

About the Book

Text Type: Fiction/Legend Page Count: 16 Word Count: 1,781

Book Summary

In the retelling of this classic tale, readers learn how Robin Hood came to steal from the wealthy and give back to the poor. Readers are also given insight into how John Little met, challenged, and later joined Robin Hood and his band of Merry Men. Readers also learn how Robin Hood's strong and faithful friend came to be called Little John.

Book and lesson also available at Levels S and Y.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Retell

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of retelling
- Understand and identify cause-and-effect relationships
- Identify irregular past- and present-tense verbs
- Understand and use content vocabulary

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*How Little John Joined Robin Hood* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Sticky notes
- World map
- Cause and effect, irregular past- and present-tense verbs, content vocabulary worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

- Content words:

Story critical: *agile* (adj.), *allegiance* (n.), *corrupt* (adj.), *exploits* (n.), *savagely* (adv.), *underling* (n.)

Enrichment: *art* (v.), *ere* (prep.), *forbear* (v.), *hath* (v.), *sooth* (n.), *thee* (n.), *thou* (n.), *thy* (adj.), *thysself* (n.), *walloped* (v.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Supply pictures of medieval times, castles, and people living during that time. Invite students to tell what they know about medieval times.
- Ask students if they have heard of a legendary thief named Robin Hood. If not, tell students that according to legend, Robin Hood lived in England during medieval times. Explain that he supposedly stole from the rich to give to the poor. Some people in England believe Robin Hood

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

How Little John Joined Robin Hood

was a real man. A bronze statue of him stands near Nottingham Castle. An amusement park in Sherwood Forest, near the city of Nottingham, has rides and shows relating to the theme of Robin Hood and his Merry Men.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what kind of book it is and what it might be about.
- Ask students if they think this book is fiction or nonfiction and to explain their reasoning.
- Show students the title page. Talk about the information on the page (title, author's name, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Retell**

- Explain to students that one way to understand and remember what they are reading is to stop now and then during reading to retell in their mind what is happening in the story.
- Explain to students that when someone retells something, he or she explains the details of what happened in order. Point out that people retell stories as part of their daily lives, such as explaining what happened in school to a student who was absent. Ask students to share other examples of when people might give a retelling.
- Model retelling a familiar story in detail, such as *The Three Little Pigs*.
Think-aloud: *In The Three Little Pigs, three pigs each decide to build a house. The first pig decides to make his house out of straw. He gathers all of the materials and builds his house. The second pig decides to build his house out of sticks. He gathers all of the materials and builds his house. The third pig gathers the materials to build his house out of bricks. One day a big bad wolf comes to the house of the first little pig. He wants the little pig to let him inside and says, "I'll huff and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house down."*
- Continue retelling in detail to the end of the story. Invite students to suggest information for the retelling of this story.
- Have students place sticky notes on the bottom of pages 5, 9, 13, and 15. Explain that as they read, they should stop at the end of these pages to think about what has happened in the story. Encourage students to retell in their mind what happens in the story as they read.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Cause and effect**

- Review or explain that a *cause* is *an event that makes something happen*, and the *effect* is *what happens because of, or as a result of, the event*. Create a two-column chart on the board with the headings *Cause* and *Effect*. Write the following sentence on the board under the *Cause* heading: *I study for a test.*
- Model identifying a series of cause-and-effect relationships.
Think-aloud: *If I study for a test, I might get a good grade on the test. If I get a good grade on the test, someone in my family might want to reward me. If they want to reward me, I may get to do something special. Sometimes a cause and its effect cause other events to happen.*
- Retell the series of cause-and-effect relationships about the good grade on the test. Ask students to identify the causes and effects. Write each cause and its effect on the chart on the board. When you have finished, point out how each cause-and-effect relationship leads to other cause-and-effect relationships.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following words from the content vocabulary on the board: *allegiance*, *savagely*, and *underling*.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

How Little John Joined Robin Hood

- Give groups of students three pieces of blank paper. For each word, have them write or draw what they know about the word. Create a definition for each word using students' prior knowledge.
- Review or explain that the glossary contains a list of vocabulary words and their definitions.
- Model how students can use the glossary to find a word's meaning. Ask students to locate the word *allegiance* in the glossary. Invite a volunteer to read the definition for *allegiance*.
- Have students compare the definition with their prior knowledge of the word. Then have students follow along on page 13 as you read the sentence in which the word *allegiance* is found to confirm the meaning of the word. Repeat the exercise with the remaining vocabulary words.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out how Little John joined Robin Hood. Remind them to stop reading at the end of each page with a sticky note to quickly retell in their mind the details of the events so far in the story.


During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 5. Have them underline the information about the setting, the names of the characters, and any important events. If they finish before everyone else, they can go back and reread.
- Have students tell what they underlined. Ask students to tell where the story took place. Provide a world map to show students where England is located (Sherwood Forest is located approximately 20 miles north of Nottingham, which is north and slightly west of London).
- Discuss how the illustrations provide additional information about the setting and characters.
- Have volunteers tell some events in the story. Remind students that a retelling includes detail and description about the events of a story, while a sequence of events lists only the most important events that someone would need to know to tell the story correctly.
- Use the information generated above to model retelling.
Think-aloud: I stopped after a few pages to retell in my mind what I had read so far. I read that when Robin Hood was young, the French conquered England, and taxed families until they starved. He vowed to bring justice and hope back to the people, so when he got older he decided to steal from the rich and return the money to the poor. He created a hideout deep inside Sherwood Forest, which became his home. Brave men from all over the country joined Robin Hood's quest, and soon the Merry Men became known for their strong and skilled fighting.
- Create a cause-and-effect chain on the board. Write *France conquered England* under the *Cause* heading. Ask students to use the text and think-aloud discussion to identify the effect of this cause (*ruling French governors taxed families until they starved*). Write this information on the chart under the *Effect* heading.
- Introduce and explain the [cause-and-effect worksheet](#). Ask students to write the information from the board on their worksheet. Have them identify and write on their worksheet a cause-and-effect relationship that happened as a result of the families being taxed until they starved. (*Cause: Robin Hood saw that his people were in despair; Effect: he vowed to bring justice and hope back to the land.*) Point out how the chain connects the first cause-and-effect relationship with the second (the effect, *ruling French governors taxed families until they starved*, is connected to the next cause, *Robin Hood saw that his people were in despair*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students identify and write on their worksheet a cause-and-effect relationship that happened as a result of Robin Hood vowing to bring justice and hope back to the land. (*Cause: He stole from the rich and returned the money to the poor; Effect: The Merry Men became the most skilled and successful fighters in England.*) Point out how the chain connects the second cause-and-effect relationship with the third (the effect, *Robin Hood vowed to bring justice and hope back to the land*, is connected to the next cause, *he stole from the rich and returned the money to the poor*).

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

How Little John Joined Robin Hood

- Have students read from page 6 to the end of page 9. Model retelling the new events of the story. **Think-aloud:** *I stopped after a few pages to retell in my mind what I had read so far. I read that Robin Hood and a stranger met on a bridge. When Robin Hood told the other man to move and let the “better” man cross, John Little declared that he was the better man. With great oak branches as weapons, a fight between the two men followed, and both were covered with black-and-blue marks. John Little eventually won, hitting Robin Hood with a couple of bloody blows to the head, and Robin Hood tumbled into the water below. Instead of being angry, Robin Hood felt the man had won fair and square. He laughed out loud, saying that he had never been beaten before, and that John was an expert with the stick.*
- Have students turn to a partner and retell in their own words the events of pages 6 through 9. Listen for individual responses.
- Have students read the remainder of the story. Remind them to continue stopping on pages with sticky notes to retell in their mind the details of the story.
-  Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Retell in detail with students the events of the story from pages 10 through 13. **Think-aloud:** *After John Little won the fight, Robin Hood was so impressed that he asked John to join his band of Merry Men. The stranger was not certain he wanted to pledge his allegiance, so he challenged Robin Hood to an archery contest. Robin accepted the challenge and had Will Scarlet create a target eighty yards away. John chose a bow, aimed his arrow carefully, and shot it straight into the center of the small target. Robin complimented John on his fine shot and said that while no one could top it, perhaps he could shoot one just as well. He did just that and then asked John again to join his band. The stranger saw that he had met his match and immediately declared his allegiance to Robin.*
- Have volunteers retell the events to the end of the book (pages 14 and 15).
- **Independent practice:** Have students retell the book to a partner, starting at the beginning. Listen for whether students include the following: main characters, setting, correct events in order, and events in detail.
- Ask students how retelling the events of the story in their mind as they read helped them understand the story.


Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Discuss with students the information on their cause-and-effect worksheet. Point out the last effect in the chain. (*The Merry Men became the most skilled fighters in England.*) Have students reread pages 12 and 13 to identify the cause-and-effect relationship that happened as a result of the Merry Men becoming the most skilled fighters in England (*Cause:* John Little challenged Robin Hood to an archery match to show his skill; *Effect:* They were each impressed by the other’s talent and became allies.)
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the cause-and-effect worksheet. If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you read about a man who courageously led and inspired others. Keeping this in mind, do you think it was right for Robin Hood to steal from the rich, even if he was returning it to the poor? When, if ever, is stealing considered noble?


Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Irregular past- and present-tense verbs

- Have students turn to page 4 and reread the introduction. Ask whether this story takes place in the past, the present, or the future. Ask students to tell how they know. Review or explain that adding *-ed* to the verb forms the past tense of a regular verb. Write the words *conquer* and *vow* on the board. Ask volunteers to write the past tense of the verbs.

 Have students underline all of the verbs on the page. Point out that sometimes the suffix *-ed* is added to a word to create the past tense, as in the word *conquered*. But at other times, the past tense is formed by using a different spelling of the word, as in the words *were*, *gave*, and *grew*. Explain to students that these are called *irregular verbs* because they *don't follow the rule of adding -ed to make the past tense*. Have volunteers tell the present tense of the three irregular verbs (*are*, *give*, and *grow*).

- Write the words *strike* and *fight* on the board. Explain that these are the present-tense forms of the verbs, and use each word in a sentence. For example: *He is going to strike his opponent with a sword. The men fight with swords.* Ask students to tell how they would change each irregular verb to past tense (*struck*, *fought*). Remind students that they can usually tell if the past tense of a verb can be formed by adding *-ed* by saying the word softly to themselves to hear whether or not the word sounds correct. For example, the words *yelled* and *knocked* sound correct. The words *striked* and *fighted* do not.

 Have students turn to page 5 in the book and reread the first paragraph. Instruct them to underline the irregular past-tense verbs. Have them circle any regular verbs that are changed to the past tense by adding *-ed*. Write their answers on the board and discuss the present and past tense of each word (irregular: *were*, *became*; regular with *-ed*: *decided*, *adored*).

- **Check for understanding:** Write the present-tense verbs *play*, *explain*, and *go* on the board. Have students work in pairs to create present- and past-tense sentences using these verbs. Have them share their examples aloud.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [irregular-past-and-present-tense-verbs worksheet](#). When they have finished, discuss their answers aloud.

Word Work: Content vocabulary

- Tell students that the words in the book are used to talk about medieval times and Robin Hood. Explain that some words, such as *hath*, *ere*, *thysself*, and *thee* are words not typically used in everyday modern language but are part of our historical language. Point out that, as readers, they will encounter these words again in print.
- Provide opportunities for students to talk about content words such as *allegiance*, *savagely*, and *underling*. Write these three content words on the board. Remind students that these words were discussed and defined in the “Vocabulary” section before reading the story. Ask volunteers to share how that exercise helped them, and how they felt when they came upon the new vocabulary words while reading the text.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to use the new vocabulary words on the board in their own sentences. Observe and listen for individual responses.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [content vocabulary worksheet](#).

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have them discuss with someone at home how to retell the story in their mind as they read.

Extend the Reading

Folktale Writing and Art Connection

Encourage students to create an additional chapter for the book. Have them make up a scenario about where John Little was going when he stepped on the bridge with Robin Hood on the day they met. Have students tell what John Little's life was like before he joined the Merry Men. If time allows, encourage students to illustrate their work. Have them read their finished story aloud to their classmates.

Visit WritingA-Z.com for a lesson and leveled materials on narrative writing.

Social Studies Connection

Provide print and Internet resources for students to research England during the Middle Ages. Have them research medieval topics such as feudalism, royal power, crime and punishment, the power of the church, life of the people, illness, or wars. Have small groups of students report their findings to the class in an oral presentation. Encourage the use of a poster as a visual aid.

Skill Review

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently use the strategy of retelling to comprehend the text during discussion and independently
- understand and identify cause-and-effect relationships in the text during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify and understand the formation of irregular past- and present-tense verbs during discussion and on a worksheet
- understand and use content vocabulary during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)