

Robin Hood - Fiction

The Teaching Sequence for Writing

English KS2 Year 3



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English

Key Stage 2
Year 3

Overview

This unit is linked to the 2007 Primary National Strategy Keys to learning resource, Key Stage 2 writing kit **Castle Attack – Images and Sounds** which is a resource relating to a story told by a storyteller with the purpose of emphasising to pupils the important features of a successful story. This material is in the public domain and is used to support the teaching and learning of literacy and specifically narrative. This material is still available (April 2023) at [The National Archives](#).

It can involve an oral retelling of the legend of Robin Hood, and producing a version of elements of the written legend. This genre can be developed further by the inclusion of local legends (e.g. Pendle witches, King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, Dick Turpin, Highwayman, etc.) and provides opportunities for establishing whole-class collections of legends to support independent reading for pleasure. Texts used could include films, comics, picture books, TV programmes and written texts.

Learning Aims

- The Teaching Sequence for Writing is still the recommended approach to the teaching of reading and writing, and the activities in this unit of work have been designed to follow the teaching sequence from reading to writing; this should be revisited as each new section of the text is encountered.
- This unit focuses on the legend of Robin Hood. The following resources are recommended: *The Adventures of Robin Hood* by Marcia Williams, *Outlaw* by Michael Morpugo, *The Adventures of Robin Hood* by Roger Lancelyn Green, Walt Disney animated film (1973). They are listed on the accompanying PowerPoint.



- This unit is not intended to be a prescriptive unit of work where all activities are worked through slavishly, but rather as a repository of possible teaching opportunities. Teachers should select from, and adapt, the range of suggested activities to meet the needs of the children they teach.
- Some slides contain additional teacher guidance in the 'Notes' area which will not be visible to the children. These are listed throughout the PowerPoint index on the following pages.

Curriculum Objective

These are **suggested** objectives from the National Curriculum for years 3 and 4 and the Grammar and Punctuation appendix for Year 3 and activities are provided to support the teaching of each. However, teachers should select the most appropriate focuses for the children they teach rather than trying to cover them all. Further objectives will be met incidentally as the unit progresses. Note that much of this unit encourages oral retelling of different aspects of the Robin Hood Story and is intended to be in line with guidance provided in the final report and recommendations from the Oracy All-Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry April 2021 *Speak for Change*.

Non-statutory guidance states:

- Teachers should make sure that pupils build on what they have learnt, particularly in terms of the range of writing and the more varied grammar, vocabulary and narrative structures from which they can draw to express ideas.
- The focus should continue to be on pupils' comprehension as a primary element in reading. The knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to comprehend are **very similar** at different ages. This is why the programmes of study for comprehension in years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 are very similar; the complexity of the texts used increases the level of challenge.
- Pupils should be taught to recognise themes in what they read, for example: loyalty, trust, heroism, kindness.

This resource also provides cross-curricular links:

History – Anglo Saxons, Normans, Castles and Knights;

Geography – mapping, forestry; Science: trees, seed dispersal, adaptation;

Design and Technology – drawbridges, longbows, willow weaving.

PowerPoint Presentation

The accompanying PowerPoint presentation has 108 slides.



As mentioned above, the unit is not intended to be a prescriptive unit of work, where all activities are worked through slavishly, but rather as a repository of possible teaching opportunities.

Slides 1 to 11 are specifically for teachers; subsequent slides are intended to be used in the classroom with the children. The slides are indexed as follows:

- Slide 1: Title slide

Slides 1 to 10 are specifically for teachers, as outlined below:

- Slide 2: Introduces the Teaching Sequence for Writing.
 - Phase 1a: Reading with a reader's eye.
 - Phase 1b: Reading with a writer's eye:
 - Phase 2: Capturing ideas, learning the skills, practising, planning, having a goal.
 - Phase 3: Teacher modelling.
- Slide 3: Explains Phase 1a and Phase 1b. The reading phase will be revisited several times over the duration of a sequence as further texts are introduced. Do not underestimate the investments made at the reading phase which will pay dividends in the writing phase.
- Slide 4: Teaching modelling of comprehending text:
Phase 1a: Reading with a reader's eye:
Do I like it? How does it affect me?
- Slide 5: Teaching modelling of analysing text:
Phase 1b: Reading with a writer's eye:
How has the writer done it? What techniques can I learn and apply?
- Slide 6: Phase 2: Capturing ideas, learning the skills, practising, planning, having a go.
- Slide 7: Phase 3: Teacher modelling: Planning, drafting, editing, writing.
- Slide 8: As mentioned above, explains that the activities have been designed to follow the teaching sequence from reading to writing. Sets out:
 - Familiarisation with the text type.
 - Capturing ideas.
 - Teacher demonstration
 - Teacher scribing; supported writing; independent writing



- Slide 9: Overview: As mentioned above, explains that this unit is linked to the [2007 Primary National Strategy Keys to learning resource, Key Stage 2 writing kit Castle Attack – Image and sounds](#). The complete story of how Marian Fitzwalter joined Robin Hood's band of outlaws is available on pages 20 to 24 of this PDF.
- Slide 10: Suggested approaches for this unit. Explains the accompanying curriculum links (as referred to above).

Slides 11 to 108 are aimed at the children.

- Slide 11: Title slide.
- Slide 13: Sets out what the children will be doing throughout this unit.
- Slide 14: Explains the reading and writing objectives.

Guidance in the Notes (these are also referred to above):

These are suggested objectives from the National Curriculum for Year 3 and 4 and the Grammar and Punctuation appendix for Year 3 and activities are provided to support the teaching of each. However, teachers should select the most appropriate focuses for the children they teach rather than trying to cover them all. Further objectives will be met incidentally as the unit progresses. Note that much of this unit encourages oral retelling of different aspects of the Robin Hood Story and is intended to be in line with guidance provided in the Final report and recommendations from the Oracy All-Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry April 2021 *Speak for Change*.

Non-statutory guidance states:

Teachers should make sure that pupils build on what they have learnt, particularly in terms of the range of writing and the more varied grammar, vocabulary and narrative structures from which they can draw to express ideas.

The focus should continue to be on pupils' comprehension as a primary element in reading. The knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to comprehend are very similar at different ages. This is why the programmes of study for comprehension in years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 are very similar; the complexity of the texts used increases the level of challenge.

Pupils should be taught to recognise themes in what they read, for example: loyalty, trust, heroism, kindness.



- Slide 15: Provides links to a selection of books on Robin Hood.

The links are as follows.

[The Adventures of Robin Hood by Marcia Williams \(ISBN: 9781406311372\)](#)

[Outlaw: The story of Robin Hood by Michael Morpugo \(ISBN: 9780007465927\)](#)

[The Adventures of Robin Hood by Roger Lancelyn Green \(ISBN: 9780141329383\)](#)

Guidance in the notes:

These links are to Hive Books. There are, of course, other online providers available.

- Slide 16: Get ready for reading. Long Ago. Click through to animate a series of questions to get the children ready for reading the forthcoming passage.

Guidance in the Notes:

Have the title on the wall/board for the children to see when they enter the classroom to pique interest.

Questions will appear on mouse clicks.

Priming pupils for reading. Use the text to ask questions about the type of narrative this might be.

Opportunity to discover what the children already know about traditional tales and to explore associations with known legends or traditional tales. If knowledge of these types of stories is limited, perhaps revisit some well known traditional tales, ideally set in a forest (to develop vocabulary) such as Red Riding Hood or Hansel and Gretel.

All answers are acceptable, but the next question must always be along the lines of ‘How do you know?’ ‘What makes you think that?’ and ‘Why?’. It is the children’s personal and collective responses you are trying to elicit. Develop vocabulary alongside.

- Slide 17: Get ready for reading – looking for clues. Displays a selection of images. Place the children in pairs and ask them to describe these images.

Guidance in the Notes:

In pairs, children should have a go at orally describing an image. These are suggested images and may be substituted with ones the teacher considers more relevant for the children in the class.



- Slide 18: Get ready for reading: Displays an image of Robin Hood, and a series of questions to help children analyse the picture. Click through to animate these questions.

Guidance in the Notes:

Priming pupils for reading. Use the image to ask questions about the content of the picture.

Use a visual image to focus attention on key ideas, to engage their imaginations, to provide hooks for thinking.

Opportunity to explore associations with known events in history. How might these connect with the picture? Children may identify Robin from what they have read or seen in films.

All answers are acceptable, but the next question must always be along the lines of ‘How do you know?’ ‘What makes you think that?’ and ‘Why?’. It is the children’s personal and collective responses you are trying to elicit.

Develop the children’s vocabulary alongside this activity.

Give children the opportunity to develop their own thinking by looking closely at the picture and speculating, using tentative language – e.g. the scene looks as if it is in a forest, near a castle. The clothes he is wearing look very old fashioned which makes it seem as if this is set in an earlier time in history. Some children may spot the words ‘Robin Hood’ on the tree trunk. If any children know this legend, encourage them to share with the class.

- Slide 19: Get ready for reading – Make a Sentence. Displays a selection of words. Place the children in groups of three, and ask them to select three of those words and to make a sentence from them.
- Slide 20: Get ready for reading -Myths and Legends. With the children, discuss the main difference between the two.

Guidance in the Notes:

Encourage children to recognise that legends often have some truth in them even if there are elements which are clearly not true, whereas myths tend to be entirely fictional. Myths will often try and explain a phenomenon in nature, such as Pandora releasing all the ills of the world from her box, or contain a moral such as Icarus flying too close to the sun.



- Slide 21: Phase 1a: Reading with a reader's eye: Do I like it? How does it affect me?
Guidance in the Notes:
Children's comments can lead to the discussion picking up different interpretations.
Structure the questioning to build in challenge and support.
Children learn from each other by listening to classmates justify and elaborate.
Supporting comments used with kind permission of <https://jamesdurran.blog/>
- Slide 22: Displays a selection of vocabulary ahead of reading the passage: courageous, skilled, seized, tyrant, landowners, dwellers. Click to animate the meaning of these words.
Guidance in the Notes:
Direct the teaching of vocabulary in advance.
Explain key information for pupils to look out for.
Usefulness of a visual focus, to aid comprehension while listening to/reading to the story.
Obvious links to a non fiction study of the Kings and Queens of Britain, focusing on King Richard the Lionheart.
- Slide 23: Reading with a reader' eye: Do I like it? How does it affect me? Read aloud the introduction to the story the children are going to read.
Guidance in the Notes:
The importance of talk and analysis being rooted in personal response.
Give individuals or pairs their own copy of the text. A ['Tell-me grid' recommended by Aidan Chambers](#) is one mechanism for structuring thinking. This grid is supplied on the last page of this PDF.
Blend pair, small group and whole-class talk.
Train pupils over time to talk in small groups; strategies for structuring talk (turn-taking in a given order, asking each other questions, etc).
The teacher spends time joining tables; over a series of lessons, can interact with and assess individuals as you might in small group reading sessions.
- Slide 24: Displays the Tell-Me grid (which is on the last page of this PDF).



- Slide 25: Phase 1a: Create opportunities to:

- Predict
- Question and discuss
- Clarify
- Summarise
- Think aloud
- Note the structure
- Make connections
- Visualise

Guidance in the Notes:

Do not underestimate the investment you are making at this stage in the children's understanding and future writing success.

- Slides 26: Sets the background to the story of Robin Hood, and highlights some keywords.

Guidance in the Notes:

Encourage children to consider these key words in context. How does this support the understanding of their meanings?

- Slide 27: Asks the children if they think Robin Hood is myth or legend.
- Slide 28: Introduction to Robin Hood.
- Slide 29: Displays the KWL grid for children what they already know and to ask questions. This grid is supplied in the following pages of this PDF.
- Slide 30: Displays Robin Hood's band of outlaws. Ask the children to look at the story map on the next slide, then place them in pairs and ask them to learn this version or invent a new version of their own. They can make a story map to help them remember the story. Then ask the children to perform their story in the manner of a true storyteller.
- Slide 31: Story map. Robin meets Lady Marian Fitzwalter.



- Slide 32: Phase 1a: Reading with a reader's eye: Do I like it? How does it affect me?
Guidance in the Notes:
Children's comments can lead to the discussion picking up different interpretations. Structure the questioning to build in challenge and support. Children learn from each other by listening to classmates justify and elaborate. Supporting comments used with kind permission of <https://jamesdurran.blog/>
- Slide 33: Setting the scene.
Guidance in the Notes:
All texts are editable and can be amended to be simpler or more challenging as required.
- Slides 34 to 36. The story of Robin meeting Lady Marion Fitzwalter.
Guidance in the Notes on slide 34:
The text is designed to offer opportunities for a range of grammar and punctuation focuses and teachers should feel free, where necessary, to change those objectives suggested for ones more suited to the needs of the children they teach. For instance, if there is a greater need for teaching, say, noun phrases or figurative language rather than conjunctions and dialogue, the text should allow this.
- Slide 37: Place the children in pairs, and ask them to predict what will happen next.
Guidance in the Notes:
There are no right or wrong answers; it is the children's personal responses you are trying to elicit. These questions are suggestions. Teachers should adapt and change them to meet the needs of the children they teach.
- Slide 38: Building a character. Displays a series of words.
Guidance in the Notes:
Providing the children with a bank of words like this helps them to acquire new words and think about their meanings but can also act as a word bank for their own writing. A 'role on the wall' can often be more meaningful if the outline is of the character rather than a gingerbread man.



- Slide 39: What WAS she thinking? Ask the children a series of questions on the characters' motivations.
Guidance in the Notes:
Teachers may choose to model one character and ask children to write in role as the other, or to allow them to have a go themselves, depending on their experience of writing in role.
- Slide 40: Robin Hood wordsearch.
- Slides 41 to 42: Continuing the story of Lady Marian.
- Slides 43 and 44: Display an image of the forest and Robin Hood. Click through to animate four questions to help children probe the picture and the story.
- Slides 45 and 46: Narrative of Marian making her escape in the woods and encountering Robin Hood.
Guidance in the Notes:
This is an imagined retelling of how Marian Fitzwalter came to be a part of Robin's band of friends in the forest. This may be used as a model for the retelling of how other characters came to be part of the merry band.
- Slide 47: Displays a selection of sentences. Place the children in pairs and ask them to put them in the correct order. The first line has already been put in the right place. These lines are provided on the accompanying Word document.
- Slide 48: Displays a further selection of sentences. Again, place the children in pairs and ask them to put them in the correct order. Then ask them to write a 100 word summary of the story in their own words.
- Slide 49: Displays a selection of sentences, highlighting the verbs. Ask the children to find alternatives for these verbs.
Guidance in the Notes:
These are sentences and fragments paraphrased from the original and most are deliberately left without sentence capitalisation and final punctuation. These could also be used to explore what constitutes a sentence. This is not the capitalisation and punctuation (these are demarcation) but the fact that it has a complete meaning and contains a verb.
- Slide 50: Phase 1b: Reading with a writer's eye: How has the writer done it? What techniques can I learn and apply?
Guidance in the Notes:
Choose one or two objectives to be the main focus of studying the text with a writer's eye. Examples follow but teachers should adapt this technique to meet the needs of the children they teach.



- Slide 51: Identifying inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate speech.

Guidance in the Notes:

Elicit from the children that you would expect to see he said/she said and alternatives. This is the reporting clause.

- Slides 52 and 53: Display a passage of text; the second slide highlights the inverted commas.

Guidance in the Notes:

Dialogue punctuation is a Year 3 requirement in the National Curriculum but only as far as identifying inverted commas. This example can go further if the teacher feels some of the children are ready for this.



Phase 2

- Slide 54: Introduces speech in stories.

Guidance in the Notes:

Either a pair of inverted commas may be used or single ones but this needs to be consistent. This resource uses the convention of a pair of inverted commas to avoid confusion but children may notice the use of single inverted commas in their reading. The term ‘inverted commas’ may be used interchangeably with the term ‘speech marks’. Both are referred to in the National Curriculum.

- Slide 55: Displays the mnemonic, INverted CommAS always Have Other Punctuation Enclosed.
- Slide 56: Explains the rules when there is one group of spoken words.

Guidance in the Notes:

Teachers should decide whether to use the term ‘reporting clause’ with their class.

- Slide 57: Who said what? The slide displays snippets of speech. Place the children in pairs and ask them to invent their own unspoken words to accompany the speech.

Guidance in the Notes:

Encourage children to invent their own dialogue with correct punctuation and appropriate reporting clauses. For example “*I am not afraid of you, or any man!*” shouted Marian conveys a different character than the reporting clause *whispered Marian*. An alternative to this activity is to provide examples of reporting clauses and ask the children to invent the words spoken by that character.

- Slide 58: Provides a link so that the children can listen to a storyteller telling the story of Robin Hood in the manner a story teller would have passed on stories all those years ago.

Guidance in the Notes:

This resource is highly recommended to develop oracy and a storytelling technique from an expert storyteller. Children can watch the way the storyteller uses body movements and facial expressions to tell the story and can listen to the prosody of the storytelling. Alternatively, the transcript of the text follows on the following slides which teachers may prefer to model themselves in role, ensuring similar techniques are used, e.g. speaking directly to the audience and asking questions. Note that the transcript is written in full sentences, whereas the oral retelling is not. The entire unit, created for the Primary National Strategy, is still available to download from [here](#).



This bank of resources includes images, sound effects and whiteboard/PowerPoint files to support the outcome of visual and oral performances to prepare and present an oral retelling of the legend of Robin Hood for an audio or digital video file.

- Slide 59: Introduces that a story will be told. Place the children in pairs and ask them to discuss a selection of questions.

Guidance in the Notes:

Children should respond as readers initially to the story on this and the following slides. This text can be explored and discussed with each other and with the teacher. Ensure the emphasis is on responses not answers.

- Slides 60 to 64: Display a series of narrative passages. Each slide presents questions for the children to discuss.
- Slide 65: Introduces conjunctions.

Guidance in the Notes:

While it is the recommendation that any teaching of grammar should be related to the text being read, it is suggested that the initial explanation uses a text or theme the children are very familiar with. This will enable the teacher to focus on the grammar or punctuation objective being taught without the distraction of a new setting or unfamiliar characters. The example shown here is based on the nursery rhyme Humpty Dumpty but any familiar story could be used.

- Slide 66: Conjunction Information.
- Slide 67: Coordinating conjunctions. Subordinating conjunctions.

Guidance in the Notes:

Start a list of conjunctions and keep on display for future reference and future use. Ask children to spot these during shared, guided and independent reading and add to the displayed list. Discuss and explain the function of these conjunctions, e.g. “because” provides a reason for something, whilst indicating concurrent events.

- Slide 68: Introduces clauses.

- Slides 69 and 70: Introduce multi-clauses sentences. Displays a selection of conjunctions within sentences. Place the children in pairs and ask them to experiment with using different conjunctions to join the two clauses within the sentences.

- Slide 71: Displays a selection of sentences.

Guidance in the Notes:

Re-read these sentences from the first part of this story. Discuss the effect of writing in this way. Direct children to the list of conjunctions and ask them to choose conjunctions to join these sentences together to make longer ones. Re-read and compare, deciding which sentences need to stand alone and which benefit from combination. Discuss how some sentences need to be brief for dramatic effect: He was behind them.

- Slides 72 and 73: Display a series of conjunctions on a spinner. Click to animate, and once the spinning stops, ask the children to work in pairs to invent their own clauses.

Guidance in the Notes:

Teachers may choose to provide some children with clauses to join together. This will be more meaningful if the clauses provided relate to the text being used.

- Slide 74: The main clause.
- Slide 75: Displays highlighted text to check the children's understanding.
- Slide 76: Introduces paragraphs.

Guidance in the Notes:

This 'Boxing up' activity is adapted from Grammar for Writing © Crown copyright 2000 and is freely available in the public domain at [The National Archives](#):

- Slide 77: Takes the simple story of Humpty Dumpty – as an example of boxing up.

Guidance in the Notes:

Through teacher demonstration, show how a simple story can be written based on the principle of one paragraph per box.



Phase 3

- Slides 78 to 81: The teacher explains how and why you are choosing words to write a selection of passages within the story of Humpty Dumpty, in boxes 1 to 3.
- Slide 82: It's the children's turn! Offers a choice of well-known children's stories, in preparation for writing their own story linked to Robin Hood.
- Slide 83: Displays a passage and an image. Click through to animate questions to help deepen the children's understanding and analysis of the text.
- Slide 84: Narrative from the next instalment of Robin Hood.
- Slide 85: Writers' tips.
- Slide 86: Robin Hood vocabulary. A selection of keywords to help the children write their own story
- Slide 87: A selection of Robin Hood openers.
- Slide 88: Effective vocabulary. Displays a selection of words, along with their meaning and alternative words.
- Slide 89: Introduces the features of legends.
- Slide 90: Teacher modelling.

Guidance in the Notes:

Co-construct the success criteria with the children and agree what the writing COULD include. This is modelled here but can be introduced at any point in the sequence and should reflect what the teacher and the children have identified as possible elements to include.

Any vocabulary recorded for potential use should only be capitalised where a capital letter is needed, e.g. the start of sentences, proper nouns. Otherwise, stick to lower case so when children use the words, they won't capitalise them in the middle of a sentence.

The agreed success criteria is a repository to select from, not a hard and fast 'tick every item'.

- Slide 91: Sets up that Robin Hood and his band of outlaws have their own story to tell. Introduces the children to the 'back-stories' on the following slides.
- Slide 92: Lady Marion.
- Slide 93: Friar Tuck.
- Slide 94: Much.
- Slide 95: Nasir.



- Slide 96: Alan a Dale.
- Slide 97: Wil Scarlett.
- Slide 98: Little John
- Slide 99: The Sheriff of Nottingham.

Guidance in the Notes:

Teachers may allow children to watch film clips of different versions of the Robin Hood story to generate ideas for their own back stories.

- Slide 100: Story Path. Robin meets Little John.
- Slide 101: Take a simple story – boxing up. This story will be set when Little John and Robin Hood meet.

Guidance in the Notes:

Through teacher demonstration, show how a simple story can be written based on the principle of one paragraph per box.

- Slide 102: The teacher models Box 1.
- Slide 103: The teacher models Box 2.

Guidance in the Notes:

Teacher modelling leads into teacher scribing as the children are invited to talk in pairs then make suggestions. At this stage, all ideas are accepted and acknowledged but it is likely to be the teacher's ideas that are still the ones to be used.

- Slide 104: The teacher supports the children writing Box 3.

Guidance in the Notes:

You should circulate amongst the children, supporting and challenging where appropriate and making suggestions for improvements.

- Slide 105: Boxing up: Displays the Robin Hood characters. Ask the children to write their own stories using the boxing up technique.
- Slide 106: Independent writing. Now ask the children to work independently on their writing.
- Slides 107 and 108: Closing slides.

All websites referred to were functional at the time of publication. Teachers should check that these are still operational before including them in the lesson. Original illustrations by [Stella Perrett, Radical Cartoons](#)



KWL Grid

About Robin Hood...

Later



	K	W	L
	What do you know?	What do you want to know?	What have you learnt?

Use this KWL grid to record what you already know and to ask questions.

What would you like to find out about the legend of Robin Hood? Later, you can return to this grid and record in the last column what you have learnt about Robin Hood.



Tell Me Grid

What I like	What I didn't like
I want to know...	It reminded me of...



Robin – The Hooded Man



There are legends all over the world about courageous and skilful heroes, not written down but passed on by word of mouth by storytellers over many years. One of the most famous is set in Nottingham, England and tells the tale of a brave man, skilled with a bow and arrow, and loved by all the poor people in the land. His name was Robin Hood.

Is this a true story? No one knows, but there are settings and characters that really existed so perhaps there is some truth, perhaps not. Imagine this situation in 12th Century England – good King Richard has set off to the Holy Land on a great crusade and his evil brother Prince John has seized the throne. Prince John has become an evil tyrant with greedy and powerful friends who take everything from the poor country dwellers living in small villages. Who will come to their rescue?

One story tells of Robin of Locksley, a noble lord. The village people liked Robin of Locksley, believing him to be a kind and good man. He looked after those who lived and worked on his lands, and no one ever went hungry. But not all wealthy landowners were so generous.

One such cruel and greedy lord was the Sheriff of Nottingham, a great ally of Prince John. The poor villagers on his land were often cold and hungry for the evil Sheriff took everything from them and made them pay high taxes for working the land. Robin heard of this and he sent food and clothes to the poorest families.

At the same time, there were rumours amongst the villagers of a local hero, someone who looked out for the villagers and one who had no regard for the power and status of rich men. This mystery man went by the name of Robin Hood.

When the Sheriff learned that rich travellers passing through Sherwood Forest were being attacked and robbed, he became bitter and resentful. Prince John's men had also been robbed whilst travelling through the forest. This angered and embarrassed the Sheriff of Nottingham. This was happening on the very land he was responsible for. Suspecting that Robin of Locksley might be the culprit, the Sheriff swore that he would not rest until he had obtained proof of this and then he would punish him accordingly.

When the Sheriff heard of a great party to be held at the castle of Robin of Locksley, he decided to send one of his men disguised in village clothes to find out more. He believed that if he knew more about this villain, he would be better placed to put a stop to his actions.

"Locksley will invite the villagers to this event," said the Sheriff to his chosen spy. "I entrust you to ask questions and return to me with information."

"I will do my best, my Lord," replied the man.

"Your best will not be good enough," snarled the Sheriff. "Do not dare to show your face in my presence unless you have uncovered the identity of this outlaw!"

That evening, in a heavy disguise, the Sheriff's man mingled amongst the guests. There was plenty of food and drink and the villagers were having a marvellous time. The sheriff's man turned to a villager near to him. 'I have heard of a local hero named Robin Hood,' said he. 'I am interested as to his identity. Tell me, do you know of this man?'

"It surprises me that you do not!" laughed the villager. "He is none other than Robin of Locksley himself. He is Robin Hood."

When the Sheriff of Nottingham heard this news, he was delighted. This could not be better. All he needed to do now was to ride directly up to Locksley Castle and arrest this scoundrel. He could find enough crimes to have this man killed for all he had done. And if he couldn't, well, he was sure he could invent some.

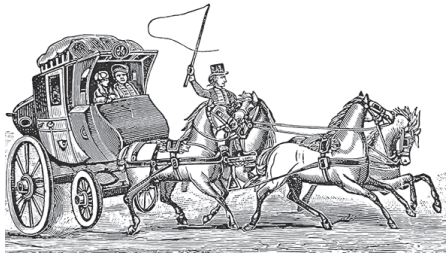
The Sheriff gathered his men ready to ride to Locksley Castle to arrest Robin. What he hadn't considered was that Robin was loved by his castle servants and by all the villagers around who knew him as a kind and good man. Word reached Robin that his identity had been given away and he knew what he must do. He drew together his servants and friends around him.

"The Sheriff knows my name and I can stay here no longer. Do not despair, my friends. King Richard will return to England. He will hear about the greedy Sheriff and his friends and all will be well," declared Robin. "For now, I must be Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest. I will not reveal my exact location to keep you all safe, but I will be nearby."

"We will keep the castle from harm in your absence," said Will, his trusty servant. "Keep safe, my lord."

"I promise I will never hurt an honest person, but any friends of Prince John are my enemies. If they choose to travel through Sherwood Forest, they must suffer the consequences."

With that, Robin gathered up his bow and arrows, and set off at a pace towards the forest.



Days and weeks passed of Robin living off the land, and despite attempts by the Sheriff's men to discover his whereabouts, he remained safe amongst the oak and ash trees of Sherwood Forest. He watched closely each day for any rich travellers passing by and one night he spotted a coach and horses approaching his hiding place. He did not know whether these were good people or bad but he could tell by the crest on the door that this was the coach of the wealthy Fitzwalter family.

It was dark. Stealthily, Robin slipped silently behind the sprawling branches of the massive oak tree and waited. He could just make out that there were two guards riding with the coach for protection, but that did not deter Robin. If what he had heard was true of these forest guests, the poor of Sherwood Forest would eat heartily this night. He had no intention of harming anyone. All he was interested in were the rich pickings they would bring with them.

The forest floor was a tangle of nettles, weeds and brambles but Robin now knew every inch of this familiar ground and he was reassured. Visitors to the forest would quickly be attacked by the thorns grasping their ankles, but not he.

Gradually, the sound became louder and clearer as the thudding of hooves on grass came ever nearer. All his senses were alert. Without a sound, he edged forward.

Suddenly, he jumped down from the tree above. He dragged the guards from their horses and on to the ground. He was so skilful that the guards were overpowered in no time. The coach driver tried to drive the horses onward but a tree across the forest path barred the way. They were trapped.

Inside the coach, the people were terrified, expecting to see a gang of thieves and fearing for their lives. Imagine their surprise when there was a polite tap on the door.

"My lord," came a voice. "Kindly alight from your coach, if you please."

Lord Fitzwalter stared at his wife and daughter with a puzzled expression on his face. Who was this person? He opened the door of the coach, expecting to see a gang of fierce thugs, and could not believe his eyes when he saw the young man dressed in green who stood before him.

His knees were trembling as he stepped down from the coach.

"Please take this purse of gold and jewels, but I beg you please do not harm us," he pleaded.

"I mean no harm to anyone," said Robin. "You have wealth to spare and there are folks in these parts who do not have food enough to feed their families. All I want is to right that wrong."

At the moment the purse was handed over, the man's daughter jumped down from the carriage. Without warning, she marched straight up to Robin and slapped him hard across his face.

"Take that, you knave!" she cried, "How dare you? If I had my sword, I would fight you to the death!"

"Marian, what are you thinking?" her father said, horrified. Not only was he afraid what this stranger might do now, but he had no idea that his daughter even knew how to use a sword. She was a skilled archer too, but did not have a clue about that either. He hardly dare look at Robin's reaction.

He need not have worried. Robin touched the side of his face where it stung from her slap but he was smiling. Marian smiled back.

"Save your anger for more important things, madam," he said, looking right at her, and holding up the purse of gold. "Your family can afford this." He turned to her father. "Now get on your way, my lord. I will accompany you to the edge of the forest to ensure your safety. You never know who you might meet in a dark forest."

Some months went by and Marian's parents decided it was time for her to be married. A wealthy man had approached them to declare his intention to marry their daughter and they had been impressed with his power and authority. He had an important job, it seemed, and he was a friend of Prince John himself. He might be a bit old and he was certainly an arrogant man, but perhaps that's what their headstrong daughter needed.

Marian had other ideas. She had no intention of being married off to a stranger. When she discovered who this suitor was, she was beside herself with rage and disappointment. Her parents had agreed that she should marry the Sheriff of Nottingham. Marian did not know of his previous encounter with Robin Hood but she knew that this old man was definitely not the man for her, however powerful and well-connected he was.

Marian made up her mind that she would run away. She knew exactly where she would go – somewhere where she would be well away and safe. She cut some of her hair off and tied the rest up inside a bycocket hat, and dressed herself in boys' clothes. She armed herself with a longbow and a quiver of arrows. She took her father's sword and set off for Sherwood Forest.

She roamed deep into the woods. Eventually, she found a clearing surrounded by oak trees which would hide her from view. She was tired and hungry, so she sat down to eat the bread and cheese she had brought with her. Suddenly, she heard a twig crack. She leapt up and hid behind a clump of trees, her senses alert for what might happen next, and her sword in her hand. A man appeared and she recognised him right away. This was Robin Hood who had robbed her family. He stared in her direction. Had he seen her?



"Get back!" she called out, revealing herself and pointing her sword at him, "For if you try to rob me, I will kill you."

"Steady on, lad," said Robin. "I am just a poor woodsman going about my business."

"You are not!" said Marian. "You are the outlaw Robin Hood, and I am not afraid of you."

Seeing her sword pointing straight at him, Robin drew his own sword. He only intended to push hers away, but she began advancing towards him, leaving him no option but to fight back. And fight they did. Robin could not believe how swift and nimble this young lad was with the sword and he was impressed by how fast and skilful he was, for he still had not recognised Marian and this angered her even more.

Eventually, she dropped her sword and pushed Robin away by his shoulders.

"You are a skilled swordsman, lad," said Robin. You could be of use to me here in the forest."

Marian took off her hat and looked straight into his face. Robin smiled.

"Welcome to Sherwood Forest, Marian," he said.