



Oscar Wilde

Author **Oscar Wilde** / Illustrations **Lluís Farré** / 86 pages / Book Series **Classic Tales**

Objectives

- To encourage students to **enjoy reading**.
- To gain confidence in **understanding the main ideas of a story** in English.
- To demonstrate **understanding of a variety of words and expressions** used throughout the story by using them in related activities.
- To be able to **read and understand parts of a story at both the word- and sentence-level**.

Word bank

Key vocabulary

Nouns – people: courtier, slave, hunter, king, woodcutter, rower, goatherd, queen, beggar, leper

Nouns – objects: sceptre, loom, sword, trap, scales, bell, well

Adjectives: selfish, beautiful, ugly, cruel

Key structures

Simple Cause-Effect conditional structures – e.g. "If you give me a third of your men, I will go away." "If you do not bring it back, I will beat you."

Modals of obligation – "God made them all..., and you must not hurt them."

Tips and ideas

Before reading

- Elicit what the class knows about Oscar Wilde – his reputation as an eccentric and his writing, and Ireland – the geography, languages and culture.
- Brainstorm tales, legends and myths of princesses and princes, giants and foundlings – are there any stories which feature these characters in their culture?
- Play with some of the key vocabulary before pupils encounter it in the stories – encourage them to use their knowledge of cognates (e.g. cruel), related familiar words (e.g. Beauty and the Beast), and their imagination (e.g. sell fish? self-ish?).

During reading

- Use brief concept checking questions to keep up the pace of the reading session and make sure the class is staying together
- When you come to an illustration, ask the pupils to note down what they think it shows. Once that section has been read, ask them to compare the differences and share their Before and After ideas with their group.

- Lower order thinking skill activity – application. Ask students to apply their knowledge of children's tales to the different characters and situations – are these stories typical or do they have other characteristics too?

After reading

- Higher order thinking skill activity – evaluation. Does a good story have to be totally believable? What elements make the tales unbelievable? (Talking animals, personification of weather features, magical transformations) What symbolic features do they recognise? (3 dreams, 3 challenges, Christ Child).
- Small groups each draw up an alternative ending to their chosen tale and present it to the class.
- Encourage different groups to choose 5 or 6 scenes from a story and to illustrate them. Add new vocabulary and structures in the form of speech bubbles and captions for their comic-like re-telling.
- Hold a discussion about stereotypical characteristics, often found in children's stories. For example, good characters versus bad characters, beauty versus ugliness, kindness and empathy versus unkindness and cruelty. Relate these characteristics to the characters mentioned in the initial brainstorming session.

Teacher support activities

Great Games: Musical Statues with a Twist

There is nothing more motivating than getting students out of their chairs once in a while, to move about a bit, and do some intensive listening into the bargain!

Play the game the traditional way - by playing music and, when the music stops, the students have to strike a pose and hold it, like a statue. Anyone who moves is Out, and the winner is the last person standing. In this variation, you call out the name of one of the tales and they have to choose a character and make that their statue. For example, from *The Selfish Giant*, pupils could choose a tree full of fruit, the North Wind, the angry or happy Giant, or the small boy trying to climb into the tree.

Alternatively, you call out a random letter while the music is playing, and when it stops, they make a statue of something beginning with that letter. If it is something from one of the stories, so much the better.

CLIL Link: History, Social Studies

Slavery, Industrial Revolution, Working Conditions

- Brainstorm what students know about where their T-shirts were probably made. Do they know how much the garments cost? Do they know anything about the workers who made them?
- Elicit the dream scenes from the story of the Young King and ask the students what message they take from them. Do they agree with the angry man and the bishop, that the poor benefit from the extravagances of the rich?

Small groups use internet searches to find out about:

- Slavery: the origins, practices, abolition and present day
- Industrial Revolution: where? when? why? and present day
- Working Conditions: around the world, famous brand names, reasons and possible remedies
- Groups prepare 2 or 3 visuals to illustrate their theme and share their stories.
- Final plenary where the whole class draws up a 5-point resolution about workers' rights.

English Theatre: The Selfish Giant's visitors

The giant has built a high wall around his garden to keep the children out, so now the only visitors he has are the wintry weather elements who rush around the place destroying everything in their path.

Spend some time getting the students to think of the sounds the visitors make - e.g. North Wind howling, Frost hissing and crackling, Hail beating and Snow dusting and whispering. Encourage the class to simply make the noises (e.g. "Owww!!", "Hissssss!!"), and also to speak to each other using this onomatopoeia.

Now ask them to think about how each visitor moves around the garden - e.g. the North Wind rushing, Frost slipping and sliding, Hail marching and thumping, Snow dancing and pirouetting. Encourage them to move around the room in character.

Pose some questions for the students to act out:

- What kind of conversations would these visitors have with each other? ("Nice weather for the time of year!!!").
- When the Giant asked them why they were in his garden, what do you think they told him?
- How would each element introduce themselves? What can they tell us (with the right voice and movement) about their lives?

Extensions or variations could include the speaking animals from *The Star-Child*, or the argument between Death and Avarice, with the three scourges, from *The Young King*.