

THE WOLVES IN THE WALLS

Education Resource Pack



The Wolves in the Walls

The Wolves in the Walls is a puppet-infested production adapted by Toby Olié from the original graphic novel by Neil Gaiman, illustrated by Dave McKean.

This production is A Little Angel Theatre, Bristol Old Vic and York Theatre Royal co-production.

When Lucy hears noises from behind the walls, she tries to warn her family that there are wolves lurking inside their house, but her family doesn't believe her. Then one day, Lucy's fears come true when a pack of wolves comes bursting out of the walls, forcing Lucy and her family to live at the bottom of the garden. But the story is far from over – Lucy must gather her courage, as her battle against the wolves is only just beginning.



Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean's spooky and hilarious tale comes to thrilling theatrical life in this frenzy of puppetry, songs, and shadow-play directed by Toby Olié and featuring original songs by Adam Pleeth and Carl Grose. Suitable for brave children and scared adults.



Little Angel Theatre



John Wright, the founder of Little Angel Theatre, was born in South Africa in 1906. He travelled to England in 1935 and worked as an assistant stage manager for the Ballet Rambert while studying at the Central School of Art and Design. During this time he saw a puppet performance by Podrecca's Piccoli and became hooked. John made his very first puppet in 1938.

In 1961 John and his troupe found a derelict temperance hall in Islington and transformed it into a theatre, designed for the presentation of marionette shows. It opened on Saturday 24th November 1961. This was to be the first purpose built puppet theatre the country had seen for many years and the only one with a permanent long string marionette bridge constructed backstage. The bridge was designed for puppeteers to stand on while they manipulate long stringed puppets who perform on the stage below leaving the audience unable to see the puppeteers. The original bridge is used to this day. The theatre has a traditional 'proscenium arch' and seats 100 audience members.

John Wright died in 1991 but the work of the theatre continued apace with family, friends and supporters working tirelessly to continue in his footsteps to make sure John's legacy would delight generations to come.

“Over the next 30 years, the Little Angel team created and performed over 30 full-scale shows”

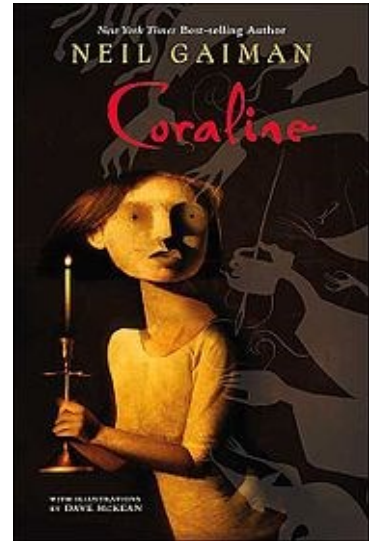
Neil Gaiman

Author Study

Neil Gaiman is an author of books for all ages. He also writes poetry, for film, as a journalist, comics, song lyrics and drama.

Other children's works include:

- Coraline (2002)
- M is for Magic (2007)
- Interworld (2007)
- The Day I swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish (1997)
- Crazy Hair (2009)
- The Dangerous Alphabet (2008)
- Blueberry Girl (2009)



FACTS!

Neil Gaiman was born in a town called Portchester, Hampshire in 1960. He now lives in the United States.

Gaiman was able to read at the age of four.

He credits librarians for fostering a life-long love of reading. He believes some of his happiest times as a boy were when he persuaded his parents to drop him off in the local library on their way to work.

As a child he loved reading: The Lord of the Rings, The Chronicles of Narnia, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and the Batman comics.

In the early 1980s, Gaiman worked in journalism. He wrote and reviewed for the British Fantasy society. His first professional short story publication was "Featherquest", a fantasy story in May 1984.

In 1984 at London's Victoria Station Gaiman noticed a copy of 'Swamp Thing' written by Alan Moore. This comic had such an impact on Gaiman that he made regular and frequent visits to London's Forbidden Planet shop to buy comics.

In 1984, he wrote his first book, a Biography of the 80's pop band Duran Duran. It took him 3 months to write.

He rarely follows the conventional rules for writing fiction. His works are classified in a range of genres including horror, fantasy and science fiction. He often jumps from one genre to another.

He has also written two episodes of the BBC TV show Doctor Who.

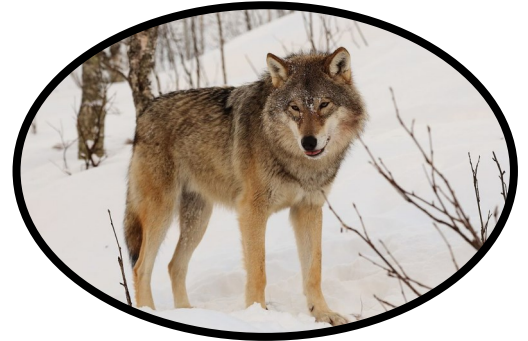
The Wolves in the Walls was also made into an opera by the Scottish National Theatre in 2006.



Wolf Facts

The best habitat for a wolf is not inside the walls of a building! Find out where wolves really live and some other interesting facts:

- The scientific name for a wolf is: Canis Lupus (Gray Wolf) and Canis Rufus (Red Wolf)
- There are 7 wolf species: Gray wolf, Arctic Wolf, Red Wolf, Indian Wolf, Himalayan Wolf, Ethiopian Wolf, Eastern Wolf.
- They can eat up to 20 pounds of meat in a single meal.
- A baby wolf is called a cub.
- They are carnivores, their favourite food is hooved animals.
- Wolves live in packs with a strict hierarchy. Usually a dominant male and his mate will be the leaders of the pack. When a cub is born, the entire pack is responsible for looking after the young.
- Wolves almost never attack humans and yet they are often considered one of the scariest animal villains in stories – much like the wolves in the story!



Where do wolves REALLY live?

Wolves live throughout North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. Wolves can thrive in a diversity of habitats from the tundra to woodlands, forests, grasslands and deserts. People are afraid of wolves, so in places where a lot of people live, people hunted the wolves or forced them away. Today, wolves mostly live in places away from people. That's why a lot of wolves today live in cold, empty places. The wolves are just looking for habitats without people around, so definitely not in houses!



Why do wolves howl?

Wolves use their legendary howl to communicate.

Wolf howling attracts the attention of the rest of its pack.

A pack of wolves howling shows they are sending a message to other packs that this is their territory. Some howls can be confrontational if they feel threatened in some way. A bit like our pet dogs which sometimes bark, sometimes they howl just because they can hear another wolf howling!

Did you know?

- A wolf's howl can be heard up to 10 miles away!
- Wolves can survive over a week without eating.

Over to you!

Wolves feature in many other famous stories, particularly fairy tales. Can you name any other books/stories that feature a wolf character?

Ideas For Writing

Write a letter

Start with a postcard written by the character Lucy from the book, for example:

"Hello, please can you help me? My name is Lucy and my family, and I have been attacked by wolves. We don't know what to do. What ideas do you have? What can we do? Do you know anything about wolves? Please write back. Thank you, Lucy"

Write a letter back to Lucy explaining what she should do. Describe what she should do to prepare, what she might need, how she might defend herself and how to avoid it in the future. You could back up your letter with evidence from your own research.

Write a postcard

Lucy's family consider moving to different places (Desert, Arctic etc.) to avoid the wolves. Write a postcard as if you are Lucy writing to her friend describing what the new places are like.

Write a fact file

This story features a lot about wolves. Carry out your own research about Wolves and create a report or fact file displaying your findings. You could research things like:

- What are wolves?
- Different species of Wolf
- Where do they live?
- What do they eat?
- How many wolves are there in the world?
- Why are people afraid of wolves?



Write a diary entry

Imagine you are one of the members of Lucy's family. Write a diary of the day the Wolves were in the walls. Describe what happened and how you felt. What were you thinking when it happened? What are you going to do next?

Write a Story

This story is about Lucy's fears of wolves. Write a story of your own in a similar style but using your fear. Perhaps it could be: "Spiders under the stairs" or "Witches in the Wardrobe".

Write a sequel about the elephants in the wall.

Ideas For Writing - Poetry

Write a poem - Kenning poetry:

A kenning poetry uses a two-word phrase in the place of a one-word noun.

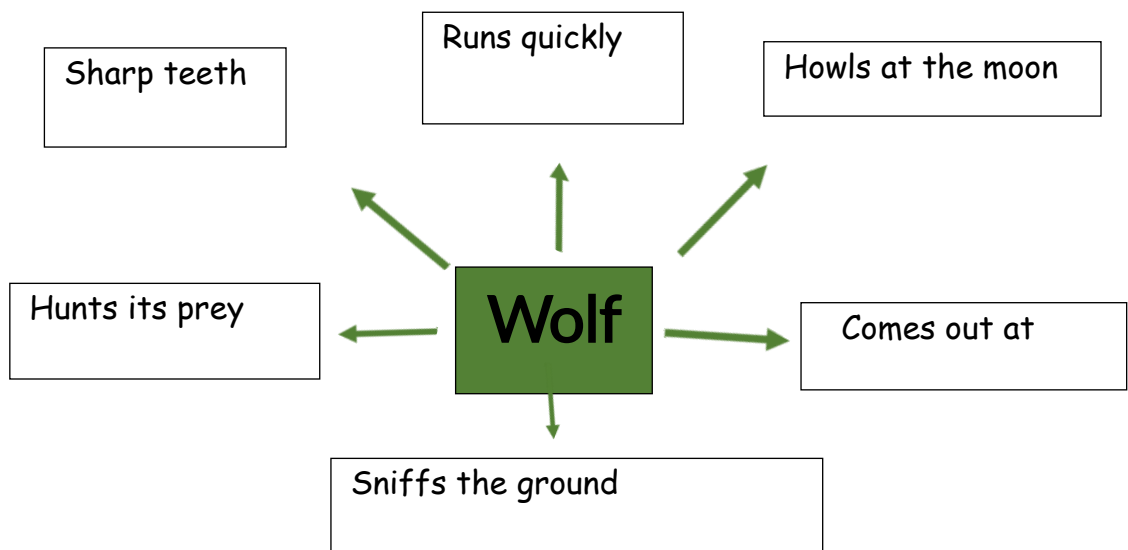
Kennings can be used to describe people, animals and objects, for example:

Dog – face-licker

Rabbit – carrot-cruncher

Horse – field-grazer

To start your kenning poetry, make a spider diagram with the word 'wolf' in the middle. Think of as many words as you can relating to wolves as you can think of. For example:



Then Turn those words into two-word kennings. For example:

- Silent Hunter
- Moon Howler
- Night prowler
- Ground sniffer

Onomatopoeia:

Neil Gaiman uses onomatopoeia throughout the book.

Hissing, creaking, howling, yowling, squeaking, bustling noises...

Think of a different animal, what sounds would they make? Write your own poem using onomatopoeia.

PSHE - Moral dilemmas, Fears and Philosophy for Children.

Lesson 1: To understand what fears and nightmares are.

Resources: Paper plate, string, feathers, beads, paints, ribbons.

Starter: What is fear? Explain in simple terms that fear is a chemical reaction in our brains in response to something (i.e. fight or flight). Share real life examples of people who have faced their fears.

Main: Discuss with the class what a nightmare is (A dream where things cause the dreamer to be worried, upset or frightened). Create a drama pieces where one character is having a nightmare. Pupils do not need to use one of their own nightmares but they can make up a nightmare which they would not like to have like; being lost in a maze, going to the dentist etc. Discuss what we can do when we are afraid of something.

Task: Children create dream catchers or worry dolls to share their fears with.

Plenary: share what they are afraid of and how they are going to face their fears.

Lesson 2: To debate moral dilemmas.

Resources: sugar paper and pens.

Starter: Ask the question "Is it ever okay to tell a 'white lie' or to withhold information? Children discuss in pairs and feed back.

Main: In the story, Lucy tells a lie to her family. Was that the right thing to do?

Split children into 2 groups.

Group A: Yes, she should lie because.

Group B: No, she shouldn't lie because.

Give children time to discuss their ideas, noting down their arguments onto large pieces of sugar paper. Children should use other examples to support their arguments.

Task: Bring children together and set up a class debate.

Plenary: which side made a better argument and why?

Lesson 3: to answer and explore philosophical questions

Resources: List of philosophical questions, book for reference.

Main:

Has there ever been a situation where you said something you did not know was true or false?

Do you think Lucy was brave in saving her pig-puppet?

What is bravery? What does it mean to be brave?

Does doing something dangerous necessarily make you brave?

Do you think Lucy's closeness to her pig-puppet is silly?

Does something have to be able to talk, move, eat, and sleep to be alive?

Is Lucy lying when she doesn't tell her family about the sound of elephants in the walls?

When should you never lie?

Task: Put the class into small groups. Children should discuss the 9 questions and write what they think about each question on sugar paper. There are no right answers and all views are valid.

Plenary: feedback on one of the questions to the whole class explaining their views.

Feeling Fear

Anxiety and the Fight or Flight Response

Everybody has fears from time to time. Fear can even be good for you sometimes and even help you stay healthy. Fear of getting too close to a fire may save you from a bad burn and fear of getting a bad mark on a test may make you study harder.

Some people even enjoy being a little scared. That's why they like to watch scary movies or go on roller coaster rides.



The body's reaction to fear is called the "fight or flight" response and people have had it since the beginning of time. Thousands of years ago caveman or cavewoman came face to face with a number of animals that were ready to eat them such as the sabre toothed tiger. At this point they could do one of two things; either run for it (that's flight), or pick up a spear and battle with the tiger (that's fight). Doing nothing wasn't an option—unless they wanted to be eaten!

To prepare for fight or flight, your body produces adrenaline that has the following effects:

- It increases the strength and speed of your heart beat so that more blood can be pumped around the body. This can cause your heart to race.
- Your lungs take in air faster to supply your body with oxygen.
- The pupils in your eyes get larger so you can see well.
- Blood drains away from the stomach which may cause a churning feeling or "butterflies".
- Tension increases in the muscles preparing them to spring into action. This sometimes causing the muscle to tremble or shake especially in the hands, arms and legs. It can make us feel tense all over particularly the scalp, neck and shoulder muscles, causing headaches or a feeling of a tight band around the head.
- Adrenaline also drains blood away from the brain making it difficult to concentrate. This can make you feel light headed or dizzy.

**Although these are unpleasant sensations, that can
make you feel tired and scared, NONE OF THE
PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY OR FEAR ARE DANGEROUS!**

In 'Wolves in the Walls' Lucy is afraid of the Wolves. Discuss what makes us scared and why. Suggest ways we can make ourselves feel better when we have those sensations:

Mindfulness – Count 10 deep, slow breaths.

Connection – Look around you, How many things can you see that are red? Or Green? Count them.

Think of a happy time or memory. Where were you? Who were you with?

Make a Folded Pig Puppet

How to make a Pig Puppet

In the story, Lucy has a pig puppet that she is very fond of. She even ventures back inside the house to get pig when the wolves have come out of the walls.

Why don't you have a go at trying to make your own folded pig puppet.

You will need:

- per pig: one A4 sheet of pink paper
- pink coloured paper scraps OR pens
- pens
- glue stick
- scissors

Step 1:

Begin by folding the A4 sheet in paper in 3 length wise.

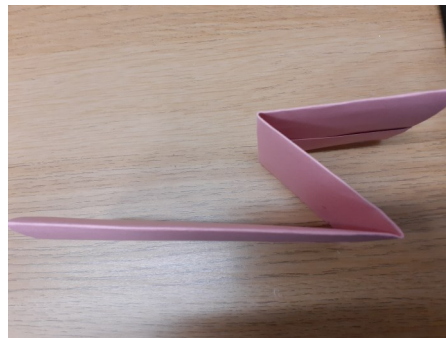
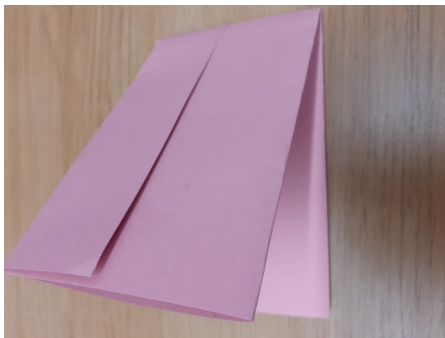
Secure with some glue.

Step 2:

With the seam of your fold on the outside, fold again so that it is in half.

Step 3:

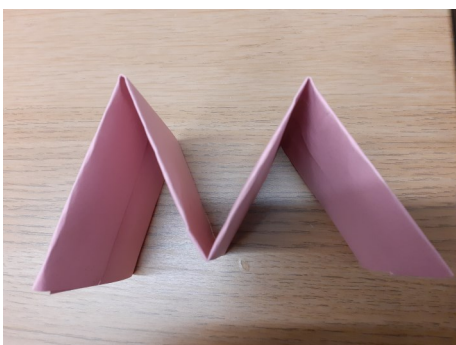
Take the top part and fold it back on itself (like a concertina).



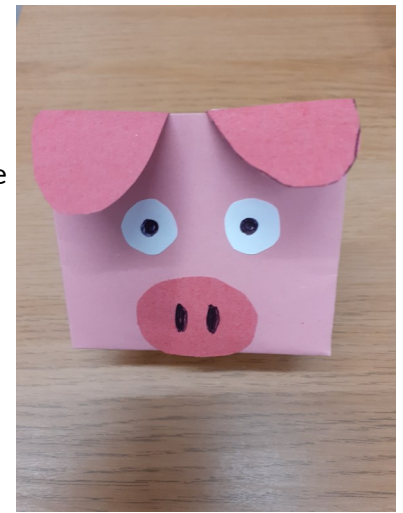
Step 4:

Flip over and repeat steps 2 and 3.

You will have created an M shape – this is the mouth of the pig.



Now it's time to decorate. Using your scrap paper or pens you will need to add: two ears, a snout, two eyes and a tongue to your pig and glue in place.



Make Shadow Puppets

The Wolves in the Walls uses lots of shadow puppetry. The shadow puppets in the show are black silhouettes with moving parts. (articulated).

Black Card Articulated Shadow Puppets

What you need

Pencils (including white or yellow coloured pencils)

Paper

Black card

Wooden skewers

Hole punch

Adhesive Velcro

Split pins

Method

- Draw a design of the shadow puppet on paper
- Copy the design on to black card (use white or yellow coloured pencil) or you can use the drawing on white paper as a template.
- Draw any moving parts separately so that they will overlap by about 1cm when placed together
- Make sure moving parts are not too small or the split pin will tear through
- Carefully cut out with scissors, removing sections to create detail
- To make a joint pierce a hole through both pieces of card and fasten together with a split pin
- To cut out detail sections in the centre of the card carefully pierce with scissors or a sharp pencil/skewer or hole punch
- For control from behind: use a wooden skewer, with the sharp ends removed. This can be attached to the puppet with self adhesive Velcro. This will allow the rods to be transferred easily between puppets

Top Tips for Teaching Shadow Puppet Making

- Demonstrate that anything drawn on the puppet won't show up in shadow. Detail like eyes need to be cut out.
- Ask children to draw their design on white paper first and then mark out the parts of the puppet that will need cutting out.
- When making joints draw the jointed part as a separate piece. Make sure it's bigger to allow for overlap and wide enough to accommodate a split pin.
- For children stick to one moving part per puppet.
- For moving part puppets attach Velcro for a rod to the top or middle of the puppet, and also at the end of the part you want to move.



Links and Resources

Little Angel Website:
<https://littleangeltheatre.com>



Children's Mental Health Support for Teachers:

BBC Teach Resources

<https://www.bbc.com/teach/teach/childrens-mental-health-week-2019/zk37bdm>

PSHE Association—Mental Health Guidance

[Mental health \(pshe-association.org.uk\)](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk)

Mentally Healthy Schools—Resources and Lesson Plans

[Primary : Mentally Healthy Schools](https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org)

The Place2be - Children's Mental Health Support

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/>

Philosophy for children:

<https://p4c.com>

Information about Wolves

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/>

<http://wolfpark.org/animals/info/wolves/>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/g/gray-wolf/>

The official Neil Gaiman website for younger readers

<http://www.mousecircus.com/books/>

Show Credits:

Directed and designed by Toby Olié

Lighting design by Matt Daw

Music composed by Adam Pleeth

Lyrics by Carl Grose

Associate designer and puppet supervision by Daisy Beattie

Education resource pack written by Charly Nash and Sarah Schofield, for Little Angel Theatre .

The Wolves in the Walls production and rehearsal photographs by Dan Tsantilis
Publicity photographs by Ellie Kurttz