

The Switching Hour

Damaris Young

Lesson Plan One – Upper Key Stage 2 – Year 5

Curriculum Links

English

Pupils should be taught to:

- maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:
 - continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or text books
 - increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions
- perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume and movement so that meaning is clear.

Objectives

To discuss and compare myths, legends and traditional stories.

To summarise a well-known story in their own words.

To create a new myth, legend or traditional story of their own, and present it to a group.

To discuss and consider the effects of environmental changes.

To consider appropriate adjectives to describe a cloudburst.

Outcomes

Children will learn to evaluate the value of myths, legends and traditional stories.

They will have an increased awareness of the effects of climate change.

Children will develop their descriptive and creative skills.

Resources

Prior reading of the book *The Switching Hour* by Damaris Young.

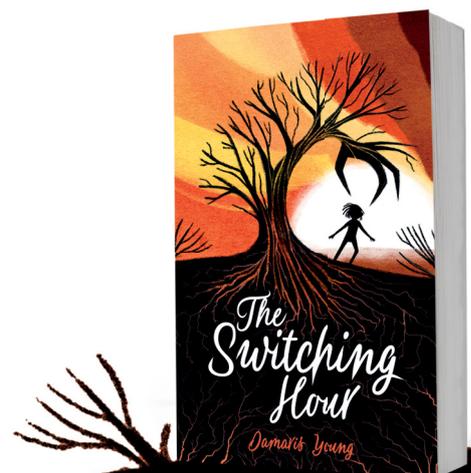
Supporting Resource Sheets

Activity Sheet One: Re-telling a favourite traditional story, myth or legend

Activity Sheet Two: Writing a descriptive poem or piece of prose

Lead in

Re-read the last few sentences of page 15 and the beginning of page 16.



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Main task

Discuss the relevance of Granny Uma's words in relation to the many myths, legends and traditional stories we have in our society today, which have been passed down through generations.

Explain that such folktales were, and sometimes still are, passed down by oral tradition. Some use animals as characters to portray human weaknesses or to convey a moral about the way we should behave.

Discuss for example:

'The Tortoise and the Hare': Remind children of how the tortoise wins the race against the hare because it applies itself to the task and is not distracted on its way.

'The Three Little Pigs': Consider the different attitudes of the pigs to the way they structure their houses. Only the little pig with the house of bricks has a home strong enough to keep out the Big Bad Wolf.

Some legends or superstitions are passed on from one generation to another following real-life situations, and may apply to certain countries or regions.

Consider the New Year tradition which followed a period in history where Vikings raided parts of Britain, ransacking and terrorising communities. The Vikings caused so much fear that generations of people would only allow a person with dark hair who was carrying a lump of coal and piece of bread to enter their house as the New Year began. This was to ensure that the person was not a Viking with blonde hair, but a Briton with dark hair. Symbolically, coal was to provide warmth and the bread was food for the following year.

Involve all children in recalling and sharing other traditional stories, myths or legends that they have heard or read, which may have a warning or a moral for its listener.

Activity One:

Provide children with a copy of *Activity Sheet One: Re-telling a favourite traditional story, myth or legend*. Ask them to choose their own favourite story and re-tell it.

Differentiation: Ask older children to create a story of their own.

Activity Two:

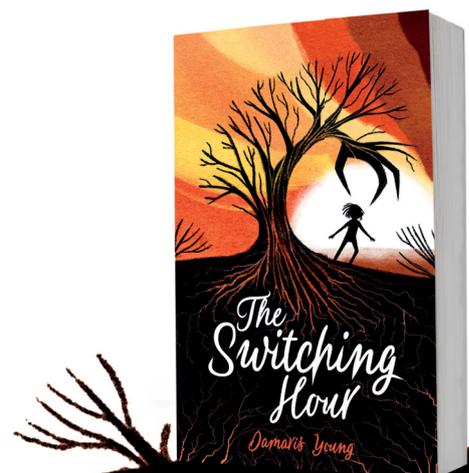
Re-read the paragraph of the book near the top of page 264, which describes the downpour of rain, beginning with "Like the crack of a whip..."

Invite children to describe any sudden downpours they have experienced. Create a list of adjectives which most explicitly depict the effects of sudden, heavy rain. Include sounds, such as a "clap of thunder", or feelings, such as "the cold of the rain".

Ask the children to use *Activity Sheet Two* to write a poem or a descriptive piece of prose. They should use some of the adjectives to portray an exciting and beautiful cloudburst.

Differentiation: Ask older children to write an additional poem or piece of prose, describing the effect of drought.

Plenary: Ask children to read their stories and poems to the class.



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Lesson Plan Two – Upper Key Stage 2 – Year 6 Curriculum Links

Pupils should be taught to:

- maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:
 - continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or text books
 - increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions
- draft and write by:
 - in narratives, describing settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to convey character and advance action.

Objectives

To ensure children's understanding of the Badeko, which is an essential thread in the story.

To consider the effects of climate changes.

To create new characters and stories inspired by The Switching Hour.

Outcome

Deeper understanding of the legend of Badeko will inspire children to create their own characters, creatures and myths in a new setting of their own, and in a different climate.

Resources

Prior reading of the book *The Switching Hour* by Damaris Young.

Supporting Resource Sheets

Activity Sheet One: A summary of Badeko

Activity Sheet Two: Planning your own traditional story

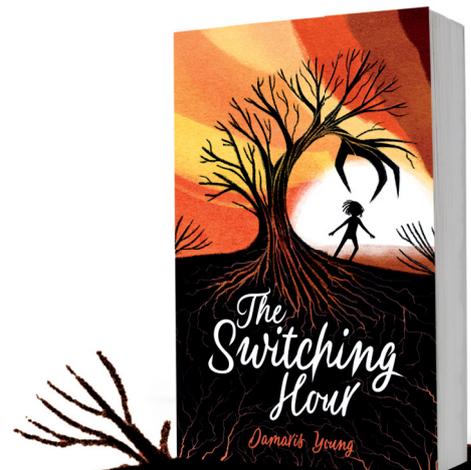
Activity Sheet Three: Telling your own traditional story

Lead in

Discuss the effects of a drought season on the setting and creatures in the book.

Consider what the opposite effects of a rainy season might bring.

Debate what type of creatures, real or imagined, might survive and flourish in floods.



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Main task

Activity One:

Tell children of current concerns about global warming in our own real environment, and that many scientists now believe that the overuse of fossil fuels is creating a warming blanket over the earth. This blanket is causing icebergs to melt, so animals are losing their habitat and ocean levels are rising.

Discuss the apparent increase in hot weather, crops drying up and concerns about drought.

In comparison, tell the biblical story of 'Noah's Ark', where Noah, having been warned of 40 days and 40 nights of rain which would cause the flooding of the whole world, builds an ark and takes on board two of every creature, to save them. Each day he sends out a dove to seek for dry land, but each day it comes back with nothing, until at last, it returns with an olive leaf. He knows then that the floods are going down and dry land is to be found.

Invite children to tell their own stories of extreme weather, whether it is something they have experienced themselves or something they have heard from family members.

Activity Two:

Provide each child with a copy *Activity Sheet One: A summary of the story of Badeko*.

Explore children's understanding of this legend. How far do they agree with Amaya's mother that 'it was just a story'? (Page 10)

Develop the discussion into building up a new story based on the regular flooding of a land, rather than a drought.

Activity Three

Read together the introduction to the book, which describes a creature with milk-white eyes.

Establish that the reader will come to realise that this is Badeko.

Invite children to jot down some ideas of a fantasy creature of their own and then ask them to share their ideas with the group.

Provide each child with a copy of *Activity Sheet Two: Planning your own traditional story*.

Ask children to complete the sheet, using some of the ideas generated in the discussions. They should also describe a creature of their own in the 'Character' section.

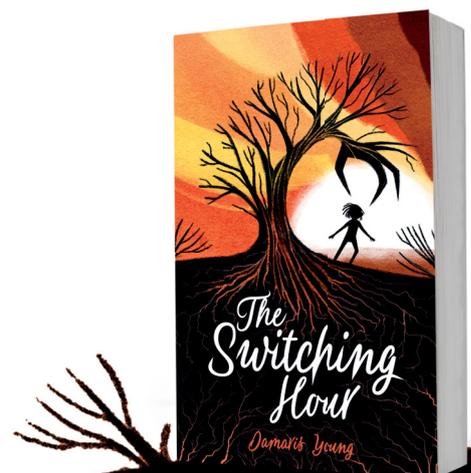
Activity Four

Ask children to use Activity Sheet Two as a basis to guide them into writing their own legend in a setting of floods. The children can write-up their legend using *Activity Sheet Three: Telling your own traditional story*.

Differentiation: Ask younger children to work in a group to create their story, under teacher guidance.

Plenary: Ask children to read their stories and to the class.

Compare the different characters and plots.



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Activity Sheet One: Summary of the traditionally told story of Badeko

The story of Badeko was passed to Granny Uma by her mama, and told to her by her mother before her.

When the drought arrives and the rivers dry up, Badeko, the 'Dream Eater', awakens from its nest under the Dead tree, which is hidden in the middle of the forest.

The last time the Dream Eater woke up was before Granny Uma's time, during the Great Drought of a hundred years ago.

When the creature had first awoken, it had started small, dining on the dreams of birds. As the drought progressed, the creature had turned to the dreams of children to satisfy its increasing hunger.

Without the rains, the creature was stuck between this world and the next, it was born by the drought, and passed away with the rains. Death and re-birth, over and over again.

When 'the switching hour' comes, it begins to roam the night-time world, using its trickery to lure people out of their houses.

You must never let it in!

If you are caught, it will take you to the Dead Tree which is as white as bones, and once there, it will sing a song to send you into a sleep that you cannot wake from.

As Badeko eats your dreams with its sharp teeth, the memory of your unfortunate soul begins to disappear from the minds of those that knew and loved it – no one will remember you enough to attempt a rescue. Your family and friends will catch the Sorrow Sickness, and be cursed to grieve forever for someone they can't remember.

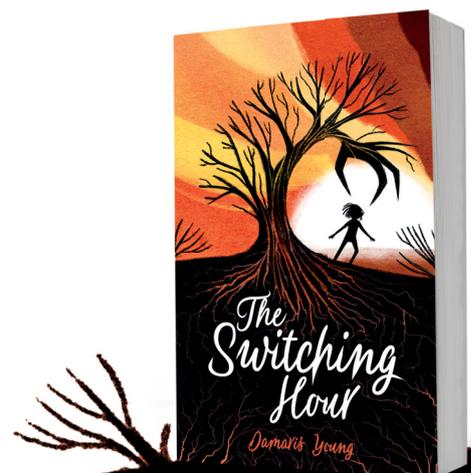
Now its appetite has grown bigger, it needs more than a child's dreams. If it could feast on a nightmare, such as Amaya's, it would then be strong enough to capture the dreams of the Old ones, those fully-grown children.

Illustration by Kelsey Buzzell



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#TheSwitchingHour



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Activity Sheet Two: Planning your own traditional story

Use the framework below to help you plot a story of your own, to pass down to others.
Set your story in a climate of flooding.

The Switching Hour	Your story's title:
Climate: Drought	Climate:
Setting: A forest	Setting:
Character: Badeko	Character:
Other real or imagined characters: Creatures of the forest. Amaya, Kaleb, their Grandmother, and Mally.	Other real or imagined characters:
Plot: To steal dreams.	Plot:
When does it happen? In the Switching Hour, during a drought.	When does it happen?

Illustration by Kelsey Buzzell



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