

Level  
1

# Penguin Young Readers Factsheets

## Dick Whittington

## Teacher's Notes

### Summary of the story

Dick Whittington lives with his poor aunt in the countryside. He goes to London to make their fortune. He meets a rich man and his daughter, Alice, and works in their house. He finds a cat and the cat catches the mice in his room. The rich man's friend, Harry goes to a far-away country, and asks the rich man if he can take Dick's cat with him. Dick's cat catches all the rats in the king's palace. The king keeps the cat, but sends lots of gold back for Dick. Dick marries Alice and the tale ends much later, when Dick and Alice have become the very popular owners of a London school.



### Background to the story

It is believed to be an English folk-tale that first passed down through the generations orally, based on Richard Whittington (c. 1358-1423) four times Lord Mayor of London. It appears in a book of English fairy-tales in 1890, where it was called *Whittington and his Cat*.

### Topics and themes

**My town.** Use *Dick Whittington* to introduce the topic of town and country differences, asking the students to compare the pictures in the book of Dick's home town and London. This will provide the opportunity of eliciting or introducing town and country vocabulary which will lead on to a description of 'my town'.

**Travel.** Dick Whittington travels to London in a horse and cart, while his master's friend travels abroad by ship. Encourage the students to think of different methods of travel, and to consider how they have changed over time.

**The body.** Use *Dick Whittington* to consolidate vocabulary about feelings by encouraging the students to describe Dick's feelings during the stages of his journey. Focus on Dick's arrival in London, when he is lost, and brainstorm adjectives to describe how one feels when lost.

**Lifestyle.** There is a sharp division in *Dick Whittington* between rich and poor, between the country and the city, making it an ideal way to introduce 'lifestyles' as a topic.

**Animals.** Use Dick's cat to introduce animal vocabulary, and encourage students to think of the differences between dogs and cats, for example.

**Food.** A 'banquet' is a big dinner, for Kings and Queens.

### Making use of the Reader

**Have you got?** You will need a bag with a variety of objects inside. The students ask the question 'Have you got a...?', 'no, I haven't got a..., but I have got a...' If they ask the question correctly, you can tell them what you do have in the bag. Continue until all the objects have been guessed or told. Follow this up by guessing what Dick Whittington might have had in his bag.

#### Pre-reading

Put the students in small groups. Tell them to look at a picture in the book (one with lots of action). The students may look at the picture for 2-3 minutes, but then must put the book away and try to remember what they saw. The group with the longest list of correct words is the winner.



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**Comic strip.** Show the students some comics to give them an idea of the comic strip format. Tell them to think of the 5 main events in the Dick Whittington story. Give them some pre-prepared pieces of card or paper, 30cm by 5cm and segmented into five squares. Ask the students to draw a picture to represent each main event, one per square. The pictures will tell the story of Dick Whittington. Alternatively, speech bubbles could be added or a small commentary, but the emphasis should be on comprehension.

### Using the accompanying video and audio cassette

#### Whole class listening. Bingo!

Divide the watching/listening exercise into three main parts (following the book, for example pp. 1-5, pp. 5-11, pp. 12-14). Prepare some pieces of card and write a selection of words from each part. Give each student 3 or 4 pieces of card. Make sure they all have different words, and they each have some words that come near the end of the chunk. Whilst watching/listening to the first chunk, the pupils tick off their words as they hear them. The first one to have exhausted their cards shouts Bingo! Continue with the other two chunks.

#### Whole class viewing /listening/ speaking.

Divide the viewing/listening exercise into four segments. Send one or two pupils out of the room, while the others watch/listen to the first segment. The pupils come back in and ask questions about the first chunk (these could be prepared in advance). Do the same for the rest of the video/cassette. This is an ideal way to practise question forms and for you to check that the class has understood the viewing/listening exercise.

#### Jigsaw viewing or listening – whole class.

Divide the class in half. One half is A and the other is B. The A's watch or listen to the first part of the story, while the B's watch or listen to the second under them.

#### Self-study/simultaneous listening and reading.

This is an ideal way for pupils to work on their own reading aloud skills. A possible follow-up would be to allow the pupils to make their own recording of the story. They can tell the story as if they are the cat. When did he (the cat) meet Dick? Was Dick kind?

### Answers to the activities

#### In the back of the Reader

##### Before You Read

1. Yes 2. No 3. No 4. No 5. Yes  
6. No 7. No

##### After You Read

E C I M H  
K I N G A  
C P T K P  
H C A T P  
D I C K Y

#### In the factsheet

##### Activity 1

- a. the cat, b. Dick Whittington, c. Alice,  
d. Alice's father, e. The king of the far-away  
country.

##### Activity 3

1. 7 children. 2. 3 dresses. 3. 5 hats.  
4. 1 cat. 5. 6 shoes. 6. Yes. 7. Yes.



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PHOTOCOPIABLE

Pupils' Activities

## Dick Whittington

Name.....

### Activity 1

Who is it? Look at the pictures. Write the names.



a. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_



d. \_\_\_\_\_

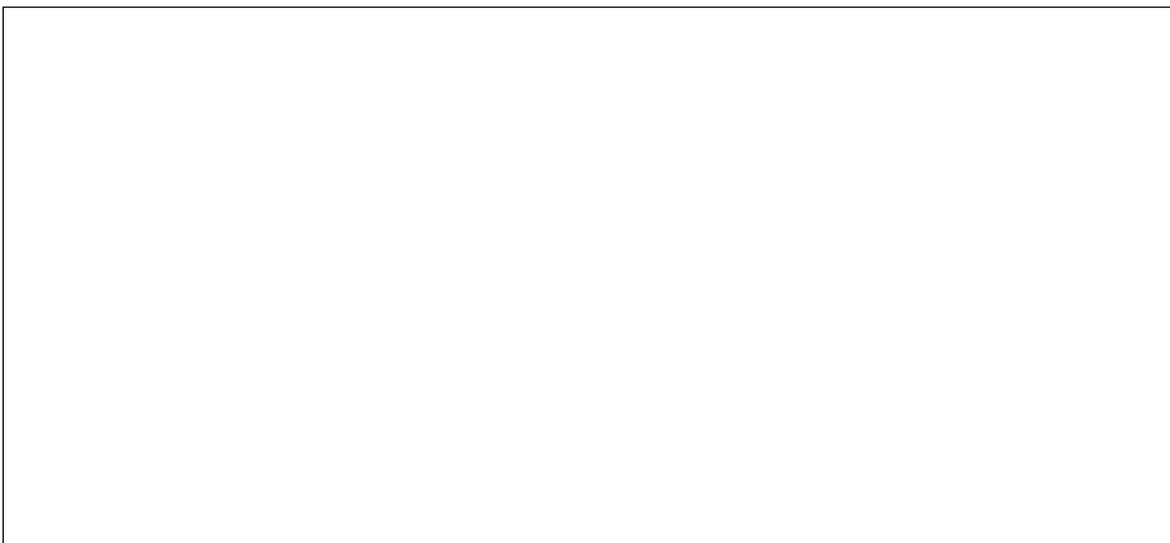
b. \_\_\_\_\_



e. \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity 2

You are Dick Whittington. You are in London. Draw a picture of what you can see.



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PHOTOCOPIABLE

Pupils' Activities

## Dick Whittington

Name.....

### Activity 3

1. How many children can you see?

.....

2. How many dresses can you see?

.....

3. How many hats can you see?

.....

4. How many cats can you see?

.....

5. How many shoes can you see?

.....

6. Is Dick in the picture?

.....

7. Is Alice in the picture?

.....



### Activity 4

Colour the picture.

Colour his hair yellow.

Colour his shirt orange.

Colour his bag green.

Give him a pink face.

Give him blue eyes.

Colour his arms pink.

