



Stage 3

Chicken Licken

Storyteller Notes

This extraordinary tale is *all* refrain; and, like *The Big Carrot*, could easily become a memory game and tongue twister – both physically and mentally!

As in *The Little Red Hen*, the rhymes are a memory aid for both storyteller and listeners. The actions for each new character give your children both a chance to join in and help with visualising the different kinds of bird. Distinct character voices also lend added detail without the need to break the refrain up with description. It comes across from Cock Lock's action and voice, for instance, that he is rather posh and proud, while Chicken Licken is frenetic and panicky.

Such a refrain-based story lends itself to making variations to keep your audience engaged: for example, losing one of the chicks adds humour just when the children thought they knew what was coming. You could make even more of this moment when telling it to your class, perhaps stepping in among the children to retrieve the chick from a lap or a pocket!

You could also leave silences, challenging your children to fill in the gaps: the rhythm and rhyme will support this. You will find that, even when a rhyming word has never been heard in the refrain before, it can still be predicted by the children. Try it by leaving a slight pause, for example: "...and the little chicks, one, two, three, four, all went back to what they had been doing...?"

Written by Amy Robinson

Amy is a professional storyteller. Previously a primary school teacher, Amy now tours schools and theatres in the UK with her storytelling colleague, Chip Colquhoun. Find out more at www.snailtales.org