



The Gingerbread Man

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BOOK BAND: TURQUOISE

BEFORE YOU START

Prepare a group **journal** to help you record group discussions and responses to the text as you work through the book.

Prepare an outline of the gingerbread man, ready to complete using the **Role on the Wall** technique.

Prepare a photograph of a *gutterperk* for use in Session 5.

SESSION 1: FRONT COVER AND PAGE 5



Focus: Predicting, Questioning and Summarising

Share the title of the book with the children and ask whether they have heard this story before. They may have or they may have heard stories similar to this one. If so, ask those children to recount what they already know about the story. They may recount different versions of the story or be able to recall the song associated with this story: "Run, run, as fast as you can. You can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man."

- Which characters can you name?
- What might happen to the characters?

Share pictures of what a gingerbread man might look like, and ask the children whether they have ever eaten one.

Share the front cover with the children, and invite them to ask two questions about what they can see. For example, they might ask why the gingerbread man is wearing shorts; why the chickens are following him; or where he might be running.

Read the first page, until 'colourful flowers.'

• What does the phrase 'Once upon a time' tell you about the story?

Ask the children to consider what type of story this might be, if it opens with this line. Re-read the page and ask the children whether they think the old man and woman are happy or not. Encourage the children to give evidence for their answers, such as: 'I think the old man and woman are happy because it says in the story that they have a beautiful garden.'

Read to the end of page 5, 'the old woman started to bake.' Check that the children understand what the word *ancestors* means and then ask them why they think the old woman has been told to bake a gingerbread man.

• What might happen if she bakes one?

Finish the activity by asking the children to look back at the illustrations and share two things they have learnt about the old man and woman simply by looking at the illustrations. For example, 'I have learnt that they do not have a lot of money because their bedsheets look very old.'

End the session by inviting the children to share other nursery rhymes, traditional tales and fairy tales they can name. List these in the group **journal**, and then ask the children to reflect on any similarities they notice between some of the tales they have named.

- What kinds of things do these stories have in common? [Children might say fairy godmother, aspects of magic, talking animals, a lesson or moral, repetitive or formulaic language or story shapes.]
- Who told you these stories or rhymes?
- Have you read them in books or seen them in films?

Encourage the children to summarise any stories that others in the group are not familiar with.



SESSION 2: PAGES 6-9



Focus: Scan the Text, Re-reading and Empathising

Begin the session by asking whether any of the children do any baking at home, or whether they have baked gingerbread. Ask the children what ingredients they might need to make a gingerbread man, and what they might have to do before they put it in the oven. You might share a recipe with the children or even bring in ingredients or dough for the children to smell and discuss. If they were to decorate their gingerbread man, what might they use for his eyes, nose, etc.? Note the children's responses in the group **journal**, taking the opportunity to clarify, recast and extend language and to compare with what the old woman does in the section of the story.

Read page 6 and pause at the end, 'she used raisins.' Ask the children to re-read the page and share what the old woman has used for the gingerbread man's eyes.

What else could she have used?

Read page 7, to 'wonderful wide smiling mouth', and repeat the activity, asking the children to share what the old woman used, and then what they might have used instead. Ask the children to draw a quick sketch of how they would design a gingerbread man's face, encouraging them to share their ideas with each other using precise descriptive vocabulary.

Read page 8 up to the ellipsis, 'to take a peek...'. Ask the children why the author might have put the ellipsis at this point in the text, explaining that ellipses help to build suspense for the reader.

• How might the old woman be feeling at this point?

Ask the children to put themselves in the position of the old woman and then to choose one word that could describe how she is currently feeling. Some children may want to collaborate. Invite the children to share their word with the group. Note their words down in the group **journal** and discuss their meanings, linking them to their own experiences.

Read to the end of page 9, 'out of the window.'

- Were you surprised by what happened?
- Why do you think the gingerbread man jumped out of the window?

Ask the children to consider how the old woman might be feeling now, again coming up with a list of words to describe how she might be feeling. Compare the two lists of words and ask the children what has caused the old woman's sudden change in emotions.



SESSION 3: PAGES 10-15



Focus: Thinking Aloud, Noting the Text Structure and Visualising

Read page 10, up to when the gingerbread man speaks.

• Why has the author chosen to write this line in a different font to the rest?

Ask the children to consider why this might be the case, and what it makes us do as readers. Encourage the children to each come up with their own gingerbread man voice, and ask them to read the lines in turns with increasing fluency and expression.

Read page 11, until 'tying out the cow.'

- Why do you think the old woman cannot catch the gingerbread man?
- Why he might be running away?

Read up to page 13, 'they couldn't catch him.' Encourage the children to all join in with their gingerbread man voices when you read the "Run, run as fast as you can!" line.

- Why do you think the author has repeated this line?
- Why does the gingerbread man keep saying this?

Read to page 15, "I want to eat you!". Write the word *delicious* in the middle of a page in the group **journal**, and ask the children to think of as many different words for *delicious* as they can.

• What other words could the author have used instead of delicious?

What might happen as the gingerbread man runs through the town?

Ask the children to complete a **Role on the Wall** for the gingerbread man. Ask the children to come up with words or phrases to describe the gingerbread man's feelings or personality and his outward appearance or behaviour.

To promote a higher level of thinking, ask the children to consider what they know from his speech and what they have to infer from his body language and gestures.

- What does something the gingerbread man does tell you about his personality?
- And how does his personality make that action seem most likely ('in character')?

Encourage the children to return to the **Role on the Wall** as you read the story, using a different colour each time to show the knowledge they gain as they read more and to track the emotional journey the character takes.



SESSION 4: PAGES 15-21

Focus: Scanning the Text, Re-reading and Questioning

Read to the middle of page 18, "I'm the gingerbread man!". As you read, encourage the children to use their gingerbread man voices every time he says "Run, run as fast as you can!". Try to read these parts in chorus each time. Ask the children to make a list of all the animals and people who have joined the chase for the gingerbread man.

• Who else might join in the chase?

Read to the end of page 19, 'even faster than before.' Ask the children if they can add anything to their Role on the Wall.

• What have we learnt about the gingerbread man's character in the last few pages?

Consider introducing the word *arrogant* to the children, asking whether they have heard it before and sharing its definition with them. Ask the children to think of two words to describe how the gingerbread man is feeling, and note them all down in the **journal**. Then read page 20, ' "Oh no! They *will* catch me now," he said.' Ask the children to repeat the activity.

• How have the gingerbread man's feelings changed, and why?

Read page 21, when the monkey comes to offer the gingerbread man a ride, "across the river." Explain to the children that they are going to give the gingerbread man some advice about whether or not he should accept the monkey's offer, and to do that we are going to ask the monkey some questions.

Explain to the group that you are going to **hot-seat** in role as the monkey so that the children can explore his motivations. Ask the children to discuss and decide on two questions that they would ask the monkey at this point in the story, for example:

- Why are you offering the gingerbread man a ride?
- Have you ever eaten gingerbread before?

End the session by deciding as a group on what the gingerbread man should do, perhaps even writing him a **note of advice** to that effect.

SESSION 5: PAGES 22-32



Focus: Summarising, Predicting and Clarifying

Read to page 26 without stopping, until 'opened his mouth...'. Pause at the ellipsis, and ask the children whether they can remember why the author may have decided to use one of these. Encourage the children to predict what they think might happen next, perhaps using their knowledge of other versions of this story that they might have encountered.

Read to the end of page 28, 'fell from the tree...'. Again, ask the children predict what they think might happen next. Encourage the children to reflect on how the gingerbread man is feeling now, and what he might be hoping will happen next.

Read up to the end of page 30, 'smiled at the gingerbread man.' Pause and ask the children what they think is meant by the word *gutterperk*. (A gutterperk is a type of slingshot.) Use the picture to aid their understanding.

Read to the end of the book, where it states that the family lived 'happily ever after.' Ask the children to consider why the gingerbread man has now decided to live with the old man and the old woman.

- What has made the gingerbread man change his mind?
- What tells you how the old man and woman feel about their gingerbread man?
- Is this how you expected the story to end?

To recap the story, ask the children to retell it one line at a time, starting from the beginning with one child. The next child in the circle then retells the next bit. Encourage them to use time adverbials such as 'after that', 'next' and 'then' as they retell the story, perhaps writing these down somewhere the children can easily see them.

Explore their responses to the book with the help of the **four basic questions**. These questions can be used as a basis for discussion throughout the sessions.

- Tell me... was there anything you liked about this text?
- Was there anything that you particularly disliked...?
- Was there anything that puzzled you?
- Were there any patterns... any connections that you noticed...?

As children respond it can be useful to write down what they say under the headings 'likes', 'dislikes', 'puzzles' and 'patterns'. Record the children's responses in the **journal**.

As an extension activity, you could encourage the children to write a short diary entry **in role** as either the gingerbread man or the old woman, explaining what happened that day and how they felt about the events. In this activity, encourage the children to return to the group **journal** where you noted down the different words to describe how the characters felt during the story.



IDEAS TO SUPPORT THE SESSIONS

These are areas you could further develop depending on your professional judgement of the children's learning needs and their interests.

Developing wider reading experiences

Read and explore a range of traditional tales, nursery rhyme collections and fairy tales, such as:

- No Dinner!: The Story of the Old Woman and the Pumpkin by Jessica Souhami
- Please, Mr Magic Fish by Jessica Souhami
- Honey for You, Honey for Me by Michael Rosen and Chris Riddell
- The Story Tree by Hugh Lupton and Sophie Fatus
- Rapunzel by Bethan Woolvin
- The Jolly Postman by Janet and Allan Ahlberg

Supporting reading fluency

- While reading with the group, model skills and strategies such as predicting, sampling, confirming, self-monitoring, self-correcting, 'thinking aloud', interpreting things which are only implied, and the full range of cueing systems (semantic, syntactic and graphophonic).
- Occasionally, you could hide some words with a sticky note, asking the children to refer to the illustration for ideas. You could give another clue by revealing the first syllable or letter.
- You could make a pairs game to develop visual memory and book language, creating cards using laminated images from the book. Make pairs of cards, one card for an illustrated location or character and one for matching words from the story. Spread these out face down. Children take turns to turn over two cards. If they match, they can keep them. If not, they have to turn them back over again. The game proceeds until all the pairs have been found.
- You could create a simple jigsaw by writing questions with corresponding answers directly underneath on one side of a piece of paper, then printing an illustration on the reverse and cutting the sheet of paper up to separate the questions and answers. The children lay out the questions and answers in order. They can check their layout by turning them over to see if they have created the illustration correctly.



Vocabulary building

- Children could make **word collections** which describe a particular character and their feelings or a place, event or situation.
- The text could also be used to investigate the structure, impact and placement of imperative verbs, precise vocabulary and adverbial phrases in instructional sentences such as "Run, run as fast as you can" or those in gingerbread recipes.

Opportunities to revisit the text independently

- With the children, make a set of magnetic or stick story props to use in a retelling of the story and to support children in their own independent retellings. If possible, provide extra copies of the book to support this.
- If the children have a good memory of the text through repeated readings, they can be given copies of the story to read to partners. This helps children to see themselves as readers.
- Allow the children to re-enact the story through play. Revisiting stories through a range of play-based experiences helps children to step into the world of the book and to explore it more completely.
- Use **hot-seating** to explore the characters further. One member of the group role-plays a character and is interviewed by the other children. This activity involves children closely examining a character's motivation and responses.
- Make a **story map** as a way of retelling the story. This breaks the story down into episodes and sequences its events. This kind of graphic representation helps children to hold on to the shape of the story more confidently.
- Encourage the children to take the book home to read alongside a parent or carer and suggest that they use the 'Tips for grown-ups' pages to support their discussions.

Experiences linked to the text

- Children could make a class collection of family stories, songs and rhymes.
- Children could plan and write another version of The Gingerbread Man or any other well-known traditional tale.

These resources were created by Bloomsbury and The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE). For more teaching resources, visit:

www.bloomsburyguidedreading.com

www.clpe.org.uk