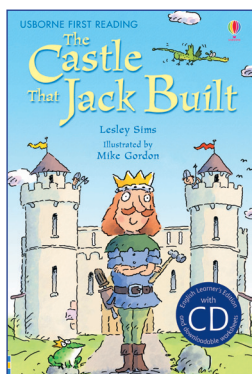


## The Castle That Jack Built • Teacher's notes



**Author:** Traditional rhyme, adapted by Lesley Sims

**Reader level:** Lower Intermediate

**Word count:** 388

**Lexile level:** 470L

**Text type:** Nursery rhyme

### About the story

Loosely based on the traditional nursery rhyme, “The House That Jack Built”, this cumulative story takes an entertaining detour into the land of fairy tales...

King Jack builds a fine stone castle. One day, a dragon steals his gold and sets off an unlikely chain of events. The fugitive dragon’s getaway vehicle is a wagon driven by a witch, which is then overturned by a careless troll. As the wagon spills its load, a frog hops out; a girl in a silver gown rides by and kisses the frog... and the frog turns into a handsome prince. Meanwhile a variety of subplots unfold in the pictures, as the witch’s magic potions spill over the dragon and several passing birds, while Jack sets out to reclaim his treasure, the dragon ignores Jack and attempts to return the treasure to the guard whom he recognizes from the original heist...

It turns out that the prince is none other than King Jack’s son, who returns to the castle and marries the girl. The troll, the witch and even the dragon (who’s been tamed by now, and is no doubt sorry for what he’s done) are invited to the wedding and they live happily ever after, “safe in the castle that Jack built”.

### About the author

Lesley Sims wanted to be a writer from the age of three. She has written a wide range of stories, including funny history books and books for beginner readers. When she’s not writing, she likes watching plays, playing the saxophone and reading – though not usually all at once. She’s never stolen any gold or kissed any frogs, but she does know an awful lot about castles.



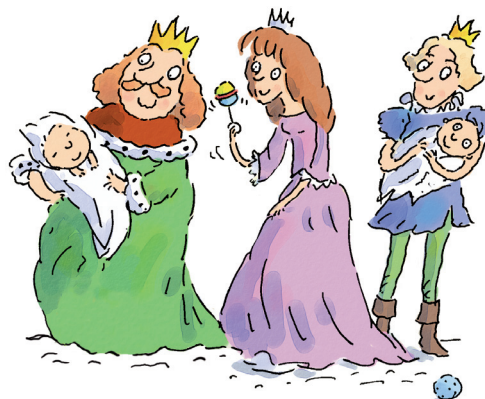
### Key words

Your students might not be familiar with some of these words, which are important in the story.

	built	p24	grumpy
p2	wagon		frown
p3	troll	p25	hopped
p8	stole	p30	gown
p10	potion	p42	crown
	[on label]	p47	safe
p16	itch		
	yowl		NB “scritch” on
p17	upset		p16 is an invented
p21	tipped		word, derived from
			“scratchy”.

### Key phrases

p20	upside down
p46	to live happily ever after



# The Castle That Jack Built • Teacher's notes

## Before reading

Ask the class to think of some typical characters in fairy tales; not their names but the character type [e.g. princess, witch, fairy, king, knight, dragon, troll]. You could write the word WHO on the board, then write up the character types. You could divide this list into GOOD and BAD if you like.

Write a separate heading: WHERE, and ask the class for suggestions as to where all these characters might live. List any suggestions [e.g. castle, palace, forest, hut, cave, bridge].

Show the students the book's cover. Who do they think is shown? [Jack.] What kind of person is he? [A king.] Do kings usually build their own castles?

Does anyone know this story? [Trick question: it's not a traditional fairy tale but a new one.]

What can they see on the ground beside Jack? Why do they think the frog is wearing a crown? [He's a prince under a spell.] What might break the spell? [A kiss.]

## Reading or listening

You can listen to the story on CD or read it aloud to the students, take turns to read or read together silently. Each double page spread in the book is one track on the CD, so that you can pause between tracks or repeat tracks if your students need it. The first reading is in a British English accent, and it is followed by an American English reading. The words are exactly the same. After the story, there is a short selection of key phrases that can be used for pronunciation practice.

## During reading: you might like to ask some of these questions.

- |       |  |     |   |
|-------|--|-----|---|
| pp4-5 | Have you ever seen a castle like this one?   | p15 | What's King Jack planning to do?  |
|       | Where were castles built and how long ago?   | p19 | What made the troll fall over? [Look back to page 16.]                          |
|       | [In Europe, mostly around 6-800 years ago.]  | p22 | How do you think the witch is feeling?  |
|       | Why were they built? [To keep kings and lords and their families safe from attack.]                    | p24 | Why do you think the frog had a grumpy frown? Who do you think made him a frog? |
| p7    | Who can you see outside the window?  | p28 | What's happened to the dragon?  |
| p9    | Do you think the guards will be able to stop the dragon? What weapon does the guard on the right have? | p30 | Are you surprised that the girl kisses the frog? Would you?                     |
| p11   | Why does the dragon have a saucepan on his head?   | p38 | What is the dragon doing?   |
| p12   | Does the witch know the dragon already?  | p43 | What do you think the prince is saying?   |
| p13   | What's the witch reading about? Why?   | p45 | What's the witch eating? How is the dragon helping? (Is he helping?)            |

## After reading

Ask the students if they liked the story. You could explain that this is a cumulative tale: it starts with the simple line "This is the castle that Jack built" and then it's repeated again and again with an extra line added at the beginning until you get a really long sentence. You could ask the students to look for the longest sentence in the book and to write it down. [It's on pp30-35.] How many words are there in the whole sentence? [57.]

You might look for other examples of cumulative tales, such as the original "House that Jack Built".

Encourage the class to write their own cumulative tale, either in groups in class or for their homework.

