

# The Snow Queen

## Summary of the story

This traditional fairy tale tells the story of two children, a kind Granny and a nasty Snow Queen. The boy, Kay, becomes mean and nasty and then disappears. He has followed the horrible Snow Queen to her palace of ice. His sister, Gerda looks for him and after some time travelling, finds him. She saves him from the Snow Queen. Kay changes back into a friendly person and they return to Granny.



## Background to the story

Originally published in 1845, this story is one of Hans Christian Andersen's 168 stories. It appeared first in English in a collection of fairy tales by H. P. Paull in 1872.

## Topics and themes

**Animals.** Animals feature strongly in this story. Horses, reindeer and a black bird are used for transport. Gerda talks to birds and a rabbit on the farm, and her Granny has a cat on her lap.

**Clothes.** Hats and scarves, and other warm clothes to wear in snow could begin this topic.

**Magic.** In this story, a piece of mirror in the eye from a troll can change a personality. Animals fly, and talk.

**Senses.** Feeling cold, tiredness, smelling roses, crying are part of the story.

**Transport.** Pupils can locate Denmark, Sweden and Finland in their atlas or on a globe.

**Seasons.** The seasons appear in the story and could be the basis for work on weather language.

## Making use of the Reader

**'Identikit'.** Write a list of adjectives used in the story on the board or on a poster. (e.g. wicked, ugly, horrible, mean, nasty, warm, kind, cold, sad, greedy, happy, beautiful, lovely, hard, cruel, dangerous, small, brave, huge, scared, unhappy, safe.) Discuss them. Now the pupils have to decide which adjectives best describe the four main characters. They should draw a picture of each and write the adjectives. (e.g. four for each character). Can they now find at least six pairs of opposites from the list? (e.g. warm – cold). Who can find the most?

**Game.** This is an extension activity from the 'Identikit' Who am I? Played in pairs but demonstrated first with the whole class. (e.g. I am – mean, cold, wicked and cruel. Who am I?) Again, the pupils refer to the list of adjectives.

**Collecting pictures.** Pupils may collect pictures of examples of different weather and stick them on card. The pictures could be of snow, clouds, sun and moon.

**Design a hat.** Design one for a good, kind person, then draw one for a mean and nasty person. Write why you have drawn it as it is.

**Make a list of different forms of transport** that people in the class have used and then look at some of the pictures of other forms of transport. A sleigh, boat and reindeer are used in the book.

**Activity.** How many animals can the pupils find in the book? They should make a list in a timed period, for example 3 minutes.



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## Using the accompanying video and audio cassette

**During watching and listening – whole class prediction.** Play the video or audio cassette story through in its entirety. The second time through, stop just before a dramatic event in the story (such as page 23, when Gerda discovers the boy is not her brother) and ask the pupils to tell you what happens next, then view or listen to see if they were right.

**Simultaneous reading and listening in groups.** This will help the pupils with pronunciation and intonation.

The pupils can join in with some of the sounds, after hearing the actor speak, e.g. the black bird's kerrawk!

**Record** the pupils dramatizing the story on audio or video cassette.

## Notes on using the activities in the factsheet

**Activity 1.** The pupils will write about the part of the story they liked. They could draw it too.

**Activity 2.** This is a pair-work activity. Pupils should use a pencil only. Check that the pupils understand all the vocabulary then ask one in each pair to draw a picture of these things across the grid. Then this partner hides his picture from his partner and describes what he/she is to draw using the grid references such as 'draw the bird in B4'. When they are finished, see if the pictures look the same.

**Activity 3.** Cut out the sentence boxes and then put them in order of the story. Alternatively lines can be drawn from one to the other to connect them.

**Activity 4.** The pupils will fill the circles with vocabulary, for example under Transport, they may put reindeer, sleigh, bird. Some of the words will belong to more than one circle (for example, the black bird belongs in both transport and animals). If they see an animal but don't know the word, they could draw the picture and find out the word they need.

## Answers to the activities

### In the back of the Reader

#### Before you read

1. Look at the cover together and discuss it. There is no really right or wrong answer as the pupils are really only predicting what will be in the book.
2. Sledge, pages 11 & 12; a red rose, pages 17 & 30; a rope, page, 20; a troll, page 3; a whip, page 11; a sleigh, page 11 & 12; a reindeer, pages 5,24,25,26,29; a mirror, page 3.
3. Kay and Gerda.

#### After you read

2. a. False; b. True; c. True; d. False; e. False; f. False.
3. There is no 'correct' answer for this question, but it is an interesting one to discuss with groups or the whole class.

#### In the factsheet

3. d. g. h. a. f. e.

4. Some of the words are:

*Transport*, Sledge, sleigh, reindeer, bird, boat

*Animals*, Cat, rabbit, reindeer, bird, horse

*People*, Granny, Gerda, Kay, Alice, Snow Queen

*Places to live*, Farm, tent, palace, house



# The Snow Queen

Name.....

## Activity 1

Write about the part of the story you liked best, make a drawing too.

## Activity 2

The Grid Game. Play this with a friend.

	A	B	C	D	E
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

On the grid draw:



the bird

the boat

the sledge

cake

the whip

the rose

the mirror

Now your friend is going to draw your picture without seeing it. Tell your friend where the parts are on your grid. Do your grids look the same?



# The Snow Queen

Name.....

## Activity 3

Cut out the sentences. Put them in order.

a. Gerda rested in Alice's cottage.	b. Kay had a piece of glass in his eye.
c. There was a huge, black bird.	d. The mirror broke.
e. Gerda arrived at the Snow Queen's palace.	f. Gerda passed the night in a farm.
g. Kay got into the sleigh with the Snow Queen.	h. Gerda went off in Granny's boat to find Kay.

## Activity 4

Each circle is a different word family. Find as many words in the book as you can to go in the four word families. Write them in the circles.

