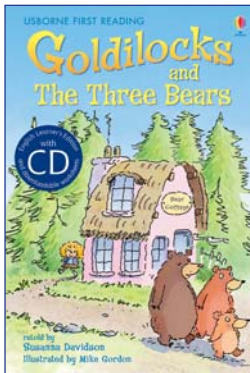


Goldilocks and the Three Bears • Teacher's notes



Author: traditional, retold by Susanna Davidson

Reader level: Intermediate

Word count:

Lexile level:

Text type: English fairy tale

About the story

This is a humorous retelling of a much-loved classic. Goldilocks is always looking for trouble. One day, she sneaks off into the woods and reaches a cottage in a clearing. There's nobody at home, and Goldilocks walks straight in. Three bowls of porridge are laid out on the table. Goldilocks tries the first two and finds them too hot or too cold, but the smallest one's just right, so she eats it all up.

Next she looks for somewhere to sit. The first two chairs are too hard or too soft, but the smallest is just right... until she breaks it. Goldilocks heads upstairs, and tries out the two larger beds before falling asleep in the smallest one. When the three bears who own the cottage return, they follow their intruder's trail and give Goldilocks the fright of her life. She runs home vowing never to be naughty again.

The story was first recorded by the Romantic poet Robert Southey, who cast the intruder as an old woman rather than a little girl (in an older version still, it was a fox). By the mid-nineteenth century she had become a child; by the early twentieth she had been given her name, and has been Goldilocks ever since.

About the author

Susanna Davidson has written over 50 books for children. She grew up in the Surrey countryside surrounded by all kinds of animals, but no bears to her knowledge. She now lives in London, writing about animals rather than living with them, and she definitely doesn't have golden hair.

Key words

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

p3 lovely	p18 notice
golden	tiny
p4 naughty	p21 taste
p6 turn	p25 broke
believe	p26 giggled
p7 warts	instead
p8 woods	p27 climbed
p11 crept	p30 paw
p12 skipped	stomped
path	p31 cuddly
p14 cottage	p33 growl
wonder	gruff
p15 knocked	p38 squeaked
delicious	broken
p16 greedy	p39 snores
p17 porridge	p43 screamed

Key phrases

p3	as good as gold
p7	carry on
p13	at all
	around a corner
p21	just right
	ate it all up
p29	in no time at all
	fast asleep
p33	to let out
p45	as fast as she could go
p46	never, ever



Goldilocks and the Three Bears • Teacher's notes

Before reading

You could ask your students if they're ever naughty at home. If they don't want to talk about themselves, perhaps they could say what naughty things their friends or siblings get up to. Do their parents ever give them warnings, maybe along the lines of "Don't do that, or else something bad will happen"? You could talk through some examples, such as "Don't go outside without your coat on or you'll catch a cold." Or, "If you don't clean your teeth, they'll go bad and fall out."

In stories, characters are often warned not to go into the woods. What sort of thing happens when they do? Write a list on the board of some scary things that fairytale characters find in woods [witches, wolves, etc.] See if the class can match the scary thing to a fairytale character, e.g. Wolf – Red Riding Hood, Witch – Hansel & Gretel.

If someone told you never to go into the woods, would you listen or would it make you more curious? Now show the class the book, covering up the title, and see if they can guess which story it is. What is Goldilocks' name in your students' own language? Write both that and the English name on the board.

.....

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.

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|--|
| p3 | Do you think Goldilocks looks as good as gold? Can you guess what's going to happen next? [Look at the bucket on the windowsill.] | p26 | What's happened to the bear's nose in the picture? |
| p5 | What do you think Goldilocks is putting on her father's chair? | p29 | Who can you see outside the window? |
| p6 | Can you spot another naughty thing Goldilocks has done on this page? | p38 | How do you think Mother and Father Bear are feeling? How about Baby Bear? |
| p8 | Would you like to be Goldilocks' brother? | p43 | How would you feel if you woke up and saw three bears at the end of the bed? |
| p13 | Can you see any bears? How many? | p45 | Why is Goldilocks imagining herself with blue hair and spots on her nose? |
| p16 | Would you just walk into someone's house? Can you spot any clues as to who lives here? | p46 | Do you believe that Goldilocks will never be naughty again? |
-

After reading

What's the moral of this story (the lesson to be learned)? Bears are often portrayed as the baddies. Is that the case here? Do bears normally eat porridge? [No!] What about honey? [Yes, but they're more interested in eating the bee larvae inside the bees' nests.]

What do you think Goldilocks' mother will say to Goldilocks at the end? Do you think she will be more angry that Goldilocks didn't listen to her, or relieved that she is safe?

This is a good story for acting out. You could try this, encouraging students to use different voices for each of the bears, low, medium and high, and to give them plenty of expression (angry, anxious, upset).

Did you know?

Scientists sometimes talk about "Goldilocks planets". These are planets that are neither too hot nor too cold, so they could be just right for things to live there.

