

Level
3

Penguin Young Readers Factsheets

Hansel and Gretel

Teacher's Notes

Summary of the story

Hansel and Gretel is a classic tale enjoyed by pupils across the world. The story tells of the plight of a young brother and sister abandoned in a forest by their wicked stepmother. The pupils are led by a magic bird to a little house in the forest, made of cake and candy. However, the house belongs to an evil witch who wishes to eat the children. Clever thinking enables the children to eventually kill the witch and escape with her treasure. On returning home with the treasure, they find that their wicked stepmother has gone. A joyful reunion with their father and their new wealth gives the story a happy ending.



About the authors

The story of Hansel and Gretel is one of many tales written by the brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, who lived in Germany at the beginning of the 19th century. Their famous collection of *Tales for Pupils and the Home* (1812) brought together for the first time in print, more than 200 stories handed down through generations by word of mouth. Indeed, although Hansel and Gretel blends many of the characteristics traditionally associated with fairy tales, this story is best considered a 'folk tale'. As such, and in keeping with the genre of the folk tale, the story of Hansel and Gretel centers on the clash between good and bad and an ultimate victory for justice.

Topics and themes

My house. Houses made of cake could form a discussion on building materials.

The country. Forest, trees and what it is like in dense forests.

Magic. The bird and witch are both magical elements.

Fairy tales. Emotions are key components in most fairy tales. This story deals not only with fear and being scared, but also about being brave.

Making use of the Reader

Maps. In groups, the pupils are given a large piece of paper and told to draw a map showing Hansel and Gretel's journey through the forest, including as many details as possible from the story. This may include a key to the map or a compass detailing directions. Finally, pupils can present their maps to their classmates.

Art and Craft. Stick Puppets. In groups, pupils can construct cut out characters from the story and attach them to pencils. Then use these to retell the story in class presentations. The story can also be used to stimulate ideas for posters and dioramas depicting important scenes or characters from the story.

Language. Time Lines and Story Maps. In groups the pupils can write a series of sentences of events from the story. These can then be attached to a large piece of paper or alternatively around the classroom under the headings: beginning, middle and end. For Story Maps, the same principles can be followed, only this time, the pupils write sentences relating to characters and setting.

Cooking. Candy Houses. The pupils are given a cracker to decorate with icing sugar and assorted edible decorations. Alternatively, some pupils can attempt to create 3-dimensional houses, using icing sugar and peanut butter as adhesive and covering for the outer walls. The traditional name for the witch's house is the gingerbread house.



Using the accompanying video and audio cassette

In addition to letting the pupils hear the tape while they read, either on their own or as a class, the cassette can also be used to stimulate the pupils' imaginations. The following visualization task can be done after the pupils understand what the story is about, but before they have actually read it. Play the video or audio cassette up to specific point in the story (for example, page 16 where Hansel and Gretel see the beautiful bird). Stop the tape and give the pupils 5 minutes to draw what they think the bird looks like. This can easily be done with any part of the story and allows the pupils to think more about what they are listening too.

Before watching or listening to the cassette (if the pupils have already read the book) elicit the names of the main characters from the story and write them on the board. Tell the pupils to, for example, boo or hiss when they see the witch or when she speaks, to clap, and so on with all the characters. This will result in very energetic and active viewing or listening.

Notes on using the activities in the factsheet

Activity 1. The pupil should be encouraged to express and interpret their own ideas through pictures with no writing involved.

Activity 2. The pupil relates part of the story to their own experiences. Writing is limited and restricted in size.

Activity 3. The pupil should focus on specific pages and sentence structures. The task calls for skim reading and word order skills.

Activity 4. The pupil is encouraged to predict what will happen.

Note that the answers for the activities 1, 3 and 4 are open to the interpretations by the pupil. The task is successful if the pupil has attempted to follow the instructions.

During watching and listening/whole class prediction. Play the video or audio cassette story through in its entirety. The second time through, stop just before a dramatic event in the story, for example, when the witch wakes them up in the middle of the night (page 21) and ask the pupils to tell you what happens next, then view or listen to see if they were right.

Simultaneous reading and listening in groups will help the pupils with pronunciation and intonation. Record the pupils dramatizing the story on audio or video cassette.

Answers to the activities

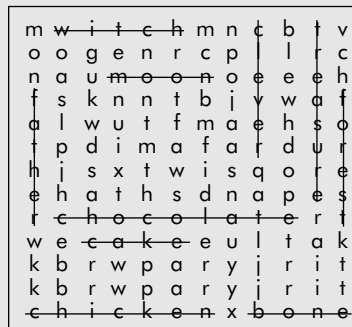
In the back of the Reader

Before you read

1. Any answer is possible as this is a prediction activity. Some of the answers may include: They are in a wood/They are looking around/The children look scared.
2. The pictures they draw could show: tree, leaf, bird, branch, dead leaves, animals, worms.

After you read

3. Wordsearch



4. Hansel took white stones to find their way home. Hansel let the witch feel a chicken bone to make her think he was thin. Gretel pushed the witch into the oven.

In the factsheet

Activity 3

1. They lived near a big forest high up on a mountain.
2. The wicked witch put Hansel in a cage outside.
3. From that day, they all lived happily ever after.



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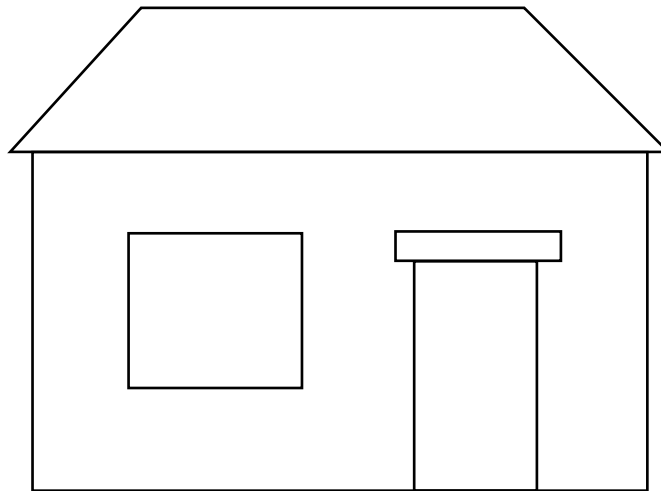
Pupils' Activities

Hansel and Gretel

Name.....

Activity 1

Draw your own candy house
Turn to page 18 in the Reader. Can you draw your own candy house?
Use the house shape below to help you.



Activity 2

What's your favorite thing to eat?
In the story, the witch likes to eat little boys! What do you like to eat?
Draw a picture of your favorite thing to eat in the box below. Then write two sentences telling what it is and why you like it.

.....

.....



Hansel and Gretel

Name.....

Activity 3

Mixed-up sentences

Can you put the words in the right order to make sentences from the story? The page numbers will help you to find the sentences in the story. Look, just like this:

Example:

they hungry came tired and were morning and (page 16)

Morning came and they were tired and hungry.

1. forest small mountain a near lived in they a high on house up a (page 4)

.....

2. cage a wicked put witch the Hansel outside in (page 22)

.....

3. all after happily they day that from ever lived (page 30)

.....

Activity 4

From that day, they all lived happily ever after!

Look at page 30 of the Reader. Hansel and Gretel and their father are happy again. What do you think they will do with the treasure?

Write two sentences about what you think they will do with the treasure.

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