



Dragonory

About the story

Jess Smith is part of the travelling tradition. She writes that *Dragonory* is a camp fire story that traveller children ‘cut their teeth on’. This is really a simple journey story about ‘the way that is blocked’ – in this case not by a troll, as in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, but by a dragon. To get past the dragon a riddling contest is held. In a nice touch at the end, the main character rescues Dragonory.

Getting to know the story well

Read aloud, or tell, the story to the class. Use the following activities to help the children get to know the story well prior to learning to tell it.

Drama

- Re-enact sitting round a camp fire in the classroom or hall – or if it is sunny enough, outside. Experiment with the children beginning to tell stories round the ‘fire’.
- Role-play the riddle scene. Encourage the children to use their own riddles.

Writing in role

- Write, or collect, riddles to outwit a dragon. Create a class riddle book.
- Write a poster warning travellers to pay up if they wish to cross the bridge.

Art

- Paint and make models of dragons.
- Design and make a rickety bridge out of sticks.

Research

- Visit Jess Smith’s website at www.jesssmith.co.uk to see images of her travelling childhood on her homepage.

Discuss

- Discuss how there is a preamble to the story. Look at how the language changes as the storyteller takes over. Then look for another change where Dragonory starts to speak.
- As a class, create the story of how Dragonory came to build the bridge.

