

ROBIN HOOD



After more than seven hundred years, the legend of Robin Hood is still hugely popular. But who he really was, still remains a mystery. Historians discovered that there were many different Robin Hoods in medieval England because Robert was a very common name and Robin was a common nickname for Robert, especially in the 13th century. The surname Hood was also fairly common because it referred either to a hooder, who was a maker of hoods, or to somebody who wore a hood as a head-covering. That's why it's not surprising that medieval records mention a number of people called 'Robert Hood' or 'Robin Hood'. We may never know for sure whether Robin Hood ever existed outside the pages of books but we do know that his legend will live forever.

The legend of Robin Hood and his merry men has become an integral part of British culture continuing today in films, television, even comic book adaptations. There have been more than fifty films and TV shows about him. Why is he one of the longest-lasting legends of all? This is easy to answer: whatever the age, we always need a hero, someone who will stand up for the poor, the weak, and those without a voice.



According to legend, he was a highly skilled archer and swordsman. He is described as a supporter of King Richard the Lionheart. When the king left England to fight in the Holy Land, his younger brother John ruled England instead of him but his reign was tyrannical. Robin Hood and his merry men waited in Sherwood Forest and when rich nobles passed through the woods, they robbed those rich men and gave the money to the poor. The King put the Sheriff of Nottingham in charge of Sherwood Forest and ordered him to catch Robin Hood. The Sheriff thought of a plan. He would organize a competition to choose the best shooter in Nottingham and when Robin Hood comes, he would catch him. On the day of the competition, there were ten contestants. The Sheriff asked one of his guards if Robin was there, but he said: 'No, Your Highness, Robin has red hair. None of the contestants have red hair.' The Sheriff said: 'He must be scared.' William, the Sheriff's man, took aim and shot. His arrow landed very closely to the centre. Then it was the turn of the man in green. The arrow went through William's arrow and bull's eye and in a flash, he let go of two more arrows. Each one flew to where the Sheriff sat, one arrow on each side. Before the Sheriff recovered, Robin pulled off his black wig and threw it on the ground. He jumped over the wall to his horse and was gone.

A1 Mark the sentences T (true) or F (false). Correct the wrong sentences.

- 1 Robert was a rare name in the 13th century.
- 2 The surname Hood referred only to makers of hoods.
- 3 Historians haven't found any proof that Robin Hood ever existed.
- 4 The legend of Robin Hood is very old.
- 5 Robin Hood stood up for the poor and the weak.
- 6 He was an excellent archer and swordsman.
- 7 He was a supporter of King John.
- 8 The King told the Sheriff of Nottingham to catch Robin Hood.
- 9 The Sheriff organized a competition.
- 10 There were 10 contestants in the competition.
- 11 William was the best shooter.
- 12 The Sheriff caught Robin Hood.

A2 Find the following words in the text:

- 1 A person who takes part in a competition contestant
- 2 A covering for the head and neck _____
- 3 A person who shoots with a bow and arrows _____
- 4 The period of time when a king or queen rules a country _____
- 5 Using power in a cruel and unfair way _____
- 6 Happy and cheerful _____
- 7 A covering of false hair which you wear on your head _____
- 8 A person or group of people whose job is to protect a person or place from danger or attack _____

B What do you know about Robin Hood?

- 1 Robin's best friends were Little John and Friar Tuck. What do you know about them?
- 2 Who was he in love with?
- 3 What do you think - was he a criminal or a hero?
- 4 Have you seen any Robin Hood films? If yes, which one do you like best and why?
- 5 What traditional heroes are there in Croatia?
- 6 Do you know any stories about them? Are they true?
- 7 Have you heard about the Uskoks of Senj? What do you know about them?

C What do you think?

- Was Robin Hood right? Is taking money from the rich and giving it to the poor the best way to reduce poverty in the world?
- How can we help poor people in some parts of the world?
- Do you think money and food should be distributed more evenly in the world?