

USING THE AUDIO

1. HOW THEY ARE ORGANISED

The twelve episodes of *Return from Troy* and an interview with the storytellers are streamable from our website and can also be purchased on two CDs. The total playing time of *Return from Troy* is 2 1/2 hours with individual episodes varying in length from 9 to 14 minutes. Each episode starts with a woman's voice announcing the episode title. A gong is used to signal the end of each episode.

The episodes are themselves divided into two or three tracks to offer teachers the chance to plan pauses for discussion, questions and explanation.

Where you pause is a matter of making judgements for the class and content and of assessing the response of the listeners at the time. Pausing to help with understanding needs to be carefully balanced against interrupting the narrative flow and thereby restricting children's enjoyment and understanding. Using the downloadable transcripts it is straightforward to locate and repeat a section. You will notice different things when you listen for a second time.

2. PREPARING CHILDREN TO LISTEN

It is important that the experience of listening is given high status and that children listen in the best circumstances possible. This means considering the physical surroundings and discussing what changes could be made. Children need to sit comfortably for sustained listening and to be able to speak and listen to one another and to the teacher as well as listening to the recording. It also needs to be made clear that there should be no interruptions from inside or from outside the classroom. The position and volume of the speakers are important.

Share this decision making. Giving children responsibility for creating their own listening routine with rules provides an opportunity for them to develop the speaking and listening skill of group discussion. It also involves them as a group and allows them to claim listening to *Return from Troy* for themselves as an important, personal occasion.

USING THE EPISODE-BY-EPISODE TEACHING NOTES

1. LAYOUT AND ORGANISATION

The notes for each episode begin with an **introduction**. This offers guidance as to the important points in the episode, suggests themes to be developed in questioning and discussion and opportunities to be followed up.

There is information about the **tracks** showing where you may pause and giving total running times.

This is followed by a **summary** of what happens in the episode, matched to the content of each track.

The **starting points** prepare children for listening in two ways:

The first is by forearming them with information and knowledge of things which will crop up in the story and which might otherwise hinder their understanding. This will help to anticipate points requiring explanation and so avoid pauses during the listening.

The second is by involving them personally in the story through discussion of what has gone before and what is to come in a way that encourages thinking and questioning and rouses their curiosity. Asking them to listen out for a particular point beforehand or to make predictions gives a focus to listening and is often taken up and developed in a follow-up activity.

The **follow-up** section offers a range of teaching activities which arise from listening to the story. Some activities involve discussion of characters and use of language. There are speaking and listening activities which can stand on their own but can also be developed as writing tasks. There is discussion of ideas and themes which run through the story as a whole. Links between episodes are pointed out. Simple recall or comprehension questions have been kept to a minimum because teachers will want to make their own judgements and ask such questions in response to the needs of their particular class.

For each episode there is also a final, **further activity** which is often of a practical or cross-curricular nature. This is something that allows children to present their ideas and understanding of the text in a different way and may be a development of one of the previous follow-up activities.

Some activities are intended to follow immediately after listening; others you can return to later.

Links to download related **illustrations** are at the bottom of each page.

2. MAKE IT YOUR OWN

The suggestions are not prescriptive. It is not intended that you try to cover all of them but rather that from the range and variety you can select and adapt what is right for your class, taking into account the age, ability, the time you have and what you find most useful.

For younger children you may wish to reduce the length and concentrate on fewer of the stories. The adventures of Odysseus after he has left Troy up until the time he reaches Ithaca (i.e. the actual journey - Episodes 2 to 8) are a series of stories which form a section within the whole. Each of the stories within that journey stands well on its own. You might choose to use this section rather than the whole.

3. USING VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Visual representation is very helpful to learners and acts as a valuable focus for speaking and listening. The following suggestions are for visual supports and are referred to in the episode notes. Each visual support builds up as the story progresses so you need to have the materials ready at the beginning. In the teaching notes we suggest where to first introduce them so that you bring them in gradually.

Picture of Odysseus

Two images of Odysseus are provided (Episode 1). Make a large copy of your chosen illustration. Odysseus is the central character and his picture can be first shown at the beginning of the story before revealing his identity (see Teachers' notes for Episode 1). As the story progresses and we find out more about the character of Odysseus, evidence can be added around this picture (e.g. he was boastful — because he called out his name to Polyphemus). This picture can be a focus for every episode and allows individual children to add their own words and the teacher to add ideas agreed by the class. Add his names too because he has many and they convey important ideas about him.

Journey map

A journey map is included in the illustrations (Episode 3). You may wish to show a map with information already marked in or you could use a blank map (Episode 3 illustrations) and mark places and events as you meet them in the story. Episode titles, illustrations and captions can be used. Some places are described in detail. Children can search the text to find them (e.g. *cobbled hill to King Aeolus's palace; the terraces, the vineyards, the goat tracks, the shingled beaches of Rocky Ithaca.*)

Timeline

The story takes place over a long period and there are potentially confusing changes in chronology. To start with have a blank line and mark in 'Odysseus leaves Ithaca for Troy' near one end and 'Odysseus returns from Troy to Ithaca' near the other. Events can be placed on this line as we learn about them. There will need to be discussion about where to place them and how to mark in the years.

This will help with time changes in the story and lets children see how the whole story structure works.

This timeline can also be used for predictions and dreams. Sometimes we are told in advance what will happen. Does this always turn out to be the case?

Character and place cards

In the Extras section is a downloadable list of characters and places. The information and symbols can be used to make a set of cards. For each entry make a set of 3 playing cards. The children can design and make the cards with the name and picture, details and symbol. Illustrations could be the children's own or researched from other sources. The cards can then be used for matching games such as snap game, making families, perhaps giving different values to some cards e.g. gods — an opportunity for group discussion and decision making.

USING THE TRANSCRIPT

These stories have first been told from memory and the telling recorded as a sound recording. They were not written down until afterwards. So the transcript is a written record of speaking. The structure and language used in speech differs from the written form. It is useful to look for examples such as incomplete sentences and repetition of words.

The transcript allows teachers to look through and find sections of stories easily. You may wish to look together more closely at a part of a story through sharing copies of the appropriate section of the transcript.

After listening to the recording children can turn to the transcript to find information and do their own research. It is useful to organise a way for them to work independently to read and listen at the same time.

USING THE PHOTOCOPIABLE ILLUSTRATIONS

In the interview (Extras folder) the storyteller Daniel Morden describes how he remembers a story as a series of pictures — mental images in his mind’s eye. We want children to listen and imagine in this way, so illustrations are important.

The illustrations in the *Guide* are presented as line drawings so that they can be used more easily. They can be printed and photocopied as they stand but you may also like to enlarge or change the pictures, possibly masking part of them.

There are notes with each illustration to give some background information to teachers and there are suggestions for ways in which each may be used in teaching.

1. INTRODUCING THESE ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE CHILDREN

Talk to the children about the source of the illustration. Some are from thousands of years ago, some are more recent. This shows how the stories have become part of our heritage and continue to be illustrated.

Some are from ancient containers for food and drink which are very important sources from archaeology. The layout of the design may be influenced by its purpose. It has to fit a certain shape.

The drawings in the book are line drawings done by an artist today — simplified versions of the originals. Use our website and other sources to show the children the originals. This also allows them to see the illustrations in colour and to think about how big they were and how they were used.

2. IDEAS FOR USING THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Look at the episode notes and the notes opposite each illustration for specific suggestions. In addition consider the following:

- Use it as a starting point to arouse curiosity before the children have heard the story. They can discuss their thoughts and questions and move on to annotate the drawing.
- Once you know the story make it part of a storyboard adding frames before and after.
- Extend the picture and add information based on your knowledge of the story. This works particularly well where an illustration is a flattened cylinder. Make it into a cylinder to show how it would have looked. Notice how you see just parts of a picture with each view. Children could take a viewpoint and draw what they think might be at either side of it.
- Look at things today which are illustrated with stories (e.g. mugs or children’s lunchboxes). Discuss the stories used. Use the Greek stories for decorating these present day items.
- Cut up the picture into bits like the fragments an archaeologist might find. Put it together like a jigsaw.
- Show the picture with missing fragments. Ask the children to draw in their ideas for the missing parts. Use another colour to make it clear what is supposition.
- Find other illustrations for a particular part of the story and compare. Use books and the internet.

- In drama recreate the picture as a freeze frame — words could be spoken and thoughts expressed.
- Photograph the above.
- Ask the children to do their own illustration *before* showing them an existing illustration — especially useful with, for example, the Trojan horse where there may be many ways of interpreting it and they may have to do some research.