

The Taxman

– Extra

Starter Level

This level is suitable for beginner-level students who have been learning English for less than a year. It precedes the Common European Framework level A1. Suitable for users of CLICK magazine.

SYNOPSIS

An abbess arrives at Nottingham Castle. She claims she has been attacked by outlaws. In Sherwood Forest, Robin Hood's men capture a tax collector and his son, who reveal that there is a huge amount of tax money in the castle. The taxman is forced to help the outlaws steal it, but he double crosses them and locks them in the castle strongroom. The outlaws escape. The Sheriff then rushes to check on the tax money, hidden in the chapel where the abbess has been at prayer – but she, along with the money, has disappeared. In the forest, the outlaws find the taxman and the abbess with all the tax money. Robin takes the money and distributes it among the poor. As a subplot, Marian has to deal with the unwanted attentions of Guy of Gisborne, and with her father's demand that she stops helping the poor or finds a new home. She arranges to go and live with the Abbess of Rufford, but at the last minute her father relents and promises to help her in her work with the poor.

THE BACK STORY

This TV series had its first season in 2006 and its second in 2007. There are plans for a third series in 2008. Each season had 13 episodes. The series is the latest of many television interpretations of the Robin Hood legend, and has been extremely popular with both the older and younger viewing public. The first TV Robin Hood was Richard Greene in the 1950s, and it was

followed by other series in the 70s and 80s. Today's series is a successful combination of humour, adventure and romance. Themes include Marian's ambivalent feelings for Robin; the domineering Guy of Gisborne's clumsy love for her; and the defence of the innocent poor against the abuses of a corrupt local government.

Robin Hood has also been the inspiration for numerous film interpretations. The first was a silent movie made in 1908. Some of the films have been epic adventures, such as the 1938 Errol Flynn film, and others, like the 1993 film *Men in Tights*, have been comedies. Disney produced a hugely successful animated version in 1973, and perhaps one of the most famous Robin Hood films of all was Kevin Costner's *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* in 1991.

MEDIA LINKS

DVD: Series 1 and 2 of *Robin Hood* (©Tiger Aspect Productions) are available on DVD, and Blu-ray format. 'The Taxman' is taken from Episode 6 of Series 1.

CD: A recording of 'The Taxman' is available to accompany the Scholastic Reader.

Internet: You can find more information at the official website, www.bbc.co.uk/drama/robinhood.

There are many books and films about the legendary Robin Hood and his men.

HOW TO USE YOUR SCHOLASTIC READER

Choosing and motivating

Is this the right story for your class? Have your students seen the series *Robin Hood*, or any other version of the legend? Motivate them with background information (see The Back Story above) and by reading aloud the first page of the story with dramatic atmosphere.

Organising

Plan a class reading schedule. Decide how many pages to set for reading each week. Select exercises from the Self-Study section at the back of the reader and extra activities from this resource sheet to go with each chunk of reading. (All answers on page 4 of this resource sheet.)

Using the CD

Students can listen and follow in their books. They can listen and then read. They can read and then listen. All these activities will improve their reading speeds and skills.

Using the DVD

Select the English language option on the DVD. 'The Taxman' is Episode 6: 'The Taxman Cometh', in Volume 2. You could show it in chunks of, say, 15 minutes, in parallel with the class reading

schedule. Alternatively, show it when the class have finished the book, as a reward.

Glossary

Go to 'New Words' at the back of the reader. Translate the words with the class or get students to find meanings at home. The Vocabulary Builder on page 3 of this resource sheet practises the new words in a different context.

Casual language

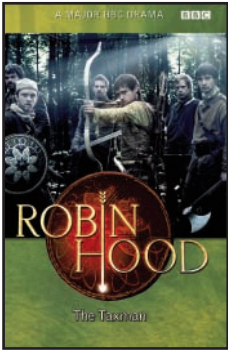
Introduce the informal expressions used in 'The Taxman' (see Vocabulary Builder on page 3 of this resource sheet). Put them into context. Ask students to look out for them as they read.

Fact Files

Set these as self-study or use for whole class work. These provide background information about the making of *Robin Hood* and life in medieval England.

What did they think?

Get everyone to do a written or spoken review of 'The Taxman'. Compare opinions. Did you like it? Let us know at: readers@scholasticeltreaders.com.



The Taxman

– Extra

People and places

1 Who

- a) governs the town of Nottingham? *the sheriff*
- b) lives in the house of Robin's family?
- c) is an old friend of Robin's?
- d) is Flaxton's son?
- e) works for the Sheriff?
- f) loves Marian?

2 Match the people with their homes.

- a) Robin i) Knighton Hall
- b) Marian ii) Sherwood Forest
- c) The Sheriff iii) Nottingham Castle
- d) Djaq
- e) Edward
- f) Much

Pages 6–11

1 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false sentences.

- a) The Sheriff is talking to two men about a dangerous job.
..... *T*
- b) Sir Guy is a doctor.
.....
- c) Robin's men find two people in the forest with lots of money.
.....
- d) Sir Guy often gives Marian things.
.....
- e) Sir Guy is going from Knighton Hall to the abbess in the castle.
.....
- f) Edward is happy because Marian doesn't want a husband.
.....

2 Circle the correct answers.

- a) Marian is *friendly* / unfriendly to Sir Guy.
- b) Edward wants *an important husband* / *a clever husband* for Marian.
- c) Marian *loves* / *doesn't love* Sir Guy.
- d) Without Marian's help, lots of poor children have no *food* / *homes*.

- e) The taxman's *father* / *son* is with him.
- f) Robin and his men *are* / *aren't* nice to Flaxton.

3 In your own language, talk about these questions.

- a) Is Sir Guy nice to Marian? What are the good and bad things about him?
- b) Is Edward a good father? Why (not)?

4 Work with a friend. You are Marian and one of Marian's friends. Talk about Marian's problems.

5 You live and work with Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest. Are you happy? Why (not)?

Pages 12–18

1 Change the names and make these sentences true.

- a) ~~Will's father~~ locks the abbess into the chapel. *The Sheriff*
- b) *Marian* makes tax chests.
- c) *Flaxton* and the tax money are in the same room.
- d) *The Sheriff* asks the abbess for help.
- e) *Will* locks Robin and his men in the strongroom.
- f) *The abbess* has a good idea in the strongroom.

2 Complete with the correct form of (not) want to.

- a) The Sheriff and Sir Guy *want to* stop the work of Robin and his men.
- b) Marian be Sir Guy's wife.
- c) Robin and Will give the tax money to poor people.
- d) Much and Allan take the tax money from the castle.
- e) Flaxton help Robin, but he can't say no.
- f) Marian live with the abbess.

3 Complete with the correct word.

about for ~~to~~ out of

- a) I want to talk *to* to God.
- b) I can pay you today's food.
- c) There are hundreds guards at the castle.
- d) Don't worry it.
- e) We can't get

4 Work with a friend. You are Much and Will in Sherwood Forest. Talk about the tax money. Why do / don't you want to take it?

5 Talk about these questions. What do you think?

- a) Does Will's idea in the strongroom work?
- b) Is the tax money safe in the chapel? Why (not)?
- c) Who has the tax money at the end of the story?

RESOURCE SHEET STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Pages 19–25

1 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false sentences.

- a) The Sheriff pays Flaxton because he takes the tax money.
F. The sheriff pays Flaxton because he puts Robin and his men in the strongroom.
- b) Will knows about locks.

- c) Marian doesn't want to be in the same room as her father.

- d) Edward loves Marian very much.

- e) Djaq is with Cedric in the forest.

- f) Robin wants to go to Holland with the abess.

2 Who says this? To whom? What are they talking about? Complete the sentences.

- a) 'He isn't expensive, but he's very good.'
The Sheriff says this to *Robin* about *Flaxton*
- b) 'You can kill him.'
 says this to about
- c) 'Guards! They can go.'
 says this to because
- d) 'Why aren't you dead in Nottingham Castle?!'
 says this to because
- e) 'You're the same as the Sheriff.'
 says this to because

3 Are there people like Flaxton and the abess today? How do they take money from people? (You can answer in your own language.)

FINAL TASKS

1 You are one of the characters from *The Taxman*. Write your part of the story.

- e.g. Sir Guy: I find a nun at the castle.
 She talks about an attack in ...

2 Look at the poster opposite. Now make a 'Wanted' poster for another person in the story.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

1 Complete the sentences with words from the 'New Words' list.

- An *abess*..... is an important *nun*.....
- Nuns often talk to G..... in a c.....
- Very important places have a g..... in the day and at night.
- Who g.....s your country? A man or a woman?
- We the door of our house when we go out.
- 'Give us your money or you're dead!' 'Oh no! Please don't a..... us!'
- People with a job usually pay t.....

2 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct any mistakes.

- Lots of people live in castles today.
F. Not many people live in castles today.
- There is a lot of red and blue in a forest.

- You can put lots of different things in a chest.

- Rich people haven't got any money.

- Schools are very dangerous.

- A strongroom is a good place for expensive things.

Casual language

- 'Don't worry about it.' (p.16). Marian says this to Robin because he wants to help her but he can't. It means that it isn't important.
- 'Oh well.' (p.21). The Sheriff says this when Much says 'You're a terrible man.' It means this doesn't worry him.

Complete the sentences with the casual language above.

- 'Oh no! The cinema is closed today. We can't go there.'
 '..... We can go to the park, then.'
- 'I'm an hour late. I'm very sorry.'
 '..... Katie is late too. We're waiting for her.'

WANTED

THIS WOMAN



She is about twenty-five. She is tall and thin, with long black hair. She is beautiful and very clever. She goes from town to town and takes money from people.

Where is she now?

Tell us and we can pay you

£100.

The Sheriff of Nottingham

MAKING ROBIN HOOD (pages 26–7)

Research and write

Ask students to work in small groups. Each group chooses a TV series that they enjoy. They find out where it is filmed and what life is like for the actors in the series. In class they pool their information to write a fact file about the series.

Discuss, write and act

In groups, students choose a hero from the past who they think would be a good subject for a TV show. They write a description of the characters and a scene from the show. They should act out their dialogue for the class, who votes on the best one.

TIME TRAVEL: ENGLAND IN THE YEAR 1200 (pages 28–9)

Discuss and write

Ask students to work in pairs to make up a daily schedule for Cecily, Eleanor or Edward. They should use the information in the text and the schedule on page 25 to help them.

Research and write

Students find out about the life of another child from medieval Europe, e.g. a prince or princess, a farmer's or blacksmith's son, a servant. They can use the Internet or a library. Give them some questions to answer, for example: *Do they live in the town or the country? Who do they live with? Who teaches them? What do they learn? What jobs do they do?* They then write a paragraph about the child, like the ones in the Fact File.

Discuss, write and roleplay

Students work in pairs. They write a list of the good and bad things about the life of a nun/monk. Then they swap partners and do a roleplay. One student is a parent, the other a child. They discuss the child's future and the possibility of becoming a nun/monk.

FILM/CD FOLLOW-UP

Observation

Choose a scene from the DVD episode and prepare questions on it before class, e.g. *What colour is Marian's dress? Who gives Robin the book?* etc. Play the scene a couple of times and ask the students your questions. Then play another scene; this time students have to write at least two questions for their partners to answer.

Prediction

Read a chapter with the students and play the relevant part of the DVD episode or CD. Stop at some dramatic points and ask what happens next.

Awards

Play part of the episode on DVD and ask children to vote for the best actor, the most exciting scene and the best costume.

Roleplay

Put students into pairs and ask them to out a part of the story. They can choose from:

- the abbess and Sir Guy, page 6
- Marian and Sir Guy, pages 8–9
- Marian and Robin, page 16
- Edward and Marian, page 23

ANSWER KEY

Self-Study Activities (pages 30–2)

- 1 Open answers.
- 2 Open answers.
- 3 An abbess and a nun live in the same place. A taxman gets money for the government. A guard keeps things and places safe.
- 4 Open answers.
- 5 a) The Sheriff b) Sir Guy c) Marian d) Edward e) Flaxton f) Robin
- 6 a) the Sheriff, to two men at the castle, about a dangerous job. b) Flaxton, to Robin's men, about his tax book. c) Marian, to Sir Guy, about the Abbess. d) Edward, to Marian, about her work at night.
- 7 Open answers.
- 8 a) lock b) chapel c) strongroom d) chest e) god
- 9 a) They want to take the tax money. b) She wants to talk to the Abbess; she wants to live with the nuns at Rufford. c) Yes, but then he locks him and his men in the strongroom.
- 10 a) x The Sheriff doesn't like helping nuns. b) / c) x Will's mother is dead. d) / e) / f) x Robin wants to help Marian, but he hasn't got time now. g) /
- 11 a) the castle b) the chapel c) the strongroom d) Rufford e) the chapel
- 12 Open answers.
- 13 Open answers.
- 14 a) 6 b) 2 c) 5 d) 3 e) 1 f) 4
- 15 a) iii b) iii c) ii) d) i e) i
- 16 Open answers.
- 17 Open answers.

Resource Sheet Activities

People and places

- 1 b) Sir Guy c) Marian d) Cedric e) Sir Guy f) Sir Guy
- 2 b) i c) iii d) ii e) i f) ii

Pages 6–11

- 1 b) F. Sir Guy wants a doctor for the abbess. c) F. Robin's men find two people in the forest with a tax book. d) T e) T f) F. Edward isn't happy because Marian doesn't want a husband.
- 2 b) an important husband c) doesn't love d) food e) son f) aren't
- 3 Open answers.
- 4 Open answers.

Pages 12–18

- 1 b) Will's father c) The abbess d) Marian e) Flaxton f) Will
- 2 b) doesn't want to c) want to d) don't want to e) doesn't want to f) wants to
- 3 b) for c) of d) about e) out
- 4 Open answers.
- 5 Open answers.

Pages 19–25

- 1 b) T c) F. Marian doesn't want to be in the same room as Sir Guy. d) T e) T f) F. Robin doesn't want to go to Holland with the abbess.
- 2 b) The Sheriff, Robin, Cedric c) Sir Guy, the guards, Robin has got the Sheriff. d) Flaxton, Robin, Robin is in the forest and not the strongroom. e) Will, the abbess, she and Flaxton are taking poor people's tax money.
- 3 Open answers.

Vocabulary Builder

1. abbess, nun 2. God, chapel 3. guard 4. govern 5. lock 6. attack 7. taxes
2. F. You can see lots of green and brown in a forest. 3. T 4. F. Rich people have got lots of money. 5. F. Schools aren't very dangerous. / Cars are very dangerous. 6. T

Casual Language

1. Oh well. 2. Don't worry about it.