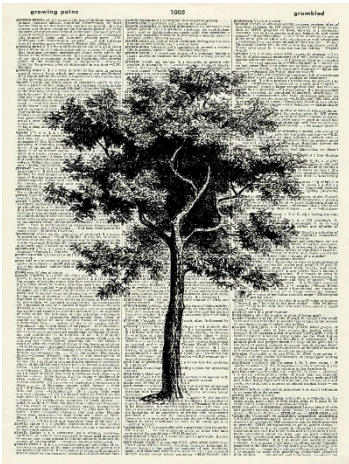


Y7 Autumn Term 2 – English home learning
Topic: Roots of Western Literature



LESSON 2: Ali Baba & the Forty Thieves

LO: Explore a traditional story imported from another culture

TASK 1:

What do you know about the Black Lives Matter movement?

You might think about:

- Protests in June 2020
- Statues being toppled/ new statues being put up
- The school curriculum.
- WATCH THIS: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/15/edward-colston-statue-replaced-by-sculpture-of-black-lives-matter-protester>

Write down your thoughts:

TASK 2:

A key idea emerging from the Black Lives Matter movement is that the school curriculum in the UK is biased towards white history.

- There has been lots of discussion about the need to decolonise the curriculum. Do you agree?
- Why do you think this unit is called Roots of Western Literature?
- Do you think that the Meadowhead English and History curriculum needs to change?

CHALLENGE TASK:

Research one of these writers. Find out five facts about them and their writing:

- Maya Angelou
- Imtiaz Dharker
- John Agard
- Langston Hughes
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche
- Zadie Smith.

NAME OF WRITER: _____ **FACTS:**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

- This was a collection of many different Middle Eastern folk tales compiled in Arabic during the Middle Ages (900-1200 CE).
- It was collected over many centuries by various authors and translators, with roots in ancient and medieval Arabic, Persian, Indian, Greek, Jewish and Turkish folklore and literature
- Some of the most famous stories – Aladdin and the Magic Lamp, Sinbad the Sailor, Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves – were not part of earlier collections, but were added later by European translators.
- Centred around a framed narrative – all of the stories are told by a character within a main story.
- The frame story concerns the Persian King, Shahryar, and Scheherazade, the daughter of his advisor.
- Scheherazade begins to tell a story, but when the time comes for her execution, she has not finished...
- The king delays her execution by a day, so he can hear the end of the story; however, as soon as it is finished she begins another.
- Again, the king delays her execution, and again she begins another tale.
- Scheherazade continues to tell stories for 1,001 nights, avoiding execution each time, until she is eventually pardoned by the king.

WATCH THIS CARTOON VERSION OF THE STORY: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwM2pfh2Ow8>

ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES

- The stories that Scheherazade tells vary widely, from love stories to historical tales, and include characters such as jinns (genies), ghouls, apes and sorcerers
- One of the stories that is often included in the collection is Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves
- Watch the trailer for the 1944 film version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YPwvBSmQKEI>
- *Can you spot the password to the secret thieves' cave?*

The PASSWORD is: _____.

SEE PAGE 7 TO CHECK YOUR ANSWER!

TASK 3:

Now read the opening to the story o ‘Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves’:

From One Thousand and One Nights (c.700-1100 CE; tr. EW Laine 1909)

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

IN former days there lived in a town of Persia two brothers, one named Kasim, and the other Ali Baba. Their father divided a small inheritance equally between them. Kasim married a rich wife, and became a wealthy merchant. Ali Baba married a woman as poor as himself, and lived by cutting wood and bringing it upon three asses into the town to sell.

One day, when Ali Baba was in the forest, and had just cut wood enough to load his asses, he saw at a distance a great cloud of dust approaching him. He observed it with attention, and distinguished soon after a body of horsemen, whom he suspected to be robbers. He determined to leave his asses in order to save himself; so climbed up a large tree, planted on a high rock, the branches of which were thick enough to conceal him, and yet enabled him to see all that passed without being discovered.

The troop, to the number of forty, well mounted and armed, came to the foot of the rock on which the tree stood, and there dismounted. Every man unbridled his horse, tied him to some shrub, and hung about his neck a bag of corn which they carried behind them. Then each took off his saddle-bag, which from its weight seemed to Ali Baba to be full of gold and silver. One, whom he took to be their captain, came under the tree in which he was concealed, and making his way through some shrubs, pronounced the words: “Open, Sesame!”

A door opened in the rock; and after he had made all his troop enter before him, he followed them, when the door shut again of itself. The robbers stayed some time within the rock, during which Ali Baba, fearful of being caught, remained in the tree.

At last the door opened again, and as the captain went in last, so he came out first, and stood to see them all pass by him; when Ali Baba heard him make the door close by pronouncing the words: “Shut, Sesame!” Every man at once went and bridled his horse, fastened his wallet, and mounted again; and when the captain saw them all ready, he put himself at their head, and returned the way they had come.

Ali Baba followed them with his eyes as far as he could see them, and afterward waited a long time before he descended. Remembering the words the captain of the robbers used to cause the door to open and shut, he wished to try if his pronouncing them would have the same effect. Accordingly he went among the shrubs, and, receiving the door concealed behind them, stood before it, and said, “Open, Sesame” Whereupon the door instantly flew wide open.

Now Ali Baba expected a dark, dismal cavern, but was surprised to see a well-lighted and spacious chamber, lighted from an opening at the top of the rock, and filled with all sorts of provisions, rich bales of silk, embroideries, and valuable tissues, piled upon one another, gold and silver ingots in great heaps, and money in bags. The sight of all these riches made him suppose that this cave must have been occupied for ages by robbers, who had succeeded one another.

Ali Baba went boldly into the cave, and collected as much of the gold coin, which was in bags, as his three asses could carry. When he had loaded them with the bags, he laid wood over them so that they could not be seen. Then he stood before the door, and pronouncing the words, “Shut, Sesame!” the door closed of itself; and he made the best of his way to the town.

When he got home, he drove his asses into a little yard, shut the gates carefully, threw off the wood that covered the panniers, carried the bags into his house, and ranged them in order before his wife. He then emptied the bags, which raised such a heap of gold as dazzled his wife’s eyes, and then he told her the whole adventure from beginning to end, and, above all, recommended her to keep it secret.

TASK 4:

Write a description of what you see when the cave door opens...

<https://www.google.com/search?q=ali+baba+the+cave&source=Inms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewiK m4z4 avpAhUGCsAKHaT8BscQ AUoAnoECA0QBA&biw=1034&bih=620&safe=active&ssui=on#imgrc=tqBUf0efoycH2M>

Use the image and vocabulary bank below to help you:

As soon as I uttered those words, the door flew right open and before my very eyes was/were...



VOCABULARY BANK:

Capacious (Spacious/ Large)
Vast amounts / Copious
amounts (Enormous amounts)
Abundance (In excess)
Plentiful/Bountiful (Lots /
overflowing)
Spellbound
Enthralled
Mesmerised
Enchanted
Captivated

READ WHAT HAPPENS IN THE REST OF THE STORY:

Ali Baba's wife borrows a scale from Kasim's wife to measure the gold before Ali Baba hides it.

Kasim's wife finds out that Ali Baba's wife was measuring gold and both she and Kasim insist on knowing the secret.

Kasim travels to the cave, forgets the password and gets stuck inside.

When the forty thieves arrive, they kill him, cut his body into quarters and hang him up in the cave to scare anyone else who may trespass.

Ali Baba is concerned when his brother does not return so investigates, finds the corpse, and take it home.

Kasim's maid, Marjaneh, visited a cobbler named Baba Mustafa, blindfolds him, (so he doesn't recognise where he is going or who he is dealing with) leads him to the house, and asks him to sew the body parts of Kasim back together for a piece of gold.

The thieves realise the body is missing from the cave!

One of the thieves meets Baba Mustafa and learns that he has recently stitched a body back together. The thief blindfolds the cobbler who is able to navigate his way back to the house. The thief marks the house with white chalk so they can identify it later.

Marjaneh spots the chalk mark and realises something is wrong. She chalks neighbouring houses to spoil the plan.

The Captain of the thieves is incensed by this and kills the first thief.

The Captain orders a second thief to find the house. Baba Mustafa is (once again) blindfolded, and the house is marked with red chalk.

Marjaneh chalks the neighbouring houses in red, and the second thief is murdered by the Captain.

The Captain decides to find Baba Mustafa himself and memorises the location of the house.

The Captain disguises himself as an oil merchant in need of lodgings for the night. The other thieves are hidden in oil jars carried by mules. Only one jar contains oil. They plan to sneak out once Ali Baba is asleep and kill him.

Marjaneh isn't fooled by the plan.

When she goes out to borrow some oil, she discovers the men in the jars and boils oil from the final jar, killing them with it.

The Captain escapes.

Marjaneh tells Ali Baba what happened and they bury the corpses. Ali Baba grants Marjaneh her freedom.

But the Captain still wants revenge!

He disguises himself as a merchant and befriends Ali Baba's son so that he is invited for dinner.

Marjaneh is suspicious of this and creates a plan.

She and another servant perform for the men and during the dance, she stabs the Captain.

Ali Baba is so grateful for Marjaneh's actions that he gives her his son's hand in marriage.

Ali Baba is the only one who knows the cave's secret words and passes it onto his sons so that they may live happily in prosperity.

TASK 5:

Empathetic Writing

Write a FIRST PERSON account from the point of view of one of the characters based on what you know about the story. You could write as:

- ✓ **Ali Baba**
- ✓ **Marjaneh**
- ✓ **The Captain/leader of the forty thieves**
- ✓ **One of the forty thieves or**
- ✓ **Ali Baba's son.**

You could write in the form of:

A letter

A diary entry

A speech or

A confession.

Please write your response in the box below:

THE PASSWORD IS: OPEN SESAME!