

"O Coelho Branco" - The Little White Rabbit

An adaptation into English by pre-school teachers in Portugal

Once upon a time, there was a little white rabbit.

He was in his house and he was hungry!

"I'll look for a cabbage," he thought.

So, he went into his garden.

When he got back there was a goat in his house!

Knock, knock, knock, "Let me in!" said little white rabbit.

But the goat said: "I'm Goatie Gajive! I'll jump on you and break you in five!"

Poor little white rabbit!

Along came an ox

"Please help" said little white rabbit

So, the ox knocked on the door.

Knock, knock, knock, "Let me in!" said the ox.

But the goat said: "I'm Goatie Gajive! I'll jump on you and break you in five!"

And the ox ran away!

Along came a ... animals in decreasing size until...

Along came an ant.

She didn't knock on the door! She went under the door!

"Go away," said the ant!

And the goat said, "I'm Goatie Gajive! I'll jump on you and break you in five!"

But the ant said, "I'm ant Nelly! I'll jump on you and bite your belly!"

And Goatie Gajive ran away as fast as he could!

"Hooray!" said the rabbit, the ox, the.... and the ant!

Age range:	3- 8 years
English level:	Beginner
Language focus:	
Repeated patterns:	“Please help” “Let me in!” And the (...) ran away
Functions:	Orders: Open the door! Go away!
Lexical items:	Farm animals (ox, horse, pig, sheep, dog, goose, cat, and duck) Body parts (belly, back, shoulders, head, legs, arms, and feet) House (door, window, roof, garden, vegetable patch) Size adjectives (big, little, tiny)
Language work:	Grammar points: Prepositions: under the door, on the door, in the house Rhymes: “Goatie Gajive” + “five” “Nelly” + “belly”
General education links:	Sequencing in size Sequencing from memory Socialising, turn taking and sharing
Story moral:	Size doesn’t matter!
Teaching aids:	Animal masks

This story is a well-known Portuguese pre-school story. Visual supports when telling a story are very important, but I feel it is enough to have the animal pictures or masks as the dialogue is so simple, and easy to understand, once it has been explained in the mother tongue. Any animal can in fact be used, even jungle ones! Why not change the scene and have the story set in a deep dark jungle!

Suggested teaching ideas.

Art and craft:

- 1) Make masks, use any of the well known techniques, but a really effective method is using a paper plate or a paper bag, and getting the children to cut and stick the relevant bits of the animal. You can review face vocabulary and colours whilst doing this activity.
- 2) Make animal puzzles. The children could colour one of the animals (like the ox,) stick it on card and then cut it up into 5 pieces. They have to remake the puzzle, and will have great fun saying the rhyme and breaking up the puzzle again!
- 3) Making a storybook. Get the children to draw a part of the story each and then put all the pictures together to make a book for their library corner. There are lots of ways at making books, check out the storytelling book by Andrew Wright, OUP. If they are old enough they can write some words as a gap filling activity. If they are too little the teacher can write the story under their drawings.

Maths: Once the children have made the masks get them to order their animal characters from biggest to smallest, helping them with a mathematical concept and reminding them of the story sequence.

Movement and Drama: Once the children know some animals in English, this is perfect for a role-play activity. They will have heard the story several times before doing the role-play and should be quite confident at saying:

“Please help” (said little white rabbit)
Knock, knock, knock, “Let me in!” (said the ox.)
“I’m Goatie Gajive! I’ll jump on you and break you in five!”

Language work: Try getting older children to find rhyming sounds for other numbers. The original is “Goatie Gajive (...) break you in five”
What about Goatie Gabor (...) break you in four”; “Goatie McGee (...) break you in three”; “Goatie Badoo (...) break you in two”;