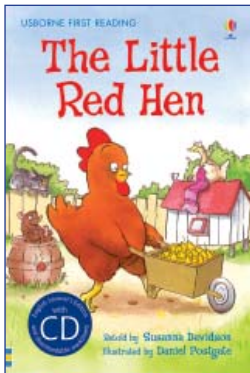


The Little Red Hen • Teacher's notes



Author: traditional folk tale, retold by Susanna Davidson

Reader level: Lower Intermediate

Word count: 479

Lexile level: 360L

Text type: Folk tale

About the story

The Little Red Hen lives on a farm and has three friends: a cat, a rat and a duck. One day, she finds some wheat and asks her friends to help her plant it, but each of the friends refuses. The Little Red Hen plants and cares for the wheat herself, until it is time to harvest the grain. Again, each of her friends refuses, and again when it is time to grind the wheat into flour, and make the flour into bread. Suddenly, though, they smell the delicious baking bread, and are very keen to help her eat it. This time, however, the Little Red Hen is only too happy to eat the bread all by herself!

The story itself is an old folk tale which probably originated in Russia.

About the author

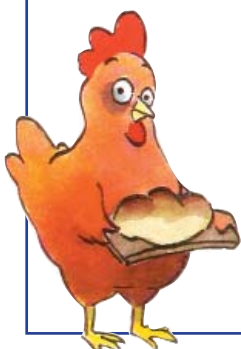
Susanna Davidson has written over 50 books for children, including retellings of fairy tales, folk tales and children's classics as well as history, biography and natural history. She grew up in the Surrey countryside surrounded by all kinds of animals, from parakeets and terrapins to rats, rabbits and snakes. She now lives in London, writing about animals rather than living with them.

Key words

Your students might not be familiar with some of these words, which are important in the story.

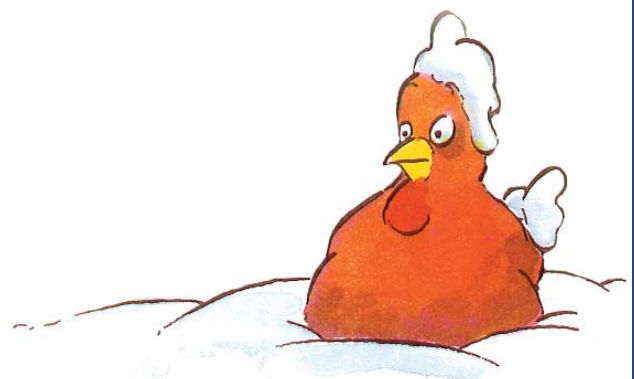
p2 pond	p12 cried [meaning "exclaimed"]
p3 barn	fluffed
mill	p13 plant
bakehouse	p15 Fine! [as a response or retort]
p5 bright	p16 pecked
p7 glossy	p17 dropped
p8 noisy	p18 shoots
p10 juicy	p25 grind
p11 grains	p37 baked
wheat	

There are also some specialized words in the bread recipe on pp46-47. If you are going to use the recipe, make sure that students know words such as yeast, sifts, hollow, dough etc.



Key phrases

p4	Once upon a time
p14	Not I [very correct but rather old-fashioned; "Not me" would be more usual]
p16	What a waste of time
p17	One by one all through the winter
p21	At last
p24	without any... at all
p43	Oh no you won't
p44	all by myself



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Before reading

The Little Red Hen is an excellent story to tie into topic work on either seeds and plants or food production. Try and source appropriate images for all of the stages below.

You might start by showing students a loaf of bread, either an actual loaf or an image. See if, together, you can work backwards through the stages of production: baking, flour, milling, wheat, harvesting, growing, seeds (grains of wheat).

Show students the cover of the book. They may already be familiar with the story. Which animals can they see on the cover? Which animals are doing something to help make bread? Do students think the others will help out in the story?

Reading or listening

You can listen to the story on CD or read it aloud to the students, take turns to read or read together silently. Each double page spread in the book is one track on the CD, so that you can pause between tracks or repeat tracks if your students need it. The first reading is in a British English accent, and it is followed by an American English reading. The words are exactly the same. After the story, there is a short selection of key phrases that can be used for pronunciation practice.

During reading: you might like to ask some of these questions.

- | | | | |
|---------|---|---------|---|
| pp2-3 | What are all the different buildings on the map used for? | p25 | Can you guess what her friends will say? |
| pp12-13 | What does the Little Red Hen want to do with the wheat? Do her friends look interested? | p31 | Is it easy to grind wheat into flour? Think of some words to describe the Little Red Hen. |
| p16 | Why does the rat think planting the wheat is a waste of time? | pp32-33 | Where is the Little Red Hen now? What can you see in the picture? |
| p21 | What are the Little Red Hen's friends doing now? Do you think they will help her this time? | p37 | What do the Little Red Hen's friends look like now? Do you think they will say "Not I" this time? |
| | | p45 | Can you think of some words to describe the Little Red Hen? How about her friends? |

After reading

Ask students: do they think it was fair that the Little Red Hen ate all the bread? Would it be better to teach the others a lesson, or to share with them? What would you do?

If you have cooking facilities, you could try following the recipe on pp46-47 and making bread yourselves.

