to collect and compare further Aesop fables. Ask them to investigate the stories behind other sayings attributed to Aesop, such as ‘dog in a manger’; ‘belling the cat’; ‘crying “wolf”’.
 - Ask the children to identify in this text the tag words that differ from ‘said’ (‘scolded’, ‘mused’, ‘reasoned’) and to begin a wider collection to use in their own narrative writing.
 - Write a list of proverbs and ask the children to choose one as the subject of their own fable or story, which will include a warning or a piece of moral advice. (A friend in need is a friend indeed; Better late than never; Never a rose without thorns; Where there’s a will, there’s a way; Do good, reap good, do evil, reap evil.)
 -  Invite the children to act out the story of ‘The milkmaid and her pail’, improvising dialogue and using a narrator.

BOOK 2

London goes wild

Contained in: Book 2 (page 4)

Genre: Newspaper report

Source: *Observer*, 31 July 1966

Introduction The children may have heard grandparents and older football enthusiasts talking animatedly about the English World Cup home victory of 1966, which is described in this newspaper article. Use the text to tap into the children’s own interest in football as well as their grandparents’ recollections. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.