

The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare

The fun has just begun!

Teacher/Librarian resources



Neil Griffiths

Illustrated by
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The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare – Teacher/Librarian resources

The following set of free downloadable resources for teachers and library staff will guarantee your storytimes are fun from start to finish! Designed to support storytelling at its best, we offer ideas on ways to introduce the story and how to involve the children in it. We have also provided suggestions on how to exploit the story, helping you assess the children's understanding of the storyline, and how to read the story aloud to ensure the children are fully engaged. But storytime shouldn't just end with the story. With this in mind, we have provided a set of role-play and curriculum starting points and highly enjoyable craft and game activities to ensure the fun really has just begun!

Introducing the story

- To have a real scarecrow, or to make one together as a class, would be a wonderful way of introducing the story!
- Alternatively, suddenly make the children jump by making a loud noise. Say: *Sorry I scared you!* Then discuss the word *scared*.
- You could perhaps just bring in a pair of gloves, an old hat, boots, straw, old screwed up newspaper, etc. Then play a guessing game. Ask what these items might be used for.
- Have some real wheat and corn to show the children.

Questions to ask before the story begins

- *What is a scarecrow, and why do we have them?*
- *Has anyone seen a scarecrow? Where? Who makes them?*
- *Do they all look the same?*
- *Do you know any scarecrow stories?*
- *What does a scarecrow scare?*

Some read-aloud ideas

- Bang a nail into wood as you read the first two pages.
- Huff and puff on the page beginning *The farmer felt sure it would do a good job ...* Pretend to push in the pole.
- Make the noise of a crow on the page beginning *As spring arrived, ...*
- Make nibbling noises on the page beginning *Several weeks later, ...* Make pointed ears for rabbits with your hands and stick your teeth forward for mice.
- Hold your chin like Farmer Wallace on the page beginning *When the farmer returned in late summer ...*

The Fun has just begun!

The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare – Teacher/Librarian resources

- Throw a pretend scarecrow on the page beginning *He was so angry, ...*
- Shiver on the following page and make noises like the wind blowing.
- Snuggle together on the page beginning *It soon forgot ...*
- Pretend to push the pole in the soil on the page beginning *As spring arrived, ...*
- Have a really big smile on your face on the page beginning *The farmer smiled proudly ...*

Questions to ask as you read the story

(to encourage prediction, careful listening and to hold attention)

- *What is Farmer Wallace making with the wood?*
- *Why doesn't his old suit fit him?*
- *Have you got any clothes with holes in?*
- *What types of birds are eating the seeds?*
- *Do you know the names of the flowers amongst the tall golden stalks?*
- *Have you ever been lonely?*

If re-reading the story

- Let the children make the hammering noises at the beginning of the story.
- They could also stand with open arms and pretend to be scarecrows.
- Encourage them to be little seeds, curled up tight. Then their hands and arms can pop out for the shoots. At the end, they can stand tall like corn.
- They could pretend to peck and nibble like birds, rabbits and mice!
- Encourage shivering during winter.

Questions to ask after you have read the story

(to assess understanding and memory)

Ask some of the following questions in any order:

- *Why was the scarecrow smiling at the end of the story?*
- *Can you remember all the things Farmer Wallace used to make the scarecrow?*
- *Who ate the tender shoots?*
- *Where did Farmer Wallace throw the scarecrow?*
- *Where did the rabbits climb into, to keep warm?*
- *Why did Farmer Wallace use the scarecrow a second time?*
- *Why didn't the creatures eat the seeds or shoots of corn during the second year?*

The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare – Teacher/Librarian resources

Enjoying the illustrations

- Look out for signs of each season throughout the book.
- Can the children count the icicles on the branches of the trees?
- Turn to the page where the scarecrow is in the frosty hedge. Let the children look closely. Now close the book and ask the following questions:
What was perching on the scarecrow's hat?
How many mice were there?
How many rabbits were there?
How many spots were on the hanky?

Imaginative role-play

Ideas for instant role-play:

- Mime the making of the scarecrow.
- Pretend to be scarecrows and try and make really scary faces!
- How many soft toys can you tuck in pockets, trouser legs, socks, arm holes, shoes, etc?
- Who can stand still like a frozen scarecrow? (Play a game like Musical statues, but be scarecrows.)

Role-play areas to create

- A woodland (during different seasons). *A Corner to Learn* by Neil Griffiths (Nelson Thornes) has some excellent woodland ideas.
- A scarecrow-making factory.
- A farmer's workshop.

Small world areas to create

- Set up a farmer's field in the sand tray and enjoy ploughing and seed-planting.
- Draw scarecrow faces in the sand with your fingers. Add eyes, a nose, etc., with carrots and other vegetable pieces!

Outdoor play

- If a patch of grass is available, turn it into a pretend 'wheat field'. The children can then role-play sowing, weeding, ploughing, etc.
- A tractor repair garage could be set up using outdoor wheeled play vehicles.
- Make real scarecrows and place them outdoors.
- Provide dressing-up clothes for the children to become scarecrows!
- Plant wheat seeds in a patch of ground.

The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare – Teacher/Librarian resources

- Draw scarecrows with chalk on the playground.
- Set up a role-play farm outdoors.

Visits and visitors

- A farm.
- Woodland during different seasons.
- A wheat field.
- An agricultural show.
- A farmer.

Other similar stories to enjoy

Little Scarecrow Boy – Margaret Wise Brown (Harper Collins)

The Lonely Scarecrow – Tim Preston (Dutton Children's Books)

Scarecrow – Cynthia Rylant (Harcourt)

Scarecrow's Secret – Heather Amery (Usborne Publishing Ltd)

The Scarecrow's Dance – Jane Yolen (Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing)

The Scarecrow's Hat – Ken Brown (Peachtree Publishers)

Rhymes to enjoy

I went to visit a farm one day

One man went to mow

Old MacDonald

Big floppy scarecrows dangling along

If you go down to the woods today

I'm a dingle dangle scarecrow

Non-fiction themes

- Woodland creatures
- Farming
- Seeds
- Seasons
- Growth
- Weather
- Birds
- Bread

The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare – Teacher/Librarian resources

Communication, language and literacy

Word fun

Talk about the meaning of these words together:

donated ploughed tender ripening scampered clumps alone lonely
troublesome nestled snugly rosy comfortable rewarded bumper company

Explore scary words like **frightened**, **terrified**, etc.

Rhyme

What words rhyme with the following: **seed**, **hat**, **tall**?

Emergent writing / Mark-making / Writing

- Write a set of instructions on how to make a scarecrow.
- Write a letter to the birds, rabbits and mice and ask them to kindly stop eating the crops.
- Write to the scarecrow to suggest ways of being more scary!
- Write a recipe for making bread or cakes.
- Write to Neil Griffiths at neil@cornertolearn.co.uk. (He will always reply.)

Discussion time

Talk about:

- Being lonely.
- Friends and keeping people company.
- Seasonal changes and the beauty of nature.
- Places around the world where the crops don't always grow and food is short.
- Being scared.

Mathematical development

- Explore pairs, e.g. boots, gloves.
- Explore pattern, e.g. hankies.
- Weigh bags of seed.
- Plant seeds in the sand tray 100cm apart, etc.
- Count seeds!
- Measure how tall grasses are!
- Set up a class garden and explore area, length, months of the year, etc.

The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare – Teacher/Librarian resources

Creative development

- Make bird scarers!
- Make scarecrows.
- Design and paint scary faces!
- Design and make new hankies for the scarecrow.
- Make seed collages using different seed types.
- Paint a picture of wheat, poppies and daisies like on the page beginning *As summer arrived ...*
- Create cosy places for creatures in winter.

Story crafts

- Make your own dangly scarecrow using **SCARE 1**.
- Make a set of masks to role-play the story using **SCARE 2**.
- Colour in **SCARE 3**.
- Make scarecrow, mice, rabbit and bird finger puppets using **SCARE 4**.
- Create scarecrows of many kinds using **SCARE 5**.
- Enjoy colouring in **SCARE 6**.

Book games

- Play **Scare pairs!** using **SCARE 7**. This is a game similar to Snap or Pairs.
- Play **Match me!** using **SCARE 7**. Which scarecrows match each other?
- Play **Mystery mice!** using **SCARE 8**. How many mice can you count?

Book fun!

- Make your own bookmark and badge using **SCARE 9**.

Physical development

- During movement sessions, act out the story of a seed: the seed in the soil (curled position), growing shoots (arms and legs extended), then tall wheat growing in a field (standing).
- Dance to the rhyme *I'm a dingle dangle scarecrow*.
- Move like rabbits, mice and birds.
- Talk about healthy eating.
- Enjoy snuggling up!

The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare – Teacher/Librarian resources

Song and dance time!

Sing to the tune of *Old MacDonald*. It can be printed off using **SCARE 10**.

Old Farmer Wallace had a farm

V1

*Old Farmer Wallace had a farm, E-I-E-I-O,
And on this farm he grew some wheat, E-I-E-I-O.
With a grow, grow here and a grow, grow there.
Here a grow, there a grow, everywhere a grow, grow.
Old Farmer Wallace had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

V2

*And on this farm he had some birds, E-I-E-I-O.
With a peck, peck here and a peck, peck there.
Here a peck, there a peck, everywhere a peck, peck.
Old Farmer Wallace had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

V3

*And on this farm he had some rabbits, E-I-E-I-O.
With a nibble, nibble here and a nibble, nibble there.
Here a nibble, there a nibble, everywhere a nibble, nibble.
Old Farmer Wallace had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

V4

*And on this farm he had some mice, E-I-E-I-O.
With a scamper, scamper here and a scamper, scamper there.
Here a scamper, there a scamper, everywhere a scamper, scamper.
Old Farmer Wallace had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.*

Snack time

- Make and eat bread!
- Eat seeds, e.g. sunflower seeds, etc.
- Make cakes.

Dear Parents / Carers,

Today we have been reading a book called *The Scarecrow Who Didn't Scare* by Neil Griffiths (Red Robin Books). It is about a scarecrow who could not scare the creatures and they ruined the crops.

If you have time, it would be wonderful if you could do some of the activities listed as a follow-up:

- Ask your child to tell you what they can remember about the story.
- Talk together about the word *scare*.
- Visit a field where wheat is growing and look out for scarecrows!
- Talk about the changing seasons and what to look for in autumn and winter.
- Look at a bag of flour and explain how bread is made.
- Make simple cakes together.
- Look at scarecrows on the Internet.

Thank you so much for your support!

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