

in the classroom

- Reading aloud and annotating. Children working on *Eye of the Wolf* read sections of the novel aloud and then highlighted pages showing where the narrative voice changed. They drew diagrams to show what this revealed about the characters of wolf and boy.



- Drawing on knowledge of similar stories. A good way into reading traditional stories, for example *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, is to review what children already know about the characters and motifs.

One of the values of studying this text is the influence of this collection on all other stories. It is rooted in popular literature and storytelling and features plenty of excitement and danger. It's the soap opera of its day and you can still see its features in modern stories and soap operas.

Getting started



The teaching sequences give detailed lesson plans, each focusing on a particular book. They demonstrate how children can investigate the meaning of a text through whole-class, group and paired reading as well as through drama and work in other parts of the curriculum.

Each teaching sequence describes the book, gives relevant national curriculum and primary national strategy references, and lists useful resources. The sequences are designed to last for several sessions and include detailed descriptions of possible activities and ways of talking about the book. All the sequences have been tried out with children in years 5 and 6.

One Thousand and One Arabian Nights (Geraldine McCaughrean) contains many familiar stories. They evoke the sharp details of an ancient Islamic civilisation and the wit and vigour of a large cast of characters.

Eye of the Wolf (Daniel Pennac) is a short novel about a wolf and a boy who learn about their contrasting worlds and cultures. The multi-layered narrative with a subtle ecological message brings together human and animal worlds and spans North America and Africa in its settings.

Sheep Don't Go to School (edited by Andrew Fusek Peters) is an anthology from 13 Eastern European countries that includes riddles, nonsense poems, traditional rhymes and some longer poems by modern writers.



Finding out more

The following materials from the Reading Differences project are available to download from the QCA website (www.qca.org.uk/english):

- introductory leaflets for years 3 to 4 and years 5 to 6
- teaching sequences for eight of the books on the booklist (the years 5 and 6 books are *Eye of the Wolf*, *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon*, *Sheep Don't Go to School* and *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*)
- an annotated booklist recommending novels, poems, traditional tales and picture books from around the world
- Teaching world literature in the primary school: a discussion paper. This explains the background to the Reading Differences project.

The teaching sequences can be adapted for use with other books.

More information about the English 21 project can be found at www.qca.org.uk/english21.

The Reading Differences materials have been developed in collaboration with the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE).

Acknowledgements:

East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon, illustrations by PJ Lynch and introduced by Naomi Lewis. Published by Walker Books. Illustrations © Max Grafe. Reproduced by permission of Walker Books Ltd, London SE11 5HJ

Eye of the Wolf by Daniel Pennac, illustrations by Max Grafe. Translated from the French by Sarah Adams. Published by Walker Books. Illustrations © Max Grafe. Reproduced by permission of the illustrator. The Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation 2005 (National Centre for Research in Children's Literature, UK).

One Thousand and One Arabian Nights by Geraldine McCaughrean, illustrations by Rosamund Fowler. Published by Oxford University Press 1999. © Oxford University Press 1982. Reproduced by permission of the publisher.

Sheep Don't Go to School edited by Andrew Fusek Peters, illustrations by Markéta Prachytová. Published by Biscuits Books Ltd 1999. Translation © Irena Hamiltons & A Fusek Peters for 'Not a Very Nice Poem'. Translation © Livia Varjú & A Fusek Peters for 'Sheep Don't Go to School'. © Sándor Weöres. Translation © George Sirtes for 'The Spring'. © Ottó Orbán. Reproduced by permission of the editor.

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For more PDFs: www.qca.org.uk/english

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Reading Differences:

Introducing children to world literature

Years 5-6



The Reading Differences project is about introducing children to a broader range of literature from around the world. It is about reading different books and about reading them differently.

Many teachers feel that the books children read should reflect the culturally diverse world we live in. In English 21, the recent national conversation about English in the 21st century, most people said that the literary heritage presented in schools should be broadened. The national curriculum already requires all children to study texts from a variety of cultures and traditions, and the primary national strategy recommends studying myths, legends, stories and poems from a range of cultures. QCA's Reading Differences project explored ways of choosing a wider range of texts and introducing them to children in key stage 2.

There are a significant number of books, and an increasing number of contemporary authors, that ought to be brought to us, and which our children need if they are to be imaginatively, intellectually and culturally linked to people of other cultures, other languages.

Aidan Chambers

Teachers working on the project devised eight teaching sequences, or book studies, for a series of lessons with children in years 3 to 6. The project also includes a booklist of high-quality international children's literature and a discussion paper about the broader issues around reading differences.

This leaflet is about working with children in years 5 and 6, and explains how teachers can introduce reading differences to the classroom.



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Reading differences

Choosing different books

Reading different books – stories, poems, picture books and traditional tales set in different cultural contexts – opens windows on to other worlds, showing how other children grow up, get along with family and friends and cope with everyday life and extraordinary events. The Reading Differences booklist contains many suggestions to choose from.

When choosing a book from a different part of the world for study, it is important to look for authors who are so familiar with a particular culture or country that they can represent it accurately and with understanding. High-quality books that speak with an authentic voice and have themes that offer scope for discussion and reflection repay reading over a sustained period of time. The book chosen should help children learn about the literature and culture of another country as well as reflect on their own experiences. Reading one text gains from links to other reading, so the ideal book collection in a 21st-century classroom will have international literature alongside the well-loved classics of English children's literature.

Each book in this leaflet presents a different challenge, raises different issues for teachers and children and offers different ways in for readers.

- Researching the background of the book. Researching the country of the authors and presenting this information to others is an effective way of deepening understanding of *Sheep Don't Go to School*.

I was pleased to have a book of poetry that is slightly different. It worked because the children had not read anything like it before. The children loved looking at maps to find Eastern European countries and looking up the gory origins of nursery rhymes. The research into different countries took on a life of its own and involved parents and others with personal knowledge of Eastern Europe.

- Interpreting pictures. Maps and pictures of the story's setting, like the ones in *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon*, convey the tale's atmosphere and lead to questions about the setting and historical period.



Books for years 5 and 6 featured in this leaflet



East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon is a traditional Norwegian fairytale told through dramatic pictures accompanying an early translation into English. It is a powerful tale of quest and adventure set in the context of wild weather, long, bitter winters and human isolation.

