

Lincolnshire Folk Tales

Teachers Pack



Storytelling Sessions Toolkit: Key Stage 2

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Storytelling Links for Teachers

The exercises in this pack can be applied to any traditional story and used to encourage oral storytelling.

They are drawn from young storytellers' sessions led by storyteller Pyn Stockman for Adverse Camber as part of the AHRC 'Lincolnshire Folk Tales: Origins, Legacies, Connections, Futures' project (LFT). The primary aim of the pack is to encourage an oral re-telling of a story. It aims to support pupils to improve confidence, build their skills in storytelling techniques, literacy, communication and performance, and develop their social skills in working collaboratively together. We hope it will also contribute to positive mental health and wellbeing, and pride in place, and help to develop the next generation of storytellers.

The format can be applied to individual work and small groups, but will focus on a class re-telling and exploration of just one story. Perhaps the version that you create with your class could be shared at an assembly with the whole school. It could be linked to National Storytelling Week, National Book Day or No Pens Day (see Links).



There's lots of source material on the AHRC Lincolnshire Folk Tales website **lincolnshirefolktalesproject.com/folk-tale-map**. You may even find something that is close to your local area by using the map.

For the purposes of this pack we will be using the story of Tattercoats **lincolnshirefolktalesproject.com/2024/02/20/tattercoats**.

You can listen to our young people from the LFT project re-telling the Tattercoats story here: **adversecamber.org/listen-lincolnshire-folk-tales-young-storyteller-podcasts**.

You will also find a version of the story to use with the pack in Appendix 1.

Session 1: Setting the Scene

A letter from a Storyteller about storytelling

Dear Storytellers,

Stories have been told out loud in all kinds of places – houses and homes, schools and libraries, around camp fires, under the stars, beneath trees, in the shadows of mountains and tower blocks too. They've been told for thousands of years, and passed on from the days when our great, great Grandmothers and Grandfathers were young. They have shifted and changed over time. Although many were written down, we'd like to invite you to tell a tale in your own words, out loud, in the moment. Just as it would have been shared long ago.

So, to get this story started wherever you are, we're going to find some things that are the same today as they would have been long, long ago.

So...

Can you find one thing that you can see? Maybe it's the sky or a tree...

One thing that you can hear? Perhaps it's birds or the breeze...

And one thing to be – maybe a human like you and me...

Are you ready for an adventure?

Ready to tell a story?

It's the best kind of fun!

Pyn Stockman, Storyteller

Warming Up

Aim to demonstrate to the children that they are already storytellers and that they have the capacity to remember without writing anything down.

Game 1: I went to the market and I bought...

Encourage the children to do an action with what they buy at the market, e.g. I went to the market and I bought a goose (add flapping goose action)! This is a cumulative game with each student repeating what has gone before and adding in something new before passing it along to the next person.

Game 2: How I got here today...

Give everyone a plain sheet of A4 paper and a pencil and invite them to quickly draw their journey to school that day, making it clear that you are not asking them to share house numbers or street names. Consider details such as: what you saw; how you travelled; what the weather was like; who was with you. The drawing may look like a map, storyboard or cartoon strip, for example.

- Next, working in pairs, take it in turns to tell each other the story of your journey to school, using the drawings as a prompt. Encourage a mix of words and actions/gestures (e.g. 'I waved to my friend' could include making a waving gesture).
- Once each person has had the chance to share some or all of their journey, invite them to invent something that "happened" on the journey to school. Anything can go here, no matter how wild! One example from the LFT project was, "I saw a man walking a fish up the road".
- Working with different partners, retell the journey with the added invented incident(s).
- Choose one or two people to share with the whole class.
- Highlight that everyone has just been a storyteller and has used all the skills necessary to tell a story. Ask the children if they can identify the different skills they have just been using. E.g. Action, Gesture, Voice, Vocal Expression, Mime, Dialogue, Character, Description, Information, Facial Expression.



Session 2: Storytelling

Based on the example of Tattercoats

- With the students sat in a circle, tell (or read) the version of Tattercoats from Appendix 1.
- The appendix also shows the story as a nine-point structure which you can use later, and suggests some moments where you might invite the children to participate in the story as they listen to it the first time.

Re-telling The Story as a class

Game 1: What happened next?

- Seated in a circle ask if anyone knows how the story started. What happened first?
- Roll a ball to the person who volunteers, and ask them to tell the first bit of the story. (You can always prompt if everyone seems stuck, or stop them if it looks like they might tell the whole thing!)
- Once they have finished, the ball can be rolled to someone else until the whole story has been retold.
- It is always possible for someone to pass if they can't remember. I remind pupils that we are working as a team to remember the story.



Session 3: Recap the Story Based on the example of Tattercoats

Game 1: Physicalising the story: High, Middle and Low

This game is really useful for physically exploring the story and characters.

- Everyone stands in a circle.
- Ask pupils to each choose a physical level – high, middle, or low.
- When you clap your hands, they move into that position e.g crouching (low), stretching tall (high), etc.
- Each time you clap, pupils move to a different physical level, until everyone has explored each level.
- The exercise is then applied to ONE section of the story, e.g. The Geese flying and swooping around Tattercoats to bring news of the fair or The Party in Tattercoats, using different dance movements and gestures.
- Experiment with telling a section of the story and inviting the students to freeze frame on different levels at key moments. Once the group understands the task, ask them to repeat the exercise picking out key moments in the story, e.g. The Grandfather looking out to sea, Tattercoats dancing with the geese, etc.

The aim is to create interesting/dynamic stage pictures that in themselves add to the story world. For example, if everyone makes the shape of a goose flying while they are all standing up straight, it may appear quite static; but as soon as different levels are adopted, a more dynamic representation of the flight happens. If students are invited to shift levels, it is then very simple to create a movement sequence using clear stage pictures (freeze-frames).

Game 3: Freeze Frame Chapters

- Ask the children to work in groups, ideally so that there are 9 groups if using the "Tattercoats" story in Appendix 1.
- Using the 9 headings from the Tattercoats story (Appendix 1), each group will make a freeze frame to express key moments in the chapter. It might be useful to have the 9 headings written on separate sheets of A4 paper – but make sure the children don't end up just reading from them later on!
- There are numerous ways to expand the exercise, e.g. putting the students into groups and asking them to plan a series of freeze-frames using high, middle and low to tell the whole tale, depicting key scenes from the story.

Game 4: Re-telling a chapter

- Give each group one of the chapters or chunks of the story and ask them to retell it using a mix of words and action, just like they did when telling their journey to school.
- Beginning each section with a connective is often useful – there are some suggested in the story structure (see Appendix 1) e.g. ‘Suddenly’, but encourage the children to improvise and refer to previous games and exercises to enable them to be freely expressive. Encourage them to tell the story in the past tense, as it helps with pace. The connective phrases are a useful tool.
- Share as a whole class, noting any crossovers and plot-holes, but primarily celebrating the students’ achievements.

If you are going to be sharing the story as an assembly, it is useful to combine the small group retellings with everyone else in the class creating physical freeze frames, as in Game 3 (session 3).

Digging into Description and Dialogue

There are several key moments in the story that lend themselves to either description or dialogue. For example, what do the Geese say? However, it can also be fun to explore a bit that doesn’t.

Sound Effects

You will have explored in the first telling creating the sounds of horses’ hooves and a seascape. You can develop the seascape by using whispered phrases to evoke and describe the sea’s movement, sounds and how it looks. Can you use phrases that also might emphasise the Grandfather’s solitude?

Music

For the moment of the transformation, you might like to introduce the students to a traditional folk song from Lincoln: lincolnshirefolktalesproject.com/2024/02/15/brigg-fair

Simple Props

Storytelling doesn't rely on props, costume or set. However, using a minimal amount, such as masks, might aid some less confident students to get involved.

The Geese template in Appendix 2 can also be used to collect words for the dialogue exercise by asking the children to write their words on the cut-out shapes.

The Horse Head template in Appendix 3 provides a useful focus for the story chunk when Tattercoats meets the young man, and is a great way to engage young people with the initial telling.

It can also be used to consider the more-than-human point of view in the story.

Alternative Endings

As oral stories have shifted and changed over the years, invite your class to explore alternative endings. Questions are suggested in the main body of Appendix 1. You can listen to a re-telling of the Tattercoats story by the young people from the Summer School in Lincoln here - they also included several other motifs from other tales, including The Lincoln Imp:

adversecamber.org/listen-lincolnshire-folk-tales-young-storyteller-podcasts



Appendix ① : The Story of Tattercoats

Tattercoats

1. How Tattercoats got her name (Once there was ...)

Once there was a rich old lord who lived in a palace by the sea.

He had no living wife or children.

But he did have a granddaughter.

However, he wanted nothing to do with her. He would not even look at her.

So the girl grew up poor.

And she was known as Tattercoats because of her ragged clothes and tangled hair.

ACTION - Create a soundscape for the sea.

2. Tattercoats, the Goose Herd and The Geese (Everyday Tattercoats would ...)

But she did have the company of a gooseherd and the geese of course!

The goose herd knew how to play wonderful music and they had many merry days.

ACTION - A freeze frame of geese flying.

3. An Invitation to the Royal Ball (One day...)

One day, the lord was invited to a royal ball in the town.

He refused to take Tattercoats with him.

ACTION - Facial Expression to show how Tattercoats feels when she is told that she can't go to the ball.

4. The Journey and a new friend (But...)

But Tattercoats and the gooseherd decided to go on their own.

As they made their way, they met a splendidly-dressed young man on a horse who was going to the ball. So they all journeyed together.

ACTION - Invite someone to use the horses head and gallop on the spot. Everyone else makes the sound of the horses hooves, but stop when the horse freezes.

5. The Proposal (Suddenly...)

It was a long journey and after they had got to know one another, the young man asked Tattercoats to marry him.

Dialogue Exercise:

- What do Tattercoats and the young man talk about?
- What do they have in common?
- What do the Geese say to each other about the young man?

6. The Refusal (Unfortunately...)

Tattercoats told him to find his bride at the ball, but he persuaded her to meet him at the ball at midnight, dressed as she was – along with the gooseherd and his geese.

7. The Dance at Midnight (At Midnight....)

She did so, as the clock struck midnight, to great amusement in the hall. They danced, and he took her up to the king – his father – and declared that this was the woman he wished to marry.

ACTION - Make a freeze frame of one of the people at the ball as Tattercoats dances with the Prince.

8. The Transformation (Just then...)

The gooseherd played a tune, and Tattercoats' rags transformed magically into shining robes.

ACTION - Use slow motion to show the transformation.

Description Exercise:

- What are the shining robes that Tattercoats suddenly wears made out of?
- How do they move?
- What colour are they?
- Draw a picture of Tattercoats in the new robes and label them.

9. Ending (Until finally...)

The gooseherd was never seen again, and Tattercoats' grandfather returned to his palace, where he still sits by the window gazing out to sea.

ACTION - Physicalise the palace in small groups.

Alternative Endings

Questions for discussion and to begin to consider alternative endings

1. Does this story remind you of any other stories?
2. What does Tattercoats do?
3. Does she marry the Prince?
4. Is there another ending? If so, what might it be?

Tattercoats is a “Cinderella” story. There are versions found across the world, including ‘Vasilisa The Brave’, ‘Yi Xen’, and ‘Aschenputtel’. Pupils could explore some of these international stories to help gain insight into other cultures and their values and beliefs through traditional tales.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinderella



Appendix ② : Geese

How to make a Goose Puppet

The template is on the following page.

Place the template on a folded sheet of A4 with the dotted line along the fold.

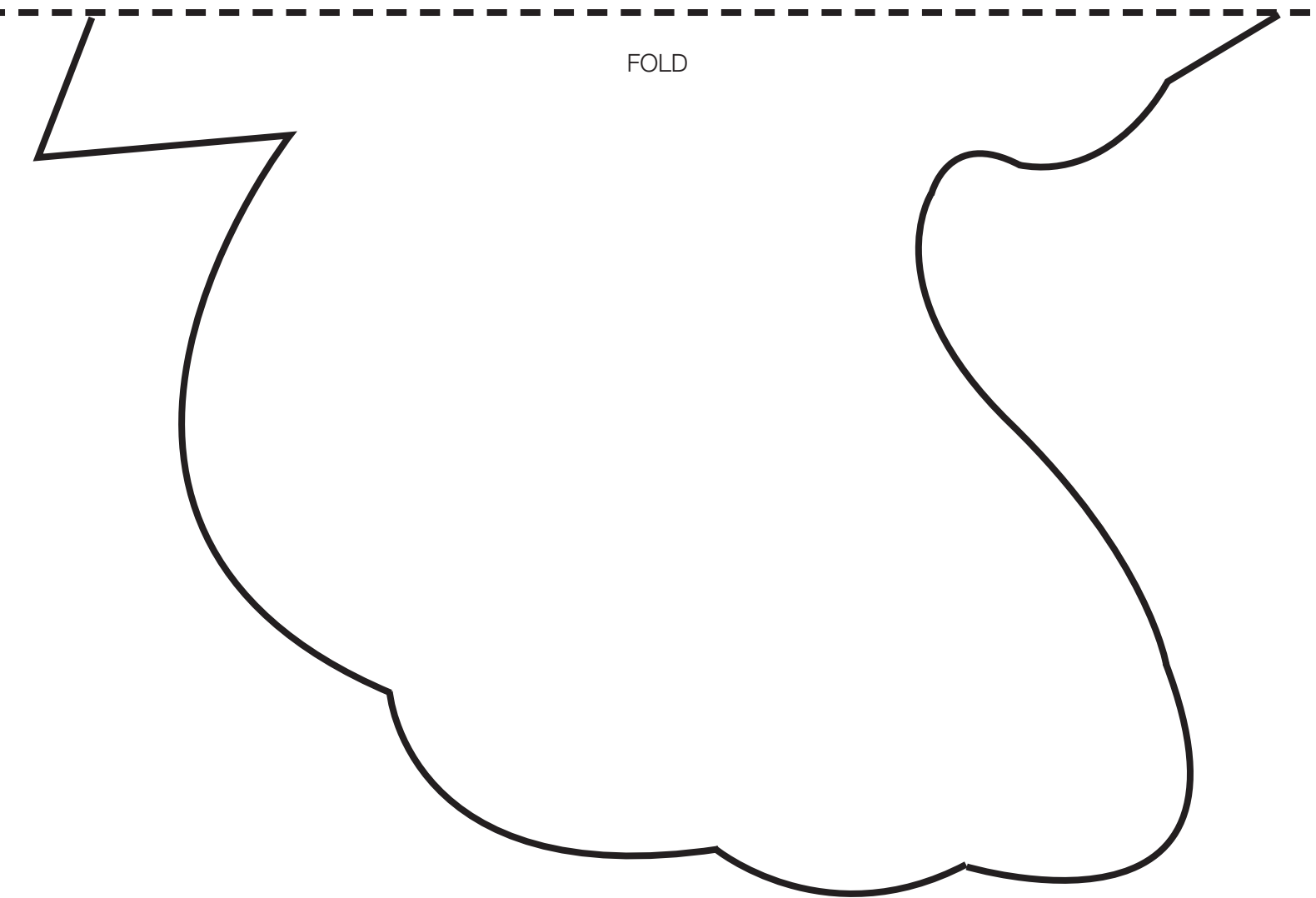
Cut out and use to collect words.

Once the template has been cut out, written on or decorated...

Attach a pencil or stick along the inside of the fold and secure with tape.

Gently move the bird up and down to make the wings flap.





Appendix ③ : Horse's Head

Making Up the Horse's Head

The templates are on the following two pages.

Head

Use a stapler to attach:

A-A

B-B

C-C

D-D

Ears

Use a stapler to attach:

E1 - E1

E2- E2

and then attach ears to E and E on the horse's head. There are two pairs of ears on the page to save on printing/paper. The head can be made from paper or thin card.

The head is designed to be held in one hand with the person's arm forming the horse's neck.



E

E

A

B

A

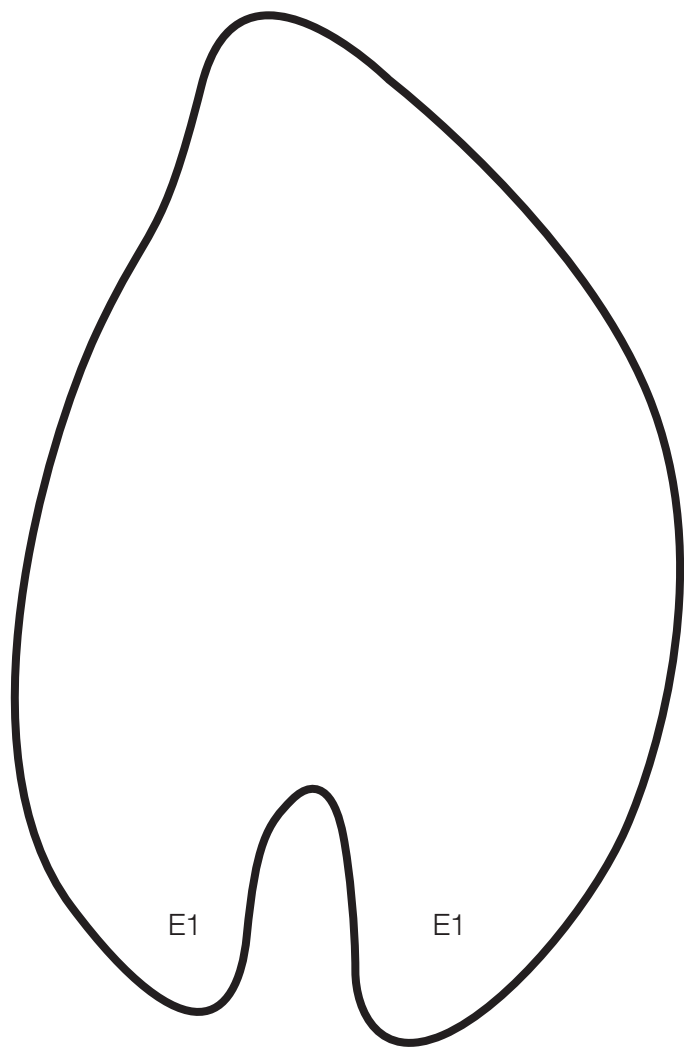
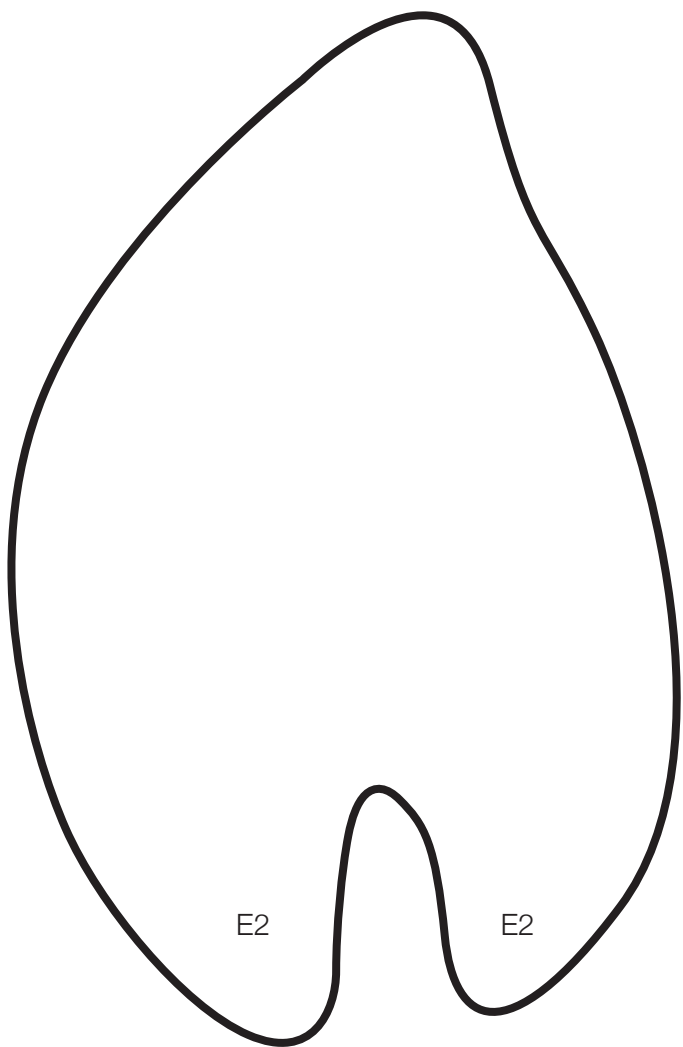
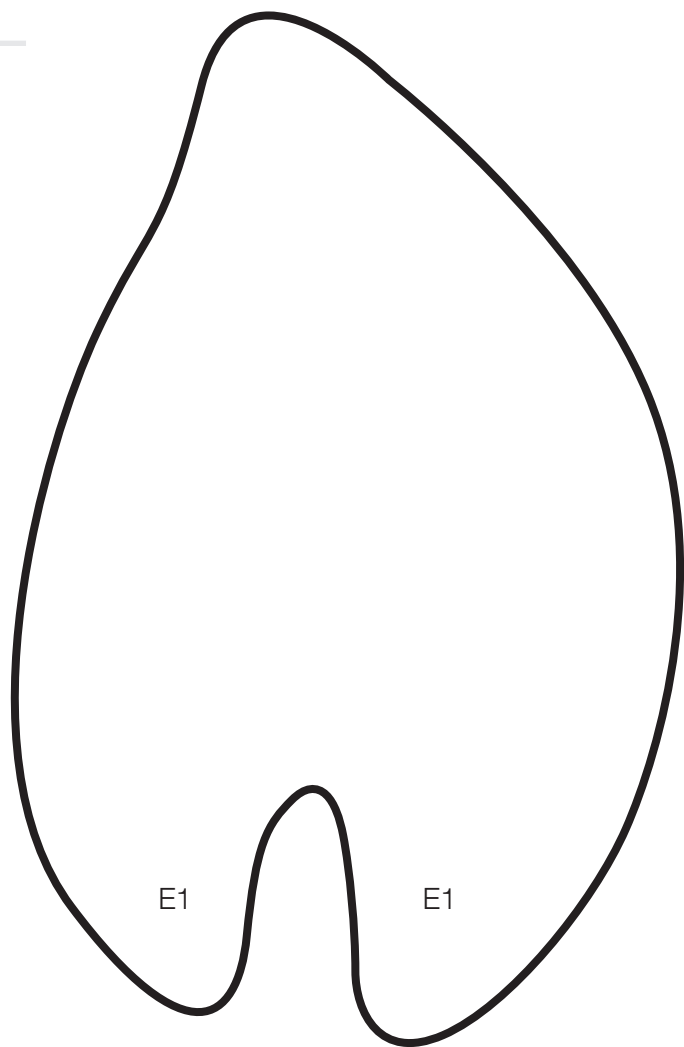
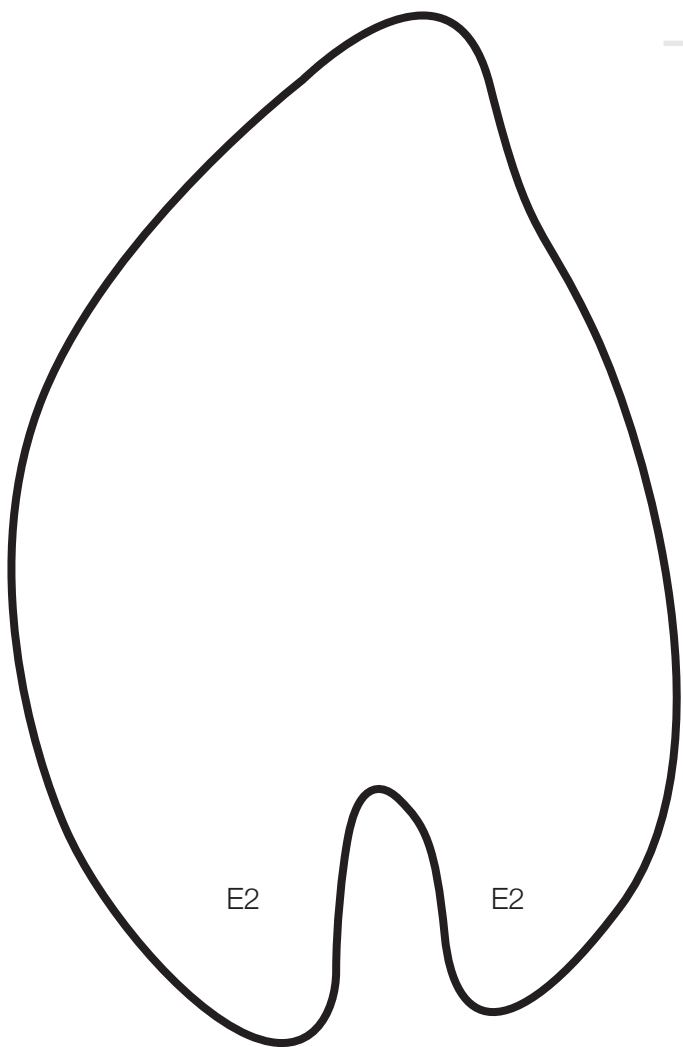
B

C

D

C

D



Storytelling Links for Teachers

Project Links

AHRC LINCOLNSHIRE FOLKTALES PROJECT:
lincolnshirefolktalesproject.com

AHRC LINCOLNSHIRE FOLK TALES YOUNG STORYTELLER PROJECT
adversecamber.org/project/lincolnshire-folk-tales-origins-legacies-connections-futures

AHRC LINCOLNSHIRE FOLK TALES YOUNG STORYTELLER PODCASTS:
adversecamber.org/listen-lincolnshire-folk-tales-young-storyteller-podcasts

ADVERSE CAMBER: adversecamber.org

In November 2024 a Young Storytellers Festival was held in various locations in England, Scotland and Wales. This included a free workshop at Lincoln Library. Discussions are underway for 2025. Please sign up to the Adverse Camber Newsletter for updates: adversecamber.org

You might also be interested in...

A selection of other resources and events (please note this is just a starting point and there are many more):

STORYTELLING RESOURCE PACK: www.sfs.org.uk/nsw/

NO PENS PACK: www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/2017/06/21/nopensday/

STORY MUSEUM: www.storymuseum.org.uk/

INTERNATIONAL STORIES: podfollow.com/super-great-kids-stories/view

THE VILLAGE STORYTELLING CENTRE: www.villagestorytelling.org.uk

OXFORD STORYTELLING FESTIVAL: www.oxfordstorytellingfestival.co.uk

FESTIVAL AT THE EDGE: www.festivalattheedge.org

STEALING THUNDER STORYTELLING FESTIVAL: stealingthunder.co.uk

FEST: fest-network.eu

WORLD STORYTELLING DAY - 20 MARCH: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Storytelling_Day

NATIONAL STORYTELLING WEEK (UK) (SATURDAY 1–SUNDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2025)

literacytrust.org.uk/resources/national-storytelling-week/

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